

C.S.

PORT & MARINE  
(Shipping)  
(Miscellaneous)  
MISCELLANEOUS  
(General)

SHI/VES/7 # 20

1943.

No. 55/43.

C.S.O.

SUBJECT.

1943.

9th April.

Previous Paper.

CENTENARY OF THE "GREAT BRITAIN".

1843 - 1943.

MINUTES.

(1)

Draft Pamphlet.

(2)

G.K.

I submit the draft of the pamphlet. I have checked it for accuracy with D. Hamilton.

KB  
9/4

York KB 9/10/43

(3)

Record

11.0.11. Capt Roberts & D. Hamilton met in my office & willingly consented to form an unofficial committee to organise centenary celebrations in aid of the Red Cross. They will submit a programme in due course.

2. Meanwhile Capt Roberts will have another photo of the G.B. D. Hamilton will hand the prints over to him to get blocks made in L.R. Capt R. will also get two off the G.B. & hand it to Ex. Reg. who agrees to make souvenirs for sale. I will be responsible for printing the pamphlet when the blocks arrive. KB 9/4.

Subsequent Paper.

B.M.  
24/4/43

B.M.  
20/5/43

# Illustration Captions

1. 19<sup>th</sup> July 1843.
2. 1845.
3. 1849-1882.
4. 1844 to 1943.

Letter to Messrs. Maclean & Stapledon 8/6/43.

Letter from D. W. Roberts, Esq., of 3/7/43.

do 5/7/43.

List of articles

4. K.H.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.

(8).

4.F.

The proposed arrangements for the Centenary are as follows.

Sat. 17<sup>th</sup>. Dance, to be organised by the Navy.

Raffle, sale, auction of medals & curios.

Sale of Book etc.

(List of articles at (7)).

Sun 18<sup>th</sup>. "Someone at the Door" by the F.I.A.D.S. opening night.  
further sale of Book etc.

2. Medals are also being distributed to the farms for raffling (see (7a)).
3. The expedition to Spawton Cove has been postponed due to owing to the fact that no suitable vessels will be in.
4. All profits (except  $\frac{1}{2}$  then of the Play) to be equally divided between Red Cross & King George V. Fund for Sailors.
5. Commemorative will be displayed at West Store before the Dance. Orders for more medals may be taken afterwards.

This seems quite satisfactory. Some of the commemorative, incidentally, have been made by PWD carpenters in their spare time as a voluntary contribution. They are all from Great Britain wood.

KB

6/7.

What about a private view of articles for myself?

Capt Roberts told.

KB  
7/7

7/11/43

Excerpt from letter received from Maclean & Stapledon 26/11/43.

Bu  
13/7/43



12. Excerpt from Camp Bulletin, No. 34 of 11. 7. 43.
13. Broadcast by Mrs. Hamilton on 15th July, 1943.
14. Telegram from Broadcasts, London, 9/7/43.
15. " " " " " " " " " "
16. Telegram to Secretary of State for the Colonies 18/7/43. 14th July 1943.
17. " from " " " " " " " " " " No. 70. 16/7/43.
18. Gazette Notice No. 38 of 19. 7. 43.
19. Telegram No. 150 to S. of S. of 19. 7. 43.

(26)

G. E.

Y. K.  
I submit a draft letter to the Lord Mayor of Bristol  
re Press Release. I have modelled the letter more on  
Cero m (37) in 29/36 h/w. though according to the  
1942 White Paper the L. Mayor is not entitled to a  
"Rt. Honorable". Y. K. may wish to send the medalion  
by sea - but air is safer. The Press Release is very  
short but we cannot hope for more than a short "notice".  
I will get an approximate figure for the funds raised,  
if possible, but I do not mean if one will be available  
<sup>in my lifetime</sup> before the mail goes. I shall send copies of the  
Brochure to the P. R. O. at the Colonial Office  
for distribution for reprinting in suitable periodicals.

KB  
2075

21. Letter to Lord Mayor, Bristol, of 22.7.43.  
~~22. Letter to Lord Mayor, Bristol, of 22.7.43.~~  
 22. Letter to H.O.W. Steward, Esq, Montevideo, of 9.8.43.  
 23. Letter from M<sup>rs</sup> Sabine Esq. 15<sup>th</sup> September 1943.  
 24 Letter from The Lord Mayor of Bristol 23rd Sept 1943.  
 25. Letter to Hon. W.W. Roberts of 16.11.43.  
 M.  
 26. Letter from Hon. W.W. Roberts of 19.11.43.  
 27. Letter from Lord Mayor, Bristol, of 15.11.43.

(27).

G.F.

TO see (26). We are so far short £200 from goal  
 of £1000 owing to overestimation of the  
 returns expected from the Camp. I saw Capt.  
 Roberts this morning & we agreed that it  
 would not do to organise further advertised  
 Festivities so late in the day. He will arrange  
 to auction the remaining articles & if we  
 do not reach £1000 we must let it go at that.  
 I think publication of the Mayor's letter  
 might await the final closing of the  
 fund & the local publication of the  
 final figure.

KB

20.11.43

Letter to Hon. W.W. Roberts of 17.1.44

Letter from Hon. W.W. Roberts of 25/1/44.

Letter from Hon. W.W. Roberts of 28/1/44.

Letter to Hon. W.W. Roberts of 2.2.44.

29.

29a.

30.

31.

(32)

G.F.

I submit a letter to Mr Roberts for your Lg.  
 I will write officially to the members of the  
 Ctee. thanking them & publish the figure.

KB

2.2.44

Letter to Com: R.B. Shorten & Mrs Hamilton of 5/2/44. 33.

" " Hon. W.W. Roberts of 5.2.44. 34.

(35)

ACS

Publish 29(h) in weekly news pt.

KB

5.2.44

Published 10/2/44.

P.H.

36. Excerpt from T. L. A. Monthly

R.V.

37. Letter from J. Dugan of 7/1/50.

R.V. 1/3/50

38. Letter from Mr. J. G. C. Carr of 21/3/50.

39. Letter ~~from~~ <sup>to</sup> Manager, F. J. C. of 22/3/50.

B.V. 26/3/50.

B.V. 7/4/50.

B.V. 17/4/50.

ACS.

Pl send reminder to 39, explaining that we would like to send an ~~note~~ to p. 38 by this mail if possible.

B.V.

21/4/50.

41. Letter to Manager, F. J. C. of 24/4/50.

42. Letter from Manager, F. J. C. of 24.4.50.

B.V. 15/5/50.

B.V. 1/6/50.

ACS.

Pl ask F. J. C. if they have anything more for us, ref. p. 42, as we would like to get a letter off on this mail.

3 JUN 1950

ACS Mr. Barton informs me that reply is still awaited from his office

B.V. 15/7/50.

Sac. 3/6/54

series from Manager F.I.C. of 26.6.50. 45

" to Director, National Maritime Museum of 30/6/50. 46

Telegram No. 96 from S. of S of 13.7.50 47

" No 141 to S. of S of 14.7.50 48

*14/7/50*

Letter from N. Campbell of 10/9/52. 49.

50.

*yes* *49.*

*Att. a copy of the "C.B." pamphlet*

I think we will send him a copy of the ad. pamphlet under a short covering letter?

51

*yes* *yes* *pl. m* *38* *25/10*

*Q* *29. x*

*off* *52.* *Drops* *20/12.*

Letter to Mr. N. Campbell of 31/10/52.

Letter from W.T. Lucas of 15/1/57.

Letter to W.T. Lucas of 27/6/57

53.

54 *20/10.*

55 *5/11*

56 Letter from Bristol Aircraft Limited of 10/11/58

*55* *27/10*

57 Letter to P.G. Masfield of 7.1.59.

*56*

58 Letter from P.G. Masfield of 26.3.59.

59 Letter to P.G. Masfield of 26.1.60.

*60*

60. Letter from J. E. Hensfield of 21/3/60.

61 Letter from Keith Emsen, The Otago  
Daily Times of 5/10/61

PO<sup>u</sup>  
22.4.60

63 Letter to K. Emsen of 1/62.

64 } Approx. weight of masks and spurs of 48.  
65 }

PO<sup>u</sup>  
5.1.62

PO

- 2 -

(1).

THE "GREAT BRITAIN".  
1843 - 1943.

The Great Britain was launched, or rather floated in the dry dock in which she had been built, at Bristol one hundred years ago tomorrow, on the 19th July, 1843.

It was a great occasion, the ceremony being performed by no less a person than His Royal Highness the Prince Consort "wearing a frock coat and the riband of the Garter". Bristol presented him with the Freedom of the City in a gold box and escorted him to the shipyard with a procession which was headed by a body of cavalry and included the Mayor and Alderman, the Dean and no less than sixty resident Clergy. "Bands played, people shouted and guns fired. Triumphal arches abounded and inscriptions hung across the streets". Before "aiming a bottle of champagne" at the bows of the ship the Prince inspected her and was entertained to a banquet on board at which there were six hundred guests, including "a large number of the fair sex". It is also pleasant to note from this contemporary account that "the demolition of the various delicacies proceeded quietly" and it was gratifying to observe that the West Country air appeared to have in no wise disagreed with the Royal appetite".

But why all the commotion? For the very good reason that the Great Britain was the largest ship in the world and considered to be a marvel of engineering. At that time there were very few ships of over a thousand tons and the Great Britain, of no less than three thousand five hundred tons, was a "mammoth" vessel, "gigantic", a "Titan among the Minnows". Also she was one of the earliest vessels to be made of iron and only the second to be driven by a propeller. In fact she had been originally designed in 1838 by the famous Sir Marc Isambard Brunel as a paddle-steamer for the Atlantic Service of the Great Western Steamship Company and had actually been re-designed during construction for screw propulsion. This decision was to have far-reaching results, for the Admiralty were subsequently so impressed by the ship's performance that they took the daring step of introducing the propeller into naval construction, a contribution to British sea-power of which the old ship is still particularly proud.

Unfortunately the spectacular "launch" ended in an anti-climax. Her builders had forgotten to widen the gates of the dry-dock sufficiently to/  
to/



allow the ship to pass through and she had to remain imprisoned until the gates had been removed and part of the wall at the entrance demolished. It was not, in fact, until early in 1845 that she put to sea and sailed round the south coast to London. Here she was inspected by the young Queen herself who was very impressed with the sixty-four state-rooms, boudoirs, music-room and twelve hundred yards of scarlet and purple carpet.

The Great Britain sailed from Liverpool on her maiden voyage to New York on the 26th July, 1845, and is believed to have made the passage in fifteen days, being the first iron-built screw-driven ship to cross the Atlantic. The Americans were impressed by her size but there was no rush to travel in her. Her Atlantic career was, in fact, not very successful, and it came to a tragic end after little more than a year.

