



Friday, October 24, 2014 - 6:00 PM  
Community Church Assembly Room, 40 East 35th Street, Manhattan

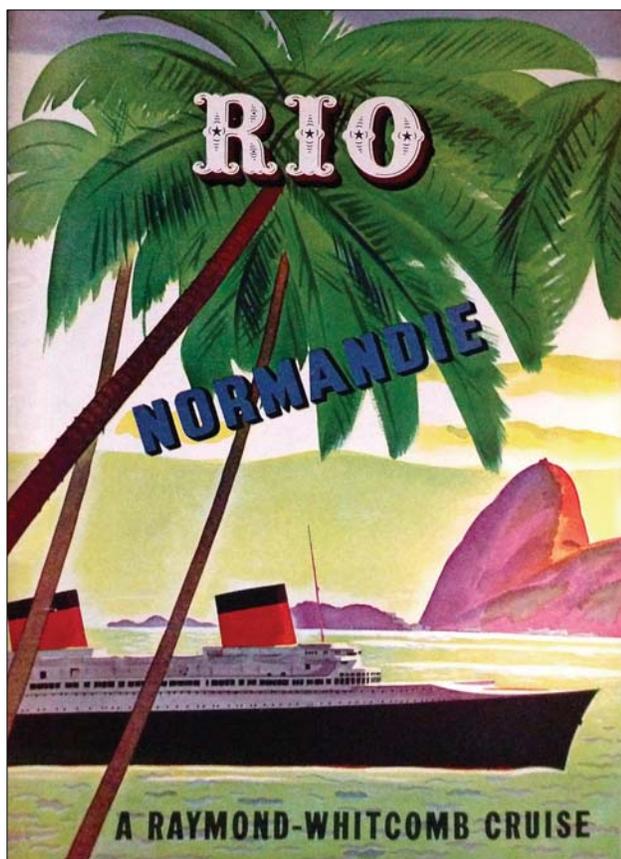
## Ocean Liner Extraordinaire: The Fabulous "Normandie"

by Bill Miller

She was "floating Ginger Rogers." Pure Art Deco on the high seas. Top heavy with glamour & said to be the finest Atlantic liner ever. She was triumph and innovation, but also the victim of a far too short life at sea.

Commissioned in 1935 as the biggest, longest, fastest and certainly best-fed liner on all the high seas, the extraordinary *Normandie* sailed only for a little more than four years. Laid-up at New York's Pier 88 in August 1939, the 83,000-tonner would never sail again. Intended to be one of the three largest Allied troopships serving in the Second World War, her conversion from luxury to military service spelled her end. She burned on February 9th 1942, then capsized, only to be salvaged, righted and sent off to the scrapers in 1946. The pride of the French Line was only eleven years old at the time.

Bill Miller has recently authored yet another book: *Classic Liners: SS Normandie*.



The cover of NORMANDIE's legendary 1938 Rio cruise brochure (above left) and a rendering of her First Class Dining Room (above right). (Bob Allen collection)

**NEXT EVENTS:** Ocean Liner Bazaar, Saturday, October 18; Luncheon on Princess Cruises' ROYAL PRINCESS, Saturday, October 25; Hoboken Walking Tour, Saturday, Nov. 1; Membership Meeting, Friday, Nov. 21 - Program TBD; Holiday Party, December, date TBD.

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THE PORTHOLE, published by the Port of New York Branch, World Ship Society, welcomes original material for publication. Address to the editor, Bob Allen, at [oceanvoyag@aol.com](mailto:oceanvoyag@aol.com) or via the PONY mailing address.



## MEMBER PHOTO OF THE MONTH



NAVIGATOR OF THE SEAS (left) and ALLURE OF THE SEAS (RIGHT) at Cozumel, Mexico on August 1, 2014.

(Stuart Gewirtzman)

### AN HISTORIC HOBOKEN AFTERNOON

Join PONY Chairman Ted Scull on a walking tour of Hoboken, NJ, on Saturday, November 1, 2014. A visit to the Hoboken Historical Museum's new exhibit on immigration is included. See the enclosed flyer for additional information.

### MUSEUMS, LECTURES AND HARBOR CRUISES

**CONTACT THESE INSTITUTIONS BY EMAIL OR PHONE FOR CURRENT EVENTS AND ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:**

**SOUTH STREET SEAPORT MUSEUM** [www.southstreetseaportmuseum.org](http://www.southstreetseaportmuseum.org) or 917-492-3379.

