

memento of the occasion each lady was presented with a corsage, a gallant gesture by the ship's company which was sincerely appreciated by all.

Finally, the annual end-of-the-year party for all members of our staff and retired personnel was held on 28th December in the General Purposes Area when we renewed acquaintance with old comrades, including Mr. R. M. Mackenzie, Mr. G. Mathieson, Mr. Eric Goodman and Mr. G. E. Lowe. The catering arrangements on this occasion were quite superlative, there being available, among other delicacies, chicken, rock lobster and that distinguished product of Bonnie Scotland which, according to the

label, is distilled and bottled under the supervision of H.M. Government.

Death of a Ship

A familiar landmark in Table Bay Docks, the old steamer *Roodewal*, which has languished for nine years at the Eastern Mole not far from "A" Berth where the homeward bound Mailships are berthed, is in the process of being broken up for scrap. Well known to passengers and crews of Mailships who have often speculated on her identity, history and purpose in an ever-changing world, the silent, blackened hulk of *Roodewal*, redolent with decay, has lain idle and neglected since 1954, recalling to herself, if ships have souls, bygone

years between two World Wars spent carrying cargoes of timber from Archangel and Riga to London, and brooding, perhaps, over the misfortunes which have befallen her since fate decreed she be left to rot in the African sunshine far from the land of her birth.

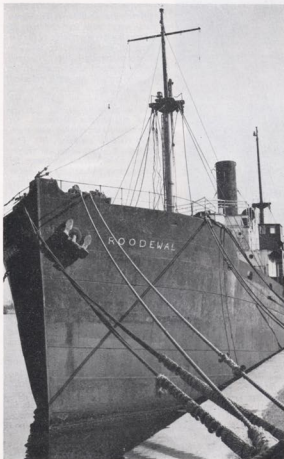
Built in Glasgow in 1919, a product of the wartime emergency building programme, *Roodewal* was designed for the timber trade with the Baltic, earning the reputation of being a "hard" ship because of her open construction, cramped quarters and coal-fired boilers which required constant attention. During her lifetime she changed hands frequently and sailed under many aliases, eventually reaching South Africa in 1948 for a final spell of coastal trading between Cape Town, Matadi and Point Noire, carrying coal and timber, until it was found that she had insufficient power to master the current of the fast flowing Congo river.

Returning to Cape Town for the last time in 1954, *Roodewal* was laid up at the Eastern Mole, where in recent years she has been disclashed by established marine societies and reduced to the status of a ghost ship, deserted by all save vermin and sea birds. Worse, she became a non-paying guest, for her owner neglected to pay dock dues, resulting in the Harbour Administration securing a Court Order to attach the old ship. Now, few will mourn her passing, least of all those who had to sail in her, but no longer will her old fashioned superstructure present a striking contrast with the sleek lines of Mailships as they call at Table Bay Harbour on their lawful journeys.

Comings and Goings

Recent additions to our staff include Mr. A. H. Thomson, C.A., and Mr. S. A. Munday, Catering Superintendent, both on transfer from Durban. Miss P. M. Girdwood (Head Passenger Office) rejoined our ranks after a spell of duty with the London Office and a visit to the United States. Miss V. F. Berrisford has joined the Passenger Department.

Resignations include Mr. M. L. Wood (Claims and Baggage Department), Miss J. R. Muntzer and Miss P. M. Mackenzie (Head Passenger Office) and Mrs. M. C. Adams (Passenger Department).



A photograph of s.s. Roodewal taken just before she was broken up for scrap
[Photo: Cape Times]