On the night of the 22nd September, 1846, the Great Britain, betrayed by the presence of a new un-notified light on the coast and an unusual "set" in a south-west gale, ran ashore in Dundrum Bay on the north-east coast of Ireland. Luckily she was grounded safely between two protecting ridges of rock and there was no loss of life or cargo. To be sure the lady passengers were perturbed. One of them described the scene: "Oh! I cannot tell you of the anguish of that night! The sea broke over the ship, the waves struck her like thunder-claps, the gravel grated below, there was the throwing overboard of coal, the cries of children, the groans of women, the blue lights, the signal guns, even the tears of men, and amidst all the Voice of Prayer, and this for long dark hours. Oh! what a fearful night!" The poor dears were no doubt infinitely relieved to be taken ashore at dawn, even though they did have to sit in their crinolines in carts of "seaweed  
manure".

But all's well that ends well. Brunel came over to Ireland and rescued his precious offspring. She was hardly damaged at all and he contrived to protect her throughout the winter by an ingenious "poultice" of massive faggots heavily weighed and lashed about the stern. In the following year she was successfully towed off, possibly by the troopship "Birkenhead of tragic fame, and taken to the Mersey. All this, however, had cost the owners, the Great Western Company,

£108,000 and they wanted to be rid of her. She failed to fetch the basic price at auction and was eventually, in 1850, sold to Messrs Gibbs, Bright & Co., for the relatively paltry sum of £18,000, and refitted for the Australian emigrant trade.

She sailed for Melbourne in 1852 with six hundred and thirty passengers and £1,000,000 in gold and silver specie, the first of thirty-two such voyages over a period of twenty-five years, only interrupted by trooping service during the Crimean War and the Indian Mutiny. Many times the Great Britain put into Stanley for coal, which used to be sent out for her in specially chartered sailing ships from Wales. She was the most popular and celebrated ship on the Australian run.

All good things, however, come to an end and in 1875 the old ship was laid up for sale. She was bought in 1881, resold to Messrs A. Biggs Sons & Co., in 1882 and in November of that year appeared in the Mersey, indignant but still game, - as a sailing ship with her iron hull sheathed in wood! Her end, however, was drawing near. She made two voyages to San Francisco, dogged throughout by minor misfortunes; then on the 6th February, 1886, she sailed for the last time. She was bound from Penarth to Panama with coal but she never arrived there. She ran into a gale off the Horn, was partially dismasted and sustained considerable damage. She ran for Stanley, and on her arrival there on the 25th May was surveyed, condemned and sold for a hulk.

Her sailing days were over, but not her career. For another forty-seven years until 1933, she was used by the Falkland Islands Company for storing wool and coal. Then, in 1933, she had regretfully to be abandoned. For three more years she lay at anchor at her old moorings awaiting her fate. Early in 1936 plans were made by Sir Henniker Heaton, who was Governor at the time, to launch a fund for her restoration and preservation. The Falkland Islands Company offered to present the ship to the Government and an appeal was to be made through the columns of the "Times" to the citizens of Bristol for the necessary funds. It was hoped to open this appeal on the 25th May, 1936, the fiftieth anniversary of the end of her last voyage, but unfortunately a preliminary survey indicated that the cost of restoration would probably exceed £10,000 and the project had to be abandoned. She was then condemned to be towed out to sea ~~thenceforward~~ and sunk but was reprieved and in 1937 was taken to honourable retirement in Sparrow Cove.

The Great Britain, as she is now, bears very little resemblance to the smoke belching Behemoth which, in the pride of youth, so amazed the barge-masters of the Thames in 1845. In those days she had a black iron hull, one funnel and six masts, one square and five schooner-rigged. Her original engine, of a thousand horsepower, was connected to the propeller<sup>e</sup>-shaft by a stupendous chain. After being wrecked she was refitted for the Australian trade with four masts, two fore-and-aft and two square-rigged, and was given two funnels, placed side by side. Finally three years later, she became a three-masted full rigged ship, again with only one funnel. This was the rig under which she earned fame and popularity for over twenty years. She was described as a "very majestic ship with an appearance resembling a steam frigate". In 1882, her engines were removed, but her rig was not <sup>naturally</sup> altered. At the same time, as we have already mentioned, her iron hull was sheathed in wood, and it is in this guise that the hulk of to day must be reconstructed in the imagination. All that really remains to the outside view of the original Great Britain is, in fact, her dimensions. She is 322 feet long, 51 feet in the beam and 32.5 feet deep, with a draught of 16 feet.

The Great Britain was not only a famous vessel in her own right and has survived to have the longest life of any iron ship ever built, but she came of a celebrated line; she was the successor of the Great Western and the inspiration of that ill-fated giant, the Great Eastern.

Now she rests, a great lady, very old and very frail, but still beautiful, in the land-locked peace of Sparrow Cove. On a fine day, when the sea and sky are blue her old timbers gratefully absorb the warmth and glow grey and amber in the sun against the honey-coloured grass, and she rouses herself from sleep to tell tales of the Antipodes and the windy Horn to respectful deputations from the penguin rookery on the hill above the cove. Perhaps these little gentlemen remind her of the Mayor, the Aldermen, the Dean and the sixty resident clergy of Bristol who accompanied Royalty in procession to her christening one hundred long years ago.

Stanley,  
July, 1943.

K.B.

8th June,

Gentlemen,

I enclose a sample of paper and should be grateful if you would, without fail, send me the equivalent of 6,000 sheets of this size by this Fitzroy. Should this actual variety of paper be unprocurable in Montevideo, please send the nearest substitute. It is essential that the paper should have a coated surface suitable for printing from metal blocks. The cost should be debited to this Government in the usual way.

I have the honour to be,

Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

K. G BRADLEY

Colonial Secretary.

Messrs. MacLean & Stapledon, S.A.,  
Casilla de Correo 193,  
Montevideo,  
URUGUAY.



Great Britain etc.

(5)

PORT STANLEY,

FALKLAND ISLANDS.

3<sup>rd</sup> July 1943

Dear Bradley,

We held a  
Committee meeting  
the G.B. Centenary  
celebration yesterday  
afternoon. It was  
decided <sup>that</sup> the bulk of the  
Souvenirs and medals  
should be raffled - that  
some should be sold at  
the dance - and a few of  
the medals and better  
articles sold by Auction  
during the dance. The  
Raffle should also be  
drawn at the dance on

Saturday evening (the 1)<sup>st</sup> inst:

The souvenirs to be auctioned  
will be exhibited at the  
Trust Store before that date.

It was also decided that  
the visit to Sparrow Cove  
be postponed since dis-  
owing to lack of transport  
and probable weather conditions  
Monday night is your show.  
"Someone at the door."

The dance will be organised  
by the Navy. and Commandr  
Martin has agreed to arrange  
for a band. Refreshment  
will be on sale. Tea, Sandwiches,  
soft drinks etc. The Company's  
Trust Store will provide the ham.

I shall be very pleased  
if you would broadcast these

arrangements for us - minus  
of course - the ham!

I have not yet received  
the list of articles made  
or to be made by the P.N.D.  
So that until I receive it,  
it will not be possible to  
state what prizes will be  
raffled. As soon as I get  
the list I will send you  
a note

Yours Sincerely,  
A.M. Smith

Gaulley. 6  
6<sup>th</sup> July 1943.

Dear Bradley,

Herewith list  
in duplicate of Souvenirs  
of "St Britain" for Sale and  
Raffle together with a list  
of allocations of medals  
to Farm Stations for Raffling.

I enclose a  
medal for your inspection  
and return. I'm sure you  
will agree that they are  
excellently done.

I am telegraphing  
H.W. today to retain the  
die until further notice and  
warning them that we  
may require more later on.



After the Celebration I think  
we could take orders for medals  
but to let this be known in  
advance would, I feel sure,  
prejudice the Auction and  
Raffle. I therefore think  
that nothing should be  
said about this at the  
moment.

You'll be pleased to hear  
that we have made our  
first sale. a special sale  
£10 from H.R. for a Silver medal.

It's the only medal sale  
I will make before the  
19<sup>th</sup> July. But I'm not  
forgetting you. Please indicate  
which you would prefer, the

brought on the silver? But  
you will help the bidding  
I know!

Yours sincerely,  
A. M. Smith

List of articles for sale and raffle.

For Auction.

2 Nests Tables  
2 Stools  
2 Cigar boxes  
2 Pipe racks  
10 Centenary Medals. *in bronze*

For Sale at Dance.

1 set Tables  
2 Work baskets  
3 Cigarette boxes  
1 Cigar box  
6 sets Bookends  
8 Paper Knives  
3 Pin Trays  
2 Pipe Racks  
1 Reading Lamp  
6 Wooden Spoons

For Raffle.

1 Stool  
1 set 3 Tables  
2 Work Baskets  
3 Cigarette Boxes  
2 Pipe Racks  
6 Bedside Table electric light stand  
2 sets Bookends  
6 pin Trays  
2 pairs Candle sticks  
4 Candle sticks  
2 Lampholders  
2 Crib boards  
2 Reading Lamps  
2 Fireside screens

37  
15 *Centenary medals in Bronze.*

52 prizes.

LIST OF FARM STATIONS TO WHICH VISITORS ARE LOCATED

7a).

FOR REFERENCE.

+ = = = =

Fox Bay East  
Fox Bay West  
Port Stephens  
Weddell, Beaver & New Island  
Lunnon Head & Spring Point  
Chartres  
Key Cove, West Point and Carcass Is.  
Bill Cove & Saunders Is.  
Cobble Island  
Port San Carlos  
San Carlos  
Port Howard  
Teal Inlet  
Douglas Station  
Salvador & Rincon Grande  
Port Louis & Johnsons Harbour  
Pittroy  
Parwin - (2)  
North Arm & Speedwell Is (2)



11

Excerpt from letter received from Messrs LacLean  
& Stapledon, dated 25th June, 1943. Original  
filed in M.P. No. 125/42.

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Sir,

.....

PRINTING PAPER. As requested we are forwarding per Pitt one box  
containing the 6000 sheets printing paper and hope same is what you  
require.

.....