**MYSTIC SEAPORT** [www.mysticseaport.org](http://www.mysticseaport.org) or 860-572-0711.

**VANCOUVER WSS & VANCOUVER MARITIME MUSEUM** [www.worldshipsocietyvan.ca](http://www.worldshipsocietyvan.ca) for information or if you visit, contact Glenn Smith: 604-684-1240, email [glenn.smith@worldshipsocietyvan.ca](mailto:glenn.smith@worldshipsocietyvan.ca). The next meeting is on Wednesday, November 12, 2014.

**NEW SOUTH WALES WSS:** Meetings are held at the Uniting Church Complex in Lord Street, Roseville at 8:00 PM. Contact the branch at PO Box 215, Strathfield, New South Wales 2135, Australia.

**THE NATIONAL LIBERTY SHIP MEMORIAL, INC.** [www.ssjeremiahobrien.org](http://www.ssjeremiahobrien.org) or [liberty@ssjeremiahobrien.org](mailto:liberty@ssjeremiahobrien.org) or 415-544-0100. 1275 Columbus Avenue, Suite 300, San Francisco, CA 94133-1315.

**PROJECT LIBERTY SHIP** [www.liberty-ship.com](http://www.liberty-ship.com) or 410-558-0164

**NEW YORK WATER TAXI,** [www.nywatertaxi.com](http://www.nywatertaxi.com) or 866-989-2542. Harbor cruises departing from both South Street Seaport Pier 17 and Pier 84 at West 44<sup>th</sup> Street. Hop on – hop off service throughout New York Harbor is offered as well. Contact via website or telephone for departure times and prices.

**CIRCLE LINE DOWNTOWN,** [www.circlelinedowntown.com](http://www.circlelinedowntown.com) or 866-989-2542. Harbor cruises on the ZEPHYR from April to December, and aboard New York Water Taxi from January to March, departing from Pier 17, South Street Seaport.

**CIRCLE LINE,** [www.circleline42.com](http://www.circleline42.com) or 877-731-0064. Circle Manhattan and other harbor cruises, departing from pier 84 at West 44<sup>th</sup> Street.

**NEW YORK WATERWAY,** [www.nywaterway.com](http://www.nywaterway.com) or 800-533-3779. Trans-Hudson ferry service and special-event cruises.

**THE NATIONAL LIGHTHOUSE MUSEUM** [www.lighthousemuseum.org](http://www.lighthousemuseum.org) or 855-656-7469. Contact for upcoming schedule of cruises and events.

**THE WORKING HARBOR COMMITTEE** [www.workingharbor.com](http://www.workingharbor.com) or 212-757-1600. Cruises to both remote and well-travelled parts of New York Harbor, such as the Hudson River to view tugboat races, Gowanus Bay and Erie Basin in Brooklyn, and a circumnavigation of Staten Island.

**THE NOBLE MARITIME COLLECTION,** [www.noblemaritime.org](http://www.noblemaritime.org) or 718-447-6490. Maritime lectures and art exhibits at the Sailor's Snug Harbor Cultural Center on Staten Island, NY



## OCEAN LINER BAZAAR

**SATURDAY, OCTOBER 18, 2014**

**10:00 AM through 2:00 PM**

The Port of New York Branch of the World Ship Society will sponsor an Ocean Liner Bazaar for members and friends at:

Abigail Adams Smith Auditorium  
417 East 61st Street, New York City  
(Between First and York Avenues)

Dealers and collectors of ocean liner memorabilia will offer for sale pins, pendants, prints, posters, paperweights, medallions, models, deck plans, brochures, postcards, china, silverware, ashtrays, key chains and many more rare and unique collectible items from passenger liners past and present.

Admission is \$5.00 per person, payable at the door.



For more information, contact David Hume by telephone at (914) 761-6372 or by email at [dghume@aol.com](mailto:dghume@aol.com).

## ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

| SHIP             | FROM              | TO                | VOYAGE                    | PASSENGER(S)                   | DATE  |
|------------------|-------------------|-------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------------|-------|
| AMERICAN QUEEN   | New Orleans, LA   | New Orleans, LA   | Mississippi River         | Bill Forsstrom                 | 03/14 |
| AMERICAN EMPRESS | Clarkston, WA     | Portland, OR      | Snake and Columbia Rivers | Bill Forsstrom                 | 06/14 |
| AMERICAN QUEEN   | St. Louis, MO     | Cincinnati, OH    | Mississippi River         | Bill Forsstrom                 | 08/14 |
| PRINSENDAM       | IJmuiden, Holland | IJmuiden, Holland | North Cape                | George Chandler & Dan Amatuzzo | 08/14 |
| QUEEN ELIZABETH  | Rome, Italy       | Venice, Italy     | Pearls of the Adriatic    | Robert Riggs                   | 08/14 |
| SEABOURN QUEST   | Boston, MA        | Montreal, Canda   | New England / Canada      | Ted & Suellyn Scull            | 09/14 |

### SHIP'S LOG

SHIP'S LOG will return in the November issue of The Porthole.

### SHIP'S MAIL

Dear Editor,

Congratulations to the QUEEN MARY 2 and the Cunard Line on the tenth anniversary of this great ocean liner! My wife Joy and I sailed on the QUEEN MARY 2 many times, including transatlantic for our honeymoon.

But I do have trouble calling the ship a "modern classic" as does Marge Dovman in the Summer 2014 Porthole. "Classic" in what sense? The adjective "classic" according to the Webster New World Dictionary refers to being an excellent model of its kind. That may be so in the Queens and Princess Grills but not necessarily so in other passenger categories in terms of the service, the food, and the accommodations. But the ship is magnificent and has the grandest public rooms on the high seas – a throwback to the golden age of passenger liners.

But there is a problem. Cunard has emphasized the "royal" on board so much so that the modest and dignified present British monarch would be put off and made uncomfortable.

The attempt, and it has proven successful, is to give passengers aboard QUEEN MARY 2, as well as on board QUEEN VICTORIA and QUEEN ELIZABETH the "royal" feeling that, in fact, they are living in Buckingham Palace or perhaps Windsor Castle. No sense, however, that they are living in The White House let alone in Abraham Lincoln's log cabin! A bit of democratic value would do Cunard well!

And there is the problem posed for American passengers by this emphasis on all things "royal." This problem also found expression when my wife and I took an Independence Day Weekend cruise on QUEEN MARY 2 to Halifax and Boston. Cunard so downplayed America's birthday that I wrote a letter of complaint to Mr. Peter Shanks, the President of Cunard. We heard some days later from a Cunard representative who awarded each of us a substantial shipboard credit because of the constructive suggestions that I had made in my letter on how Cunard could stress the importance of Independence Day!

Of course, people should be encouraged to sail on QUEEN MARY 2 but that Cunard vainglory about QUEEN MARY 2 as well about its two other passenger ships is a bit much.

Very truly yours,  
Stephen Schoeman, Ph.D.



Is she just too "royal?" QUEEN MARY 2 celebrated her 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of service for the Cunard Line in 2014. (Cunard Line)



Portuscale Cruises' classic 1961-built FUNCHAL will replace DISCOVERY on a brief charter to CMV Cruises.

(CMV Cruises)

**FAREWELL, BEAUTIFUL PRINCESS:** DISCOVERY (ex-ISLAND VENTURE, ISLAND PRINCESS) completed her last charter voyage for Cruise & Maritime Voyages (CMV) at Bristol, UK on October 6. Built for Flagship Cruises and completed in 1972, the lovely 20,000-ton vessel became well known as one of the "Love Boats" on television in the 1970's and 1980's. Her owners, All Leisure Holidays, decided to terminate the charter, reportedly because of the high cost of maintaining and operating the 42-year-old vessel. She will be put up for sale, with scrap merchants as the only likely buyers. Her final two scheduled cruises will be carried out by Portuscale Cruises' FUNCHAL (1961), another classic vessel that hopefully has a brighter future.

**GIVE ROYAL CARIBBEAN AN OVATION:** OVATION OF THE SEAS, that is. Royal Caribbean has announced the start of construction in Papenburg, Germany of their third ship in the QUANTUM series. The 167,800-ton OVATION OF THE SEAS will carry 4,180 passengers when she is introduced in 2016. QUANTUM OF THE SEAS makes her US debut at Bayonne, NJ in November 2014, followed by ANTHEM OF THE SEAS in 2015. Deployment for OVATION has yet to be announced.

