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A History of the Origins and Development of the  
American Line, 1873 - 1895.

by

William H. Flayhart, III.

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William H. Flayhart, III.  
Williamsport, Pennsylvania  
June 15, 1966

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Addresses of Maritime Societies Mentioned in the Acknowledgment:

Mr. John C. Taylor  
Overseas Liaison Secretary of the World Ship Society  
78 The Crescent  
Hadleigh  
Essex, England  
United Kingdom

Mr. Paul E. R. Scarceriaux  
Chairman: Belgian Nautical Research Association  
16 Avenue J. Stobbaerts  
Brussels 3  
Belgium

Mrs. James T. Wilson  
Secretary: Steamship Historical Society of America  
414 Pelton Avenue  
Staten Island, New York, 10310  
United States of America

The History of the Origins and Development of the American  
Line, 1873 - 1895.

The tale of the American Merchant Marine is one of the most glorious chapters in the early history of the United States. From 1775 to 1861 great American sailing ships carried the Stars and Stripes around the world with honor to the nation and profit to their owners. The Civil War proved to be a catastrophic watershed in the history of the American Merchant Marine. The disastrous effects of the war upon American shipping was compounded by the general change-over from sail to steam, and from wood to iron that occurred in the same period. After 1865 the shipping industry never regained its pre-war position, and in fact, entered into a sharp steady decline. The situation deteriorated so rapidly that by 1870 there was not a single American-flag passenger liner on the Atlantic, nor were there any under construction or being planned. This was a lamentable situation for a nation which so shortly before had boasted one of the finest merchant fleets in the world and proved a sad blow to national pride. Yet few concrete proposals for rectifying the situation were forthcoming as the nation's eyes were turned Westward. Not until more than twenty-five years had passed would American citizens be able to cross the Atlantic on a first-class American owned, operated and manned mail steamer.

However, this is not to say that certain small groups of shipping men were uninterested in establishing a front ranking steamship line at a much earlier date. The first mildly successful attempt was the little American Line of 1873 and its eminently successful lineal descendant was to be the great American Line of 1893. The story of this twenty year struggle for commercial success and govern-

1. A detailed discussion of the decline of the American Merchant Marine after 1861 follows on pages

mental recognition is the subject of this thesis. Through a detailed study of the origins and development of the American Line a comprehensive picture of the problems of the American Merchant Marine and of the relationship between the American shipping industry and the United States government can be revealed.

The 1870's saw the beginnings of the truly big industrial and transportation enterprises in the United States. The wealthy, dynamic trans-continental railroads pushed westward and the even more powerful Eastern railroads strove to consolidate their interests and to develop through-lines with coordinated services over great distances. The extremely prosperous Pennsylvania Railroad Company held the distinction of being the largest, as well as the most powerful and influential business enterprise in the nation. The Pennsylvania very much wanted to expand its operations in order to take advantage of the expected expansion in ocean-going trade and, at the same time, to offer a more complete service to its customers. This aim of the Railroad developed into a mammoth expansion drive, which during the years 1870 through 1873 saw the Pennsylvania's profits increase by some forty per cent.<sup>2</sup> Hence the Railroad, with its exuberant and adventuresome First Vice President Thomas A. Scott leading the way, decided to look into the problem of developing Philadelphia as a major steamer port. The basic idea proposed was that the Railroad should buy a reputable European trans-atlantic steamship line and establish a through service from Europe to the Great American West by way of the Port of Philadelphia and the Pennsylvania Railroad.

A general survey of the smaller yet prosperous European lines led the Pennsylvania Railroad to enter into negotiations with the

2. George H. Burgess and Miles C. Kennedy, Centennial History of the Pennsylvania Railroad Company 1846-1946, Philadelphia, 1949, p.304.



the Anchor Line of Glasgow, Scotland. Overtures were made:

with a view to the Anchor Line making Philadelphia the terminal port of the service as part and parcel of the railroad system. Negotiations had, indeed, come to a stage where a settlement was almost reached but the railroad company stipulated that the books of the Anchor Line, and virtually the direction of all its affairs, were to be transferred to the American side. This was too much to ask of an individualist like Thomas Henderson and the deal fell through.<sup>3</sup>

Thomas Henderson of the Anchor Line—a rugged Scottish sea captain in his younger days—had not spent the last fifteen years of his life (1856-1871) building up the Handyside and Henderson Company (Anchor Line) just to leave Scotland at the behest of an American railroad no matter how attractive the offer might be. The Anchor Line in the early 1870's was not only operating a highly profitable bi-weekly transatlantic line but also conducted a splinter service from Scotland to Scandinavia and two major Mediterranean operations: Britain to the Mediterranean; Mediterranean to New York. The extremely healthy state of the Anchor Line readily becomes apparent when it is known that the Line landed over 25,000 passengers in New York during the year 1870.<sup>4</sup> The Pennsylvania Railroad Company and Thomas A. Scott were after an attractive prize—and it got away.

The reversal suffered by the Pennsylvania Railroad in its Atlantic expansion program caused Thomas A. Scott to take another course of action. Since the Civil War civic forces in Philadelphia had been urging the founding of an American-backed steamship link with Europe. In November 1870 the Board of Directors of the Pennsylvania Railroad Company took the initiative and in an announcement indicated their willingness to supply substantial financial backing for a steamship line if interested Philadelphia citizens would undertake the

3. R. S. McLellan, ANCHOR LINE (1856-1956), Glasgow, 1957, pp. 40-41.

4. N. R. P. Bonsor, NORTH ATLANTIC SEAWAY, Prescott, Lancashire, 1955 (rev. ed. 1960), pp. 139-140.

the establishment and operation of such a concern. The commercial interests of Philadelphia responded enthusiastically to the overture of the Railroad. The Philadelphia Commercial List and Price Current, a weekly journal of commerce for the Philadelphia business community, particularly gave every encouragement to the venture in its columns. It had been stated previously that the basic financing of the new company was to be handled through the issuance of stock and by the floating of a ~~bond issue~~ during December 1870. On January 7, 1871, an article in the newspaper announced that all of the stock in the new company had been subscribed for and that the bonds were expected to sell quickly.<sup>5</sup>

The Commercial Exchange, an association of wealthy businessmen dealing in shipping and in manufacturing and agricultural products, substantially backed the new steamship company. The Annual Report of the Commercial Exchange dated February 4, 1871, provides a detailed description of the financial backing, organization and character of the new Line for the first time. The Line was to consist of not less than four steamers—the minimum necessary for a weekly service—to ply between Philadelphia and Liverpool or any other suitable European port. A charter for the Company was to be obtained from the next session of the Pennsylvania General Assembly and the minimum capital of the Line was set at \$ 700,000 with provisions for its eventual rise to \$ 5,000,000 if conditions should warrant. The Pennsylvania Railroad Company was to subscribe to \$400,000 of the stock and to guarantee both the principal and interest on a \$1,500,000, twenty-five year, five

5. Philadelphia Commercial List and Price Current, January 7, 1871.

per cent bond issue. Hence, the Railroad was to assume a most substantial proportion of the financial risk for the new line. The title of the new enterprise was formally established as the American Steamship Company of Philadelphia.<sup>6</sup>

The Commercial Exchange established a committee composed of ten of its most distinguished members to secure the necessary public support for the line of these ten men none were to be active in the affairs of the company in the years to come.<sup>7</sup> The sale of the bonds in the new venture was pushed immediately with only moderate success in spite of the impressive guarantees of the Pennsylvania Railroad Company. An article in the Philadelphia Commercial List and Price Current of February 18, 1871, indicated that \$1,100,000 of the bond issue had been sold but that \$400,000 was still outstanding and that "as soon as the \$400,000 still unsold shall have been disposed of, the corporation will be at liberty to commence operations without further delay."<sup>8</sup> Matters must have progressed fairly well for a most significant event occurred during the first week of April.

The first formal meeting of the stockholders of the American Steamship Company was held on April 4, 1871, at the Merchant's Exchange. During the meeting the first Board of Directors of the Company was chosen. The vote resulted in the election of Herman J. Lombaert as President and E. C. Knight, Washington Butcher, Josiah Bacon, John Rice, B. H. Bartol, J. Price Wetherill, Henry D. Welsh, and D. B. Cummins as Directors.<sup>9</sup> Two weeks later on April 18, 1871, a formal charter was granted the American Steamship Company by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

6. Philadelphia Commercial List, February 4, 1871. See Appendix A.

7. Philadelphia Commercial List, February 4, 1871.

8. Philadelphia Commercial List, February 18, 1871.

9. Philadelphia Commercial List, April 8, 1871.

The Charter of the Company was issued "for the purpose of establishing a line of first class steamships to run between Philadelphia and Liverpool; the steamers to be constructed in American ship building yards, and as entirely as possible of American materials."<sup>10</sup>

Evidence of the strong civic feelings of Philadelphia towards the American Line are revealed in the inaugural address of William Brice as President of the Commercial Exchange Association on February 3, 1872. On this occasion the new President remarked:

The merchants and capitalists of our city in connection with that great and enterprising corporation, the Pennsylvania Railroad Company, are now having built—and built, too, on our own broad Delaware—a line of steamships to run between this city and Liverpool, not under a foreign flag, gentlemen, but under the glorious flag of our Union, our own Stars and Stripes... It will be for us, and the entire mercantile interests of our city, to make that line so eminent a success that other lines will follow in such rapid succession that we will remain not the second city in the Union, but second to none.<sup>11</sup>

Despite such enthusiasm, however, the very early financial course of the ~~American Line~~ appears to have been somewhat rocky. At times the Company's bonds were offered on the Philadelphia Stock Board without receiving buyers even when a discount of as much as five per cent was permitted.<sup>12</sup> This did not deter the Directors of the new enterprise from their appointed course.

The contracts for the four American liners were signed with the firm of William Cramp and Sons on August 3, 1871. All four vessels were to be alike in model and machinery, and to be built of American materials as far as possible. The contract stipulated that each vessel was to be of 3,016 tons burden, 355 feet in length, 43 feet in beam

10. Inman Line, Red Star Line, and American Line, INMAN AND INTERNATIONAL STEAMSHIP COMPANY LIMITED, New York (1887), p. 49.

11. Philadelphia Commercial List, February 3, 1872.

12. Philadelphia Commercial List, February 17, 1872.

and "furnished with independent, compound, vertical, direct-acting, surface condensing, propeller engines."<sup>13</sup> Each of the four liners was to be outfitted to carry 75 first-class and 854 steerage passengers. The total cost of the four vessels was to be \$2,080,000 and specific dates for their completion were laid down: The PENNSYLVANIA, to be completed by September 1, 1872; the OHIO by November 1, 1872; the INDIANA by December 1, 1872; and the ILLINOIS by January 1, 1873.<sup>14</sup> As will be learned later ~~these~~ contract completion dates were to be exceeded by nine months to a year and this was to hurt the fortunes of the Line seriously.

The liners were designed by B. H. Bartol, one of the Directors of the American Line. As part of the preparations for building the vessels and on orders from Bartol, Charles H. Cramp, one of the owners of the Cramp Ship Building Yard, and J. Shields Wilson, Managing Engineer for the construction of the liners, drew \$10,000 from the treasury of the steamship company and sailed for Europe in order to inspect the latest developments in engine design and construction.<sup>15</sup> The two marine specialists were especially interested in the new Elder compound engines and so booked passage on the National Line's ITALY (1870, 4,169 tons) which Charles Cramp described as "the first trans-atlantic steamer with compound engines of John Elder's make and type, whose reported performance in economical coal consumption was considered...marvelous."<sup>16</sup> Since the prime object of sailing on the ITALY had been to learn all they could about her engines this is what they immediately set out to do. Cramp related "We soon made the

13. Philadelphia Commercial List, April 6, 1872. See Appendix B.

14. Philadelphia Commercial List, April 6, 1872. See Appendix B.

15. Burgess, p. 271.

16. Augustus C. Buell, THE MEMOIRS OF CHARLES H. CRAMP, Philadelphia, 1906, p. 112.

acquaintance of the chief engineer of the ship...and Mr. Wilson practically lived with him. He was permitted to take cards (take notes) under varying conditions, and secured an accurate account of coal consumption and of all other matters likely to be of interest."<sup>17</sup>

Upon their arrival in the United Kingdom Cramp and Wilson at first encountered difficulty as they were completely unknown to the various ship builders whose yards they wished to see. Thus, the first engineer delegated to show them around the Lairds' Liverpool Yards "had expected to get through with (them) in a very short time, thinking that a sort of perfunctory visit 'in one door and out at the opposite' would be sufficient."<sup>18</sup> Cramp and his engineering companion, Wilson, were well versed in their trade and soon established themselves as individuals of note during their tour of the yard which gained them an introduction to the Yard Superintendent, a Mr. Zamuda. This man after having a lengthy discussion with the two Americans immensely aided their endeavors by providing them with letters of introduction to all the major yard superintendents in Britain. Cramp and Wilson soon became fascinated with the idea of fitting the American Line ships with the radically new compound engines. However, Cramp reported:

The concensus of opinion of the different shipyards on the subject of compound engines was, as a rule, unfavorable. We found that the opposition was principally due to the fact that the change from the old type to the new involved important and radical modifications in the the construction of boilers and of engines, so they hesitated to discard their old plans, patterns, and methods, the value of which they were sure of, and <sup>19</sup> grope into an unknown field of augmented costliness.

The two men were not to be dissuaded from their confidence in the new engines.

17. Buell, p. 113.

18. Buell, pp. 113-114.

19. Buell, pp. 114-115.

The faith of Cramp and Wilson in the compound engine was to receive proper justification when they visited the great Fairfield Works at Govan, Glasgow, Scotland. Cramp reported enthusiastically:

Whatever doubts we may have had up to the time of our arrival at the Fairfield Works, they were forever removed when we visited their magnificent erecting shop. We saw there thirteen compound engines in various stages of completion...without any preparation whatever for it, this vision of thirteen actualities of the new departure burst upon our view.<sup>20</sup>

Needless to say they spent the day in the Fairfield Yard and soon thereafter returned to the United States loaded with new ideas to be incorporated into the American Line ships and with the American production rights for John Elder's compound engines. Cramp must have been anxious to return to Philadelphia in order to begin work on the engines for the liners as the contract completion dates for the vessels were rapidly approaching, and, in fact, almost a year had passed since the founding of the Line.

Philadelphia's pride in the American Line is again evident in the exuberant introduction to the American Steamship Company's First Annual Report of March 31, 1872:

Silently, but steadily, this new enterprise, which the sages of New York and Boston have so confidently predicted would prove a fiasco, and which others pretended had no existence save on paper, is progressing towards a successful completion, and a few weeks hence we hope to be able to present to citizens and strangers, the novel spectacle, in American waters, of the launch of an American iron steamship, built of American materials, owned by American capital, and to be manned by American seaman.<sup>21</sup>

This Annual Report, so enthusiastically received, stated that

20. Buell, p.115. (Italics are those of Charles H. Cramp.)

21. Philadelphia Commercial List, April 6, 1872. See Appendix B.

7,047 shares at \$100 each had been subscribed for and that the treasury had received the money for nearly all of these shares. Messrs. William Cramp and Sons had been required to furnish a steep bond of \$400,000 for the faithful performance of their contract which represented twenty per cent of the value of the order, itself! As of April 1872 the bond issue still had not been sold completely, but \$1,358,000 of the \$1,500,000 in the Company's hands by that time and a serious campaign to secure a Federal subsidy or mail contract was underway though having met with little success as yet. Herman J. Lombaert was re-elected President and the Board of Directors was increased from ten to eleven members by the addition of Samuel T. Bodine.<sup>22</sup> Mr. Bodine was elected on the basis of a resolution which stipulated that the public shareholders should have a wider representation on the Board of Directors and that the control of the Pennsylvania Railroad over the Company should be lessened, indicating some dissatisfaction with the Railroad's activities in connection with the Line. As it was all money realised from the sale of stock and the bond issue was turned over to the Pennsylvania Railroad Company which was to hold this sum until the ships were accepted and payment due the builders.

An optimistic note appeared on February 24, 1872, one month before the First Annual Report. On that date the Philadelphia Commercial List and Price Current published a feature article on "The New Steamships," which asserted that there could be no doubt that they would be completed within the period limited by the contract. "The ribs of two are already up," the writer remarked, "and we learn that nearly a thousand men are busy at work making that point on our river front (the Cramp

22. Philadelphia Commercial List, April 6, 1872. See Appendix B.



Shipyard) one of special public interest at this time, and giving it a feature of unusual activity."<sup>23</sup> However, in spite of all the high expectations of the owners and builders, the PENNSYLVANIA was not to be launched in the early spring and the long awaited event was not to take place until quite late in the summer. Labor problems, material shortages and a variety of minor irritations resulted in a four month delay. The great iron hull of the first American Line liner, the PENNSYLVANIA, at last went down the ways on August 15, 1872, and all Philadelphia declared a holiday.

The Philadelphia Commercial List and Price Current was beside itself with enthusiasm in its August 17th issue. Under the bold title "Launched" appeared the following article:

Thursday last, we venture to predict, will be an eventful day in the chronology of Philadelphia for years yet unborn. Being the day in which the first steamship of the Philadelphia line was launched from the shipyards of Messrs. Cramp & Sons, at the foot of Beach and Norris Streets, great interest was attached to the event by men of all classes in the community, and it was not surprising that the attendance was immense. The popular curiosity and excitement in the Richmond district (of Philadelphia) ran very high, and in some of the industrial establishments a half holiday was allowed the operatives. The Hall of the Commercial Exchange Association, on Second Street, was also closed, the members having agreed to attend in body, and testify by their presence, as most of them had previously done by more substantial means, their interest in the final success of the great undertaking.

The scene before the launch was exciting in the extreme. The piers, the steamboats, and the smaller boats were all decorated with their best and gayest bunting, and they were all crowded with human beings. All eyes were turned again to the quiescent mammoth on the stocks, decorated with hundreds of streamers, signal flags and other bunting.

23. Philadelphia Commercial List, February 24, 1872.

There lay the mighty monster of the deep awaiting the word that would baptize her in the element where she is hereafter to exist. She looked like an inanimate body, patiently pausing for that breath of life which would perfect, figuratively, the existence of the ship—the vessel destined to bear our flag aloft as the representative of peace and plenty to the lands across the seas.

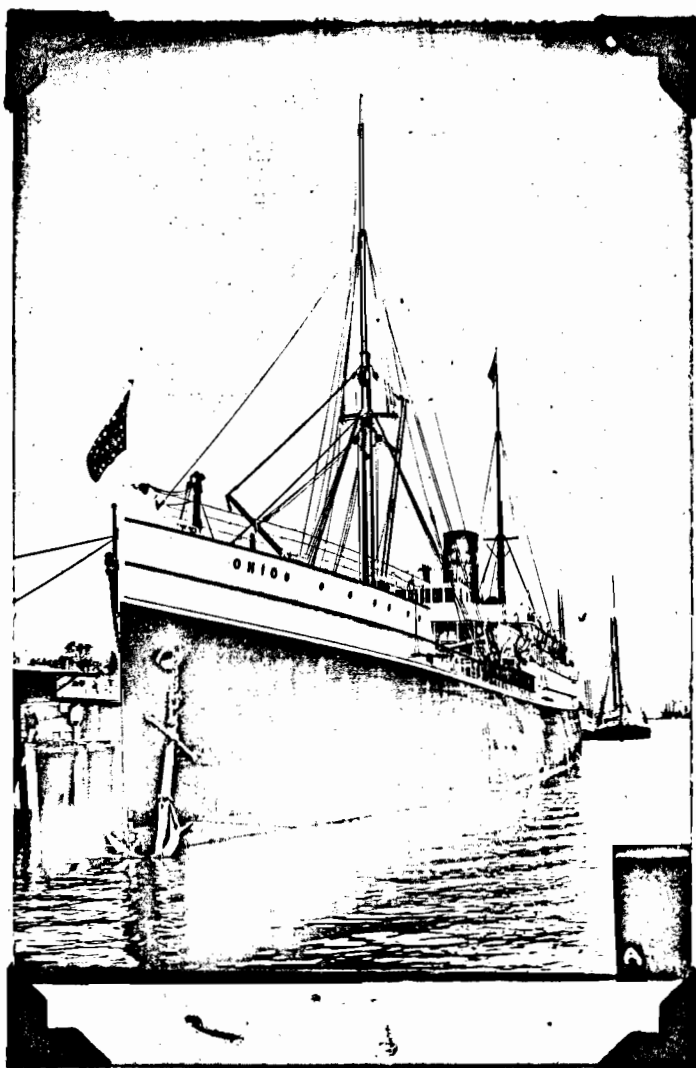
The launching of a vessel, especially one of the dimensions of the PENNSYLVANIA, is a very complex and critical operation, and it was not without some difficulty and danger that her baptism by water was effected. At precisely twelve minutes past ten o'clock the elder Mr. Cramp gave the order to the axeman to cut away the remaining pinions and shores, which was the work of a moment, and then the noble craft started towards her future home. She moved gracefully down the ways for the space of a minute, amidst the cheers of the vast throng, the blowing of a hundred steam whistles, and a salvo of artillery. In a few minutes the noble craft the PENNSYLVANIA was afloat, and she indeed looked like a 'thing of beauty and a joy forever' as her massive form floated on the waters of the Delaware.<sup>24</sup>

The joy over the successful launching of the PENNSYLVANIA must have been tempered in the minds of those who were backing the venture financially by the fact that it took place but two weeks before the complete liner was to have been delivered (September 1, 1872) and that this was obviously impossible. The OHIO followed her sistership down the ways on October 30th with considerable less fanfare, and at that time it was indicated that the maiden voyage of the PENNSYLVANIA was planned for early February, 1873. February came and went as did March without the PENNSYLVANIA sailing, although the third vessel of the Line, the INDIANA, was launched on March 25, 1873.