513

Next week-end, too, we celebrate a marine occasion. On the 19th July, 1843, the famous ship the "Great Britain" was launched by the Prince Consort at Bristol. She is now, as you know, pensioned off in Sparrow Cove in Port William, and we are going to celebrate her centenary. It would have been fitting for part of the festivities to have taken place at Sparrow Cove in the presence of the old ship herself, but unfortunately this, for various reasons including the weather, will not be possible. The arrangements for the week-end are in the hands of a Committee under the Chairmanship of Captain Roberts, and this is what is going to happen. On Saturday evening there is to be a special dance in the Town Hall organised by the Navy, and on Sunday evening there will be the opening night of the first play to be produced by the Falkland Islands Amateur Dramatic Society. It is a thriller called "Someone at the Door" and I have advance information that it is guaranteed to reduce any audience to hysterics of laughter and fright. Both the dance and the play are in aid of war charities - the Red Cross and King George's Fund for Sailors - but they are not the only means which have been devised for raising money for these charities. More than fifty curios and useful household articles have been made from timber taken off the Great/

12A

Great Britain. These have mostly been made by local carpenters as their contribution to the centenary. <sup>Some</sup> They will be raffled; <sup>others will be</sup> sold or auctioned at the dance. There are also a number of medals to be had. There are copies of the original medal which was struck a hundred years ago to mark the launching of what was then the largest ship in the world. Some of these medals are being distributed for raffling on the farms. And then there is the illustrated booklet called "The Great Britain 1843 to 1943". This little history of the ship has been specially written and printed <sup>at the same time</sup> for the occasion. It is being sold for sixpence and should make an interesting souvenir. Copies of this will also be distributed for sale on the farms. One way and another we look forward to an entertaining and profitable week-end. What a pity it is that you people in the Camps will only be able to play such a small part in it, but at least you will have yet another opportunity of adding to your already generous contributions to the Red Cross and King George V's Fund for Sailors.

I would like to end my broadcast this morning by thanking Port Howard, Johnson's Harbour and New Island for their recent contributions to the Red Cross. Port Howard sent in a magnificent £274, Johnson's Harbour £40 and two families on New Island £10. In Town here £165 has been received from a unit of the garrison which has been staging an excellent concert in the Town Hall all this week. Keep on with the good work and listen in again this time next Sunday for more local news. Until then good-bye everybody.

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BROADCAST BY MRS. HAMILTON.  
6 p.m. Thursday, 15th July, 1943.

This week-end, as you know, we are going to celebrate the centenary of the "Great Britain". She was launched at Bristol by the Prince Consort on the 19th July, 1843, and now she lies, pensioned off, in Sparrow Cove. It would have been fitting for part of the festivities to have taken place at Sparrow Cove in the presence of the old ship herself but this will not be possible because there will be no suitable vessels available at the time, and in any case, the weather is unlikely to be good enough. The arrangements for the week-end are in the hands of a Committee under the Chairmanship of Captain Roberts and here is an outline of the programme.

First of all comes a Special Broadcast from London by the B.B.C. This will begin at half-past seven on Saturday evening and last till eight o'clock. The programme will include a talk on the "Great Britain" by Captain J. W. Harries, R.N.R., who will be speaking on behalf of the Master of the Honourable Company of Master Mariners. Be sure to list, in to this programme.

From eight to midnight on Saturday is the dance in the Town Hall. Over fifty curios and useful household articles have been made from timber taken off the "Great Britain". They have been made by 16 carpenters as a voluntary contribution. Some will be raffled, some will be sold at the dance and still others will be auctioned there. Included in the auction will also be some bronze medals, which make very interesting souvenirs. These are copies of the original medals which were struck in 1843 to celebrate the launching of then the largest ship in the world. You can read all about the "Great Britain" in an illustrated booklet which has been specially prepared for the occasion. Copies of this booklet will be on sale at the price sixpence, and also at every performance of "Someone" if the supply lasts out. The opening night of "Someone" is the first production of the Falkland Islands Amateur Dramatic Club and will be Sunday, at 8.30 p.m. and there are to be further performances on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday.

And now about the raffle. There are no less than 100 - curios and other things made of timber from the "Great Britain".



and bronze medals. Tickets are on sale now at the stores and cost a shilling each. The Raffle is going to be drawn at the next Bellows Dance in August.

You will be able to see all the curios, medals and other things to-morrow. They will be on view at the West Store.

And now last but not least, don't forget that all this is in aid of war charities. The dance, the play, the auction, the sale of curios and the raffle are all in aid of the Red Cross and King George V. Fund for Sailors. We hope that everyone will enjoy themselves and spend a lot of money in a very good cause. GOOD-NIGHT.

DECODE.

TELEGRAM.

From BROADCASTS. LONDON.

To POSTCHEN. PORT STANLEY.

Despatched : 9th July 19 43. Time : 19.28.

Received : 12th July 19 43. Time : .....

Special programme for Falkland North American service July 17th 2350,  
0000 G M T includes recorded sea shanties and talk by Captain J.W. Harries  
R.N.R. speaking for Master of Honourable Company Master Mariners stop  
We meanwhile investigate regular programme please advise whether G R Q  
18025 kc or 18.64 metres satisfactorily receivable 1445, 1515 G.M.T.

Broadcasts.

11.0 P.M.  
after 5.0 - 11.0

10.15 P.M.  
11.15 P.M.

# GOVERNMENT TELEGRAPH SERVICE.

FALKLAND ISLANDS AND DEPENDENCIES.

SENT.

15.

Number	Office of Origin	Words	Handed in at	Date
To	BROADCASTS LONDON.			13. 7. 43.



*Red 144*

YOUR TELEGRAM 9TH JULY SPECIAL PROGRAMME JULY 17TH WILL BE MUCH APPRECIATED STOP FREQUENCY MENTIONED IS SATISFACTORILY RECEIVABLE R 3 TO 4 AT TIMES STATED STOP IF YOU ARE CONSIDERING SPECIAL REGULAR PROGRAMME DIRECTED FALKLAND ISLANDS IT SHOULD BE SCHEDULED BETWEEN 2100 AND 0300 GMT BEST FREQUENCIES 25 AND 31 METRE BANDS.

COLONIAL SECRETARY.

Time

DECODE.

TELEGRAM.

From HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR.

To SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES. M.P. 55/43.

Despatched : 14th July 19 43. Time : .....

Received : ... .. 19 ... Time : .....

No. 148. Grateful if following could be conveyed to Lord Mayor of Bristol begins :-

Next week end we are celebrating in Port Stanley centenary of Great Britain launched at Bristol 19th July 1843, and still existing as hulk here. Naval personnel and Imperial Troops will join Falkland Islanders in festivities in aid of Red Cross and King George V. Fund for Sailors. Will you accept silver replica of medallion struck on occasion of launching also illustrated brochure giving history of the Great Britain which has been specially written for the centenary. Mindful of the ordeal through which you have passed the people of the Falkland Islands and I on this memorable occasion send you and the citizens of Bristol our most cordial greetings and best wishes for the future. Governor of the Falkland Islands. Ends.

GOVERNOR.

G.T.C.

DECODE.

TELEGRAM.

M.P. 55/43.

From SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES.

To HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR.

Despatched : 16th July 19 43. Time : 18.48.

Received : 17th July 19 43. Time : .....

*Recd 16*  
No. 70. With reference to your telegram No. 148. Following message has been received from Lord Mayor of Bristol. Begins.

Delighted to receive your message and to accept on behalf of Bristol a replica of medallion and illustrated brochure of Bristol's Great Britain, a pioneer steamship whose sailing opened up period of expanding travel and commerce. Today its lineal successors are landing Canadian, American and British soldiers on beaches of Sicily. Bristol has many historical connections with your Islands and happy recollections of two great personalities Sir James O'Grady and Bishop Norman De Jersey so closely associated both with your Island and our City. You are much in our thoughts and we send warm thanks and greetings. Ends.

Your message and Lord Mayor's reply are being issued to United Kingdom Press here for publication at 00.3 hours double British Summer Time Sunday July 18th.

Secretary of State.

G.T.C.

Colonial Secretary's Office,  
Stanley, Falkland Islands,  
19th July, 1943.

His Excellency the Governor directs the publication, for public information, of the following telegrams exchanged between His Excellency and the Lord Mayor of Bristol on the occasion of the Centenary of the "Great Britain", ~~1843-1943~~

From His Excellency the Governor to the  
Lord Mayor of Bristol.

Next week end we are celebrating in Port Stanley Centenary of "Great Britain" launched at Bristol 19th July, 1843, and still existing as hulk here. Naval personnel and Imperial Troops will join Falkland Islanders in festivities in aid of Red Cross and King George V. Fund for Sailors. Will you accept silver replica of medallion struck on occasion of launching also illustrated brochure giving history of the Great Britain which has been specially written for the Centenary. Mindful of the ordeal through which you have passed the people of the Falkland Islands and I on this memorable occasion send you and the citizens of Bristol our most cordial greetings and best wishes for the future.

From the Lord Mayor of Bristol to His Excellency  
the Governor.

Delighted to receive your message and to accept on behalf of Bristol a replica of medallion and illustrated brochure of Bristol's "Great Britain", a pioneer steamship whose sailing opened up period of expanding travel and commerce. Today its lineal successors are landing Canadian, American and British soldiers on beaches of Sicily. Bristol has many historical connections with your Islands and happy recollections of two great personalities Sir James O'Grady and Bishop Norman De Jersey so closely associated both with your Island and our City. You are much in our thoughts and we send warm thanks and greetings.

By Command,

*K. Bradley*

Colonial Secretary.

*also Broadcast 19/7/43.*

*Penguin  
Radio Radio*



DECODE.

TELEGRAM.

*From* His Excellency the Governor,

*To* The Secretary of State for the Colonies.

---

*Despatched:* 19th July, 1943. *Time:* ....

*Received:* ... .. 19 ... *Time:* ...

No. 150.

Following for British Broadcasting Corporation begins: Special programme for "Great Britain" centenary excellent and much enjoyed. Please thank Captain Harries on behalf myself and people of the Colony for his very interesting talk. Governor, Falkland Islands ends.

GOVERNOR.

G.T.C.

22nd July, 1943.

My Lord Mayor,

I write to acknowledge the receipt of your telegram of the 16th July regarding our "Great Britain" Centenary celebrations and to tell you how very much your message has been appreciated by the people of this Colony.

I am sending you by this surface mail the replica of the medallion in silver and two copies of the illustrated brochure.

You will be glad to hear that the festivities were a great success and we hope to be able to send donations of several hundreds of pounds each to the Red Cross and King George V. Fund for Sailors.

I am,

my Lord Mayor,

Your obedient servant,

(Sgd.) A. W. CARDINALL

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

THE LORD MAYOR OF BRISTOL,  
BRISTOL.

*Red 17*

Forwarded per  
Registered mail  
9/8/43.