**FOOD, GLORIOUS FOOD:** P&O Australia will redefine late-night shipboard cuisine by completely eliminating the midnight buffet on their new PACIFIC ARIA and PACIFIC EDEN (ex-STATENDAM, 1993 and RYNDAM, 1994). In place of the traditional buffet, P&O will present "The Pantry," an area that will contain food outlets such as a delicatessen, fish & chips stand and other assorted eateries. Dramatic new dining arrangements are only part of a wide-ranging renovation in store for the two former Holland America ships, which begin cruising from Australia in 2015. Thompson Holidays is also upgrading two ex-Holland America liners for the 2015 season. THOMPSON DREAM (ex-HOMERIC, WESTERDAM, 1986) and THOMPSON SPIRIT (ex-NOORDAM, 1984) will each receive a new restaurant, Kora La, serving Indian and Chinese cuisines. New décor will also be added to various areas, continuing an ongoing renovation program on both ships.



PACIFIC ARIA and PACIFIC EDEN will sail into P&O Australia's fleet in late 2015.

(P&O Australia)

## SHIP OF THE MONTH



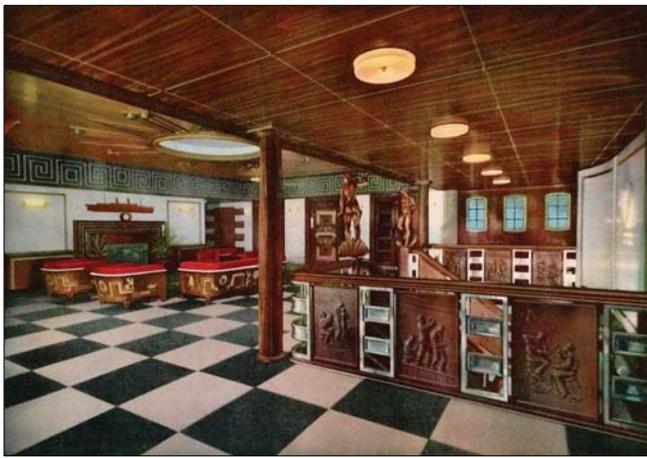
**m.s KUNGSHOLM**

(Bob Allen collection)

The Swedish America Line, founded as a national flag carrier in 1915, used second hand tonnage during their first decade of operation. Although the post-World War I wave of emigration to the United States was greatly reduced by laws enacted by Congress in 1923, the line planned and built their first new ships with an eye toward continued transatlantic service from Gothenburg to New York, and luxury cruising throughout the year. The GRIPSHOLM was completed in 1925, and a slightly enlarged and improved sister ship, KUNGSHOLM, was launched in March 1928. While the GRIPSHOLM was British-built, Swedish America Line (SAL) chose German shipyard Blohm & Voss in Hamburg to build her sister. Beautifully proportioned, she featured a superstructure with two enclosed promenade decks and tall graceful twin raked funnels – unlike the low funnels common on motor ships of the period. KUNGSHOLM departed Gothenburg on her maiden voyage to New York on November 24, 1928.