The Second Annual Meeting of the American Steamship Company stockholders was held on April 7, 1873, and the Annual Report firmly stated "the PENNSYLVANIA will make her trial trip sometime during

24. Philadelphia Commercial List, August 17, 1872. See Appendix C.

**AMERICAN LINE**



**S. S. OHIO**

Representative vessel of the original quartette of the American Line-- the second vessel to be delivered to the Line in 1873.

Statistics: 3,104 tons; 355 feet in length; 43 feet in breadth.

Note: This picture of the OHIO was made between 1884-1886 as the funnel features the black of the International Navigation Company with that Line's distinctive Red Star. This photograph and the others of the OHIO are courtesy of the Steamship Historical Society of American, Inc.

the present month, and will be ready for delivery to the company not later than May 1st."<sup>25</sup> This deadline was to be achieved for all practical purposes as the PENNSYLVANIA ran her trials during the week of May 3, 1873, and took her maiden sailing for Liverpool on May 22, 1873.

During the winter of 1872-1873 a subsidy bill had been prepared by the Board of Directors of the American Steamship Company and placed before Congress by Representative Leonard Myers. The bill authorized the Postmaster General to contract with the American Line for the establishment of an ocean mail steamship service between the United States and England.<sup>26</sup> The measure was referred to the House Commerce Committee where no action was taken on it. The hopes of the backers of the American Line for some form of government assistance were deflated accordingly. The over-all financial picture of the Line, however, was infinitely brighter as far as the bond issue was concerned for \$1,410,000 of the \$1,500,000 had been sold leaving only \$90,000 outstanding.<sup>27</sup> The estimated final cost of the steamers had begun to rise with each week of fitting-out, but for the time being, this was kept as a problem of the management and not openly aired.

At the April 1873 Annual Meeting a new President of the Company was elected in the person of E. C. Knight, a member of the first Board of Directors and one of the Founders of the Line. Mr. Knight had succeeded Washington Butcher upon the latter's death during the year and was re-elected to a full one year term. Hence, the PENNSYLVANIA took her trial trip during the administration of the second President of the American Steamship Company. The Philadelphia Commercial List

25. Philadelphia Commercial List, April 12, 1873. See Appendix D.

26. Philadelphia Commercial List, April 12, 1873. See Appendix D.

27. Philadelphia Commercial List, April 12, 1873. See Appendix D.

and Price Current of May 10, 1873, records the success of the liner's first run with unrestrained praise, stating that the  
**PENNSYLVANIA:**

combines in a remarkable degree, all the qualities desirable in a vessel of her class, being swift, strong, and economical in consumption of coal...Each room is supplied with a hair mattress and long silk-striped terry curtains of the first quality neatly festooned on either side...As an index of the care which has been bestowed on this part of her outfit it may be noticed that each apartment is fitted up in a different material, though uniform in style, thus increasing the attractions of the eye of the visitor without destroying the harmony and symmetry of the whole.<sup>28</sup>

The final step necessary in the organization of the American Steamship Company was the establishment of the Head Offices in the United States and the setting up of the agency arrangements in the United Kingdom. In Philadelphia Mr. Louis C. Madeira was appointed General Superintendent of the Company and opened the Head Offices of the Line at Numbers 237 & 239 Dock Street. The staff consisted of Mr. Madeira, General Superintendent, Mr. R. B. Hancock, Freight Agent, and some ten clerks. In Liverpool the shipping firm of Messrs. Richardson, Spence & Company was retained to oversee the European affairs of the of the Line. Messrs. Richardson, Spence, & Company handled a number of prominent steamship line accounts among which was that of the Inman Line, one of the premier British Liverpool-New York lines which would later figure prominently in the history of the American Line. Towards the end of May 1873 a wide-ranging European publicity campaign was launched to familiarize the public with the services of the new line. Among the attractions of the new line which were stressed was the fact that through connections could be obtained to the interior of the United States on the Pennsylvania Railroad.

28. Philadelphia Commercial List, May 10, 1873.

The Maiden Voyage of the PENNSYLVANIA from the Delaware to the Mersey began May 22, 1873, majestic 3,104-ton liner backed out into the swirling river. The Philadelphia Evening Bulletin of May 21, 1873, carried a detailed and informative account of the passengers and cargo departing on the PENNSYLVANIA.<sup>29</sup> Among the most prominent of the fifty-six cabin class passengers were Major and Mrs. Thomas T. Firth. Major Firth had reserved the first cabin on the liner and was active in the affairs of the Pennsylvania Railroad Company. The greater portion of the cargo shipped on the liner came from firms controlled or owned by the Directors and stockholders of the American Line. The import-export house of E. C. Knight & Company enjoyed the privilege of placing the first cargo in the holds of an American Line ship for Mr. Knight was the President of the Line.

The PENNSYLVANIA with her single towering funnel and four graceful masts must have been a beautiful sight underway for her masts were outfitted to carry full-brig rigging and her sails were used. Unfortunately for the PENNSYLVANIA, the need for her sails was to be proved on her maiden voyage. The Liverpool Journal of Commerce for June 23, 1873, reported:

A few weeks ago the new iron screw steamer PENNSYLVANIA, the pioneer vessel of the American Steamship Company of Philadelphia, arrived in the Mersey from the latter port, after a rather prolonged voyage caused by some of the blades of her propeller getting knocked off.

Things were looking better, though, for the article continued;

Today (Monday) the PENNSYLVANIA sails from Liverpool on her return voyage with a fair cargo and a full complement of passengers.<sup>30</sup>

29. Philadelphia Evening Bulletin, May 21, 1873. See Appendix E.

30. Liverpool Journal of Commerce, June 23, 1873. Courtesy N.R.P. Bonsor.

The initial voyage of the PENNSYLVANIA was followed by that of the OHIO in August and of the INDIANA in October with the ILLINOIS taking her maiden sailing in January 1874.<sup>31</sup>

The financial affairs of the American Steamship Company were not as satisfactory as it had been hoped they would be in the fall of 1873. The PENNSYLVANIA and her sister-ships had been nine to twelve months late in their maiden sailing dates, and even though all were to be in operation by January 1874 the delay had cost the Line dearly in unsustained overhead. In addition to this the Annual Report for 1873 stated that the contract price for the construction of the four steamers, together with the cost of fitting them out, and other expenses of their construction not included in the contract, had far exceeded the aggregate of capital stock and bonded debt.<sup>32</sup> Therefore, it had been found necessary to float a loan from the Pennsylvania Railroad Company to pay the shipyard and to obtain a small measure of working capital. The extra construction costs of the liners had, in fact, exhausted the resources of the Line and had it not been for the munificent backing of the Pennsylvania Railroad Company the enterprise might well have failed then and there.

31. Charles H. Cramp in his essay collection COMMERCIAL SUPREMACY AND OTHER PAPERS (Philadelphia, 1894, p.29) described the four liners as "357 feet long over all and 343 feet between perpendiculars, 43 feet beam, with a tonnage depth of 24 feet, United States measurement, and gross register 3,126 tons (sic). "They were powered with two cylinder compound engines, having piston diameters of 48 and 90 inches with 48-inch stroke and carrying 65 lbs. of steam pressure. They developed about 2,000 horse-power which gave them an average speed of 14 knots."

32. Philadelphia Commercial List, April 11, 1874. See Appendix F.

During the 1870's the Pennsylvania Railroad was associated with another maritime enterprise founded in Philadelphia--the International Navigation Company (Red Star Line) was chartered shortly after the American Line to run a fleet of foreign-flag steamers from Antwerp to Philadelphia and, at first, from Liverpool to Philadelphia. Whether the Red Star Line--as the company is most familiarly known--and the American Line were rivals during the year 1873 will be discussed more fully in the next chapter. In any event, from May through December of that year the Red Star Line ran two British-flag liners, the ABBOTSFORD and the KENILWORTH, in an active Liverpool-Philadelphia service along the same route as the American Line.

Individuals interest in both Lines evidently urged a united operation in December 1873 when the attention of the Directors of the American Steamship Company was called to the desirability of a consolidation of its business with that of the two steamers of the International Navigation Company. The general advantages to be derived by the American Line from such a move were stressed as a weekly service between the two ports, the concentration of the trade under one management at both Philadelphia and Liverpool, and a material economy in the expense of operating the steamers.<sup>33</sup> The negotiations between the owners of the two shipping lines were completed within a month! The firm of Peter Wright & Sons, managers of the International Navigation Company, was retained as general agents for the American Line in Philadelphia and a new contract was obtained from Richardson, Spence & Company of Liverpool, <sup>which</sup> was more favorable to the owners of the American Line.

33. Philadelphia Commercial List, April 11, 1874. See Appendix F.



Both shipping agencies were, also the agents of the International Navigation Company, and both had a multitude of mutual business connections over and above the two **American-owned lines**. The recently opened Head Offices of the American Steamship Company on Dock Street were closed and "Mr. L. C. Madeira, the General Superintendent, Mr. R. B. Hancock, the Freight Agent, and the numerous clerks engaged there...retired to private life."<sup>34</sup> The American Steamship Company's vessels had completed fourteen round-trip voyages by the end of December 1873 and had returned a profit of exactly \$427.20 for their seven months in operations after all expenses had been deducted. The much heralded American Line had not exactly proven to be a gold mine.

In January 1874 the United States Post Office granted the American Steamship Company a mail service between the United States and the United Kingdom. The American Line was to receive both the sea and inland postage for the mail carried by the liners. While this was nowhere near the subsidy which the backers had expected to receive, it did help the financial affairs of the Company.

The winter of 1873-1874 was one of the worst the North Atlantic shipping industry had ever experienced. Hurricane after hurricane howled across the sea lanes with mountainous waves and gale-force winds. The American Line vessels did not escape unscathed, yet none were lost and this in itself was a major accomplishment. The PENNSYLVANIA left Liverpool for Philadelphia on February 21st and soon encountered a particularly violent hurricane which slammed the liner about and caused the crew to exert the utmost effort to keep the vessel under control.

34. Philadelphia Commercial List, January 3, 1874.

During the course of the storm the commander, Captain George Sumner, the first mate, the second mate, and two seaman were swept from the bridge of the plunging liner by gigantic waves and drowned!!! This was a tragedy of momentous proportions for while the loss of a ship's officer at sea did happen occasionally, the crushing loss of five men including the first three ranking officers placed the vessel in a most critical position. What was even worse the third officer, William Rivers, upon whom the command of the liner devolved, remained below decks and refused to accept responsibility for the stricken steamer. Mr. C. L. Brady, a passenger on the PENNSYLVANIA, who had just survived the wreck of the ATLANTIC (1870, 3,707 tons) on which he had been third officer, assumed command of the storm-battered American liner and through excellent seamanship brought the vessel safely through the hurricane. After the storm abated Captain Brady declined to turn the PENNSYLVANIA over to the delinquent third mate and brought the steamer into Philadelphia, himself. When the PENNSYLVANIA was safely berthed and the story was known, the third mate was placed on the "retired list" and Captain Brady was voted gratuity of \$1,000 by the Board of Directors of the American Steamship Company for saving their nearly new \$600,000 passenger liner and its cargo which was probably worth at least another \$250,000. Captain Brady indignantly returned the check and promptly filed a libel suit against the liner for services rendered. A lengthy four month law suit ensued at the end of which Captain Brady received an award of \$4,200 out of which he had to pay his lawyers some \$1,650, ending up with \$2,550 as his recompense for saving nearly \$1,000,000 in private property and several hundred lives from the Atlantic.

The Annual Report of April of April 1874 announced the resignation of Mr. E. C. Knight from the Presidency of the American Steamship Company and from his seat on the Board of Directors. A major realignment of interests was necessitated and Mr. Henry D. Welsh became the third President of the American Line within less than <sup>35</sup> four years. Whether Mr. Knight resigned in opposition to the new management arrangements for the American Line is unknown, but because of the cordial tone of the "resolution of thanks" voted at the Annual Meeting and the fact that there appears to have been no acrimonious debate, it would appear that business pressures caused Mr. Knight to bow out.

During the early months of 1874 the American Line appears to have entered upon somewhat better times. The four members of the original quartet—PENNSYLVANIA, OHIO, ILLINOIS, INDIANA—were all in service and the ABBOTSFORD and KENILWORTH were employed to provide a weekly sailing schedule. The INDIANA departed for Liverpool on February 19th with "thirty-five passengers, a large assorted cargo valued at \$247,854.65 and nine well-filled mail bags." <sup>36</sup> This probably was not a bad cargo for a late-winter sailing when shippers were reluctant to entrust valuable cargoes to vessels on the North Atlantic. Also on March 21, 1874, an announcement was made that the two most recent additions to the fleet—the INDIANA and ILLINOIS—would have an extra deck placed in them at an early date.

The OHIO was badly roughed-up on one of her late winter voyages. While outward-bound to Liverpool she lost two lifeboats and her after wheelhouse was destroyed; coming home a gale set in which damaged her

35. Philadelphia Commercial List, April 11, 1874. See Appendix F.

36. Philadelphia Commercial List, February 21, 1874.

bow.<sup>37</sup> The ILLINOIS made the headlines again by ramming and sinking four canal boats on her way down the Delaware, April 16, 1874. But she was undamaged and continued on to Liverpool.<sup>38</sup>

The summer months brought bigger cargoes and more passengers. The INDIANA arrived from Liverpool on June 8th with over 400 steerage passengers, the largest number yet carried,<sup>39</sup> and on July 16th the OHIO took over 400 passengers to Europe including the members of the Athletic and Boston Baseball Clubs.<sup>40</sup>

The six steamers of the American Line occasionally were not sufficient to provide the weekly sailings, particularly when extensive repairs had to be made. At the same time the ABBOTSFORD and the KENILWORTH occasionally took some of the Red Star Line's Antwerp-New York sailings which further depleted the American fleet. This situation was further aggravated when the ABBOTSFORD was damaged by a collision in the English Channel while on passage from Antwerp to New York, and the Guion Line's MANHATTAN (1866, 2,869 tons) and MINNESOTA (1867, 3,008 tons) were chartered for one voyage each in January and February 1875; the MANHATTAN having just undergone a major reconditioning during which she had been outfitted with compound engines.

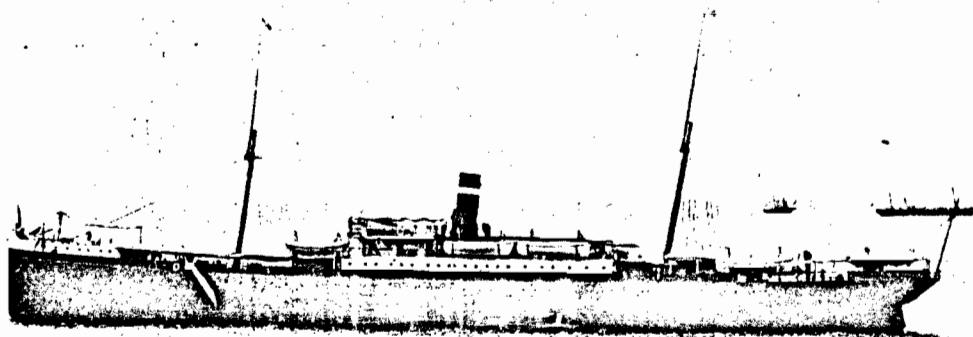
The shipping slump of the mid-1870's was one of the worst in memory. The depression of 1873 shook the financial roots of the American nation to the core and business was slow to recover. It was to take the better part of the next ten years following the collapse for the economy to boom again. This disastrous decade of low freight rates, too little cargo and too much tonnage was what the American

37. Philadelphia Commercial List, March 21, 1874.

38. Philadelphia Commercial List, April 18, 1874.

39. Philadelphia Commercial List, June 13, 1874.

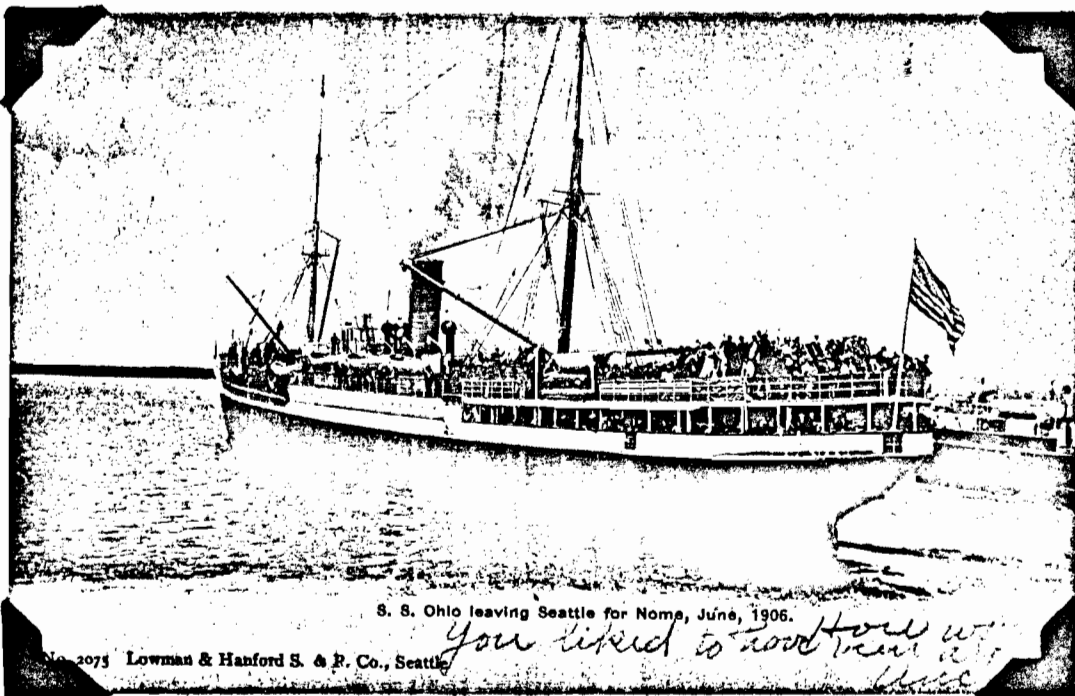
40. Philadelphia Commercial List, July 11, 1874.



S. S. Ohio at Dominica, February 20th, 1896.

S. S. O H I O

Representative vessel of the original American Line quartette of 1873. Maiden Sailing; August 1873. Statistics: 3,104 tons; 355 feet in length; 43 feet in breadth. (These two pictures represent the liner as she appeared in later years, 1896 & 1906.)



S. S. Ohio leaving Seattle for Nome, June, 1906.

*You liked to have had us  
Will*

Line had to face in its early years. A major stockholders' investigation of the Pennsylvania Railroad Company caused its management to be unusually cautious in the handling of the Railroad's finances. On top of this the American Line was plagued with difficulties. In February 1875 as the PENNSYLVANIA was waiting to enter the floating drydock in the Philadelphia Navy Yard in order to replace her propeller, the rods connecting the engines with the pump parted and the drydock went to the bottom of the harbor. The less of the drydock to the Yard was great enough as it was only nine years old and had cost \$400,000,<sup>41</sup> but as the nearest facilities capable of handling the PENNSYLVANIA were in New York, the liner had to miss a sailing so that the propeller could be fitted in New York at substantial extra expense to the Line.

The Annual Meeting of the Company held on April 5, 1875, was not a happy occasion. The American Steamship Company had lost \$48,914.26 during the preceding year and the floating debt of the Company amounted to the outstanding and awe inspiring sum of \$351,656.17, over \$150,000 of which was accounted for in the extra expenses centering around the original quartet.<sup>42</sup> The stockholders were suppose to be consoled by the fact that in a normal year with normal freight rates they would have made a substantial profit. The information was volunteered that the major foreign steamship lines serving New York had lost a total of \$27,000,000 in revenues during 1874. Having made this comparative observation the Annual Report closed on the cheery note that "the next year promises to be a highly prosperous

41. Philadelphia Commercial List, February 13, 1875.

42. Philadelphia Commercial List, April 10, 1875. See Appendix G.

one for our favorite line, and a dividend to the stockholders may be confidently predicted."<sup>43</sup>

Perhaps with this expectation the original quartet of the American Line underwent alterations to expand their first-cabin passenger accommodations from 75 to 100. The OHIO was the first of the liners to resume sailings in April 1875 with what was deemed a major improvement in her earning capacity.<sup>44</sup> The inventive genius of the managers of the American Line, the partners in the shipping firm of Peter Wright & Sons, was forever directed at finding new means <sup>to</sup> augment the freight and, therefore, the revenue of the Company. No venture was considered too great a risk as shipping rates continued to tumble. Out of this search for profitable freight the "Peaches Incident" arose. ~~Many~~ temperatures, gentle rains, and long summer days had combined in just the proper proportions to produce a bumper crop of delicious peaches in the summer of 1875. The markets of Pennsylvania, Delaware and Maryland were flooded with the luscious "cherry ripe" fruit and prices tumbled accordingly. Someone in the firm of Peter Wright & Sons, and it may very well have been Clement A. Griscom, the enterprising, young, junior partner, conceived the idea that it would be wonderful if some of ~~this~~ delicious and over abundant crop could be shipped to the British market where it would bring a fancy price. Refrigeration was in its infancy, but American inventiveness was not. Accordingly a formal announcement was made that on Thursday, August 26th the first shipment of peaches to Liverpool would be made on the liner OHIO.