*cc.*

Sabine, P.R.O. Col Office (6) <sup>12.</sup> <sub>11</sub>  
 Steward, Lumber Pens  
 L.M. of Bristol x  
 Green Colours, Green Colours x  
 S. 48. x

---

740.	
Roberts	1500. ✓
D. Scty.	1200.
H.F.	6.
	12.
Roberts	6.
Self	
	12.
Sabine	1
	1
Steward.	1
L.M. of Bristol	1.
Self.	

---

2739

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Extract from letter addressed to H.M. Consul in Montevideo  
by the Colonial Secretary, dated the 9th August, 1943.

... ..

175 copies  
sent 10/4/43.

I am sending you up by this boat a number of copies of a brochure I wrote for our "Great Britain" Centenary in aid of the Red Cross and King George V. Fund for Sailors. You may care to sell them to members of the British Community and send the proceeds to war charities. We sold them here at 6d, but you can make what charge you like. We do not want any account or anything. We hope the final figures for our Centenary will not be far short of £1,000.

Kind regards,

Yours sincerely,

N. O. W. Steward, Esq.,  
British Consulate,  
Montevideo,  
URUGUAY.

55/43.

6281/9/43.

Palace Chambers,  
=====

Bridge Street, S.W.1.

15 September, 1943.

My dear Bradley

Thank you very much for sending along six copies of the excellent brochure on "Great Britain". I shall certainly see a copy is sent to the Crown Colonist, and it is possible we may find other uses for it as well. This is certainly a useful piece of publicity from your side of the globe and we were particularly glad to receive your telegram of appreciation on the special B.B.C. programme. The fact that you are hoping to be able to send about £1,000 in all as a result of the weekend, speaks for itself, and I think you are to be congratulated.

In due course I will let you  
know

KENNETH BRADLEY, ESQ.

know of any use to which we are  
able to put the brochure, copies  
of which I note you have sent to  
the Lord Mayor of Bristol.

Yours sincerely

Lord Salisbury

---



(24)

*The Council House, Bristol,*

23rd September, 1943.

Your Excellency,

I have received your letter of the 22nd of July.

I am very pleased to know that the message I sent to the "Great Britain" Centenary celebrations arrived and was acceptable, and will at once let you know when the replica of the medallion and the illustrated brochure arrive.

The result of your festivities was certainly very fine. May I congratulate you and all concerned on the splendid amounts raised for the Red Cross Fund and King George V. Fund for Sailors?

Believe me, Your Excellency,

Yours sincerely,

*HA Paul*

Lord Mayor.

His Excellency A.W. Cardinall, C.M.G.,  
Government House,  
FALKLAND ISLANDS.

16th November, 1943.

Dear Roberts,

*Red 24.*

I enclose a copy of a letter which has come from the Lord Mayor of Bristol. I think it will interest you. We told him we hoped to raise \$1000. I hope this figure can be reached before the Appeal is finally closed. Can you tell me when this is likely to be ? I hardly think the enclosed can be published until then.

Yours sincerely,

K. G. BRADLEY

The Honourable

D. W. Roberts, M.L.C., J.P.,  
STANLEY.



Stanley,

Falkland Islands.

19th November, 1943.

*26 pl 1500*  
*(26)*

Dear Bradley,

*Red 25.*

Many thanks for your letter of 16th inst. enclosing a copy of a letter to His Excellency from the Lord Mayor of Bristol. The sum to date amounts to £802 with the proceeds of 2 medals still to come in. There are 6 fruit bowls to be auctioned. I have 2 silver medals and 2 bronze medals also which could be auctioned. The bowls were to have been auctioned at the Poppy Dance on the 11th inst. but someone blundered and failed to deliver them at the Town Hall.

I fear there might be some difficulty to raise sufficient enthusiasm to bring the sum to £1,000 unless a dance or concert could be arranged with the express object of attaining that sum and advertised as such.

Have you any ideas?.

Yours sincerely,

*Spoke to W.R. The things  
will be auctioned at  
the next opportunity &  
h.f.a.*



55/113

THE COUNCIL HOUSE  
BRISTOL

15th November, 1943.

B.N. on  
File (21)

Your Excellency,

I have received with much pleasure the silver replica of the Medallion struck to commemorate the centenary of the "great Britain" and the illustrated brochure enclosed.

My predecessor in office, who sent the message of congratulation, has I think already thanked you for the kind gift, but I would like to add my thanks to his.

Bristol regards with much pleasure her various associations with the Falkland Islands and we are delighted to know that your interest in the Islands is reciprocated. The Medallion and brochure will be kept among our treasures and I thank you most sincerely for the gift.

Believe me,

Yours sincerely,

*J. C. Williams*

Lord Mayor.

His Excellency A.W. Cardinall, C.M.G.,  
Government House,  
FALKLAND ISLANDS.

17th January, 1944.

Dear Roberts,

I enclose a copy of a letter which  
which His Excellency has received from the  
Lord Mayor of Bristol. I am anxious to  
publish both these letters and the previous  
letter of the 23rd of September but do not  
wish to do so until you can let me have  
your final figure of collection. I hope  
you can arrange this fairly soon in order  
that the letters when published may not be  
too out of date.

Yours sincerely,

K. G. BRADLEY

The Honourable

D. W. Roberts, M.L.C., J.P.,  
STANLEY.

MEMORANDUM.

29a

25th January 1944.

om

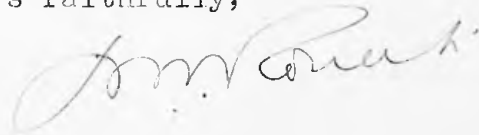
THE FALKLAND ISLANDS COMPANY, LTD.,  
STANLEY.

To Hon K.G. Bradley,  
Stanley.

Dear Bradley,

Enclosed herewith copy of account of the proceeds and expenses of the Great Britain Centenary Celebrations. The total amount collected was £827.12. 2. Cheques for this amount have been sent to His Excellency the Governor.

Yours faithfully,





Colonial General.

\* £25 of this amount is from the Board of Directors personally and not from the Falkland Islands Co. Ltd. The Directors bought a silver medal for £25 and donated this to the museum.

(30)

# The Falkland Islands Company, Limited.

(INCORPORATED BY ROYAL CHARTER 1851)

REGISTERED 1902.

AGENTS FOR LLOYDS

TELEGRAMS "FLEETWING PORTSTANLEY" VIA RADIO.

*Stanley.*

25th January, 1944.

Dear Sir Allan,

I enclose herewith two cheques,  
one for £413. 16. 1., the other for £412. 10. 1.,  
the former for King George V Fund for Sailors and  
the latter for Red Cross Special Appeal.

The difference between the respective amounts  
is due to the proceeds of Hill Cove Raffle for a  
medal £1. 6. -. being sent direct to the local Red  
Cross. This makes a total of £827. 12. 2.

Yours sincerely,

*Mr. Quirk*

2nd February, 1944.

Dear

I am sorry there has been a few days' delay in answering your letter of the 25th January and thanking you for the two cheques for King George V. Fund for Sailors and the Red Cross.

I think the total of £827. 12s. 2d. contributed in connection with the "Great Britain" centenary is a splendid effort and reflects the greater credit on yourself and the members of your Committee. I am most grateful for all you have done.

Yours sincerely,

(Sgd.) A. W. CARDINALL

The Honourable  
D. W. Roberts, J.P.,  
STANLEIGH.

5th February 1944

Dear Mrs Hamilton,

I have just had the final figures of £827. 12s. 2d. raised by the Great Britain Centenary Committee and write to thank you on behalf of His Excellency for the help you gave towards raising the Splendid contribution for King George V. Fund for Sailors and the Red Cross.

Yours sincerely,

K. G BRADLEY

Commander R. B. Martin, D.M.  
STANLEY.

Mrs J.E.Hamilton,

STANLEY.

5th February, 1944

Dear Roberts,

Thank you for your letter of the 25th  
Janaury. The result of your efforts <sup>is</sup> ~~are~~ certainly  
most satisfactory and I will see that the figures  
are given proper publicity. His Excellency has  
written to you and I will send a line to the members  
of your committee.

Yours sincerely.

K. G. BRADLEY

The Honourable  
D. M. Roberts, J.P.  
STANLEY.

The Great Britain.

In our own time the birth of a great ship never fails to touch responsive chords in the popular imagination. Every stage from the first mooted of its design, the laying of the keel, its launch and eventual despatch upon its maiden voyage are recorded in great detail, attended by pomp and ceremony, and discussed with a great show of technical discernment, as matters of national importance - as of course, they are. As befits the traditions of a seafaring race incidents in the subsequent careers of great ships "from the cradle to the grave" never fail, in normal times, to secure prominence in the news of the day. For they carry around the world not only passengers and freights but also the prestige and pride of the nation. So it was a century ago when the Great Britain, then the largest ship in the world and considered a marvel of engineering, was launched on July 19th, 1843, at Bristol. This famous ship still survives in the harbour of Port Stanley in the Falkland Islands and we have received from "K. B." of that outpost of the Empire a short history and eulogy on the occasion of her centenary, from which the following information has been extracted.

A century ago there were very few ships of over a thousand tons, and the Great Britain, of nearly three thousand five hundred tons, was a "mammoth" vessel, "gigantic", a "Titan among the minnows". Also she was one of the first vessels to be made of iron, and one of the first to be driven by a propeller. In fact she had been originally designed in 1838 by the famous engineer Brunel as a paddle-steamer for the Atlantic Service of the Great Western Steamship Company, and had actually been redesigned during construction for screw propulsion. This decision was to have far-reaching results, for the Admiralty were subsequently so impressed by the ship's performance that they took the daring step of experimenting with the propeller in naval construction, a contribution to British sea-power of which the old ship is still particularly proud. Alteration to the dock in which she was completed caused delays and it was not until early in 1845 that she put to sea and sailed round the south coast to London. Here she was inspected by the young Queen Victoria, who was very impressed with the sixty-four state-rooms, boudoirs, the music-room and twelve hundred yards of scarlet and purple carpet.

The Great Britain sailed from Liverpool on her maiden voyage to New York on July 26th, 1845, and is believed to have made the passage in fifteen days, being the first iron-built screw-driven ship to cross the Atlantic. The Americans were impressed by her size, but there was no rush to travel in her. Her Atlantic career was, in fact, not very long nor successful. On the night of the 22nd September, 1846, the Great Britain, betrayed by the presence of a new-un-notified light on the coast and an unusual "set" in a south west gale, ran ashore in Dundrum Bay on the north east coast of Ireland. Luckily she grounded safely between two protecting ridges of rock and there was no loss of life or cargo.