The 1920's were among the most inventive and varied decades in ocean liner interior design. The PARIS of 1921 brought a late but lavish Art Nouveau architecture to sea, while the MAJESTIC and HOMERIC, both ex-Germans completed by the White Star Line in 1922, displayed a mix of Neo-Classical and Teutonic grandeur. Flemish touches graced the BELEGENLAND of 1923, while Dutch liners VEENDAM and VEENDAM (1922/1923) and STATENDAM (1929) featured Louis XVI designs alongside Chinese and Dutch-themed interiors. Italian liners such as VULCANIA, CONTE GRANDE and AUGUSTUS were well known for their dramatic, over-the-top Rococo. In 1927, the ILE DE FRANCE created a sensation with her brilliant Art Deco interiors and set the standard for progressive liner design for the following decade, while the BREMEN (1929) embraced a subtler Art Deco. While GRIPSHOLM had beautiful interiors, copied from her namesake Swedish Royal Castle, KUNGSHOLM added Swedish Modern to this amazing decade of design. All of her interiors were the work of the innovative Swedish architect Carl Bergsten (1879-1935), and his team of artists and craftsmen. According to a 1929 SAL brochure, "The new motor liner Kungsholm, of 20,000 tons register, has set the shipping world aghast with the finished beauty of its appointments. Without question, it is one of the most exquisitely furnished ships afloat and its interior constitutes a full museum of the world renowned Swedish Art." A perusal of the brochure confirms the superlatives. The First Class Entrance Hall featured a balustrade sculpted in jacaranda and silver-finished ironwork, a skylight set in a sunburst-patterned grey walnut ceiling, and furniture with inlaid wood backs. The First Class Lounge featured a stepped alabaster skylight, African pearwood ceiling, Orrefors glass mirrors and light fixtures, and simple golden sycamore bulkheads inlaid with Scandinavian figures from old Gothenburg legends. The First Class Smoking Room, with a red, black and gold palette, was lined with murals of Stockholm and New York, and lattice-covered windows. This striking room featured plaques in its four corners commemorating great events in Swedish-American history: the voyage of the Viking Leif Ericsson; the colonization of Delaware, the victory of the MONITOR, and the solo trans-Atlantic flight of Charles Lindbergh – a milestone only one year before KUNGSHOLM's maiden voyage. The silver dome of the First Class Dining Room, complete with musicians' gallery, was also muraled and bordered with exotic foliage. Modern Scandinavian style extended to the Second Class as well. Those passengers were greeted by a spacious Entrance Hall, through which the mainmast thrust, with bulkheads finished in genuine sealskin. The Smoking Room was paneled in horizontal bands of oak, Javanese teak and ebony, with bright red upholstery and red, black and grey linoleum deck covering. These unique interiors, devoid of period styles, were clearly a precursor to those on the tragic but stunningly modern STOCKHOLM of 1941, lost in World War II without completing a peacetime voyage.

After a year settling down on the North Atlantic run, she undertook her first luxury cruise from New York to the Caribbean, in January 1929. SAL had begun their program of lengthy deluxe cruises with a GRIPSHOLM voyage to the Mediterranean in February 1927. These voyages set a standard for the cruise industry that was virtually unsurpassed for the company's entire 60-year history. During the winter of 1932/1933, KUNGSHOLM was modernized to provide more luxurious, contemporary passenger accommodations and her hull was painted white to emphasize her cruise ship role. After the outbreak of World War II, she continued cruising, venturing to the South Pacific for the first time in January, 1940.



A quintet of KUNSHOLM'S remarkable First Class public spaces, clockwise from above left: Entrance Hall, Main Lounge, Dining Room and Smoking Room. All were designed by the celebrated Swedish architect Carl Bergsten. (Bob Allen collection)

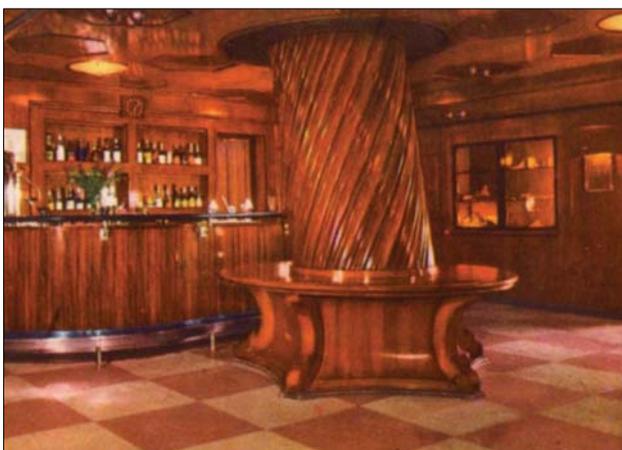
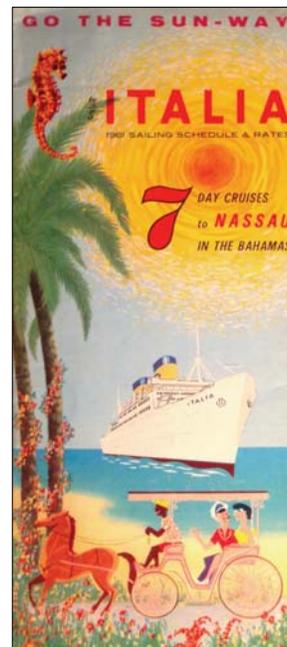