43. Philadelphia Commercial List, April 10, 1875. See Appendix G.

44. Philadelphia Commercial List, April 24, 1875.

In making the announcement about the proposed shipment of peaches the Line announced:

To keep the fruit in merchantable order, it is proposed to operate by means of fans, forcing air over the ice with such rapidity that the temperature is quickly reduced to ~~the~~ 38 degrees ...No outside air is admitted, and the same air over and over again is passed quickly through and through the fruit with scarcely any moisture, and there being no currents of air of different temperatures there is not over one-third the consumption of ice that attends any other process. The gases emitted from the fruit are said to be drawn to the ice, and that the fruit is always dry and in the best possible state, although kept for weeks in this condition.<sup>45</sup>

This detailed statement by the Agents must have convinced many of the peach growers, for a special eight-car train was run by the Delaware Railroad along its route on Wednesday, August 25th, to pick up crates of peaches for shipment on the liner OHIO the next day. The Philadelphia Commercial List and Price Current for August 28, 1875 noted that some 4,500 baskets of peaches had been shipped on the OHIO and that the shippers awaited the results of this venture with no little anxiety.<sup>46</sup> Two weeks of ominous silence followed. Then on September 11th under the headline "A Complete Failure" the tale was told. "The cargo of peaches recently sent out in the OHIO in her last outward-bound trip has proved a disastrous failure to the Maryland and Delaware shippers. The fruit was carefully selected but the ice gave out on the route and on arrival at Liverpool the former was found to be more like peach butter than the "cherry ripe" fruit which was placed on board." The paper concluded, "we presume that this failure will settle the question for the present at least."<sup>47</sup> The peach growers were most unhappy at the news and there were rumors of damage suits, but one can only guess at the consternation of the

45. Philadelphia Commercial List, August 21, 1875.

46. Philadelphia Commercial List, August 28, 1875.

47. Philadelphia Commercial List, September 11, 1875.



OHIO's Yankee crew when the officers and sailors learned that they had over 4,500 baskets of very rotten fruit to scrape out of the hot iron hold of their ship.<sup>48</sup>

The passenger figures of the American Steamship Company improved slightly in 1875 over 1874 as the Line carried 13,890 passengers against 13,447<sup>49</sup> in the previous year. But this was hardly enough to keep the wolf from the door and it strongly appears as though the Company did not publish its Annual Reports after 1875. No trace of this usually highly publicised event could be found in the 1876 newspapers or in any other years thereafter.

The single loss of an American Line ship occurred July 19, 1875, when the ABBOTSFORD was wrecked on the coast of Anglesey without loss of life. The return sailing of the lost liner was immediately taken by the Inman Line's CITY OF LIMERICK (1855, 2,536 tons). Shortly thereafter the Inman CITY OF BRISTOL (1855, 2,215 tons) was chartered to replace the ABBOTSFORD with the CITY OF NEW YORK (1865, 2,642 tons) taking an occasional sailing. The Inman Line was closely associated with the Liverpool firm of Richardson, Spence & Company, and as a result of this--and of the fact that the Line had considerable excess tonnage as will be discussed further on--Inman liners were to take numerous sailings for the American Line during its early years.<sup>50</sup> With the ABBOTSFORD gone, the 2,554-ton KENILWORTH was replaced, taking her last Liverpool departure on December 1, 1875. The liner chartered to fill out the Company's fleet was the comparatively new, 3,386-ton LORD CLIVE, a most substantial vessel which had already proved herself on

48. Philadelphia Commercial List, September 11, 1875.

49. Philadelphia Commercial List, January 8, 1876.

50. The American Line, the Red Star Line, and the Inman Line were to work more and more closely together and after 1886 were all to be under the same management as will be elaborated upon later.

the North Atlantic. The LORD CLIVE had been built for a Mr. G. M. Papayanni of Liverpool in 1872 and had been trading between Liverpool and Boston.<sup>51</sup> Thus, begins a long association between Mr. Papayanni as a ship owner and the American Line as a charterer, for the LORD CLIVE was to be followed in 1879 by a sister-ship, the LORD GOUGH(1879, 3,655 tons)which had been especially built for the American Line service. Both the LORD CLIVE and the LORD GOUGH eventually were to be purchased<sup>52</sup> by the American Line, but not until the late 1880's.

Despite the fact that "the American Steamship Company never earned the interest on its bonds"<sup>53</sup> the Line continued throughout the period 1875-1884 to charter newly built tonnage(which it appears probably would not have been ordered without a guaranteed charter from the American Line). Thus in line with this "the first of a long series of transactions between the American Line and the British Shipowners Company of Liverpool took place in 1878, when the former chartered the 3,400 ton BRITISH EMPIRE, newly built by Harland & Wolff of Belfast... She was replaced in 1880 by the 3,600 ton BRITISH CROWN, two of whose sisterships, the BRITISH QUEEN and BRITISH KING, were added in 1881, only to be superseded a year or two later by the 3,900 ton BRITISH PRINCE and BRITISH PRINCESS which ran regularly for the Company until 1894.<sup>54</sup> The American Line was usually operating four or five foreign flag vessels in addition to the original quartet during the years 1878-1884, when it supposedly was not making money. Yet it does not seem logical that a company in financial trouble or which is conducting

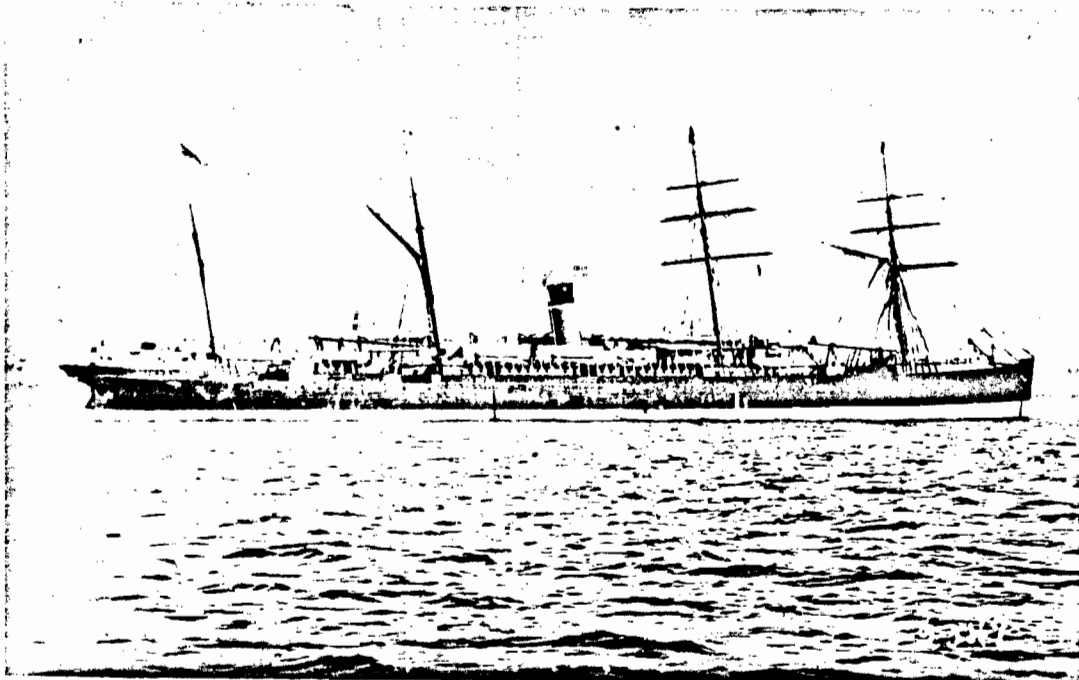
51. Bonsor, p. 308.

52. Bonsor, p. 310.

53. Burgess, p. 271.

54. Bonsor, p. 308. It would be interesting to know the backers of the British Shipowners Company of Liverpool for this concern may very well be backed with American money.

AMERICAN LINE



S. S. BRITISH PRINCESS

Representative vessel of the chartered tonnage of the American Steamship Company. Constructed for the British Shipowners Company, Limited—which may have been owned by the International Navigation Company or that company's British associates. Built in 1882 and chartered in the same year for the American Line Philadelphia-Liverpool service. Statistics: 3,864 tons; 420 feet in length; 42 feet in breadth. The BRITISH PRINCESS ran for the American Line from 1882 until 1894.

Photograph courtesy of the Steamship Historical Society of America.

Note the funnel which features the American Steamship Company colors but with a "Red Star" within the "Keystone" indicative of the fact that this shot was taken between 1884 and 1886.

unprofitable operations would have been able to expand. Although the Pennsylvania Railroad Company was allegedly anxious to rid itself of its American Line connections in the late 1870's, the business could not have been too bad for inspite of the worst depression in American history (1874-1879), the Railroad "purchased the old Navy Yard property...about 23 acres of land and five more under water, with its deepwater wharves, for \$1,000,000, and laid tracks to connect the wharves with the (Railroad's) Delaware Extension. Three new piers and a freight shed were added in 1879."<sup>55</sup> The stated position of the Pennsylvania Railroad Company, and its actual activities do not support each other in regards to the American Line.

In 1878 Tzar Alexander III (1855-1881) of Russia temporarily enters the history of the American Steamship Company. ~~After~~ the Congress of Berlin (1878) European diplomatic relations had markedly deteriorated and relations between the United Kingdom and Russia were especially strained. The uneasy Angle-Russian situation caused the Tzarist Navy to look elsewhere than British yards both for new warships and for ship repair facilities. Accordingly "in the early part of the year 1878 the North German Lloyd steamer CIMERIA<sup>56</sup> appeared at Bar Harbor (Maine) with about sixty Russian officers and about eight hundred men."<sup>57</sup> The officers were royally entertained, but the enlisted men found the American shores singularly inhospitable as they went along the streets of prohibitionist Maine "searching for vodka in vain."<sup>58</sup> The American agency for the Russian Government was the Philadelphia banking concern of Barker Brothers, and Mr. Wharton Barker soon paid

55. Burgess, p. 355.

56. The Norddeutscher Lloyd (North German Lloyd) was always ready to charter an out-dated steamer to the Russians, hence, no particular significance can be attributed to the Russian Naval Delegation arriving on a German liner (CIMERIA: 1867; 3,037 tons). There is an error in the Buell account, however, as the CIMERIA was a Hamburg American Line liner and never sailed for the North German Lloyd.

57. Buell, p. 209.

58. Buell, p. 210.

a call on Charles H. Cramp. "Mr. Barker informed Mr. Cramp that he was delegated to arrange for the conversion and fitting out of a number of auxiliary cruisers for the Russian navy and that he had selected the Cramp Company as the professional and mechanical instrumentality for the purpose."<sup>59</sup> Captain Semetschkin, Chief of Staff of the Grand Duke Constantine, who was General Admiral of the Russian Navy, had arrived independently of the CIMBRIA as head of a committee to watch over the naval project. Augustus Buell, the compiler of Cramp's memoirs relates the background to the incident:

The war between Russia and Turkey was still in progress, and and there was every indication at that moment of British intervention. The purpose of the Russians was to fit out a small fleet of auxiliary cruisers or commerce destroyers to cruise in the North Atlantic in the route of the great British traffic between the United States and England. Their idea was that the fitting out of such a fleet with its threatening attitude toward their North Atlantic commerce might or would deter the British from armed intervention in behalf of the Turks.<sup>60</sup>

The visits of the Russian officers to the Cramp Ship Yard were carried out with the greatest secrecy "and arrangements were made to buy three or four fine and up-to-date merchant ships and to transform them into cruisers..."<sup>61</sup> Charles H. Cramp undoubtedly knew the attitude of the Pennsylvania Railroad Company, namely that of Thomas A. Scett, towards the American Line in the late 1870's, and Cramp naturally enough would have liked to have ships the construction of whose hull and machinery he had supervised with which to supply the Russians in this highly profitable venture. Cramp accordingly made an offer to the American Line President to purchase three of the Line's four ships. A parting of the ways between the management of the

59. Buell, p. 210.

60. Buell, p. 212.

61. Buell, p. 213.

Pennsylvania Railroad Company and that of the American Steamship Company resulted. The President of the American Line, who may have been aide and abetted by the real power in the Line's management, Clement A. Griscom, stalled and "was not prepared to act as promptly as the occasion required..."<sup>62</sup> Hence, the American Line "lost the chance of selling the ships, to the most profound disgust of Mr. Thomas A. Scott, of the Pennsylvania Railroad, which corporation had a paramount interest in the ships and wanted to sell them!"<sup>63</sup> Subsequently Charles H. Cramp purchased three other vessels at substantial prices, and was also given the contract to construct one small cruiser, the ZABIACA, for the Russian Government.

The disgust of Thomas A. Scott undoubtedly was conveyed to Clement A. Griscom. Scott wanted to disentangle the Pennsylvania Railroad Company from the American Line, and Griscom evidently was most willing to take the problem off Scott's hands. After all he had been managing the affairs of the American Steamship Company for five years and, in all likelihood, knew more about them than anyone else. Through his extensive oil and import-export interests, Griscom was rapidly building a fortune to match his already recognized genius in the shipping world.

In 1882, as another severe shipping slump was beginning, the American Steamship Company was forced to dramatically reduce its fleet during the normally high month of July. The ~~steamer~~ BRITISH KING was removed from service and chartered at Liverpool for a voyage to the East Indies. The LORD CLIVE and another of the chartered British fleet, the BRITISH QUEEN, were also removed from service as soon as they reached

62. *Shell*, p. 214.

63. *Shell*, p. 214.

their homeport of Liverpool. The OHIO and PENNSYLVANIA were docked for repairs and possible laying-up as soon as they arrived at Philadelphia. In the brief period of one month the fleet was drastically reduced with the notice that the service "would be expanded as soon as freighting warrants it."<sup>64</sup> Such was not to be the case for many months and in 1884 the Philadelphia backers of the American Steamship Company with the heartfelt endorsement of the Pennsylvania Railroad Company evidently decided that they no longer could continue indulging themselves in such a losing enterprise as the American Line. Accordingly when Clement A. Griscom and his associates in the International Navigation Company made an offer to purchase the ships, name and goodwill of the American Steamship Company, the offer was accepted out of necessity and despair. The International Navigation Company emerged as the owner of both the Red Star Line and the American Line, and Clement A. Griscom was able to consolidate his growing shipping interests most effectively. Little, if anything, was changed as the original quartet of liners continued to fly the American flag and to maintain the Philadelphia-Liverpool service. A period of more frequent interchanging of vessels did occur with American and Red Star ships taking each other's sailings whenever vacancies occurred, but this was the ~~only~~ natural course for the owners to take when one of their lines had a ship available and the other possessed an open sailing date. An arrangement, which at the time seemed to mark a nadir for the American Line, was to lead within ten years to an infinitely greater role for it in the American Merchant Marine.

64. Philadelphia Commercial List, July 1, 1882.

## Chapter II

### THE INTERNATIONAL NAVIGATION COMPANY

The early 1870's was a period of tremendous growth and development on the American economic scene. These fruitful years created the proper climate for the establishment of new business ventures of which the American Steamship Company was only one manifestation. On May 5, 1871, the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania authorized the chartering of the International Navigation Company, less than a month after the approval of the American Steamship Company's charter.

The International Navigation Company was representative of those American shipping interests which wanted to establish a trans-atlantic steamship line, but which did not feel that this could be accomplished successfully under the American flag.<sup>1</sup> These financial interests, therefore, though having their headquarters in the United States built their fleets in foreign yards, operated the vessels under foreign flags, and manned the ships with foreign crews. Such was the case with the International Navigation Company (much more well known as the Red Star Line) whose foreign-flag operations were exactly the opposite of the American Steamship Company's American-flag organization.<sup>2</sup>

The chief backer and General Agent for the International Navigation Company was the firm of Peter Wright & Sons of Philadelphia. This concern was one of the eldest, most respected, and financially prosperous of the Philadelphia import-export houses. The firm controlled a large fleet of sailing ships, many of which were engaged in carrying

1. The cost of building steamships, manning them, and operating them under the American flag was considerably higher than under any other major nation's flag. American workers and sailors were paid more even in 1870 than their European counterparts.
2. The name "Red Star Line" originates from the house flag of the International Navigation Company which was a red star on a white "swallow-tail."



Pennsylvania<sup>oil</sup>, both in barrels and cases, to the European market. The total export of petroleum products in 1871 from the Port of Philadelphia exceeded 54,000,000 gallons valued at \$13,235,805, and Peter Wright & Sons was the largest exporter of oil in the state and the second largest in the nation.<sup>3</sup> The shipping affairs of Peter Wright & Sons were primarily in the energetic and capable hands of a vigorous young man by the name of Clement Acton Griscom.

Griscom was born in 1841 and received the best education that money could obtain for a young Philadelphia gentleman of his day. Hence, when at the age of 16 he began his business career as a clerk with Peter Wright & Sons, he already possessed a solid foundation on which to build. Griscom rapidly came to the attention of the senior partners in the firm and particularly of James A. Wright who evidently encouraged the serious but affable young man. During a period of six years, he rose rapidly through the ranks until he was made a partner in 1863 when only twenty-two. Griscom broadened the interests of Peter Wright & Sons by purchasing sailing ships and the firm prospered accordingly. It seems most likely that Clement A. Griscom, as a partner in Philadelphia's leading import-export house, and Thomas A. Scott, as the dynamic vice-president of the Pennsylvania Railroad Company, knew each other from an early date.<sup>4</sup> Both men were rapidly rising businessmen in their respective fields of the transportation industry, both were renowned for their refined manners and pleasant natures, and both were obsessed with the idea of expanding their companies. It seems probable that around 1870 Griscom and Scott conceived a plan whereby Philadelphia

3. Philadelphia Commercial List and Price Current, January 6, 1872.

4. Thomas A. Scott became vice-president of the Pennsylvania Railroad Company in 1860 at the age of 37. George H. Burgess and Miles C. Kennedy in their CENTENNIAL HISTORY OF THE PENNSYLVANIA RAILROAD COMPANY, 1846-1946 (Philadelphia, 1949) give an authoritative description of Scott's career, pp. 341-383.

could possess not just one but two steamship lines serving major European ports. The Pennsylvania Railroad Company would openly finance one, the American Steamship Company, and work for a Federal subsidy; while Peter Wright & Sons would create another line, the International Navigation Company, and operate it under a foreign flag. Thus, if the government subsidy was not forthcoming and the American-flag venture failed financially all would not be lost. The genius of Clement A. Griscom, testified to by his rapid rise to prominence in maritime affairs, becomes still further apparent when it is realized that when this plan was initiated, he was not thirty!

Mr. Francois Hermans of Antwerp, Belgium, supplied the author with valuable information concerning the early organization of the European division of the International Navigation Company operations through Mr. Paul R. Scarceriaux, Chairman of the Belgian Nautical Research Association. At the time of the formal American chartering of the International Navigation Company, negotiations were underway in Belgium for the establishment of the European base of the proposed line with Mr. John B. vander Becke and Mr. William Marsily, both of whom were prominent Belgian shipowners and both of whom owned prosperous business firms. Mr. vander Becke and Mr. Marsily enjoyed long established business connections with the prominent Philadelphia firm of Peter Wright & Sons.

It was highly desirable, from the standpoint of the Pennsylvania Railroad Company, that a Philadelphia-Continental steamship line be established to complement the prospected Philadelphia-Liverpool service of the American Steamship Company. Since it was thought advisable to operate under a foreign flag due to the lower operating costs, what

better way to accomplish this that through the good offices of the competent J. B. vander Becke of Antwerp, Belgium, who also was interested in expanding into steam. The negotiations were fruitful and the necessary statutes establishing the Belgian based line under the name Société Anonyme de Navigation Belge-Américaine (Red Star Line) were published, September 26, 1872, in the Moniteur Belge, the Belgian Government Gazette. The Founding Officials and First Board of Directors of the new organization were listed as: John B. vander Becke, President; William E. Marsily, Administrator. The following individuals were mandated by Messrs. Peter Wright & Sons, and the International Navigation Company of Philadelphia to represent them on the Board.<sup>5</sup>

The commitment of Thomas A. Scott to the International Navigation Company and to its Belgium subsidiary, the Société A. de Nav. Belge-Américaine, could not be stated more explicitly, and Scott was the vice president of the Pennsylvania Railroad Company which was financing the American Steamship Company. Since the Pennsylvania Railroad was endeavoring to eliminate competition on land as quickly as possible, it is inconceivable that the Railroad or any member of its management would have done anything to encourage competition on the seas.

The idea has been put forth, nonetheless, that the International Navigation Company and the American Steamship Company were competitors. This arises in part from the fact that some newspaper accounts of the period describe the two lines as competitors and from the fact that the Red Star Line ran two chartered steamers, the ABBOTSFORD (1871, 2,554 tons) and the KENILWORTH (1872, 2,595 tons), on the same Liverpool-Philadelphia

as the American Line served from May through December 1873. A composite chart listing the sailing dates of the Red Star Line and the American Line ships for 1873 strongly indicates that the schedules had been coordinated to provide a weekly departure and that there was, in fact, no competition.<sup>7</sup> When this information is considered along with the mutual interest of Thomas A. Scott in both lines, it appears even less likely that the two companies were ever competitors. Another explanation may be that Peter Wright & Sons, which had been running their own fleet of chartered freighters from Philadelphia to Liverpool, may have employed the ABBOTSFORD and the KENILWORTH in a supplementary capacity to that business for awhile. Whatever the explanation, the perfect integration of the sailing schedules of the Red Star and American Lines and the fact that after January 1873 both Lines were to be under the same American management would strongly appear to indicate close connections from a very early stage and probably from the inception of the two steamship ventures.