Brunel went to Ireland and rescued his precious offspring. She was hardly damaged at all, and he contrived to protect her throughout the winter by an ingenious "poultice" of massive flagstones heavily weighted and lashed about the stern. In the following year she was successfully towed off, and taken to the Mersey. All this, however, had cost the owners, the Great Western Company, £108,000 and they wanted to be rid of her. She failed to fetch the basic price at auction and was eventually, in 1850, sold to Messrs. Gibbs, Bright & Co., for the relatively paltry sum of £18,000, and refitted for the Australian emigrant trade.

She sailed for Melbourne in 1852 with six hundred and thirty passengers and £1,000,000 in gold and silver specie, the first of thirty two such voyages over a period of twenty-five years, only

/interrupted



interrupted by troopship service during the Crimean War and the Indian Mutiny. Many times the Great Britain put into Stanley for coal, which used to be sent out for her in specially chartered sailing ships from Wales. She was the most popular and celebrated ship on the Australian run. In 1875 the old ship was laid up for sale. She was bought in 1881, resold to Messrs. A. Biggs, Sons & Co., in 1882, and in November of that year appeared in the Mersey indignant but still game - as a sailing ship with her iron hull sheathed in wood! Her end, however, was drawing near. She made two voyages to San Francisco, dogged throughout by minor misfortunes then on February 6th, 1886, she sailed for the last time. She was bound from Penarth to Panama with coal but she never arrived there. She ran into a gale off the Horn, was partially dismasted and sustained considerable damage. She ran for Stanley, and on her arrival there on May 25th was surveyed, condemned and sold for a hulk.

Her sailing days were over, but not her career. For another forth-seven years until 1933, she was used by the Falkland Islands Company for storing wool and coal. Then in 1933, she had to be regretfully abandoned. For three more years she lay at anchor at her old moorings awaiting her fate. Early in 1936 plans were made by Sir Henniker Heaton, who was Governor at the time, to launch a fund for her restoration and preservation. A preliminary survey indicated that the cost of preservation alone would probably exceed £10,000, and the project had to be abandoned. She was then condemned to be towed out to sea and sunk, but was reprieved, and in 1937 she was taken to honourable retirement in Sparrow Cove.

The Great Britain, as she is now, bears very little resemblance to the smoke bleaching behemoth which, in the pride of youth, so amazed the barge-masters of the Thames in 1845. In those days she had a black iron hull, one funnel and six masts, one square and five schooner-rigged. Her original engine, of a thousand horsepower, was connected to the propeller-shaft by a stupendous chain. After being wrecked she was refitted for the Australian trade with four masts, two fore-and-aft and two square-rigged, and was given two funnels, placed side by side. Finally, three years later, she became a three-masted full-rigged ship, again with only one funnel. This was the rig under which she earned fame and popularity for over twenty years. She was described as a "very majestic ship with an appearance resembling a steam frigate". In 1882, her engines were removed, but her rig was not materially altered. At the same time, as we have already mentioned, her iron hull was sheathed in wood, and it is in this guise that the hulk of to-day must be reconstructed in the imagination. All that really remains to the outside view of the original Great Britain is, in fact, her dimensions. She is 322 feet long, 51 feet in the beam and 32.5 feet deep, with a draught of 16 feet.

The Great Britain was not only a famous vessel in her own right and has survived to have the longest life of any iron ship ever built, but she came of a celebrated line; she was a successor of the Great Western and the inspiration of that ill-fated giant the Great Eastern.

Now she rests, a great lady, very old and very frail, but still beautiful, in the land locked peace of Sparrow Cove. On a fine day, when the sea and sky are blue, her old timbers gratefully absorb the warmth and glow grey and amber in the sun against the honey coloured grass, and she rouses herself from sleep to tell tales of the Antipodes and the windy Horn to respectful deputations from the penguins rookery on the hill above the cove.

55143.  
37  
Mr. G.M. Clifford Esq  
Governor  
The Falkland Islands  
Stanley

7 January 1950

Your excellency:

I have a query concerning the Falklands of which I should like to ask your help of that of a member of your staff who may know. I am writing a book on the great British engineer Isambard Kingdom Brunel, who built at Bristol in 1841, the remarkable steamship Great Britain, which was the first iron ship, and the first transoceanic vessel to be powered by a screw instead of paddles.

My authorities state the subsequent history of the vessel, included a stranding and successful refloating in 1846 on Dundrum Bay in the Irish Sea, service in the Australian run for many years, and the conversion to a sailing ship after 35 years, ended in 1886 with the Great Britain being towed into Port Stanley after damage in a great storm off Cape Horn. She was then employed as a coaling hulk until October 1937, presumable in Stanley. That month the Great Britain was towed off and beached at Sparrow Cove, Port William.

I would very much like to know if the hulk is still in existence, and, if so, in what condition? You will appreciate what marvelous history this is, if the Great Britain's revolutionary iron hull is still in existence, after 109 years. If I might lean heavily on your kindness, I would like to have as much detail as your sources can furnish, about the ship, her local history and legend, and how she stands today. If the remains of the Great Britain are still to be seen, I would be enormously grateful for a photograph of her today.

While building the Great Britain Brunel was widely criticized by superstitious people who said an iron ship would not float: indeed the Lords of the Admiralty refused to approve iron vessels for another decade. It would be a splendid irony if the hull still remains, after generations of ships following her have gone to the shipbreakers.

I am, With gratitude for your aid in <sup>my</sup> question,

Sincerely,

James Dugan  
James Dugan

Replied at 38 Please draft reply senders  
copy of Bradley's batchel.

me

A.S.  
Accordingly H.

22/2

55/43

2nd March,

50.

37  
Sir,

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 7th of January, 1950, addressed to His Excellency the Governor regarding the "Great Britain", and to inform you that the hulk still remains beached at Sparrow Cove in Port William.

2. It is regretted that no information is available regarding the present condition of the hulk, but I am to enclose a copy of a booklet on the vessel published in 1943 which it is felt will be of interest to you.

I am,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

MICHAEL R. RAYMER.

Mr. James Dugan,  
305 East 94,  
New York. 28. New York,  
SA2 - 2686.

Colonial Secretary.

MAMA.

38

A reply to this letter should be addressed to—

THE DIRECTOR,

NATIONAL MARITIME MUSEUM,  
GREENWICH, S.E.10,

and the following number quoted:



NATIONAL MARITIME MUSEUM,  
GREENWICH, S.E.10.

8th February, 1950.

Dear Sir,

38a I am writing on behalf of the Trustees of the National Maritime Museum, with reference to the hull of the Great Britain, which has been a hulk in the Falkland Islands for the past 63 years. I am venturing to enclose a cutting from a recent number of "Sea Breezes;" reproducing a photograph by Major G.L. Garratt, which shows her as she appeared in 1943.

He It would seem from this photograph, that the hulk still exhibits the original figurehead; and as we are anxious, in this Museum, to strengthen the Merchant Navy side of our activities, and to add to the figureheads we already have, which are of outstanding naval importance, some of which are equally historic in the development of the Mercantile Marine, I wonder whether there is any possibility of this figurehead of the Great Britain being acquired for the National Maritime Museum here?

If the figurehead still exists, and it were possible for it to be presented from the Falkland Islands, I am sure that it would be a most welcome addition here, and one which we should exhibit with pride, and with public acknowledgment of the generous source from which it came.

If, on the other hand, the figurehead were not available, we would welcome any other trophy, as for example, the wheel, the binnacle, or some other relic of this famous ship, which we could preserve for the Nation among our maritime treasures here.

386 In order that you may have some idea of the scope and meaning of this Museum, I am venturing to enclose a copy of our Concise Guide for your information.

I apologise for troubling you with this matter, but I /know

Miles Clifford, Esq., C.M.G., O.B.E., E.D.,  
Governor and Commander-in-Chief,  
Government House,  
Stanley, Falkland Islands.

Reply at 46

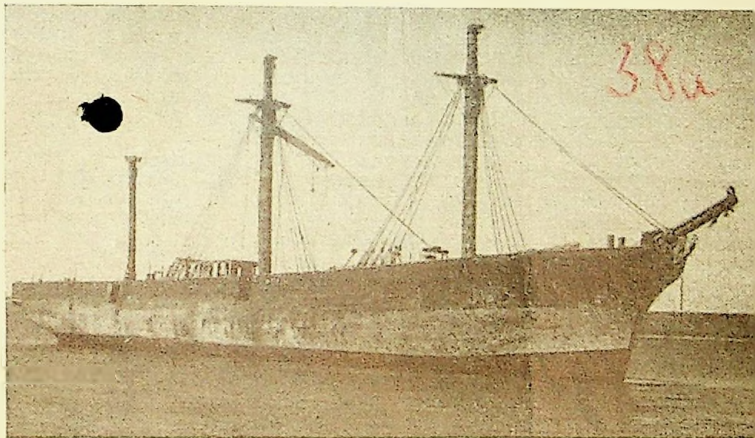
20 MAR 1950  
H. H. early

know that my Trustees will very greatly appreciate any help  
that you are able to give us.

Yours faithfully,

*Frank G. Carr*

DIRECTOR.



*Photo by Major G. L. Garri*

Described by her original owners as "a magnificent ship fitted up with every possible convenience", the "Great Britain" has been a hulk in the Falkland Islands for the past 63 years. This illustration shows her as she appeared in 1913

22nd March,

50.

Sir,

38 I am directed to forward the attached copy of a letter just received from the Director of the National Maritime Museum at Greenwich, and to enquire whether your Company would feel disposed to present the figurehead or any other suitable trophy from the "Great Britain" to the Museum. If you so desired, transport could be arranged by the "John Biscoe".

I am,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

(Sgd) Michael R. Raymer

COLONIAL SECRETARY.

Reply at 4/2

Manager,  
Falkland Islands Company, Limited,  
STANLEY.

42

# The Falkland Islands Company, Limited.

(INCORPORATED BY ROYAL CHARTER 1851)

REGISTERED 1902.

AGENTS FOR LLOYDS.

TELEGRAMS "FLEETWING PORTSTANLEY" VIA RADIO.

*Stanley*

24th April 1950.

The Honourable The Colonial Secretary,  
STANLEY.

Sir,

Hulk -"Great Britain".

39. We have to acknowledge receipt of your letter No.55/43 dated 22nd March last, together with copy of letter from the National Maritime Museum.

We have communicated with our Head Office on the matter and have asked them to notify us by telegram of any trophy of interest which the Company might be prepared to present to the Museum.

It is noted that transport could be arranged by the "John Biscoe".

I am, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

*A. B. Boulton*

MANAGER.

25 APR 1950

H



45"

X

# The Falkland Islands Company, Limited.

(INCORPORATED BY ROYAL CHARTER 1851)

REGISTERED 1902.

AGENTS FOR LLOYDS.