The glorious motor liner KUNSHOLM in a contemporary rendering after receiving a white hull in 1933; it was soon afterwards that Swedish America Line became known as "The White Viking Fleet." (Bob Allen collection)

Shortly after the Pearl Harbor attack, KUNSHOLM was seized by the US Navy on December 12, 1941 and converted to the troop transport JOHN ERICSSON; she was sold to the US Government on January 2, 1942. During the war, she carried 170,000 troops in the Atlantic, Pacific and Mediterranean, followed by service as a war bride ship after hostilities ceased. She was briefly chartered by the United States Lines, but caught fire and was seriously damaged at her New York pier in March, 1947. In July, she was re-purchased by SAL, but not for their services. Instead, she was sold in December to the newly formed Home Lines, which was financed by the Brostrom family, majority owners of Swedish America Line. Home Lines, founded to move emigrants from Italy to South America after World War II, needed additional

tonnage. KUNGSHOLM was rebuilt in Genoa as ITALIA, departing on her first run from Genoa to South American ports on July 27, 1948. Anyone closely observing the ITALIA that day would have made the connection between SAL and Home Lines as evidenced by their very similar colors and funnel markings. However, the South American trade was unsuccessful, and ITALIA began sailing from Genoa to New York on June 12, 1949, and then between Hamburg and New York (managed by the Hamburg America Line) in March 1952. Her passenger accommodation was modernized again in the winter of 1958/1959, following which she commenced service between Hamburg and Quebec.

With the demand for low cost emigrant services dwindling, the 32-year old ITALIA received a major renovation in 1960 to fulfill the role of a deluxe cruise ship, intended for the somewhat experimental weekly New York – Nassau cruise service. She was not in competition with the Swedish America's new, top-of-the market cruise liners KUNGSHOLM (1953) and GRIPSHOLM (1957), but she achieved tremendous popularity on the Nassau run. Due to ITALIA's success, within a few years Home Lines replaced her with the larger HOMERIC (ex-MARIPOSA of 1932) and then the spectacular, newly constructed OCEANIC (1965) for luxury cruise service. Ironically, with the brilliant reception accorded OCEANIC, Home Lines became a major competitor of SAL in the seasonal Caribbean market. ITALIA's last voyage for Home Lines was in 1964, following which she was sold to Freeport Bahamas Enterprises for use as the floating hotel IMPERIAL BAHAMA. Unfortunately, this venture did not succeed and IMPERIAL BAHAMA was sold for scrap in 1965. The 38-year-old liner had a remarkable career as a transatlantic liner, luxury cruise ship, troopship, emigrant carrier, trailblazing weekly Bahamas cruise ship and finally a floating hotel.



Luxury cruising, 1960's style, on the rebuilt ITALIA. Clockwise from upper left: ITALIA shows off her new lido deck aft, as well as the original pool on the forward deck, in a Home Lines rendering; the brochure cover for the 1961 Nassau season; a lavish buffet on the Promenade Deck, with a fitting backdrop of brass windows; the Mast Bar, featuring the original 1928 woodwork of the Second Class Entrance Hall. Note the funnel markings of Swedish America Line contained three crowns, while a single crown appeared on Home Lines funnels. (Bob Allen Collection)

|                        |   |                                   |                                 |
|------------------------|---|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| <b>Owner:</b>          | Svenska Amerika Linien, Gothenburg, Sweden  | <b>Dimensions:</b>                | 609' x 78'                      |
| <b>Builder:</b>        | Blohm & Voss, Hamburg, Germany  | <b>Gross Tonnage:</b>             | 20,223                          |
| <b>Rebuilder:</b>      | Ansaldo, Genoa, Italy   | <b>Maiden Voyage (KUNGSHOLM):</b> | Nov 24, 1928                    |
| <b>Route:</b>          | Gothenburg – New York; Cruising   | <b>Maiden Voyage (ITALIA):</b>    | July 27, 1948                   |
| <b>Service speed:</b>  | 17.5 knots  | <b>Last Voyage:</b>               | April 18, 1964                  |
| <b>Pass. capacity:</b> | 115 1 <sup>st</sup> Class; 490 2 <sup>nd</sup> Class; 970 3 <sup>rd</sup> Class; 605 Cruising | <b>Demise</b>                     | Scrapped at Bilbao, Spain, 1965 |

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