The Belgian interests in the Société Anonyme de Navigation Belge-Américaine (Red Star Line) remained active throughout the period under consideration. John B. vander Becke was President from 1872 until 1896, when his friend and associate William E. Marsily succeeded him and continued as President from 1896 until 1902 and the founding of the giant International Mercantile Marine Company.<sup>8</sup> John B. vander Becke was a well known Antwerp shipowner as early as 1854, then owning five sailing vessels. During the late 1860's the firm became an important

7. See Table I., page 36.

8. Francois Hermans' Research.

TABLE I

Sailing Schedules  
**AMERICAN STEAMSHIP COMPANY**      **INTERNATIONAL NAVIGATION COMPANY**  
**AMERICAN LINE**                              **RED STAR LINE**

Weekly Sailing Date: Liverpool Departure	Vessel	Vessel
1873 May 10		ABBOTSFORD (M/V)
(June 18) <sup>2</sup>		
June 23	PENNSYLVANIA (M/V)	
June 26		ABBOTSFORD
July 11		KENILWORTH (M/V)
July 30	PENNSYLVANIA	
(August 7) <sup>3</sup>		ABBOTSFORD
(August 13) <sup>4</sup>	(OHIO)	
August 20		KENILWORTH
August 27	OHIO (M/V)	
September 10	PENNSYLVANIA	
September 17		ABBOTSFORD
October 1		KENILWORTH
October 8	OHIO	
October 22	PENNSYLVANIA	
October 29		ABBOTSFORD
November 5 <sup>5</sup>	INDIANA (M/V)	
November 12		KENILWORTH
November 19	OHIO	
December 3	PENNSYLVANIA	
December 10		ABBOTSFORD
December 17	INDIANA	
December 24		KENILWORTH
December 31	OHIO	
1874 January 14	PENNSYLVANIA	
(Peter Wright & Sons assumes management of both Lines)		
January 21		ABBOTSFORD
January 28 <sup>6</sup>	(ILLINOIS) INDIANA	
February 4		KENILWORTH
February 14	ILLINOIS (M/V)	
February 21	PENNSYLVANIA	
February 28	OHIO	
(March 4) <sup>7</sup>		
March 11	ABBOTSFORD (F/V)	
March 18	ILLINOIS	
March 25 <sup>7</sup>	KENILWORTH (F/V)	

- 1 TABLE I. was taken from the complete record of all American and Red Star Lines' sailings compiled by Mr. N.R.P. Benson.
- 2 PENNSYLVANIA was delayed by repairs and did sail until June 23, 1873.
- 3 Liverpool sailing not verified but left Philadelphia on return trip August 28th.
- 4 OHIO was unable to sail, skipped a week and took the next American Line alternate sailing date.
- 5 Originally scheduled for Nov. 19th., but sailing advanced.
- 6 ILLINOIS sailing taken by the INDIANA.
- 7 First American Line sailings of the ABBOTSFORD AND KENILWORTH; initial sailing of the ABBOTSFORD was delayed by one week.

petroleum importer to the Continent; the oil coming from the recently discovered oil fields of Western Pennsylvania. As the firm of Peter Wright & Sons was most active in the oil export business, there were early connections between the Philadelphia concern and its Belgian counterpart. The relationship was natural for Clement A. Griscom's interest in the petroleum transportation business is well known. As a side activity for example, he had been a major organizer of the National Transit Corporation considered in 1894 as having the most extensive pipeline and storage facilities in the world. When J.B. vander Becke entered the oil import business in the 1860's and, thereby, established connections with Griscom of Peter Wright & Sons, the cases of oil were "shipped to Antwerp in American and Belgian sailing ships."<sup>9</sup>

The important interests of vander Becke and Griscom in oil transportation provides a ready explanation for the peculiar construction of the first Red Star liner, the VADERLAND(1873, 2,748 tons). The VADERLAND was designed to carry the unusual and uninviting combination of passengers, general cargo, and petroleum products. The Mitchell's Maritime Register for August 30, 1872, announced that "on the 21st instant there was launched from the iron shipbuilding establishment of Messrs Palmer & Company, Jarrow, an iron screw steamer named the WATERLAND(sic). The steamer is 319 feet in length, 38 feet in breadth, 2,333 tons register, and is built upon the double bottom principle, and divided into several compartments, perfectly air, water and gas tight."<sup>10</sup> The last statement referred to five compartments meant to carry petroleum products and was intended to meet the objections of the

9. Hermans' research.

10. Mitchell's Maritime Register, August 31, 1872. Courtesy N.R.P. Bonsor.

11. W. A. Baker and Tre Tryckare, THE ENGINE POWERED VESSEL, New York, 1965, p. 79.

public that there would be noxious fumes from the cargo. The general belief being that the air currents moving over the ships at sea would be insufficient to carry away the fumes of such a cargo. Another matter of interest regarding the owners of the VADERLAND arises when the reporter notes that the liner is "owned by the Philadelphia Steam Navigation Company Red Star Line, and... intended for the Antwerp and New York trade."<sup>12</sup> Three most significant facts should be noted in this brief remark: (1) the owners are stated as being the Philadelphia Steam Navigation Company Red Star Line and the former is never to be heard from again; (2) the terminology "Red Star Line" is used without any Belgian reference; (3) the VADERLAND was launched thirty-six days before the Société Anonyme de Navigation Belge-Américaine (Red Star Line) officially came into existence. Clement A. Griscom travelled to Europe to complete the negotiations with the Belgian interests and to be present at the launching of the VADERLAND, as it was an event of the first magnitude in the history of the International Navigation Company. Griscom's cablegram "VADERLAND launched today" was published in the August 24, 1872, Philadelphia Commercial List and Price Current three days after the event.<sup>13</sup>

The Pennsylvania Railroad Company at an early date entered into a traffic agreement with the International Navigation Company (Red Star Line). The Railroad "agreed to provide free dockage or wharfage at its piers (and) constructed a new terminal at Girard Point for the use of this line, with warehouses and elevators capable...of handling fifteen million bushels of grain in a year. The company also made large

12. Mitchell's Maritime Register, August 30, 1872.

13. Philadelphia Commercial List and Price Current, August 24, 1872.

additions to its other terminal properties, such as additional coal docks at Greenwich Point, (and) facilities for handling petroleum from shore to ship." Yet inspite of reporting all these activities, the Railroad historians still seem fit to say that "it does not appear that any financial participation was involved." The extensive improvements undertaken by the Pennsylvania Railroad, the guarantee of free dockage or wharfage, and the presence of Thomas A. Scott on the Founding Board of Directors of the Soc. A. de Nav. Belge-Américaine (Red Star Line) surely indicates a strong "financial participation" by the Railroad. Yet for some reason, the Pennsylvania Railroad Company did not wish identification with the major terminal construction program for the Red Star Line. Contemporary accounts make no mention of the Railroad's interest in the matter and a lengthy account of an inspection of the proposed terminal site by officials of the port and a committee representing the Line says nothing more than that satisfactory arrangements have been made with the Pennsylvania Railroad Company, for rapid conveyance of freight to the wharves. The Pennsylvania Railroad Company was keeping as quiet as possible about its financial arrangements with the Red Star Line quite possibly in order that nothing might stand in the way of the proposed American Steamship Company receiving a Federal subsidy.

A most interesting descriptive article on the early nature and aims of the Red Star Line (International Navigation Company) was released by the firm of Peter Wright & Sons and published in the Philadelphia North American United States Gazette of January 13, 1873.

14. Burgess, p. 271.

15. Burgess, p.271.

16. The free dockage guarantee and the construction of new facilities was a most substantial undertaking at a time when a major depression was just beginning and transportation revenues had begun to slump.

17. Philadelphia Commercial List and Price Current, November 16, 1872.



just prior to the maiden voyage of the VADERLAND to Philadelphia:

We publish this morning the announcement by the general agents, Messrs. Peter Wright & Sons of the Red Star Line of regular steamship service between Philadelphia and Antwerp, via Southampton, appointed to carry the Belgian mails. Although sailing under the Belgian flag in consequence of having been built abroad, these steamers are chiefly owned in Philadelphia. They are of iron built in the English style, of the highest class. Their bottoms are double and everything is in accordance with the strictest regulations of English Lloyd's. For passengers the most elegant and comfortable arrangements have been made, the saloon and first class staterooms being upon the main deck amidships, where the least amount of motion is felt, and where the best ventilation is assured.

These steamers will be run regularly. The first of the line, the VADERLAND, Captain Van der Heyden, 2,800 tons, is now ready and will sail from Antwerp January 18th, and from Philadelphia February 15th. The other two, NEDERLAND and SWITZERLAND each 3,000 tons, are building and nearly completed and as soon as they are finished the line will be made fortnightly. Especial attention will be given to the comfort of steerage passengers, as it is the purpose of the general agents to enter vigorously into the competition for the immigrant business. Tickets will be sold here good from Antwerp to all interior points in the United States via the Pennsylvania Railroad and its connections at the lowest prices. This is the arrangement which we have often referred while advocating the establishment of lines of European steamers to be run in connection with the Pennsylvania Railroad, passengers being ticketed (sic) through from any point in the United States to any point in Europe and vice versa. The rates of passage will be found quite reasonable. The eminent firm of E. Von der Beeke (sic!), of Antwerp is the general European agent of the line.

The same arrangement holds good with reference to freight with this line, which will be received at all points in the west and south at the railroad offices, and through bills of lading issued for Antwerp, London, Hull, Leith, Bremen, Hamburg, Rotterdam, Amsterdam and all the prominent points in the interior of Europe. It will, of course, take time to have the people of two continents

(contd.)

appreciate thoroughly the advantages of this wide spread system. But it will work its way as fast as it is felt understood. The people of the interior, south and west, will soon perceive that by this arrangement the steamships sailing to and from Philadelphia are for the benefit of the whole country. Antwerp and Southampton are the most favorable points that could be selected for the trade of London and the south of England on the one hand, and of the Netherlands, Germany, eastern France and Switzerland on the other.

The Liverpool connection already established and soon to be greatly extended would of itself not suffice to enable our foreign commerce to recuperate. It needed a connection like this which had been established by a few prominent citizens under the management of one of the most experienced and enterprising mercantile firms in Philadelphia, and has been arranged in the most careful and comprehensive manner... Hitherto our imports from Belgium, Holland, and Germany have all come through the New York custom house...

A good many years (have passed) since a Philadelphian projected a line of steamers from this point to Antwerp, at which time there were no steamers running thither from New York. But the effort was twenty years ahead of time and meanwhile the connection has been opened with New York...

Although the American Steamship Company was in point of time the initial effort in our steamship movements, the great energy of the founders and managers of the Antwerp Line has enabled them to open the ball... The two Liverpool lines established under foreign auspices in 1872 are still running and are permanent. The Red Star Line to Southampton and Antwerp makes the third and the American Line to Liverpool will be the fourth--all to be running in the coming spring.<sup>18</sup>

The Maiden Voyage of the VADERLAND began January 20, 1873, two days later than expected, and was not without incident. After leaving the port of Falmouth (January 30th), the new liner sailed into a blustery North Atlantic gale which severely delayed her progress and caused her to burn so much fuel that it was necessary to re-coal at Halifax. Leaving there on February 14th the VADERLAND finally arrived at Philadelphia with 105 passengers and a good cargo

18. Philadelphia North American United States Gazette, January 13, 1873.

having taken seventeen days for what was to be a normally ten  
19  
day crossing. N.R.P. Bonsor, eminent British maritime historian,  
reports that she sailed again on February 25th directly for Antwerp  
and that, although no exact details were given, it seems reasonably  
clear that she carried both passengers and what was described as  
20  
'liquid freight.' If the VADERLAND did indeed carry oil on this  
crossing, it was probably to be the only time of her career as the  
American authorities took a dim view of any liner carrying petroleum  
products and passengers. Ordinary merchandise and, perhaps, grain  
appear to have been substituted for "liquid freight" thereafter.  
The VADERLAND was the only Red Star Line vessel in the Antwerp-  
Philadelphia service from January until September 1873 when she was  
joined by the chartered RYDALL HALL(nd., 2,100 tons), and soon  
thereafter by her sistership the NEDERLAND(Maiden Voyage, December, 6,  
1873). The third sistership SWITZERLAND did not take her maiden  
sailing until May 15, 1874, and in the meantime two more vessels  
had been chartered, the CYBELE(1874, 1,980 tons) and COLINA(1873, 2,100  
tons). The ABBOTSFORD and the KENILWORTH had been transferred to the  
American Line early in 1874 and were operating on the Liverpool-  
21  
Philadelphia route as has been previously enlarged upon.

It is to be noted that in connection with the mutual handling of  
the affairs of both Lines by Peter Wright & Sons, after March 1875  
the same general advertisements were run in the newspapers with the  
American Line maintaining the Philadelphia-Liverpool route and the

19. N.R.P. Bonsor, "Red Star of the Western Ocean," Sea Breezes, Vol. 24,  
p. 22.

20. Bonsor, "Red Star of the Western Ocean," p.22. The Philadelphia Commercial  
List of January 21, 1882, announces the sale of VADERLAND which  
"will hereafter be used in the petroleum trade for which she is  
especially fitted." This announcement was six years premature as the  
VADERLAND was not sold until 1888 when she became the French  
GEOGRAPHIQUE.

21. See pages 17, 20, 34, 35, 36.

Red Star Line the Philadelphia-Antwerp service. Abandonment, or rather consolidation, of the Liverpool-Philadelphia service by the Red Star Line gave the Line the opportunity to expand and to undertake a New York-Antwerp route. This development of far reaching importance for the International Navigation Company is reported by Mr. N.R.P. Bonsor in the following words:

On March 11, 1874,... a new service between Antwerp and New York was inaugurated by the 1,980-ton CYBELE, which was chartered from the Donaldson Line... The second New York sailing was undertaken by the SWITZERLAND, a newly completed sister-ship of the VADERLAND, on April 15, 1874, and was to have been followed a month later by the NEDERLAND but, instead, (another chartered vessel) the COLINA was substituted.<sup>22</sup>

The Belgian government with the encouragement of King Leopold offered a small subsidy for the Antwerp-New York service. The contract stipulated a mail subvention of \$100,000 for ten years with port privileges and wharfage worth \$30,000 more, for a line of fourteen-day steamers.<sup>23</sup> This arrangement was most acceptable because the measure was especially tailored for the Société Anonyme de Navigation Belge-Américaine (Red Star Line) by the Royal Government of Belgium. The VADERLAND and NEDERLAND jointly handled the Antwerp-Philadelphia service until well into the 1880's.

During its early years the Red Star Line was plagued with ship difficulties. The NEDERLAND was referred to on at least one occasion by the Philadelphia Commercial List and Price Current as an "ill-fated steamer."<sup>24</sup> This report unfortunately was made at a time when the Line was striving to build up its passenger business--hardly a welcome

22. Bonsor, "Red Star of the Western Ocean," p. 25. Both the CYBELE and the COLINA were to be returned to the Donaldson Line after a few voyages.

23. Winthrop L. Marvin, THE AMERICAN MERCHANT MARINE, New York, 1902, p. 418.

24. Philadelphia Commercial List, April 18, 1874.

label to be bestowed on a new passenger liner of any company. This outburst was caused by a voyage of the NEDERLAND from Antwerp which had taken over two months. The NEDERLAND had left Antwerp for Philadelphia on a regular sailing. A few days out, however, she suffered unspecified damages which made it necessary for her to put into Liverpool for repairs. When these were completed the liner resumed her crossing only to go ashore on the Brigantine Shoals near Atlantic City, April 16, 1874, less than a day's journey from port. The NEDERLAND was later refloated within a week<sup>with</sup> what the newspaper described as only "superficial" damage—a damage so "insignificant" that it was to take over three months to repair it and the liner was unable to resume sailings until August 29. This disaster substantially disrupted the Red Star Line sailing schedule during the major part of the "high season" and undoubtedly hurt both the infant company's prestige and earnings. But in spite of this inauspicious start, the NEDERLAND was to participate in her share of sea rescues. Captain James took his liner to the aid of the wrecked New Brunswick schooner LOUISA D. on March 5, 1875, and saved the crew of the stricken sailing ship. In acknowledgment of this activity, Captain James and his Chief Engineer were presented with "handsome gold watches" by the Canadian Government.

25. Philadelphia Commercial List, April 25, 1874.
26. Philadelphia Commercial List, August 24(1), 1874.
27. The NEDERLAND, according to N.R.P. Benson was to have taken the third sailing (May 1874) in the International Navigation Company's new New York-Antwerp service, but her grounding and the extensive repairs which followed made this impossible. As an example of the errors possible in the newspaper accounts of maritime affairs, the Philadelphia Commercial List for May 2, 1874, indicates that the VADERLAND was "beached on the Jersey Flats near Kaighn's Point to repair her steering apparatus" (April 28, 1874) when in reality she sailed on May 2 and the reporter probably means the NEDERLAND which was repairing at Kaighn's Point.

The early history of the International Navigation Company (Red Star Line) saw two major ship losses. One of these, the ABBOTSFORD, occurred in July 1875<sup>28</sup> sometime after the transfer of the liner to the American Line. Her sistership, the KENILWORTH, was to meet an equally untimely end. Just before the start of her eighth voyage her name was changed to RUSSLAND, which probably indicates that the vessel had been purchased, and twelve days later<sup>29</sup> on March 17, 1877, she went ashore at Long Beach, New Jersey. Extensive efforts to refloat the liner were unsuccessful and she was finally declared a total loss. This left the Red Star New York service with only the SWITZERLAND and a consort was urgently needed. Accordingly the International Navigation Company chartered the JAVA (1865, 2,866 tons) which after three voyages was renamed the ZEELAND, thereby bringing her name into line with the rest of the fleet.<sup>30</sup>

The construction of the new International Navigation Company facilities at Girard Point near the confluence of the Delaware and Schuylkill Rivers proceeded rapidly. The Philadelphia Commercial List and Price Current for February 13, 1875, carried a magnificent spread on the newly developed terminal facilities including a detailed picture-engraving covering the width of the paper. The main building of the terminal complex was described as being 200 feet long, 100 feet wide, and 115 feet high. "It contained 36 bins with a capacity of 15,000 bushels each, and 23 bins with a capacity of 10,000 bushels each. Twelve elevating machines were capable of lifting 4000 bushels of grain per hour and 24 railroad

28. ABBOTSFORD was wrecked in Cummoes Bay on the Anglesey Coast, on Wednesday night, July 21, 1875, and sank July 23, 1875, according to the Philadelphia Commercial List of July 24, 1875.

29. Bonsor, "Red Star of the Western Ocean," pp. 25-26.

30. JAVA was originally a Cunard liner. The names of all Red Star liners contained the suffix "land."

cars could be unloaded at once." <sup>31</sup> This was extremely big business. The surrounding wharves could accommodate six ocean-going steamers or twelve sailing vessels. The first vessel to use the new terminal was the VADERLAND when she loaded 20,000 bushels of Red Winter Wheat in October 1874 for delivery in Antwerp.

Operations at Philadelphia were prosperous enough for the International Navigation Company to employ a small fleet of tugs, the JUNO, HERCULES, and NEWCASTLE, to facilitate movement of their steamers and those of the American Steamship Company at Philadelphia. The JUNO and HERCULES were new construction from the Wood and Dialogue's <sup>32</sup> Works while the NEWCASTLE was only two years old. The three tugs were placed under the management of Peter Wright & Sons and with the number of vessels handled by this firm it may be assumed that they rarely lacked business.

The Red Star Line was not without competition in the <sup>33</sup> Belgian-American trade. The White Cross Line <sup>34</sup> and the Engels Line, while providing some challenge to the Societe Anonyme de Navigation Belge-Americaine (Red Star Line), were never a serious threat since neither possessed the strong financial resources of the latter. The strength of the International Navigation Company is shown by the fact that in the midst of the shipping depression of the late 1870's the Red Star Line was able to order two liners far larger than any previously

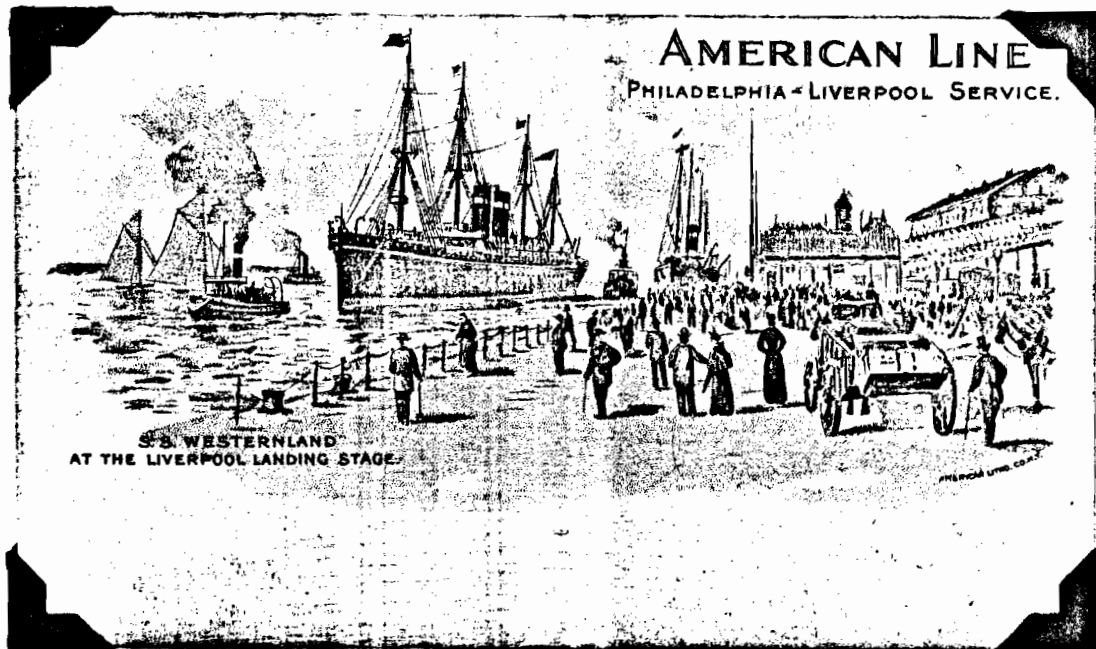
31. Philadelphia Commercial List, February 13, 1875.

32. Philadelphia Commercial List, September 2, 1876.

33. The White Cross Line was founded in 1865 by Steinmann & Co. of Antwerp and ran a passenger-freight service to New York from Antwerp until 1884 when the passenger business was discontinued. (N.R.P. Bonsor, NORTH ATLANTIC SEAWAY, Prescott, Lancashire, 1955, pp.276-278.)

34. Engels Line was founded in 1875 for the purpose of operating a transatlantic steamer service. The passenger carrying business was operated until 1888 when it was discontinued. At either this time or slightly before a working agreement had been reached with the White Cross Line for a joint freight service between Antwerp and New York. (Bonsor, NORTH ATLANTIC SEAWAY, PP. 330-331.)