TELEGRAMS "FLEETWING PORTSTANLEY" VIA RADIO.

*Stanley*

26th June

19 50.

The Honourable the Colonial Secretary,  
STANLEY.

Sir,

I have to inform you that a relic from the "Great Britain" was shipped to the United Kingdom per m.v. "John Biscoe" on the 15th inst. consigned to the National Maritime Museum, Greenwich.

Accompanied by Commander Kirkwood I had visited the "Great Britain" some days prior to the sailing of the "John Biscoe", and brought ashore a section of oak plank or rail supported by two iron stanchions. We agreed that it was the only readily detachable portion, and regret that it is not more prepossessing, however it is genuinely part of the old ship.

The figure-head to which the Director of the Museum refers is more a carved scroll than figure-head. It appears to be in moderately good repair but it would require scaffolding and expert workmanship to remove it entire. The motto "Honi soit qui mal y pense" is clearly visible from below. Should the Board of Directors ever approve the expense of removing this interesting relic it may well be their wish to donate it to the Stanley Museum, therefore the hopes of the Greenwich Museum should not be roused unduly.

We presume you will in the meantime advise Greenwich by air mail of the estimated time of arrival at Southampton of the "John Biscoe".

I am, Sir,  
Your obedient servant,

*A.B. Barton*

MANAGER.

*Office*

*Hs early H*

27 JUN 1950

*Reply at 47*

30th June, 50.

Sir,

38

I am directed by His Excellency the Governor to refer to your letter of the 8th of February, 1950, regarding the "Great Britain" and to inform you that the request contained in your letter was forwarded to the Falkland Islands Company, Limited, who are the present owners of the hulk. The Company had to communicate with its head office in England, and this has occasioned some delay. However they now report that the figure head of the "Great Britain" is more in the nature of a carved scroll than an actual figure head. It appears to be in moderately good repair, but would require scaffolding and expert workmanship to remove it entire. The local manager of the Company states that "should the Board of Directors (of his Company) ever approve the expense of removing this interesting relic it may well be their wish to donate it to the Stanley Museum" (that is, the local museum here).

2. However, the Company have caused to be removed from the "Great Britain" a section of oak plank or rail supported by two iron stanchions, and have consigned them to your Museum on board the s.v. "John Biscoe", which is expected to arrive in Southampton about the 17th of July. The Company notes that this appeared to be the only readily detachable portion of the vessel, they regret that it is not more prepossessing, but remark that it is genuinely part of the old ship.

3. I should be grateful if you would acknowledge receipt direct to the Manager, the Falkland Islands Company, Limited, Stanley, Falkland Islands.

I am,  
Sir,  
Your obedient servant,

(Sgd) Michael R. Rayner

COLONIAL SECRETARY.

The Director,  
National Maritime Museum,  
Greenwich, S.E. 10.

55/43

47

30th June,

50.

Sir,

45

I am directed to acknowledge receipt of your letter of the 26th June, 1950, regarding the "Great Britain" and to thank you for the action which has been taken. I have advised the Director of the National Maritime Museum of the despatch of the relic and informed him of the estimated arrival date of the "John Biscoe" in England.

I am,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

(Sgd) MICHAEL R. RAYMER,  
Colonial Secretary.

Manager,  
Falkland Islands Company Limited,  
MA. STANLEY.

● DECODE.No. 29.TELEGRAM RECEIVED.*From* SECRETARY OF STATE *to* GOVERNOR.*Despatched* : 13. 7. 50    *Time* : 10.35    *Received* : 14. 7. 50 *Time* : 09.30.

No. 96.    Bradley would like to republish privately as article edited version of booklet on Great Britain which he wrote for Centenary in 1943 and would be most grateful for your permission to do so.

Reply at 48

SECRETARY OF STATE.

G.T.C.

LJH.

48  
DECODE.

TELEGRAM SENT.

From GOVERNOR to SECRETARY OF STATE

Despatched: 14. 7. 50 Time: 11.45 Received: .....Time: .....

47  
No. 141. Your telegram No. 96. No objection.

GOVERNOR.

P/L.  
LJH.

619  
116 OCT 1952  
12 Hacienda Dr.  
Arcadia, Calif.  
Sept. 10, 1952

The Editor  
The Leading Newspaper  
Stanley, Falkland Islands

Dear Sir:

I am doing research for a book dealing with a famous old British Iron Steamship, the "Great Britain," and am writing this letter in your care, trusting that should you not know the information personally, you might forward the letter to some government agency which would.

In various English books I find complete agreement that this old ship met heavy weather off the Horn, and put into Stanley for repairs, where she was condemned in 1886, and used as a coal and wool storage hulk. However, books published as early as 1910 state that she had by that time been towed to Barrow and broken up; and two books, one of which was published as late as 1928, state that the "Great Britain" was still in the Falkland Islands at that date!

Since obviously one of these statements is erroneous, I am anxious to get the straight of it. If it be true that she was towed to Barrow and broken up prior to 1910, could the exact year be learned? If she is still in the Falklands, that would be exciting news indeed, but if not, and the earlier story prove incorrect, can you find out what did finally happen to this grand old ship, first launched as a six-masted screw steamship in 1843.

If my book is published, as I trust it soon will be, I shall certainly send you a copy, and suggest it be placed in the city public library.

Thank you for any trouble you may be put to in my behalf.

Sincerely

*Neil Campbell*  
Neil Campbell

Reply at 132

31st October,

52.

Sir,

49.

I am directed to refer to your letter of the 10th of September, 1952, addressed to the Editor of the Leading Newspaper and to inform you that the hulk of the "Great Britain" is permanently beached at Sparrow Cove in Port William, near Stanley Harbour.

2. Information gleaned from various sources resulted in the publication of a small booklet entitled "The 'Great Britain', 1843-1943, and I enclose a copy for your information.

I am,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

(Sgd) J.E. Briscoe

Acting Colonial Secretary.

Mr. N. Campbell,  
12 Hacienda Dr.  
Arcadia,  
California,  
U.S.A.


Filing Clerk

Re. att. a copy  
of the 1943 "G. B."  
brochure

  
22/6

A.C.S.

1 copy of the 1843-1943 "G.B."  
brochure attached.

  
24/6/5-P.



TELEPHONE:  
BRISTOL 36387

5 QUEENS MANSIONS,  
ARLINGTON VILLAS,  
BRISTOL, 8.

54

The Secretary 15/1/57  
To The Governor.  
Falkland Islands

Dear Sir

I venture to ask you  
Kind help Re the  
Old Steamship  
Great Britain

Since the week July 19<sup>th</sup>  
1943 when The Governor  
sent a message to our  
Lord Mayor here -  
during your celebration  
Reck. at 55.

TELEPHONE:  
BRISTOL 36387

5 QUEENS MANSIONS,  
ARLINGTON VILLAS,  
BRISTOL, 8.

Shā

2

of the Centre of the  
Ship. Then a Hulk in  
Port Stanley. I have  
been collecting Data  
& now have quite a <sup>lot</sup> of  
useful data but  
I was wondering if you  
would be so kind as  
to try & secure a  
better Photograph  
of the Gt. Britain  
in your Port then?

TELEPHONE:  
BRISTOL 36387

5 QUEENS MANSIONS,  
ARLINGTON VILLAS,  
BRISTOL, 8.

3

The only one I have  
of her at that date  
is a Newspaper  
Cutting (26/10/46 in  
Western Daily Press Bristol)  
in which she hardly  
shows up.

I would be very  
glad indeed of your  
help in this.

The Telegram the  
Governor sent over.

TELEPHONE:  
BRISTOL 36387

5 QUEENS MANSIONS,  
ARLINGTON VILLAS,  
BRISTOL, 8.

54c

4

Lord Mayor. approx  
19/7/43 Kuchly  
mentioned that he was  
sending him an  
Illustrated Brochure  
covering the history of  
the City of Britain"  
I asked our City Archivist  
for sight but after a  
long search she had  
to give up the search.

TELEPHONE:  
BRISTOL 36387

W.T. Lucas 54d

5 QUEENS MANSIONS,  
ARLINGTON VILLAS,  
BRISTOL, 8.

5


I was hoping a  
photograph of her  
would be there

Very sorry to trouble  
you with all this  
but I am almost the  
Oldest Free man here  
how & we had a <sup>Private</sup> Fleet for 200 years  
trading to West  
Africa for Palm oil etc

I am not giving details of the etc but I have  
the Ladies! Thanking you very Respectfully  
W.T. Lucas

Filing Clerk

R. att. a copy  
of the 1943 "G. B."  
brochure

  
22/6

A. C. S.

1 copy of the 1943-1943 "G. B."  
brochure attached.



24/6/5-P.

27th June,

57

Sir,

54

I am directed to refer to your letter of the 15th January, 1957, regarding particulars of the "Great Britain", and to forward herewith a copy of the brochure issued here at the time of her centenary.

I am,

Sir,  
Your obedient servant,

(Sgd.) J. Bound.

COLONIAL SECRETARY.

W. T. Lucas, Esq.,  
5 Queens Mansions,  
Arlington Villas,  
BRISTOL 8.

JB/MF

56

# BRISTOL AIRCRAFT LIMITED

FILTON HOUSE

BRISTOL, ENGLAND.

FROM THE  
MANAGING DIRECTOR

FILTON 3831

PGM/AVL/2385  
AIRMAIL

10th November, 1958

A.G. Denton-Thompson, Esq., M.C.,  
Colonial Secretary,  
Stanley,  
Falkland Island.

Dear Mr. Denton-Thompson,

Forgive me bothering you with a matter of historical research, but a lecture which I recently prepared on Bristol engineering led me to the task of tracing the history of the steamship "Great Britain" - the first screw steamer to cross the Atlantic, and a project of the great Isambard Kingdom Brunel - launched at Bristol on the 19th July 1843. The "Great Britain" was, in fact, a most historic ship with close association with Bristol.

I have a most interesting photograph of the hull of the "Great Britain" lying in the Falkland Islands - taken, I believe, in 1937 - where she had lain for many years. Since then I understand the hulk has been scuttled in "Sparrows Cove" and that it may still be visible to this day?

To complete the story of the "Great Britain", I shall be most grateful if you were able to let me have any precise information on this report, and in particular any photograph of the hulk as it lies at present in "Sparrows Cove", if it is, in fact, still extant?

Would it be possible to have photographs taken? I shall be most grateful for anything which could be achieved in this respect, and, of course, I would be willing to forward any reasonable expenses which may be incurred.