INTERNATIONAL NAVIGATION COMPANY  
RED STAR LINE



S. S. WESTERNLAND

Appropriately named for a liner that was suppose to attract the immigrant trade, the WESTERNLAND was built in 1883 at Birkenhead. She ran for the Red Star Line from 1883 to 1901 when she was transferred to the American Line. The postcard dates from the early days of the WESTERNLAND's American Line service which ran from 1901 to 1912 when the liner was scrapped.

Statistics: 5,736 tons; 440 feet in length;  
47 feet in breadth. Capable of 14 knot crossings.



owned by the Company. The new vessels commissioned in 1880 were the 403-foot BELGENLAND and RHEYNLAND, each fifty feet longer than the chartered PERUSIA which had been the largest liner in the fleet up to that time. Both vessels were built by the Barrow Shipbuilding Company and proved valuable additions to the Line. Lack of tonnage had prohibited the development of a weekly New York-Antwerp service, which the new liners made possible. Shortly thereafter, the occasional service to Philadelphia was increased to a regular fortnightly departure with the addition of four other liners between 1881 and 1883: WAESLAND(1867, 4,752 tons); PENNLAND(1870, 3,760 tons); <sup>35</sup> MOORDLAND (1883, 5,212 tons); and WESTERNLAND(1883, 5,736 tons). The first two vessels were purchased, while the last two were new construction for the Line and marked major increases in the size and quality of the fleet. The last named, WESTERNLAND, had two distinctive features in her construction. She was built in the Birkenhead Drydock and floated out at her launching and as the first steel unit of the fleet marked the changeover from iron to steel in ship construction for the International Navigation Company(Red Star Line). The WAESLAND was lengthened from 358 feet to 435 feet(1880) probably before beginning her Red Star service, and the PENNLAND received a new spar deck in 1888 which increased her <sup>36</sup> tonnage from 3,428 to 3,760 tons. From 1878 through 1882 the SWITZERLAND, ZEELAND, WAESLAND, and BELGENLAND generally were assigned to the New York-Antwerp service with the VADERLAND and NEDERLAND handling the Philadelphia traffic with some assistance from various units of the fleet.

35. WAESLAND was built in 1867 as the Cunard RUSSIA and in 1869 held the record for the fastest Eastbound passage. She was purchased by the Red Star Line in 1880, reconstructed and commissioned in 1881. PENNLAND was built in 1870 as the Cunard ALGERIA ; received compound engines in 1881 and was commissioned in 1882.(Bonsor, NORTH ATLANTIC SEAWAY, pp. 285 & 291.)
36. Bonsor, "Red Star of the Western Ocean," p. 27.

Mr. N.R.P. Bonsor states: "It is evident that from the early days the New York service was regarded as the more important, and for this reason was not only the more frequent, but usually had the newest and best ships." <sup>37</sup> The Belgian mail subsidy probably had considerable influence on the development of the two services. Significant indication of the progress of the International Navigation Company (Red Star Line) between 1873 and 1883 lies in the fact that the two new liners of 1883 had a greater tonnage than the combined weight of the four original vessels, although their speed was only slightly greater. <sup>38</sup> Along with the sensational development of the Red Star Line's New York-Antwerp traffic, the Philadelphia trade also grew substantially. In 1880 the International Navigation Company landed some 30,000 immigrants in Philadelphia and in 1881 about 40,000 for a significant increase in this profitable trade. <sup>39</sup> The International Navigation Company (Red Star Line) service had grown immensely in the eight years since its inception. In 1874 the Line had carried a total of 3,174 passengers and in 1875 this number had more than doubled to 7,093 which was still far short of the 40,000 persons landed a short ~~some~~ years later. <sup>40</sup> The direct Antwerp-Philadelphia sea route with the Pennsylvania Railroad Company connections to the interior of the United States was certainly popular.

37. Bonsor, "Red Star of the Western Ocean," p. 28.

38. The tonnage figures of the six liners are as follows:

1873	VADERLAND	2,748 tons	1883	NOORDLAND	5,212 tons
	KENILWORTH	2,595		WESTERNLAND	5,736
	ABBOTSFORD	2,554		Total	10,948 tons
	NEDERLAND	2,839			
	Total 10,736 tons				

39. Philadelphia Commercial List, January 28, 1882.

40. Philadelphia Commercial List, January 8, 1876.

In 1884 the Red Star Line was prospering and the resources of the International Navigation Company were large enough for Clement A. Griscom and his associates to purchase the American Steamship Company and, thereby, to consolidate their shipping interests. The Pennsylvania Railroad Company had wanted to rid itself of its American Line entanglements for at least five years and appears to have been most happy to dispose of its interest. A major historical misconception has arisen concerning the International Navigation Company's purchase of the American Line as it has been frequently been made to appear that the American Line was sold to foreign interests. This misconception arises when the International Navigation Company (Red Star Line) is considered to be a foreign company. It has been established that this is not the case and that the International Navigation Company was almost totally American owned. With this in mind, then, the sale of the American Steamship Company to the International Navigation Company can in no way be considered to have been to foreign interests. The basic management, services and name of the Line remained the same. The only significant difference was that Clement A. Griscom and his maritime associates rather than the Pennsylvania Railroad were behind the American Line. Few grounds if any exist for the much lamented demise of the so-called "Old American Line" as it never did die. What occurred in 1884 was nothing more than the re-organization of a diversified shipping enterprise for the purpose of eliminating a reluctant backer, the Pennsylvania Railroad Company, and some other Philadelphia interest which felt that they could not continue operating the American Line without the Railroad's support. The American Line continued to exist and to operate a Philadelphia-Liverpool service just as it had since its inception, the only novelty

being a greater flexibility of tonnage which found American Line liners sailing for the Red Star Line and vice versa. The International Navigation Company of Philadelphia assumed the role of the American holding company for both the American Steamship Company (American Line) and the Societe Anonyme de Navigation Belge-Americaine (Red Star Line). The development and expansion of Clement A. Griscom's American shipping interests did not stop with the adjustments of 1884. The backers of the International Navigation Company were laying the groundwork for an even more important acquisition—the Inman Line.

TABLE II

1

INTERNATIONAL NAVIGATION COMPANY - 1886 FLEET LIST

SOCIETE ANONYME DE NAVIGATION BELGE-AMERICAINE (RED STAR LINE) 1886

<u>Year Joined Fleet</u>	<u>Liner</u>	<u>Tonnage</u>
1873	VADERLAND	2,748
1873	NEDERLAND	2,839
1874	SWITZERLAND	2,816
1878	ZEELAND <sup>2</sup>	2,866
1879	BELGENLAND	3,692
1879	RHYNLAND	3,689
1881	WAESLAND <sup>2</sup>	4,752
1882	PENNLAND	3,760
1883	NOORDLAND	5,212
1883	WESTERLAND	5,736

average age: 7.5 years; Number of liners, 10; Total tonnage 38,110 tons

AMERICAN STEAMSHIP COMPANY (AMERICAN LINE) 1886

<u>Year Joined Fleet</u>	<u>Liner</u>	<u>Tonnage</u>
1873	PENNSYLVANIA	3,104 <sup>3</sup>
1873	OHIO	3,104 <sup>3</sup>
1873	ILLINOIS	3,104 <sup>3</sup>
1874	INDIANA	3,104 <sup>3</sup>
1875	LORD CLIVE <sup>4</sup>	3,386
1879	LORD GOUGH <sup>4</sup>	3,655
1880	BRITISH CROWN <sup>4</sup>	3,563
1881	BRITISH QUEEN <sup>4</sup>	3,558
1881	BRITISH KING <sup>4</sup>	3,559
1882	BRITISH PRINCE <sup>4,5</sup>	3,871
1882	BRITISH PRINCESS <sup>4,5</sup>	3,864

average age: 8.8 years; Number of liners, 11; Total tonnage 37,872 tons

1. International Navigation Company fleets before the acquisition of the Inman Line (1886).
2. Purchased liners.
3. A tonnage of 3,126 tons is sometimes given for these liners.
4. Chartered liners flying the British flag.
5. Replaced two of the older units of the fleet for a time and, therefore, not all of the vessels in the lists may be considered to have run for both lines continuously from the date at which they first joined the fleet. However, all were sailing regularly for the American Steamship Company during the year 1886.

The Inman Steamship Company Limited had been operating an important Liverpool-New York express service since 1856. The line, however, had experienced increasingly more difficult times after 1870. The introduction of the Elder compound engines for steam propulsion in the early 1870's almost immediately had made all first-class tonnage obsolete. ~~This was a serious~~ enough blow to the fortunes of the Inman Line, but almost immediately upon its heels came the shock of having a major new rival for the Liverpool-New York trade begin operations. The Oceanic Steam Navigation Company (White Star Line), greatly worried all the established Liverpool-New York Lines. The two most severely affected were the Inman Line and the Cunard Line, for they suddenly faced the necessity of building new tonnage or going out of business. Mr. N.R.P. Bonsor observes of the White Star Line:

no new line...ever appeared at a more opportune time or had a greater effect on those already in existence. The White Star ships were amongst the largest and fastest afloat and offered new standards of comfort for passengers ... The entire fleets of all the competing lines--Inman included--were completely outdated.

Just at the time that the new Inman liners were ready a major shipping depression began and became steadily worse. To make matters worse the establishment of the Red Star Line 's Antwerp-New York service made the Inman Line's Antwerp-Liverpool feeder service of little use and robbed the Inman Line of still another source of revenue. Two relatively new vessels, the CITY OF DURHAM and CITY OF HALIFAX, which had recently been built for the Antwerp-Liverpool service were withdrawn before they had even begun to compensate the Line for the

the expense of their construction. The financial distress of the once-celebrated Inman Line forced the owners to form a public company with William Inman at its head in 1875 in an effort to provide the extra capital that was so badly needed. The competition to have in service the fastest ship in the North Atlantic was murderous. The White Star ADRIATIC(1872, 3,888 tons) made a record passage in May 1872; and it was two years before the Inman Line could launch an appropriate challenger. The CITY OF BERLIN(1875, 5,491 tons) which entered service on April 29, 1875, at last slammed across for a record passage towards the end of the year. The White Star Line countered, however, by introducing its new GERMANIC(1875, 5,008 tons) which took her Maiden Voyage within one month of the CITY OF BERLIN, May 20, 1875.<sup>3</sup> Soon in February 1876 the GERMANIC reaped home with the "Elue Riband" and her sistership, the BRITANNIC(1874, 5,004 tons) captured the Westbound title in the following November. The White Star Line, thereafter, was the proud possessor of both titles for the fastest Atlantic crossings.

4  
TABLE III

RECORDS OF THE INMAN LINE AND WHITE STAR LINE RECORD BREAKERS

WESTBOUND RECORD PASSAGES						
Vessel	Date	Line	Time: D. H. M.			Speed
ADRIATIC	May 1872	White Star	7.	23.	17.	14.52
CITY OF BERLIN	Sept. 1875	Inman	7.	18.	2.	15.21
BRITANNIC	Nov. 1876	White Star	7.	13.	11.	15.43
GERMANIC	Apr. 1877	White Star	7.	11.	37.	15.76
EASTBOUND RECORD PASSAGES						
CITY OF BRUSSELS	Dec. 1869	Inman	7.	22.	0.	14.66
BALTIC	Jan. 1873	White Star	7.	20.	39.	15.09
CITY OF BERLIN	Oct. 1875	Inman	7.	15.	28.	15.37
GERMANIC	Feb. 1876	White Star	7.	15.	17.	15.79
BRITANNIC	Dec. 1876	White Star	7.	12.	47.	15.94

The Inman Line, vanquished by the record crossings of the

White Star BRITANNIC and GERMANIC, was not to have a record breaker for

2. Bonsor, "The Inman Story—Peak and Decline," p. 395.  
 3. White Star BRITANNIC entered service before the GERMANIC but the latter broke the first record.  
 4. Bonsor, NORTH ATLANTIC SEAWAY, pp. 590-592.

another ten years. By the spring of 1876 the shipping depression had become so severe that the Inman and White Star Lines, inspite of their bitter rivalry, were forced to come to a working agreement on their sailings before they bankrupted each other.<sup>5</sup> This agreement, which markedly reduced the sailings of the two Lines, left Inman with some free tonnage. The result of this was that the CITY OF LIMERICK(1855, 2,536 tons) and the CITY OF BRISTOL(1855, 2,655 tons) were chartered to the American Line for a few voyages. In fact, the CITY OF LIMERICK was to spend the better part of the period from 1876-1879 under charter to the American Steamship Company. Both the American Line and the Inman Line had close connections with the Liverpool firm of Richardson, Spence and Company which meant that chartering arrangements could be readily handled.

The years 1879-1883 saw a major rationalization of the Inman fleet. In 1879 the Line owned an even dozen steamers of which only six could be regularly employed with profit, and the time was long overdue when the older units should have been sold or scrapped. By 1883 Inman owned seven aging liners, though much of the older and more expensive<sup>6</sup> to operate tonnage had been disposed of in one way or another. The commissioning in 1879 of the record-breaker ARIZONA(1879, 5,147 tons) by the American-owned, British-flag Guion Line forcefully brought home the need for a new vessel if the Inman Steamship Company was even to hold its own. Before a decision was reached on the design of the new liner, the first steel passenger liner took her maiden North Atlantic sailing. The BUENOS AYREAN(1880, 4,005 tons) was commissioned for the

5. Bonsor, "The Inman Story--Peak & Decline," p. 395.

6. TABLE IV on page 55 illustrates the "rationalization" of the Inman fleet between 1879 and 1884.



TABLE IV<sup>1</sup>

INMAN STEAMSHIP COMPANY LIMITED FLEET

1879 - 1884

<u>Vessel</u>	<u>Year Built</u>	<u>Year Acquired</u> <sup>2</sup>	<u>Tonnage</u>	<u>Status</u>
CITY OF BRISTOL	1855	1860	2,215	Sold 1880
CITY OF LIMERICK	1855	1863	2,536	Sold 1880
CITY OF LONDON	1863	1863	2,560	Sold 1879
CITY OF NEW YORK	1865	1865	2,642	Sold 1883
CITY OF PARIS	1866	1866	2,556	Sold 1883
CITY OF ANTWERP	1867	1867	2,391	Sold 1879
CITY OF BROOKLYN	1869	1869	2,911	Sold 1879
CITY OF BRUSSELS	1869	1869	3,747	Sank after collision in the Mersey Jan. 7, 1883. Ten lives lost.
CITY OF MONTREAL	1872	1872	4,451	In Fleet 1884
CITY OF CHESTER	1873	1873	4,566	In Fleet 1884
CITY OF RICHMOND	1873	1873	4,607	In Fleet 1884
CITY OF BERLIN	1875	1875	5,491	In Fleet 1884
CITY OF ROME	1881	(1881)	8,415	Rejected by the Line as unsatisfactory and returned to builders.
BALTIC	1873	(1883)	3,707	Chartered
CITY OF CHICAGO	1883	1883	5,202	In Fleet 1884

1. TABLE IV was compiled from the Inman Steamship Company Fleet List of Mr. N.R.P. Bonsor, NORTH ATLANTIC SEAWAY, pp. 68-71.
2. The CITY OF BRISTOL originally ran under the name ETNA and was not renamed CITY OF BRISTOL until 1871.

Allan Line and provided an excellent working example of the advantages steel possessed over iron. A ship produced of steel was not only stronger, but could provide a far greater cargo and passenger capacity than a similar vessel of iron. Hence, Inman decided to take the plunge and ordered a steel liner of some 8,000 tons from the Barrow Shipbuilding Company of Scotland.

The builders were almost immediately struck with the problem of how to obtain enough of the precious steel needed to construct the large liner that Inman had ordered. The relatively new metal was in much too short supply for Barrow's to fulfill the contract in anything like a reasonable time. As a result the proposition was put to the Inman management as to whether they wanted an iron vessel within a short period of time, or preferred to wait several years for the proposed steel liner. Knowing that they could not wait several years while their opposition steamed away with the Company's trade, the Line grudgingly agreed to the construction of an iron steamship. This work proceeded rapidly and on June 14, 1881, the new liner was launched as the CITY OF ROME. In evaluating the appearance of the new liner, Mr. N.R.P. Bonsor is absolutely correct when he states that "opinion among shiplovers has been almost unanimous that she was the most stately and well-proportioned steamship ever built."<sup>7</sup> Certainly the CITY OF ROME must have been a glory to behold. The clipper-bowed liner possessed the lines of a thoroughbred racer and her superstructure was crowned by three stately slender funnels and four evenly-spaced pole masts. When commissioned with a tonnage of 8,415 tons, a length of 560 feet, and a breadth of 52 feet, the CITY OF ROME was the largest regular commercial liner in the world.<sup>8</sup>

7. Bonsor, "Inman Story—Peak and Decline," p. 399.

8. The GREAT EASTERN (1860, 18,915 tons) would continue to be the largest steamship in existence until she was scrapped in 1888.

Unfortunately beauty was not enough for the new CITY OF ROME.

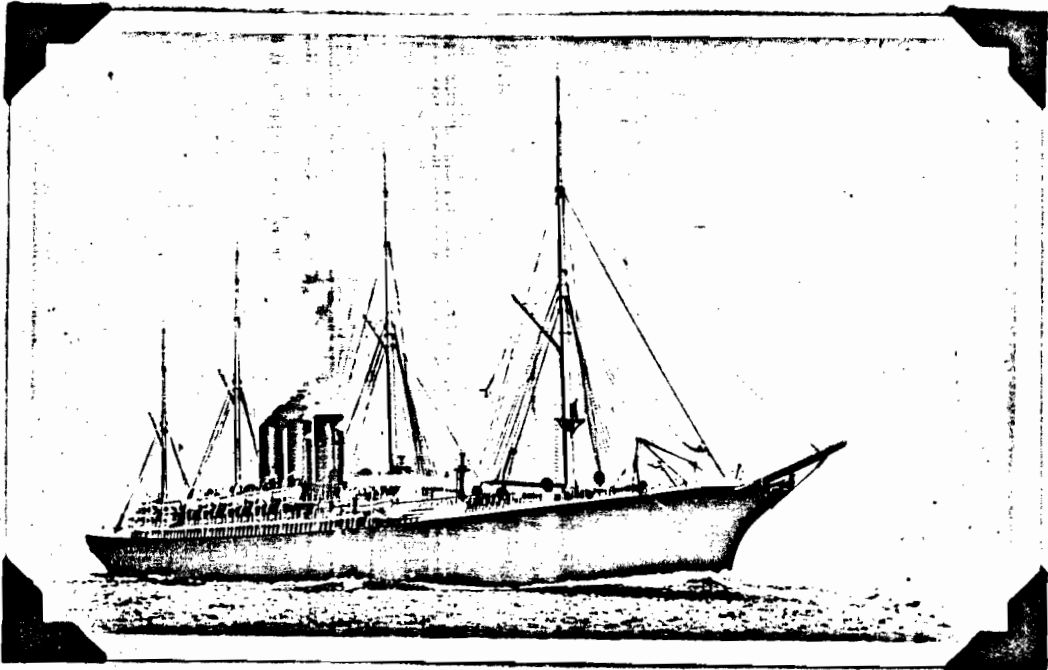
On her Maiden Voyage, October 13-22, 1881, she plowed from Queenstown to New York, taking over two days longer than the ARIZONA which she had been built to beat! This was a disastrous performance for a liner upon which the Inman Steamship Company had staked everything. When the CITY OF ROME took a day longer than the ARIZONA to steam home, the disaster became a catastrophe. The new liner promptly underwent a major six-month overhaul and then took four more voyages for the Inman Line.<sup>9</sup> In the middle of August 1882 the beautiful CITY OF ROME was thrown back on her builders in disgust by the Inman Line. The fact that the liner had lost one-third of her cargo capacity through the use of iron instead of steel in her construction and that a new record crossing by the ARIZONA was so speedy that the CITY OF ROME could not hope to beat it were probably the primary reasons for the rejection of the new liner.<sup>10</sup>

On July 3, 1881, the management of the Inman Steamship Company was weakened by the death of the founder of the Line, William Inman. Fortunately Inman died just a few days after the launching of the CITY OF ROME and, therefore, the great shipping man never lived to know of the liner's shortcomings. The rejection of the CITY OF ROME after five voyages, however, may be regarded as a somewhat hasty action on the part of the management of the Inman Line. Greater consideration might well have been given the vessel if William Inman had been alive, for the CITY OF ROME would probably have been an asset to the aging Inman fleet even if she was not a record-breaker; but the liner was never to have the opportunity. The CITY OF ROME was turned over to the Anchor Line by her builders as the owners of the Anchor Line had

9. Bonsor, "The Inman Story—Peak and Decline," p. 400.

10. Bonsor, "The Inman Story—Peak and Decline," p. 401.

## INMAN STEAMSHIP COMPANY LIMITED



### S. S. CITY OF ROME

The CITY OF ROME probably ranks as the most glorious failure in the history of the trans-atlantic steamship industry. The liner was constructed by Barrow for the Inman Line in 1881 but because of a number of reasons--- not the least of which was her inability to make a record-breaking crossing---she was returned to her builders. The CITY OF ROME was the most beautiful of the three funnel liners and, perhaps, the most beautiful trans-atlantic liner ever built. This particular shot is from the collection of the Anchor Line Limited and shows the liner in Anchor colors.

Statistics: 8,415 tons; 560 feet in length; 52 feet in breadth. Capable of 16 knot crossings.

Photograph courtesy of the Anchor Line.

a substantial interest in the Barrow Shipbuilding Company.<sup>11</sup> The Anchor Line was to operate the CITY OF ROME for the rest of the liner's lifetime until she was finally scrapped in 1902.

The Inman Line carried a sizable portion of the Liverpool-New York passenger trade in the mid-1880's. "During 1886 they landed 5,705 cabin and 25,659 steerage passengers at New York in the course of 52 voyages—almost the same as the White Star total and appreciably higher than the Guion Line's."<sup>12</sup> The Inman liners were all middle-aged as ships went and far too old for a company supposedly running a first-class service. Their crossing times were far eclipsed by their competitors and the liners were becoming increasingly expensive to maintain in operation. The hour of decision had come to the Inman Steamship Company as the Line had its back to the wall financially. A stockholders' meeting was called in Liverpool on October 18, 1886, to discuss the courses of action open to the Company. Debts and obligations of the Line exceeded the value of the fleet by nearly £ 100,000 and were mounting steadily. Attempts to obtain new funds by means of mortgage debentures had failed,<sup>13</sup> yet new ships had to be built if the Line was to survive.

The critical financial straits of the Inman Steamship Company were common knowledge and became of particular interest to Clement A. Griscom and the International Navigation Company. The Griscom shipping interests had purchased some of the debts of the Inman Line and, therefore,<sup>14</sup> were primary creditors. Since the Inman Line nicely fitted

11. R. S. McLellan, ANCHOR LINE, 1856-1956, Glasgow, 1956, pp. 41-42.

12. Bonsor, "The Inman Story—Peak and Decline," p. 402.

13. Arthur J. Maginnis, THE ATLANTIC FERRY, London, 1900, p. 68.

14. C.R. Vernon Gibbs, PASSENGER LINERS OF THE WESTERN OCEAN, London, 1952, 1957, p. 114.

into the expanding operations of the International Navigation Company, Griscom entered into negotiations for the purchase of the Line. These had proceeded quite far and the major stockholders of the Inman Steamship Company knew of the American move when the stockholders' meeting was called. On October 18, 1886, it was decided that the Company should go into voluntary liquidation and "thus pave the way for purchase by a certain interested party."<sup>15</sup>

A degree of secrecy was evidently necessary as Thomas H. Ismay of the White Star Line was interested in keeping the Inman Line in operation under British management. In later years Ismay:

told a story that when the Inman Line was in difficulties he wrote to a well-known gentlemen in the same trade, offering to find half the money necessary to keep the line going, if his correspondent would find the other half. The offer was declined. 'And now (1899),' Ismay said, 'we have an American railway company come into the trade, with millions at its back, running under a well-known British flag, and setting us all to work building whether we want to or not. Would not it have been better to have kept the weak line going?'<sup>16</sup>

Within two weeks of the stockholders' meeting a new and powerful name appeared among the trans-atlantic steamship line advertisements-- the Inman and International Steamship Company Limited replaced the name Inman Royal Mail Steamers--and the trans-atlantic passenger lines were confronted with a rejuvenated giant where an imminent demise had been expected. The Inman owners were paid £ 205,000 for their five liners and the use of the Company name, from which was to be deducted the large sum already owed the American purchasers. Certain discussions appear to have taken place over whether the new

15. Bonsor, "Inman Story--Peak and Decline," p. 403.

16. Roy Anderson, WHITE STAR, Prescott, Lancashire, England, 1964, p. 87.

17. Bonsor, "Inman Story--Peak and Decline," p. 403.

company name should be the "International, Inman and American Line" but the final form was Inman and International. This was a wise choice for the longer name was too bulky for advertisement purposes, and, also, since the Inman Line was one of the subsidised British mail lines there was no need to offend or upset the British people or government any more than they already had been by stressing the purchase of one of the premier British North Atlantic line by Americans. The situation vis-à-vis Her Majesty's Government and the new Inman owners was to deteriorate soon enough anyway.

The first order of business for the new owners was the rebuilding of the fleet in a grand manner. Clement A. Griscom had planned and prepared some twenty years for the day when he would have a free hand to establish a truly first-class trans-atlantic line. He possessed a strong foundation for doing so in the two divisions of his International Navigation Company which controlled a prosperous Antwerp-New York and Antwerp-Philadelphia trade through the Société Anonyme de Navigation Belge-Américaine (Red Star Line) and which, also, operated a growing Philadelphia-Liverpool ~~service~~ under the American Steamship Company (American Line). Neither of these concerns had ever been in a position to obtain the respect of the great British North Atlantic lines. Both Cunard and White Star had long looked down on Griscom's efforts as unworthy of attention while he built up the smaller lines. With the acquisition of the tottering Inman Line, over which Cunard and White Star had been ready to day the last rites, Griscom suddenly emerged as one of the largest owners of steamships in

the world. The reactions of the competing British lines was at first one of stunned silence and then of a flurry of activity. Griscom, they knew, was the very essence of the fox amongst the chickens and he had waited years to play the part.

Upon acquiring the Inman Steamship Company, Clement A. Griscom caught the next steamer for Liverpool to discuss the future plans of the Inman Line with the British Directors, Messrs. Spence and Taylor. Before he returned negotiations had been completed with Mr. James R. Thomson of the J. & G. Thomson Shipbuilding Yard, Clydebank, Scotland, for the building of the two largest, fastest, and finest commercial liners in the world, calculated in advance to far surpass any existing competitors for quite awhile. The order was placed for the these two exceptional vessels in the spring of 1887. While the planning and construction of the two new liners progressed, the Inman CITY OF BERLIN was withdrawn for the installation of triple-expansion machinery and in other respects to be thoroughly overhauled." The BRITISH QUEEN taking two of the Inman sailings until the BERLIN's return.

On August 6, 1887, the CITY OF MONTREAL(1872, 4,451 tons) burned at sea while enroute from New York to Liverpool and this accident cut the Inman and International fleet to four liners, one of which was undergoing repairs. As there were too few liners to maintain the all-important weekly sailing schedule, Griscom began to switch liners around his three fleets like checker pieces. The American Steamship Company OHIO was chartered for an entire year, while the Cunard ATLAS

19. Thomson was the predecessor of John Brown & Company builder of the giant Cunarders QUEEN MARY(1936, 81,237 tons) and QUEEN ELIZABETH (1940, 83,400 tons), and which have the new Cunarder under construction.
20. Inman Line, Red Star Line, and American Line, INMAN AND INTERNATIONAL STEAMSHIP COMPANY LIMITED, New York, (1888?), p. 7.
21. Inman Line, p. 19.



(1860, 1,794 tons), the American ILLINOIS(1874, 3,104 tons), the Dominion TORONTO(1879, 3,316 tons), the Allan SARDINIAN(1875, 4,349 tons), the Dominion VANCOUVER(1884, 5,141 tons), and the American PENNSYLVANIA(1873, 3,104 tons) all took one or more voyages for the Inman and International Steamship Company. The OHIO had recently undergone a major overhaul during which triple-expansion engines were installed with spectacular <sup>results as</sup> crossings at more than 14 knots ~~were laid~~ down by the fourteen-year-old liner. The original American Line quartet were all doing well in these years and were considered to be in sufficiently good condition to be overhauled and rejuvenated.

~~When~~ <sup>22</sup> ~~Grison~~ was determined to make the greatest impression imaginable upon the steamer trade with his new liners. The vessels were to be as nearly unsinkable as possible—each liner was constructed with fifteen transversal bulkheads that ran from the keel all the way up to the saloon deck with no breaks in the partitions below this level. The two liners were the most perfectly subdivided trans-atlantic liners ever built up to that time and put many contemporary warships to shame with their built-in safety measures. The Chief Surveyor of Lloyd's, Mr. B. Martel, was credited with having supervised every part of the design and construction of the new liners. Each vessel was outfitted with two completely separate engine rooms each of which was capable of driving the liner at four-fifths the maximum speed of

the ship in the event that either set of engines should have to be ~~stopped~~

22. Bonser, "The Inman Story—Peak & Decline, pp. 403-404.

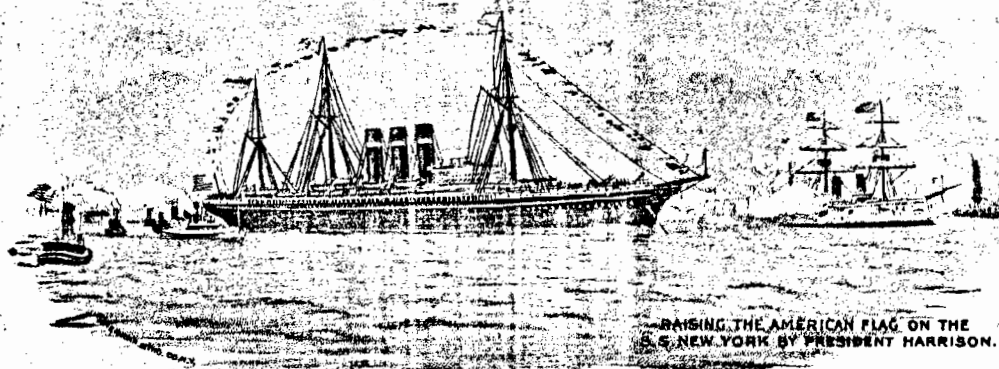
23. Inman Line, pp. 51-52. Describes all the the American Line original quartet as carrying both "first-class cabin" and "intermediate" passengers with only the LORD CLIVE, among the chartered tonnage, not carrying "Saloon Passengers." The OHIO was especially mentioned as having just been refitted with new "First-class Cabin" accommodations during her 1887 overhaul.

24. Inman Line, p. 10.

25. Inman Line, pp. 7-8.

AMERICAN LINE

AMERICAN LINE  
NEW YORK AND SOUTHAMPTON.



RAISING THE AMERICAN FLAG ON THE  
S.S. NEW YORK BY PRESIDENT HARRISON.

S. S. NEW YORK

Originally built as the CITY OF NEW YORK for the American owned Inman Line in 1888, the liner became the NEW YORK when a special act of Congress permitted her American registry in 1892. The NEW YORK officially became an American-flag liner on Washington's Birthday, February 22, 1893.

AMERICAN LINE U.S. MAIL STEAMER  
SOUTHAMPTON-CHERBOURG-NEW-YORK SERVICE.



S.S. NEW YORK 10,800 TONS

stopped for any reason. The separation of the two engine rooms was made possible by a longitudinal bulkhead that in itself was unique. All of the 37 auxiliary engines in each liner were set up to work independently of the main machinery just in case the main power plants might be damaged. Finally each liner was constructed with a double hull so that if the ship should strike anything which might open her interior to the sea, the second skin would be there to keep the vessel safe.

The first of this famous pair was christened the CITY OF NEW YORK and launched by Lady Randolph Churchill, March 15, 1888. Her sister-ship was christened the CITY OF PARIS and launched in October 1888. Since the liners were constructed in a depression period along the Clyde, they were, indeed, warmly looked upon by the local populace. Their passenger accommodations surpassed anything in existence and set new standards of luxury. <sup>27</sup> Of particular note were the magnificent, vaulted dining rooms of both liners complete with stained glass windows and grand organs! The vaulted ceiling of the saloon area was meant to give the first-class passengers the impression that they were in a grand hotel or mansion instead of on a ship at sea and this effect was fully achieved. The two liners had accommodations for 540 first, 200 second, and 1,000 steerage passengers.

The CITY OF NEW YORK took her Maiden Voyage on August 1, 1888, and was the largest passenger liner in commission at the time. The CITY OF PARIS followed with her Maiden Sailing on April 3, 1889, and the

26. Inman Line, pp. 10-11. (The double-hull had been pioneered by I. K. Brunel in the GREAT EASTERN(1860, 18,915 tons). The owners and builders of the White Star Liner TITANIC twenty-five years later had not thought a double-hull necessary.)

27. See Appendix H for a detailed description of the CITY OF NEW YORK and CITY OF PARIS published by the Line around 1898.

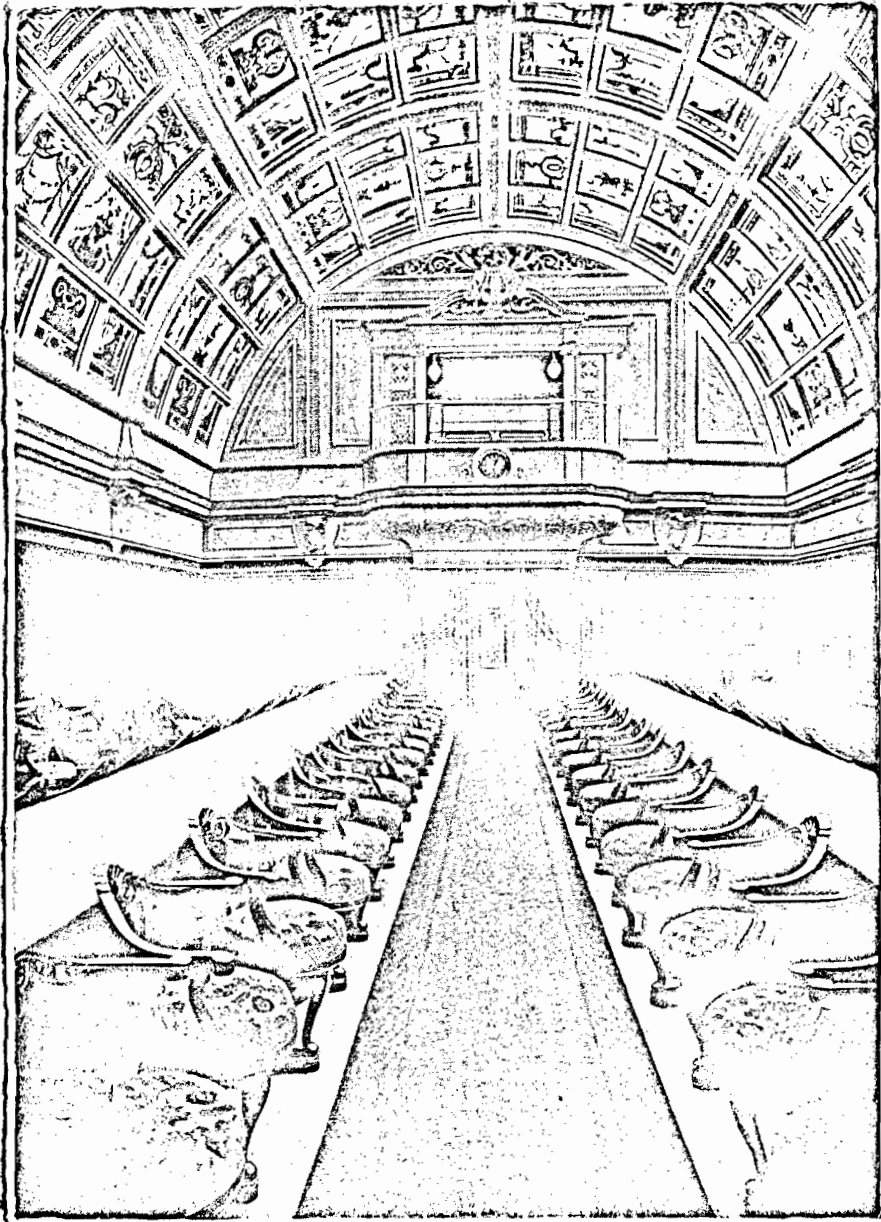
two ocean greyhounds were hailed as the outstanding marine marvels of their day, with their gross tonnage of 10,500 tons, length of 560 feet, and beam of 63 feet. The Inman and International "CITIES" also were regarded as among the most beautiful passenger ships ever constructed. The CITY OF NEW YORK and CITY OF PARIS possessed the unique Inman clipper-bows and long sleek black hulls. Each was graced with three majestic, evenly-spaced funnels and three towering masts. Oddly enough the builders deemed it necessary to outfit the liners with sails and the foremast was described as square rigged with the other two masts being fore and aft rigged. <sup>28</sup> It is doubtful if the sails were ever used by these twin-screwed, 20 knot, passenger liners and they were soon removed. Both liners carried 22 lifeboats as a prominent portion of their exterior equipment and it was firmly stated that "these will be capable of carrying all on board when the vessels <sup>29</sup> are full."

Majestic in their external appearance and most beautiful within the "CITIES" may have been, but whether they would capture the "Blue Riband" was the question. The performance of the CITY OF ROME must have haunted Griscom as the great liners he had ordered prepared for their Maiden Voyages. His fears were probably accentuated when the CITY OF NEW YORK took longer than expected to work the kinks out and, while turning in a creditable performance during her first six months, produced no record-breaking crossings. Her sister, the CITY OF PARIS, made a comfortable Maiden Voyage (March 3, 1889) which was eagerly watched but which also established no new record. The "PARIS" left Liverpool on her

28. Inman Line, p. 11.

29. Inman Line, p. 12.

THE AMERICAN LINE



DINING SALOON  
STEAM SHIPS  
NEWYORK AND PARIS.

second voyage, May 1, 1889, and after the usual stop at Queenstown rapidly pulled away for the Irish Coast with 2,855 miles of the broad North Atlantic before her. Five days, 23 hours, and 7 minutes later the CITY OF PARIS arrived off Sandy Hook and steamed up the North River with the mythical "Blue Riband" of the Atlantic tacked to her foremast. The Inman and International Steamship Company was the proud owner of the "Fastest Passenger Liner in the World." Clement A. Griscom in one stroke had transformed the Inman Line from a loser into a blue-blooded winner and in the process sent all his competitors to their builders. The CITY OF PARIS's time for the crossing was two hours, forty-eight minutes faster than the Cunarder ETRURIA's (1885, 7,718 tons) record passage over a course of similar length. The "PARIS" had maintained an average speed for the crossing of 19.95 knots—an outstanding performance! "Later in the same month the CITY OF PARIS arrived at Queenstown after a voyage of 5 days, 22 hrs. 10 min. and thereby completed the "double."<sup>30</sup> Now the Inman and International could proclaim to all the world that they had the "Fastest Liner on the Atlantic."

The winning of the "Blue Riband" must have given immense satisfaction to Clement A. Griscom, but his elation surely must have been tempered by the deterioration of relations between the Inman and International Steamship Company and the British Government. While the CITY OF NEW YORK and the CITY OF PARIS were nearing completion, the American maritime historian, Winthrop L. Marvin writes:

the mail contract of the British Government with the Inman, Cunard and White Star lines expired. One day the American owners of the Inman line were astounded to receive a curt notification from the British Post Office Department that the government had been considering the matter, and had concluded that three mail lines from Great Britain to the United States

were not necessary—that two were enough—and that the services of the Inman Line would be dispensed with.<sup>31</sup>

That was the official explanation, but Marvin goes on to say that "the Inman managers were afterward told unofficially that the English government did not feel that a company owned entirely by American capital should receive mail pay from the British Government."<sup>32</sup> Hence the Cunard and White Star interests had combined in an endeavor to strangle their rejuvenated competitor by cutting off the British mail subsidy. The tactics did not succeed.

The value of the many safety features incorporated in the two Inman record-breakers was soon to be shown. "On March 25, 1890, the CITY OF PARIS was nearing the Irish Coast at full speed when the starboard propeller shaft fractured, causing the engine to race and within seconds to disintegrate, flying fragments pierced the bulkhead and, the sea connections having been damaged, both engine-rooms were flooded. By a miracle no one was injured"<sup>33</sup> as the jagged chunks of machinery capable of piercing a steel bulkhead flew through the engine rooms. The CITY OF PARIS coasted to a stop, her engine rooms filling with water. When the liner lay dead with the waves lapping against her sides, a boat was put out from the ship which encountered the White Star liner ADRIATIC (1872, 3,888 tons). The ADRIATIC stood by the stricken CITY OF PARIS, which at no time was in any danger of sinking until a freighter, the ALDERSGATE, steamed up and towed the Inman liner to Queenstown. There was some seventy-five feet of sea water in the two engine rooms when the CITY OF PARIS reached port and she was to be

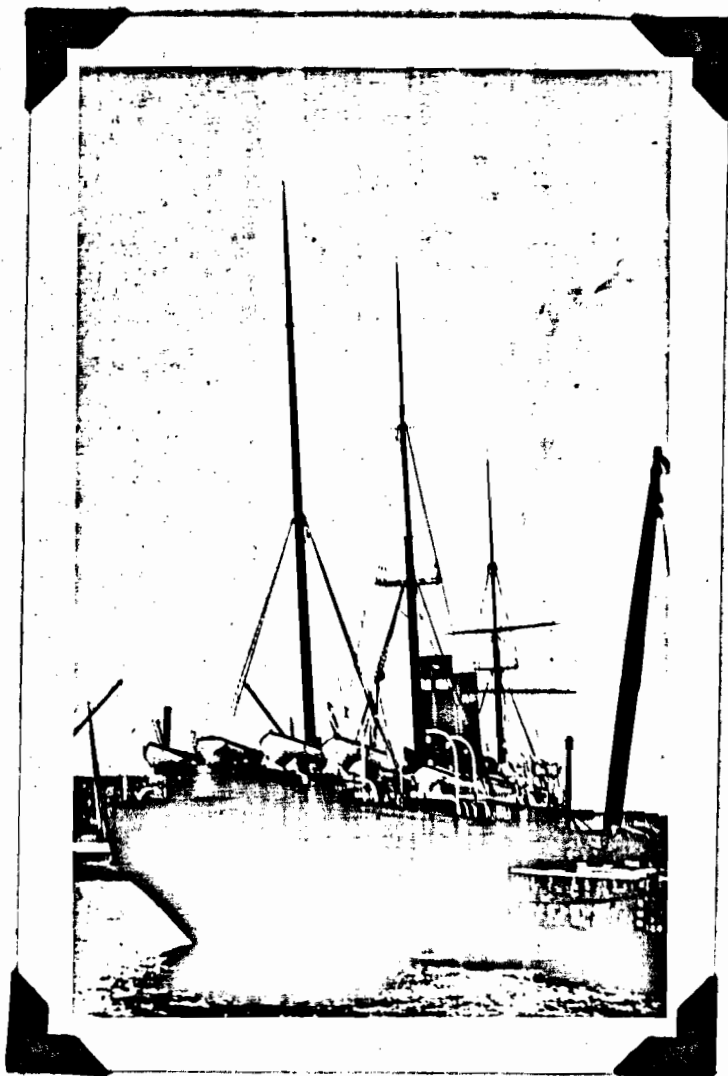
31. Winthrop L. Marvin, THE AMERICAN MERCHANT MARINE, N.Y., 1902, p. 419.

32. The private explanation was revealed in the testimony of Clement A. Griscom, President of the International Navigation Company, before the Senate Commerce Committee when the Line sought American aid.