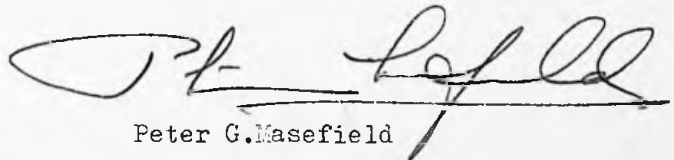
p.t.o.

*Reply at 57.*



I shall very much look forward to hearing from you,  
and to know whether the "Great Britain" story can be completed. I  
trust that you will not mind me troubling you on this point, but I  
felt you would be the best person to consult.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Peter G. Masfield', written over a horizontal line.

Peter G. Masfield

SS/43.

57.

7th January, 1959

Dear Mr. Masfield,

30 You must by now have come to the conclusion that either your letter of the 10th November had gone astray or had found a last resting place in my "too difficult" dip. The fact is that your letter arrived on the incoming mail on Christmas Eve and there is no outgoing mail from the Colony until the 21st January.

The "Great Britain" still lies in Sparrow Cove and is of course quite often visited. I am enclosing a small pamphlet about the ship that you may find of some interest, though you are no doubt already in possession of most of the facts relating to her history. I also enclose a recent photograph. Apart from normal wear and tear from the weather, the ship is in the same place and in the same condition today.

I very much hope that this gives you the information you require. If there is anything else that you would like to know please do not hesitate to write, bearing in mind, however, that because of our mail schedules it may be some time before a reply reaches you.

Yours sincerely,

A. G. Denton-Thompson.

P. C. Masfield, Esq.,  
Bristol Aircraft Limited,  
Filton House,  
BRISTOL

AGDT/MF

# BRISTOL AIRCRAFT LIMITED

58-

FILTON HOUSE

BRISTOL, ENGLAND.

FILTON 3831

FROM THE  
MANAGING DIRECTOR

PGM/MVL/503  
AIRMAIL

26th March, 1959

A.C.Denton-Thompson, Esq., M.C.  
Colonial Secretary,  
Stanley,  
Falkland Islands.

Dear Mr. Denton-Thompson,

Thank you so much for your letter of the 7th March  
and for sending to me the photograph and pamphlet of the  
"Great Britain" in Sparrow Cove.

I am so sorry to bother you with such a trivial  
matter but I am most grateful to you for your help.

I do not know how far Sparrow Cove is from Stanley,  
but if you or a photographer are ever there I would be most  
interested in any photograph taken on board or close-up, and  
also any details of whether the ship is grounded and whether  
any obvious remains of its origin exist.

I am afraid there seems little opportunity for me  
to visit the Falkland Islands myself as they are off Britannia  
routes, but I am very grateful to you for your kindly help. I  
will remember the communication difficulties!

With kind regards to you.

Yours sincerely,

  
Peter G. Masefield

*P.D. on file.  
11.5.59*

26th January, 1960

Dear Mr. Masfield,

In the course of conversation I had a little time ago with the Commanding Officer of H.M.S. Protector I mentioned your interest in the "Great Britain" and he suggested you might care to have one or two photographs taken of her from one of the Protector's helicopters. The next time one of her helicopters was up in the air in Stanley, photographs were taken and I have sent these on to you under separate cover. As you see she is grounded and there is still much left of her.

Please do not worry about answering this unless you don't get the photos. In that case I will see what we can do about getting some more.

Yours sincerely,

A. G. Denton-Thompson.

P. G. Masfield, Esq.,  
Bristol Aircraft Limited,  
Filton House,  
BRISTOL

AGDE/MF

55/43

60.

# BRISTOL AIRCRAFT LIMITED

FILTON HOUSE

BRISTOL, ENGLAND.

FROM THE  
MANAGING DIRECTOR

FILTON 3831

PGM/MVL/JB/607

21st March, 1960.

A. G. Denton-Thompson, Esq., M.C.,  
Colonial Secretary,  
Stanley,  
Falkland Islands.

Dear Mr. Denton-Thompson,

I have now received the remarkable photographs of the "Great Britain".

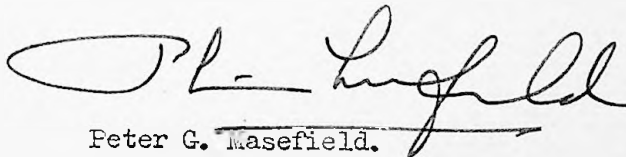
These are most fascinating and I much appreciate your kindness in sending them to me so that I may bring my file up-to-date.

The photographs are extremely clear and the ship appears to have weathered the past hundred years extremely well.

It really is most kind of you to have taken the trouble to send these photographs to me, and I am most grateful to you.

With kind regards,

Yours sincerely,

  
Peter G. Masefield.

October 5, 1961.

Mr A.G. Denton-Thompson, OBE, MC,  
H.M. Colonial Secretary,  
Government House,  
Stanley,  
Falkland Islands.



Dear Sir,

I am presently engaged on research into early shipping and famous ships of the Southern Seas, my object being to produce a book on the subject. One of the ships in which I am particularly interested is the "Great Britain" which is still, I believe, at Stanley and in use as a coal hulk.

Commander Peter Kemp in his "Famous Ships of the World" (1956) reported that she had been recently restored to "something of her old glory" and it is my hope, Sir, that your department may be able to assist me in providing some information on the ship and, perhaps, copies of any photographs you have of her.

If this is possible I shall, of course, make proper mention of my sources in the book.

While the files of this newspaper cover 110 years and there are as well in Dunedin very extensive files of other newspapers, there is little real information on the "Great Britain".

I would greatly appreciate any assistance you could provide on this matter and look forward to your reply in due course.

Yours faithfully,

*Keith Eunson*

Keith Eunson

S/C 62  
Pl. send copy of "The Gr Britain"  
Enquire of Mary Bagg, his daughter if they see  
Cand. other stuff Mr E accy

11/23/12/61

Reply at 63.

January,

62.

Sir,

61

I am directed to refer to your letter of 5th October, 1961, requesting information on the "Great Britain", and to enclose a small booklet entitled "The Great Britain, 1843 - 1943" which might be of interest to you. The booklet was written in 1943 and was compiled from material gleaned from various sources.

2. As will be seen from the booklet, the "Great Britain" is no longer moored in Stanley Harbour, but was towed to near-by Sparrow Cove in Port William in 1937 and permanently grounded there.

3. It is regretted that it has not been possible to obtain a recent photograph of the "Great Britain," but apart from normal weathering she is still in the same condition today as in 1943, and has not in any way been restored.

I am,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

(Sgd.) U.I. Bound

for COLONIAL SECRETARY.

Mr. K. Dunson,  
Editorial Department,  
The Otago Daily Times,  
Box 181,  
Dunedin,  
NEW ZEALAND.

RB/LH

SHIP "GREAT BRITAIN".  
APPROXIMATE WEIGHT OF MASTS AND SPARS.

		T.	C.	Q.	L.
Foremast	93 ft.	19.	—	—	—
Foretopmast	54 "	1.	10.	—	—
Fore topgallant & royal mast	54 "		18.	—	—
Foreyard (iron)	105 "	3.	17.	2.	—
Fore lower topsail yard (iron)	90 "	2.	18.	—	—
" upper " " "	76 "	1.	19.	2.	—
" lower topgallant yard	65 " )				
" upper " "	60 " )	2.	3.	—	—
" royal yard	43 "		10.	—	—
Main mast	95 "	19.	—	—	—
" topmast	54 "	1.	10.	—	—
" topgallant & royal mast	54 "		18.	—	—
" yard (iron)	105 "	3.	17.	2.	—
" lower topsail yard (iron)	90 "	2.	18.	—	—
" upper " " "	76 "	1.	19.	2.	—
" lower topgallant yard	65 " )				
" upper " "	60 " )	2.	3.	—	—
" royal yard	43 "		10.	—	—
Mizzen mast	79½ "	10.	—	—	—
" topmast	54 "		18.	—	—
" topgallant & royal mast	38 "		11.	—	—
Crossjack yard	73 ft 4 ins.	1.	12.	—	—
" lower topsail yard	68½ ft.	1.	2.	3.	—
" upper " "	60 "		19.	—	—
" topgallant "	47 "		11.	2.	—
" royal "	31 "		8.	—	—
Bowsprit	48 "				
Jobboom	75 "				



" GREAT BRITAIN "

DRAUGHT OF WATER.	GROSS DISPLACEMENT.	WEIGHT OF SHIP.	CARGO & STORES.	
Feet	Tons	Tons	Tons	From 24/25 ft. water 26.13/20 per inch
25	5160	1384	3776	23/34
24	4840	....	3456	27.10/20 " "
23	4510	....	3126	22/23
22	4160	....	2776	29. 1/20 " "
21	3800	....	2416	21/22
20	3465	....	2081	30 tons " "
19	3165	....	1781	28 tons " "
18	2860	....	1476	20/21
17	2560	....	1176	25 tons " "
16	2270	....	886	18/19
15	2010	....	626	17/18
14	1750	....	366	25 tons " "
13	1510	....	126	16/17
12	12 ft 4 ins.	1384 tons. Weight of the ship.		

=====

PROVING HOUSE - CHESTER.

No. 1847.

R. 3 Nov. '87.

Chester, 2nd November, 1887.

THIS IS TO CERTIFY that A Swivel shackle with 4 end shackles for 2½" cable attached weighing 16 cwt. 0 qrs. 15 lbs. has been tested to 91 tons. 2 cwts. 2 qrs. 0 lbs. and subsequently examined, and did not show any defect and has been marked 9.87 C.P.T.CO 1847 B of T.

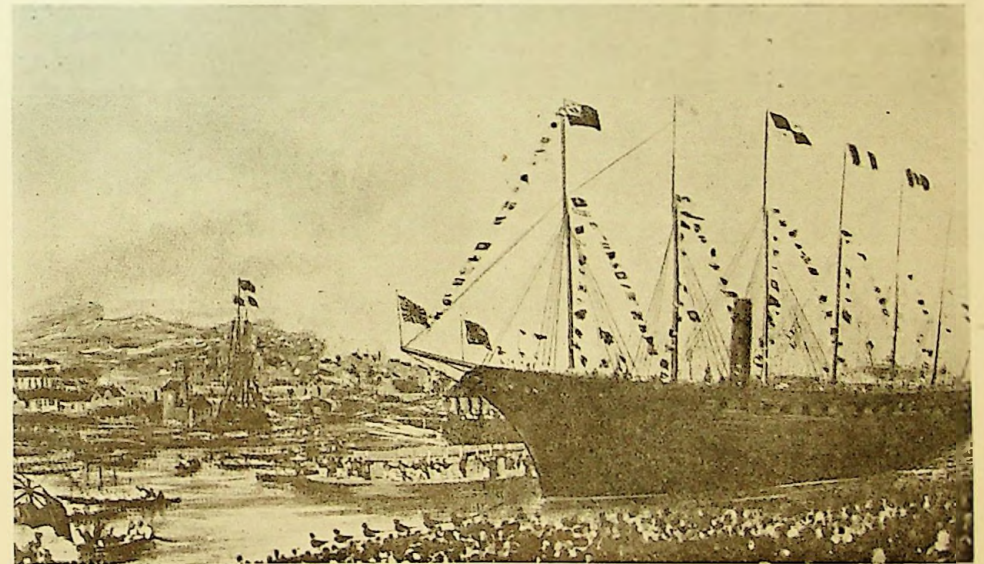
(Signed) ANDREW S. JACK

Superintendent.