(56th Congress, 1st. Session, Senate Document 149: according to Marvin)

33. Bonsor, "The Inman Story—Peak & Decline," p. 407.

## AMERICAN LINE



### S. S. CHESTER

The Inman Line CITY OF CHESTER became the American Line Chester in 1893 after the transfer of the CITY OF NEW YORK and the CITY OF PARIS to American registry. The CHESTER retained her British registry but had her name shortened to bring it into line with the other vessels in the fleet.

Statistics: 4,566 tons; 445 feet in length; 44 feet in breadth. Built-1873. Capable of 14 knot crossings.

Photograph courtesy of Mr. N.R.P. Bonser and is a copy of an original taken by Mr. Bonser's father.



out of commission undergoing repairs for over a year. It had been thought that a four-ship-fleet would be adequate to maintain a weekly sailing schedule with the addition of the two new liners. However, the accident to the CITY OF PARIS brought the aging CITY OF CHESTER back into service for another years with occasional sailings by the CITY OF RICHMOND which was finally sold in 1891.<sup>34</sup>

The Inman Line during its forty-three years history (1850-1893) suffered a number of marine disasters. The ninth and final loss of an Inman ship took place on July 1, 1892, when the CITY OF CHICAGO went ashore in dense fog near the Old Head of Kinsale and became a total loss. There were no casualties, but once again the old CITY OF CHESTER took a place in the sailing schedule as she was the reserve ship—in a very active reserve capacity. The necessity for a fifth ship meant that the American Line liners were considered as available for Inman sailings. This is the situation that found the fourth of the American Line quartet, the ILLINOIS, taking an Inman sailing in September 1892, which meant that at one time or another all of the original quartet had done Inman sailings.<sup>35</sup>

While the primary activity of the American Line between 1886-1892 may seem to have been to keep a reserve fleet in operation for the Inman service, this is not the whole story. The original quartet of American liners often substituted for Inman ships as has been shown, but at the same time a substantial fleet of British chartered tonnage maintained the Liverpool-Philadelphia service of the American Steamship Company. The Société Anonyme de Navigation Belge-Américaine was also most active. Between 1881-1889 the Red Star Line's New York service steadily expanded.

34. Bonsor, "The Inman Story—Peak and Decline," p. 407.

35. Bonsor, "The inman Story—Peak and Decline," pp. 407-408.

An average of 25,000 steerage passengers per year were landed in New York and there was a slow but relatively steady increase in the better paying classes from 1,500 to 4,000 passengers per year.<sup>36</sup>

The Philadelphia figures greatly exceeded these with a total of over 40,000 in 1882 alone.<sup>37</sup> The Red Star Line was able to order a much bigger vessel than ever before in 1888. The FRIESLAND, built by Thomson's on the Clyde shortly after the Inman "CITIES", was the only Red Star liner to be constructed with a clipper bow. The new liner entered service late in 1889 with passenger accommodations for 226 first, 102 second, and 600 steerage class passengers. Rumors of the sale of the VADERLAND and the ZEELAND had been making the rounds for at least seven years before the construction of the FRIESLAND finally brought their sale in 1889. The Red Star passenger totals continued to rise and during the year 1891 reached over 41,000 for the port of New York. Hence, the Société Anonyme de Navigation Belge-Américaine (Red Star Line) was clearly prospering and carrying its weight in the Griscom International Navigation Company combine.

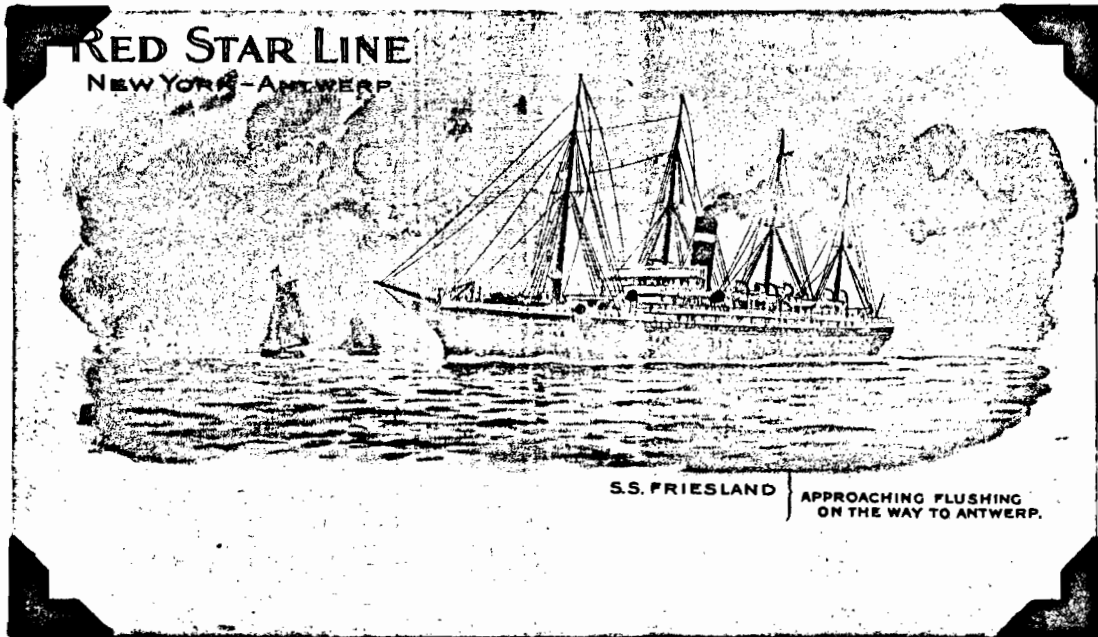
The CITY OF PARIS re-entered the Inman Line service in May of 1891 just in time to help the CITY OF NEW YORK meet the challenge of the White Star Line's TEUTONIC and MAJESTIC. These four liners were the most evenly matched pairs of rivals ever to compete for the transatlantic "Blue Riband." Average crossing times were nearly the same and record passages were lowered in time by only minutes as the four liners sought to obtain the coveted title for their owners. The competition was strenuous and the White Star Line was a subsidised concern which could better stand the grueling pace in the long run.

36. Bonsor, "Red Star of the Western Ocean," Sea Breezes, Vol. 24, p. 29.

37. See also, page 48.

38. Bonsor, "The Inman Story—Peak & Decline," p. 407.

INTERNATIONAL NAVIGATION COMPANY  
RED STAR LINE



S. S. F R I E S L A N D

The International Navigation Company ordered this greatly improved addition to their fleet in 1888. The FRIESLAND was delivered by Thomson in 1889 and was initially employed in the Red Star Line's Antwerp-New York service where she fully justified her construction.

Statistics: 7,116 tons; 437 feet in length; 51 feet in breadth. Capable of 15 knot crossings.

The only Red Star liner with a clipper-bow.

Clement A. Griscom was fully aware of this fact and, therefore, redoubled his efforts to obtain American recognition for his Line of first-class steamers. Congress was pressured to change the government policy on Federal shipping subsidies and to alter the rigidity of the American ship registration laws. The reviving American interest in navies and maritime affairs generally aided this campaign, although it was slow to pick up speed. Nevertheless, Clement A. Griscom and his associates pushed the issue as forcefully and judiciously as possible, for Griscom, in particular, must have felt that the entire survival of his multi-faceted maritime empire hung upon the need for the United States support. The development of the American attitude towards mail subsidies between 1861 and 1891, which affected the Congressional reaction to this campaign, is the next part of this story of the revival of the American Merchant Marine.

## Chapter IV.

### Decline and Subsidies

A survey of the status of the American Merchant Marine and of the United States government's attitude towards Federal subsidies is necessary if the developments in connection with the American Line are to be properly understood and to be placed in their proper perspective. The Civil War played havoc with the American Merchant Marine. The Confederate States employed a total of nineteen armed merchant cruisers which captured some two hundred and fifty-seven merchantmen.<sup>1</sup> Most of the ships captured were relatively slow and helpless sailing vessels which could not escape the largely steam-powered Confederate raiders. "The loss of these ships, however, was the smallest part of the injury suffered. The possibility of capture deprived American ships of the opportunity to obtain cargoes, and led to the cessation of building in American shipyards. It led many owners to transfer their vessels to foreign flags." It changed the currents of commerce."<sup>2</sup> Evidence of the drastic decline in the American Merchant Marine caused by the Civil War can be gleaned from the records of American and foreign vessels entered and cleared in the foreign trade of the United States for the fiscal years 1860 and 1865. In 1860 some 12,087,209 tons of American shipping carrying 71% of all American imports and exports sailed to or from American ports. These figures represented a twenty-eight year high for the American Merchant Marine.<sup>3</sup> By 1865 the tale was strikingly different. In the final year of the war only 5,968,695 tons of American shipping sailed to or from American ports carrying 47% of the import-export trade; a decline of 24% and

1. John R. Spears, THE STORY OF THE AMERICAN MERCHANT MARINE, New York, 1910, p. 293.

2. Spears, p. 293.

3. Hans Keiler, AMERICAN SHIPPING: ITS HISTORY AND ECONOMIC CONDITIONS, Jena, 1913, p.105.

over six million tons in the American carrying trade.<sup>4</sup>

Peace did not improve the condition of the American Merchant Marine. During the course of the war foreign-flag lines had consistently worked to improve their positions. The situation had deteriorated so greatly that "there was not one American steamship regularly employed in 1865 between our ports and Europe, Africa, or Asia."<sup>5</sup> The soaring insurance rates caused by the war came down slowly and merchants who had been afraid to risk their wares in American ships continued to use those of other nations. Just because the American war had ended was no reason to interrupt shipping arrangements of five years standing in order to fill American bottoms. Besides this "the registered tonnage of the ships engaged in the foreign trade of the United States had dropped to 1,387,756,(tons) a loss when compared with 1861, of 1,109,138 tons...the greater part of the loss...directly attributed to the operation of Confederate cruisers."<sup>6</sup> Combined with the losses resulting from the Confederate cruisers had been the "impressment of 400 vessels for wartime service,"<sup>7</sup> and the fact that insurance rates on American cargoes and ships had soared. Thus fewer ships were now available to continue the necessary commercial services and the insurance costs on those sailing were prohibitive.

As if the disastrous affects of the war on American shipping were not enough, the Federal Government persisted in its policy of refusing to ask Congress for any kind of a subsidy for the beleaguered and vital industry. The financial ghosts of the ill-fated Collins Line which had

4. Keiler, p. 105.

5. Winthrop L. Marvin, THE AMERICAN MERCHANT MARINE, New York, 1902., p. 342.

6. Keiler, p. 76.

7. Walter R. Herrick, Jr., THE AMERICAN NAVAL REVOLUTION, 1890-1898, Winter Park, Florida, 1965, p. 13. (Unpublished manuscript doctoral dissertation, the University of Virginia, Charlottesville, Virginia.)

failed in 1858, continued to haunt the Washington political scene and to exert undue influence. From 1858 to 1866 the United States Government even refused to give any subsidy for the ocean mail services. American lines had the small and most inadequate consolation of receiving both the sea and inland postage; but this was by no means enough encouragement to warrant the tremendous investment necessary for the establishment of a first-class trans-atlantic mail line.

One small light on the horizon of government aid occurred in 1864 when a "bill was introduced, authorizing the payment by the United States of \$150,000 per annum for a monthly steamship service between Rio de Janerio and a United States port north of the Potomac, on the condition that Brazil pay \$100,000(a year)for the service." The American balance of payments with Brazil was overwhelmingly in the Brazilian favor and the United States had a golden opportunity to compete with the United Kingdom for the Brazilian trade in industrial products if a regular steamship line could be established. The measure was passed by Congress and on August 29, 1865, a contract was let to the United States and Brazil Steamship Company with terms involving a monthly service between New York and Rio de Janeiro.

A second glimmer of hope for the North Atlantic steamship trade occurred when the Pacific Mail Steamship Company received a subsidy for a service from the West Coast to the Far East via Hawaii. The authorizing bill became law on February 16, 1865, and the contracts were awarded in 1866, although it was soon divided into two routes—one to the Far East

8. Royal Meeker, HISTORY OF SHIPPING SUBSIDIES, Columbia University, 1905, p. 157.

9. Meeker, pp. 157-158. American imports from Brazil were running \$20,000,000, whereas American exports to Brazil were only \$6,000,000. The United Kingdom possessed a Brazilian trade worth \$28,000,000 per year.

10. Meeker, p. 158. The Line was to continue in operation for ten years and to cost the two governments \$2,500,000.

and the other to Hawaii. The Pacific services were to continue for five years and will be discussed later in connection with their renewals. <sup>11</sup>

Certain other measures of Congress passed shortly after the Brazilian and Far Eastern mail subsidy bills were to affect the American Merchant Marine disastrously. As a part of the post-Civil War "vendetta" an Act of Congress passed February 10, 1866, refused American registry to any American-built vessel which had been placed under a flag of convenience during the war. This was narrow mindedness of the worst order and decisively retarded restoration of the American Merchant Marine. No ship was allowed American registry if it had been constructed abroad to begin with, but with this ill-conceived piece of legislation any American-flag vessel which had temporarily sought the protection of a foreign flag during the course of the war was arbitrarily refused permission to become an American vessel again and hundreds of perfectly <sup>12</sup> sound American ships were alienated from the American flag forever! Because of this act the only means of replenishing the American Merchant Marine was through the builder's yards which were at best inadequate to the task even if disgruntled owners had been willing to enter upon a massive rebuilding program. The expenses involved in the construction of a ship in any American yard were increased over the usual high costs by continuing taxation at Civil War rates. A basic tax of two per cent <sup>13</sup> on the hulls of vessels combined with a five per cent tax on marine engines and numerous Internal Revenue taxes on items going into the construction of a vessel served to make ships excessively expensive precisely at the <sup>14</sup> time when cheap vessels were desperately needed.

11. See pp. 76-77.

12. Keller, p. 78. (U.S. Statutes at Large, Vol. XIV, p. 3.)

13. Keller, pp. 78-79. (Taxes remained in effect until March 31, 1868).

14. Marvin, p. 342. Products going into the construction of ships which were taxed were: domestic iron; steel; copper; lead; spars; sails; paints; cordage.



On top of all the other factors contributing to the decline of the American Merchant Marine after the Civil War was the opening of the Western half of the United States for development and trade. The rise of manufacturing in the East and the relentless westward push of the trans-continental railroads after 1865 drained away vast amounts of capital which otherwise might have been invested in ships. It was poor business to invest capital in a steamship line with a two to five per cent return when you could obtain ten per cent out of sound railroad or mining shares.

A revolution in ocean transportation was also taking place. By the end of the Civil War the deep sea ocean carrying trade which had been dominated for over two milleniums by wind and sail was in the process of acquiring a new master. The graceful, poetic majesty of the great American clipper ships provided the brilliant culmination of the sailing ship era as the vessel of international commerce. Every time a new smoke smudge was sighted on the horizon from the towering yardarms of a great clipper ship the age of the sailing ship was that much closer to its end. The British realized this fact; the Americans did not. The change from sail to steam and then from wood to iron and steel robbed the American ship builder and ship owner of their preeminence on the world economic scene. The vast American forests meant little and the Continent's iron and steel works everything in the new age of steam.

Finally on July 27, 1868, President Andrew Johnson approved a measure granting the Commercial Navigation Company of New York a monopoly of the American trans-atlantic mail service for fifteen years(1868-1883).

The terms of the Act provided that the mails should be carried on a weekly or semi-weekly basis to Queenstown, Southampton, and Bremen. The Line was to construct seven iron vessels in the United States and was to receive the inland and sea postage up to \$400,000 and, thereafter, another \$160,000 worth of sea postage per annum. But the Commercial Navigation Company never got started. The Post-Master General, Alexander W. Randall, refused to let a contract which would reduce the mail sailings from four a week to two. Mr. Randall, instead, offered the Company "a contract to carry the mails four times a week at the pre-<sup>15</sup>scribed rate, but it was not taken." This was a sensible move on the part of the backers of the proposed Line for \$560,000 was nowhere nearly an adequate subsidy for so demanding a service which would have required a fleet of around thirty liners instead of the proposed seven.

The late 1860's produced a full scale Congressional investigation of the American Merchant Marine by the House Commerce Committee. The Lynch Committee--so named for its chairman an ambitious, young representative from Maine--made an elaborate report to the House in February 1870 urging (1) that shipbuilding materials and ship supplies be admitted duty free, and (2) that a subsidy or bounty be granted to American ships<sup>16</sup> engaged in international trade. Much acrimonious debate followed in the nation's press and in Congress with no action being taken. The state of the American Merchant Marine in 1875 was worse than that of 1865, and there were several reasons for the continuing decline. The effect of the Depression of 1873 was reflected, for example, in the maritime statistics which showed 1875 had been the worst year in the history of the United

15. Meeker, p. 164.  
16. Marvin, p. 343.

States for the American Merchant Marine. American vessels carried only 26.1 per cent of the import-export trade, less than half the figure for 1861( 65.2 per cent). Contributing to the post-war decline had been a decision by the British insurance company, Lloyd's of London, not to classify and register "foreign wooden ships for more than one year."<sup>17</sup> Yearly inspections of American vessels were expensive and a severe nuisance for American owners. The opening of the Suez Canal which shortened the distance from Europe to the Far East also greatly benefited steamships, in general, and particularly the ~~the~~ Peninsular & Oriental Steamship Line. The great voyage around Africa to the Far East was no longer profitable for the huge American sailing fleet.

In 1872 the Pacific Mail Steamship Company subsidy came before Congress for renewal. At this time the Line offered to institute another monthly sailing to China and Japan if the government would increase the subsidy by \$500,000. The anti-subsidy forces in Congress fought the measure throughout a long and bitter debate, and, in the end, only the personal prestige of President Grant secured the passage of the bill. The authorization of the contract was passed by Congress on June 1, 1872, with the greatest difficulty and the President soon thereafter signed the measure into law. Matters flowed smoothly for about a year after the new Pacific Mail contract was awarded and then suddenly exploded. In 1874 information was obtained by the anti-subsidy forces and presented to Congress conclusively proving that bribery on a grand scale had taken place to secure the passage<sup>18</sup> of the bill. The new contract was immediately cancelled by the Post Master

17. Marvin, p. 351.

18. Meeker, pp. 160-161. (House Documents: 42nd. Congress, 2nd. Sess., No. 598; Misc. Docs., No. 74 and 255; 43rd. Congress, 1st. Sess., No. 268.)

General because of the scandal and because of the fact that the Line had not lived up to the terms of the agreement. The Pacific Mail scandal could not have come at a more inappropriate time for the American Steamship Company as in 1875 the Line was to have a fully operational trans-atlantic service and would have been in a position to push for a subsidy of its own. In the wake of the Pacific Mail scandal it was not politically sensible to launch a drive for an Atlantic subsidy; and no one was more aware of this fact than Thomas A. Scott, President and veteran political "wheeler-dealer" of the Pennsylvania Railroad. The matter was dropped without further thought.

In Britain the 1870's saw a debate amongst politicians regarding the relative merits of a fixed subsidy policy (the British method) versus a policy of payment according to the weight of the mails carried (the American method). The British proponents of the American method supplied the American anti-subsidy bloc with renewed justification for their position as the principal argument was that the American system was far more economical than the British. This was true, but it failed to consider the values of the services demanded under the two policies.<sup>19</sup> The effect of the American "no-fixed-subsidy" policy on the American Steamship Company, for instance, was that when more vessels were needed for the service they were constructed in Britain and operated under charter. There was no incentive for the Pennsylvania Railroad Company and the Philadelphia backers of the American Line to invest any more capital in the more expensive to build and operate American tonnage.

The amount paid to American-flag vessels for carrying the ocean

19. The United Kingdom had at least three superb, first-class steamship lines on the North Atlantic alone (Cunard Steam-Ship Company, Oceanic Steam Navigation Company (White Star Line), and the Inman Steamship Company), whereas the United States of America had not one!

mails slid "from \$750,295 in 1874 to \$40,152 in 1878, and to

<sup>20</sup>  
\$38,779 in 1880." Between 1878 and 1890 foreign lines carried

the vast majority of the American mails and received much more money from

the United States Government than did American lines. The only piece

of beneficial shipping legislation from 1875 to 1890 was an insignificant Act of June 16, 1884, permitting the withdrawal of supplies

for commercial vessels from bonded warehouses without paying the

duties. The McKinley Tariff Act of 1890 at last made a major step forward by "allowing the free importation of plates, beams, angles, etc.,

<sup>22</sup>  
for iron and steel vessels" in international trade. During the latter

half of the 1880's a continuous barrage of pro-subsidy propoganda was

aimed at the American Congress and peoples. Mr. Charles H. Cramp of

the Cramp shipbuilding family was particularly active and outspoken

in this campaign. His personal "crusade" for aid to the American

Merchant Marine was to arouse considerable public response. <sup>23</sup>

By the latter half of the year 1890 the atmosphere was deemed favorable for the presentation of shipping subsidy bills to Congress.

The situation of the American-owned Inman and International Steamship Company served as an excellent reason for the passage of an American

<sup>24</sup>  
subsidy bill at that time. Testimony before the Senate Commerce

Committee of the handsome, white haired and greatly respected Clement

A. Griscom, President of the International Navigation Company, concerning

the maltreatment ~~the~~ American owners had received at the hands of the

British Government when their mail contract had been arbitrarily cancelled,

20. Marvin, p. 391.

21. Payments to American liners: (1878) \$40,152; (1880) \$38,779.

Payments to foreign liners: (1878) \$159,827; (1880) \$161,030.

22. Marvin, p. 382.

23. Augustus C. Buell, THE MEMOIRS OF CHARLES H. CRAMP, Philadelphia, 1906, any chapter in this benevolent survey of a most interesting man will support this statement.