THE  
"GREAT BRITAIN",  
1843 = 1943.



THE "GREAT BRITAIN".  
1843 - 1943.



19th July, 1843.

The *Great Britain* was launched, or rather floated in the dry dock in which she had been built, at Bristol one hundred years ago tomorrow, on the 19th July, 1843.

It was a great occasion, the ceremony being performed by no less a person than His Royal Highness the Prince Consort "wearing a frock coat and the riband of the Garter". Bristol presented him with the Freedom of the City in a gold box and escorted him to the shipyard with a procession which was headed by a body of cavalry and included the Mayor and Aldermen, the Dean and no less than sixty resident Clergy. "Bands played, people shouted and guns fired. Triumphal arches abounded and inscriptions hung across the streets". Before "aiming a bottle of champagne" at the bows of the ship the Prince inspected her and was entertained to a banquet on board at which





1845.

there were six hundred guests, including "a large number of the fair sex". It is also pleasant to note from this contemporary account that "the demolition of the various delicacies proceeded quietly and it was gratifying to observe that the West Country air appeared to have in no wise disagreed with the Royal appetite".

But why all the commotion? For the very good reasons that the *Great Britain* was the largest ship in the world and considered to be a marvel of engineering. At that time there were very few ships of over a thousand tons and the *Great Britain*, of nearly three thousand five hundred tons, was a "mammoth" vessel, "gigantic", a "Titan among the minnows". Also she was one of the earliest vessels to be made of iron and one of the first to be driven by a propeller. In fact she had been originally designed in 1838 by the famous engineer Brunel as a paddle-steamer for the Atlantic Service of the Great Western Steamship Company and had actually been redesigned during construction for screw propulsion. This decision was to have far-reaching results, for the Admiralty were subsequently so impressed by the ship's performance that they took the daring step of experimenting with the propeller in naval construction, a contribution to British sea-power of which the old ship is still particularly proud.

Unfortunately the spectacular "launch" ended in an anti-climax. Her builders had forgotten to widen the gates of the dry-dock sufficiently to allow the ship to pass through and she had to remain imprisoned until the gates had been removed and part of the wall at the entrance demolished. It was not, in fact, until early in 1845 that she put to sea and sailed round the south coast to London. Here she was inspected by the young Queen herself who was very impressed with the sixty-four state-rooms, boudoirs, the music-room and twelve hundred yards of scarlet and purple carpet.



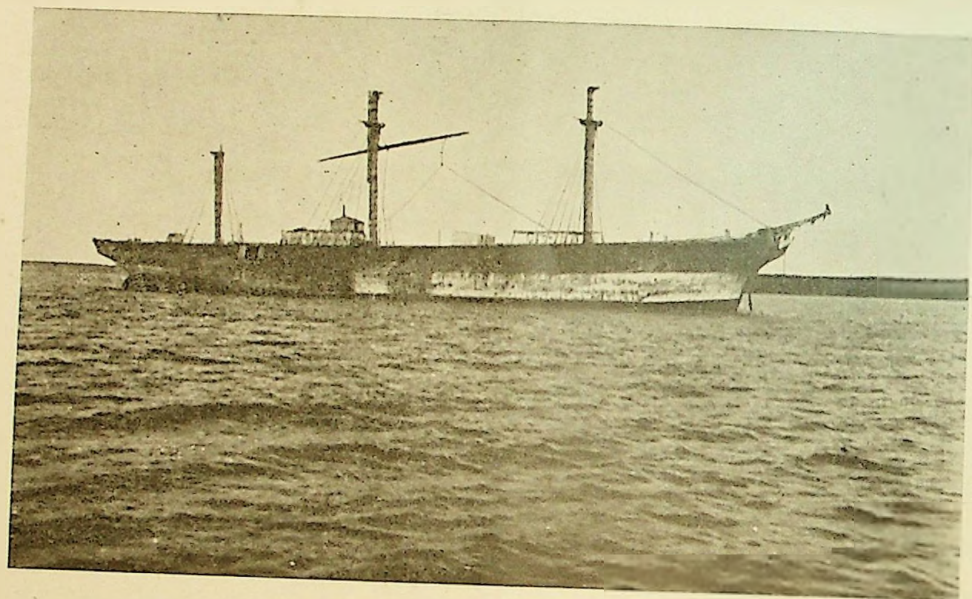
1849 - 1882.

The *Great Britain* sailed from Liverpool on her maiden voyage to New York on the 26th July, 1845, and is believed to have made the passage in fifteen days, being the first iron-built screw-driven ship to cross the Atlantic. The Americans were impressed by her size but there was no rush to travel in her. Her Atlantic career was, in fact, not very successful, and it came to a tragic end after little more than a year.

On the night of the 22nd September, 1846, the *Great Britain*, betrayed by the presence of a new unnotified light on the coast and an unusual "set" in a south-west gale, ran ashore in Dundrum Bay on the north-east coast of Ireland. Luckily she grounded safely between two protecting ridges of rock and there was no loss of life or cargo. To be sure the lady passengers were perturbed. One of them described the scene: "Oh! I cannot tell you of the anguish of that night! The sea broke over the ship the waves struck her like thunder-claps, the gravel grated below, there was the throwing overboard of coal, the cries of children, the groans of women, the blue lights, the signal guns, even the tears of men, and amidst all the Voice of Prayer, and this for long dark hours. Oh! what a fearful night!" The poor dears were no doubt infinitely relieved to be taken ashore at dawn, even though they did have to sit in their crinolines in carts of "seaweed manure".

But all's well that ends well. Brunel came over to Ireland and rescued his precious offspring. She was hardly damaged at all and he contrived to protect her throughout the winter by an ingenious "poultice" of massive faggots heavily weighted and lashed about the stern. In the following year she was successfully towed off, possibly by the troopship "*Birkenhead*" of tragic fame, and taken to the Mersey. All this, however, had cost the owners, the Great Western Company, £108,000 and they wanted to be rid of her. She failed to fetch the basic price at auction and was eventually,





1943.

in 1850, sold to Messrs Gibbs, Bright & Co., for the relatively paltry sum of £18,000, and refitted for the Australian emigrant trade.

She sailed for Melbourne in 1852 with six hundred and thirty passengers and £1,000,000 in gold and silver specie, the first of thirty-two such voyages over a period of twenty-five years, only interrupted by trooping service during the Crimean War and the Indian Mutiny. Many times the *Great Britain* put into Stanley for coal, which used to be sent out for her in specially chartered sailing ships from Wales. She was the most popular and celebrated ship on the Australian run.

All good things, however, come to an end and in 1875 the old ship was laid up for sale. She was bought in 1881, resold to Messrs A. Biggs Sons & Co. in 1882, and in November of that year appeared in the Mersey, indignant but still game, — as a sailing ship with her iron hull sheathed in wood! Her end, however, was drawing near. She made two voyages to San Francisco, dogged throughout by minor misfortunes; then on the 6th February, 1886, she sailed for the last time. She was bound from Penarth to Panama with coal but she never arrived there. She ran into a gale off the Horn, was partially dismantled and sustained considerable damage. She ran for Stanley, and on her arrival there on the 25th May was surveyed, condemned and sold for a hulk.

Her sailing days were over, but not her career. For another forty-seven years until 1933, she was used by the Falkland Islands Company for storing wool and coal. Then, in 1933, she had regretfully to be abandoned. For three more years she lay at anchor at her old moorings awaiting her fate. Early in 1936 plans were made by Sir Henniker Heaton, who was Governor at the time, to launch a fund for her restoration

and preservation. The Falkland Islands Company offered to present the ship to the Government and an appeal was to be made through the columns of the "*Times*" and to the citizens of Bristol for the necessary funds. It was hoped to open this appeal on the 25th May, 1936, the fiftieth anniversary of the end of her last voyage, but unfortunately a preliminary survey indicated that the cost of preservation alone would probably exceed £10,000 and the project had to be abandoned. She was then condemned to be towed out to sea and sunk but was reprieved and in 1937 she was taken to honourable retirement in Sparrow Cove.

The *Great Britain*, as she is now, bears very little resemblance to the smoke belching Behemoth which, in the pride of youth, so amazed the barge-masters of the Thames in 1845. In those days she had a black iron hull, one funnel and six masts, one square and five schooner-rigged. Her original engine, of a thousand horse-power, was connected to the propeller-shaft by a stupendous chain. After being wrecked she was refitted for the Australian trade with four masts, two fore-and-aft and two square-rigged, and was given two funnels, placed side by side. Finally three years later, she became a three-masted full rigged ship, again with only one funnel. This was the rig under which she earned fame and popularity for over twenty years. She was described as a "very majestic ship with an appearance resembling a steam frigate". In 1882, her engines were removed, but her rig was not materially altered. At the same time, as we have already mentioned, her iron hull was sheathed in wood, and it is in this guise that the hulk of to day must be reconstructed in the imagination. All that really remains to the outside view of the original *Great Britain* is, in fact, her dimensions. She is 322 feet long, 51 feet in the beam and 32.5 feet deep, with a draught of 16 feet.

The *Great Britain* was not only a famous vessel in her own right and has survived to have the longest life of any iron ship ever built, but she came of a celebrated line; she was the successor of the *Great Western* and the inspiration of that ill-fated giant the *Great Eastern*.

Now she rests, a great lady, very old and very frail, but still beautiful, in the land-locked peace of Sparrow Cove. On a fine day, when the sea and sky are blue, her old timbers gratefully absorb the warmth and glow grey and amber in the sun against the honey-coloured grass, and she rouses herself from sleep to tell tales of the Antipodes and the windy Horn to respectful deputations from the penguin rookery on the hill above the cove. Perhaps these little gentlemen remind her of the Mayor, the Aldermen, the Dean and the sixty resident clergy of Bristol who accompanied Royalty in procession to her christening one hundred long years ago.

Stanley,  
18th July, 1943.

K. B. .