24. See pages 65-66.

clearly stirred the sympathies of an already favorably inclined Congress. Two distinct measures were being contemplated, one concerned with ocean mail steamers and the other with freighters and sailing ships. The development of the resulting mail subsidy bill was of overwhelming significance in the history of the Inman and International Steamship Company, the International Navigation Company and the American Steamship Company.

Senator William P. Frye of Maine was the chief architect of both shipping bills. The Senator had previously undertaken a detailed study of the state of the American Merchant Marine and of the fundamental costs of maritime operations. He, therefore, was well versed on the condition and economics of the maritime industry. The goals of the Mail Subsidy Bill (as the measure was dubbed) were:

first, to secure regular and quicker (mail services) to countries now reached. Second, to make new and direct commercial exchanges with countries not now reached. Third, to develop new and enlarge old markets in the interest of producers and consumers, under the reciprocity treaties completed and under consideration. Fourth, to assist the promotion of a powerful naval reserve. Fifth, to establish a training school for American seamen.<sup>26</sup>

The various amounts stated in the bill for subsidies to the shipping industry were authoritative and the Senate accepted them without question. The House of Representatives was of a different mind and, also, was in frantic haste to adjourn. Thus, when an amendment was put forth on the floor to slash the proposed subsidy by one-third for the first-class liners, it was passed to the displeasure of the bill's backers. The amended bill was immediately passed. So was enacted the first

25. In this statement "freighters" means metal-hulled cargo carrying vessels and is not meant to indicate that sailing ships were not usually cargo carriers in their own right.

26. Meeker, p. 167. (51st. Congress, 2nd. Sess., H.R.# 3273.)

significant piece of legislation designed to aid the American Merchant Marine in thirty-two years. The provisions of the act are of the greatest importance. To begin with the Post Master General was authorized to make contracts with American citizens for the carrying of the trans-atlantic mails for periods of five to ten years.

Proposals must be invited by public advertisement three months before the letting of the contract. ~~Vessels must be American built, owned and officered.~~ The crew of a mail steamer must be at least one-fourth American for the first two years, one-third for the next three years, and one-half thereafter.<sup>27</sup>

Since it was not reasonable to lay down the same set of requirements and subsidies for all vessels four classes of mail steamers based on tonnage and speed were established. First class steamers had to be of at least 8,000 tons and be capable of maintaining a speed of around 20 knots. Second class liners had to be of at least 5,000 tons and be capable of maintaining a speed of 16 knots, while third class steamers had to be of at least 2,500 tons with a cruising speed of 14 knots and fourth-class steamers had to be of at least 1,500 tons with a cruising speed of 12 knots. All ships in the first three categories had to be constructed of either steel or iron while the fourth class steamers could be of iron, steel, or wood. Since it was intended that the liners could serve as armed merchant cruisers or troopships in event of war, the steamers in the first three classes were required to be constructed under the superintendence of the Navy Department. The reward forthcoming to the owners of vessels qualifying for the various classes was fixed at a maximum of four dollars per mile for a first class steamer, two dollars per mile for a second class steamer and one dollar a mile for a third class steamer. Fourth class

27. Marvin, pp. 166-167.

steamers were to receive a compensation which must have given some accountants headaches as it was set at sixty-six and two-thirds cents per mile. All compensation or subsidy was to be paid ~~on~~ only the outward ~~and not the~~ homeward passages of each voyage with a restriction of no more than \$12,000 per voyage for those liners serving between the United States and the United Kingdom.

28

The Postal Aid Act—which was the camouflage name under which the measure had been finally passed— did not result in a flood of offers to begin a first-class line of mail steamers on the North Atlantic. In fact not a single offer was forthcoming since a subsidy of only \$12,000 per voyage was far from sufficient inducement to invest millions in a fleet of expensive ocean greyhounds. The offer could only look attractive to an already established line in need of a subsidy, but there was no such commercial endeavor flying the American flag. There was, however, the American-owned-and-operated Inman and International Steamship Company that had been denied a British subsidy and was ready, willing and able to undertake a trans-atlantic service under the American mail contract terms. The result was an appeal to Congress by the Inman owners, as represented by Clement A. Griscom, explaining how they had been treated by the British government and requesting that the Inman Line be allowed to register its new CITY OF NEW YORK ~~and~~ CITY OF PARIS in the United States, on condition that two similar vessels be built by the Inman and International Line in American shipyards.

29

Congress did not have to hesitate over this offer for long for several reasons. It did not appear as though a trans-atlantic service would ever be taken up by an American concern. The Inman and International Line was almost wholly

28. Marvin, p. 417.

29. Marvin, p. 419.



American owned and managed. The establishment of the Inman and International Line as an American-flag concern <sup>would</sup> belster American pride and be a slap at the British. Finally, the offer to build two sisterships of the brand new and already famous CITY OF NEW YORK and CITY OF PARIS in American yards would be a great stimulus to the American shipbuilding industry. It is not surprising, therefore, that on May 10, 1892, Congress approved a measure giving American registry to the CITY OF NEW YORK and the CITY OF PARIS, and thereby paving the way for the return of the American flag in a spectacular manner to the Atlantic at the foremast of the finest fleet of first-class passenger liners in existence. The long, hard struggle of Clement A. Griscom and his associates to re-establish an outstanding American-flag line on the North Atlantic had begun when the 3000-ton PENNSYLVANIA backed out into the smoothly flowing Delaware River, May 23, 1873, and reached its appropriate culmination with the President of the United States, Benjamin Harrison, raising the "Stars and Stripes" on the flagship of the rejuvenated American Line, the 10,800-ton S.S. NEW YORK, February 22, 1892, in New York Harbor. The majestic NEW YORK at the time held the titles of the "Largest Liner in the World" and was one of the select "Blue Riband Liners of the Atlantic," the swiftest ocean greyhounds in the world.

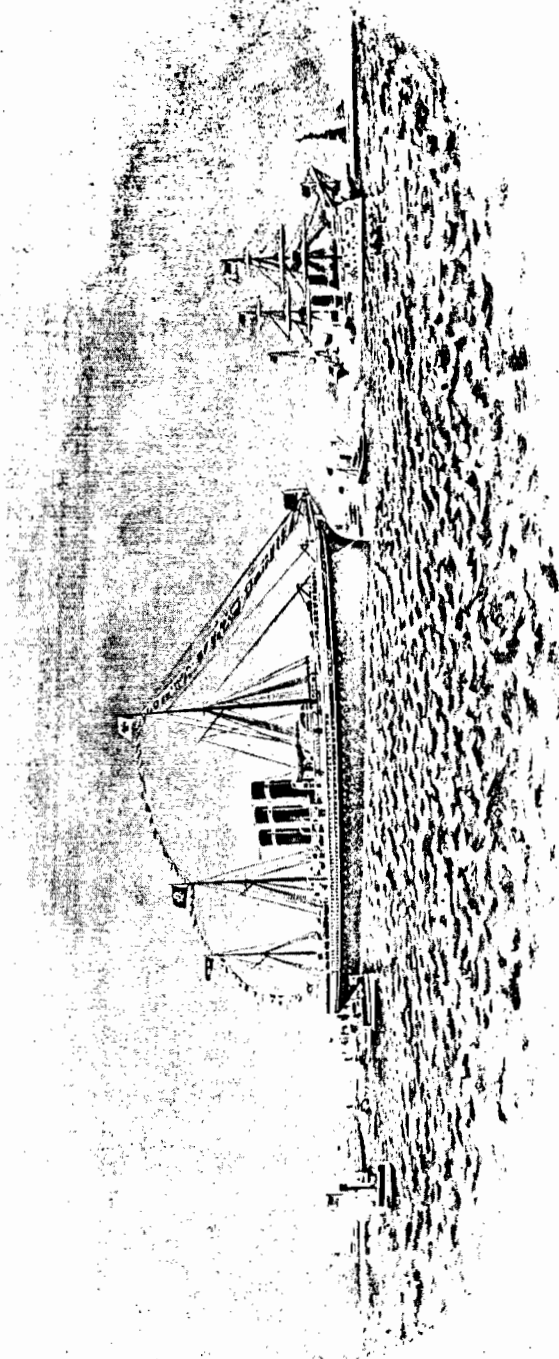
## Chapter V

### THE AMERICAN LINE 1893

The passage of the Act of May 10, 1892, heralded a new age in American maritime history. Clement A. Griscom at last possessed what he had been striving for twenty years to achieve—a first-class, American-flag passenger line on the Atlantic. Contracts were issued in September 1892 for two liners supposedly to replace the aging CITY OF CHESTER and CITY OF BERLIN, but in reality to rejuvenate the American Steamship Company's original Liverpool-Philadelphia service. All of the services of the giant International Navigation Company were to be revised and updated, and this was only the beginning. The 8,607-ton SOUTHWARK and the 8,669-ton KENSINGTON went into service in the latter part of 1893 and were far superior in quality to anything previously operated by the American Steamship Company on the Philadelphia-Liverpool route. The SOUTHWARK and KENSINGTON were over twice as large as the vessels they replaced, but since they were built in British yards they, therefore, could not fly the American flag. The SOUTHWARK was a product of Denny of Dumbarton and the KENSINGTON came from the yards of Thomson on the Clyde, the builders of the record-breaking "CITIES." Two aspects of these liners made them different from any previous Inman liners. Named for two suburbs of Philadelphia, they did not bear the Inman prefix "CITY OF—" and they were constructed with straight bows rather than the classic Inman clipper-bow. Thus these ships were to be in line with the new image of the Inman and International Navigation Company under its new name, the **AMERICAN LINE**.

The formal shifting of the CITY OF NEW YORK to American registry and the official establishment of the new American Line marked an

THE AMERICAN LINE



RAISING THE AMERICAN FLAG ON THE NEW YORK, FEBRUARY 22, 1893.

occasion of great public note. As the Line later reported:

The raising of the American flag over the naturalised NEW YORK, which occurred on Washington's Birthday, 1893, was...of national importance. Patriotic citizens by the thousands thronged the sea-wall at the Battery to see President Harrison fling 'Old Glory' to the breeze while the Naval Reserve presented arms and cannons thundered forth the nation's salute from the decks of the cruiser CHICAGO and from the batteries of Castle William.<sup>1</sup>

President Harrison's remarks on the occasion were to the point: "I have felt," he said, "both as a citizen and as President, the mortification that every American must feel that examines into the standing of the United States in the merchant marine of the world. I believe that we have reached an epoch in our development when we may successfully recover our fair share in the carrying trade of the world. We lift the flag to-day over one ship—a magnificent specimen of naval architecture—one of the best afloat on any sea. That event is interesting in itself, but its interest to me is in the fact that the ship is the type and precursor of many others that are to float this flag."<sup>2</sup> With typical Victorian sentiment the American flag was hoisted over the PARIS upon her first New York arrival for the American Line by a "fair young girl." Thus, both the CITY OF NEW YORK and the CITY OF PARIS entered American registry. The "CITY OF--" prefix was dropped from the names of all the American Line ships: The CITY OF NEW YORK and the CITY OF PARIS becoming the NEW YORK and PARIS; the CITY OF BERLIN and CITY OF CHESTER becoming simply the BERLIN and the CHESTER.

The American Line management undertook a major alteration in the

1. International Navigation Company, AMERICAN LINE, New York, 1898, n.n. (p.5.).
2. International Navigation Company, n.n. (pp. 4-5.).

Line's European terminal. The new American Line moved its headquarters south from Liverpool and the Mersey to Southampton and the Channel. They were the first trans-atlantic line of any importance to do so. The London Times for September 1, 1892, carried an article to the effect that the International Navigation Company had "just submitted to the American Government their proposal for the conveyance of mails from New York to Southampton," and that the result was "eagerly awaited by the inhabitants of Southampton who have hailed with much satisfaction the prospect of the acquisition of the decks of the port by the London and South Western Railway."<sup>3</sup> The United States Post Master General accepted the tender of the International Navigation Company for not only the American Line New York-Southampton service but also for the Red Star Line's New York-Southampton-Cherbourg-Antwerp mail service. Thus, Clement A. Griscom acquired two American mail contracts at one blow with the respective services to begin in March 1893.

The people of Southampton gave the NEW YORK a warm welcome on her first arrival at that port in early March 1893. "As soon as the NEW YORK was signaled off the Needles, the American flag was run up over Bargate and all municipal buildings, while a salute was fired from the Battery."<sup>4</sup> The reasons for switching the European terminal from Liverpool to Southampton were numerous. (1) The American Line no longer had the deep sentimental attachment and business connections which the Inman Line had developed with Liverpool over the years. (2) At Southampton the terminal facilities were infinitely easier to reach than those of

3. London Times, September 7, 1892, courtesy of N.R.P. Bonsor.

4. International Navigation Company, u.n. (p. 6).

Liverpool up the twisting, often treacherous Mersey. (3) Southampton was closer to London and closer to France. Trains could land passengers in London within a couple hours as compared with the long haul from Liverpool and a continental feeder service could have passengers on their way to Paris in a short time. Conversely, continental passengers need not spend the better part of two or three days travelling travelling across France, the Channel and England before they reached a trans-atlantic liner terminal. (4) It is not improbable that Clement A. Griscom was already planning an extension of the service to the German ports, and, if this was to be done, the most direct route was undoubtedly by the Channel. (5) Finally, with the advent of a new era in American trans-atlantic steam navigation it was desirable to start with a completely new image and what better way to help promote this than through a new European terminal at Southampton. Both the PARIS and NEW YORK helped improve the new image by establishing record crossings from Southampton to New York in July and September 1893 respectively. Their crossing times of 6 days, 9 hours, 36 minutes (July 15-22), and 6 days, 7 hours, 14 minutes (September 9-16) were spectacular, but the new Cunarders CAMPANIA and LUCANIA were doing slightly better on the Liverpool-New York route.<sup>5</sup>

A major reorganization of the American holding company for the American Line, the Société Anonyme de Navigation Belge-Américaine (Red Star Line), and the American Steamship Company (American Line) now occurred. On June 6, 1893, the International Navigation Company of Philadelphia, the parent concern, closed its books to be succeeded immediately

5. M.R.P., Benson, NORTH ATLANTIC SEAWAY, Prescott, Lancashire, England, 1955 (Supplement added 1960), p. 310.

by a new concern of the same name incorporated in the state of New Jersey. The new International Navigation Company of New Jersey was given title to all the American-flag tonnage of the combined lines, and a Liverpool subsidiary, the International Navigation Company Limited, was established on July 13, 1893, to hold title to the BERLIN and CHESTER which continued to fly the British-flag. The general reorganization of the three shipping companies did not affect the Red Star Line's ships or schedules at first, but it did result in all the liners of the combined operations adopting the distinctive and famous Inman funnel colors—black with a white band. The disappearance of the strikingly colored American Steamship Company funnel with its red stack, black top, and gold band with a gold keystone in the center, was regrettable; but by adopting the more widely known Inman colors, a degree of unity was created in the International Navigation Company's diversified fleet. Needless to say, Clement A. Griscom, by then recognized as the foremost American maritime genius of his day, was elected to the Presidency of the new concern.

The old American Line's OHIO and INDIANA, now averaging the ripe old age of twenty years, maintained the Philadelphia-Liverpool service with miscellaneous chartered tonnage until the new SOUTHWARK and KENSINGTON took their Maiden Voyages, December 27, 1893, and June 27, 1894. The Philadelphia-Queenstown-Liverpool service was maintained by the OHIO INDIANA, LORD GOUGH, LORD CLIVE, BRITISH PRINCE, BRITISH PRINCESS, SOUTHWARK and KENSINGTON in 1893-1894 with the BRITISH PRINCE, BRITISH PRINCESS, LORD CLIVE and LORD GOUGH bowing out after the Maiden Voyages.

of the SOUTHWARK and KENSINGTON. The PENNSYLVANIA and ILLINOIS along with the chartered vessel, CONEMAUGH, handled a fair portion of the Red Star Line's Antwerp-New York service in the early 1890's. The useful service lives of the original American Line quartet had been extended through the installation of triple-expansion machinery. Along with the general reorganization of the various lines controlled by Clement A. Griscom there was a general diminishing the Belgian financial participation in the Société Anonyme de Navigation Belge-Américaine (Red Star Line).

A key point in the argument for the admission of the NEW YORK and PARIS to American registry was the proposed construction of two similar liners in American yards. When Congress approved the transfer of the liners to American registry, May 10, 1892, Clement A. Griscom took immediate action to convert this promise into reality. Contracts for the construction of two new ocean greyhounds were signed with William Cramp & Sons Ship and Engine Building Company of Philadelphia which had built the original quartet of the American Steamship Company in 1873, and of which Company Mr. Griscom was a director. William Cramp & Sons had a long and honored history of solid and dependable ship construction behind them and, at the time of the new liner contracts, was under the management of Charles H. Cramp, one of the most eloquent and forceful maritime spokesmen of his day. The Cramp Yards were turning out a substantial number of warships for the reborn United States Navy and was admirably suited to undertake the ambitious project of constructing the first American trans-atlantic greyhounds.



The first frames of the two liners were raised on July 27, 1893, and work proceeded rapidly on the vessels which had the yard numbers 277 and 278. It was a source of no little pride to the patriotic Charles H. Cramp that the two liners were constructed from "truck to Keelson" of American materials, and that he had been able to ignore completely the tariff clause which permitted shipbuilders to import necessary construction materials without duty.<sup>6</sup> The two new liners were to be as American as Cramp could possibly make them and Clement A. Griscom fully concurred.

The great day of the launching of the first of the twin liners came on a blustery November 12, 1894. The event was regarded as a tremendous American achievement so worthy of national recognition that the occasion was honored with the presence of the President of the United States, Grover Cleveland, as a special guest of honor. Christened the ST. LOUIS and sent down the ways by the First Lady, Mrs. Cleveland,<sup>7</sup> the new American liner was hailed "as the greatest vessel ever constructed on this Continent."<sup>7</sup> Over twenty-five thousand people jammed the Cramp Yard and the surrounding Delaware River front to see this masterpiece of American naval genius launched.

The second liner was christened the ST. PAUL and launched with little less fanfare six months later on April 10, 1895. The American love for facts and figures was indulged to the fullest possible extent as the new two ocean greyhounds were saluted as the major symbols of a resurgent American Merchant Marine.<sup>8</sup>

6. Charles H. Cramp, "Commercial Supremacy--and other Papers," Philadelphia, 1894, p.43. (Privately published collection of the Cramp essays.)
7. Winthrop L. Marvin, THE AMERICAN MERCHANT MARINE, New York, 1902, pp. 420-421.
8. See Appendices and... for a complete contemporary description of the liners reproduced from the International Navigation Company's book on the American Line activities in the Spanish-American War.

TABLE V

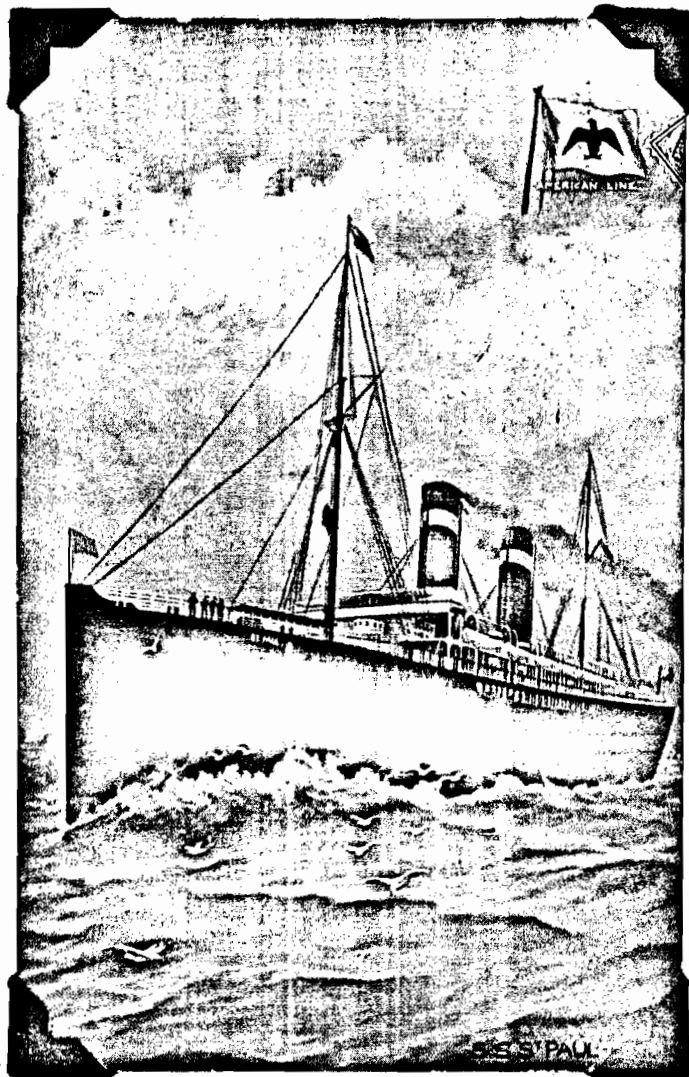
THE AMERICAN LINE 1893

DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS ON THE ST. LOUIS AND ST. PAUL

Length between perpendiculars:	535 feet 8 inches
Length over all	554 feet 2 inches
Extreme beam	62 feet 9 inches
Depth from first deck to keel flat	42 feet 4 inches
Depth of hold for tonnage amidships	23 feet 2 inches
Height of bow above water-line loaded	39 feet
Number of decks.....	5
Number of watertight compartments exclusive of ballast tanks.....	12
Gross register.....	10,700 tons
Displacement (loaded)	15,600 tons
Dimensions of main dining saloon	109 feet 4 inches by 46 feet
Dimensions of second cabin	39 feet 6 inches by 56 feet
Seating capacity of main saloon	322
Seating capacity of second cabin	208
Berthing capacity of steerage	900
Machinery=	two vertical inverted quadruple expansion engines developing 18,000 to 20,000 Indicated Horse Power. <sup>9</sup>

9. Augustus C. Buell, THE MEMOIRS OF CHARLS H. CRAMP,  
Philadelphia, 1906, pp.119-120.

AMERICAN LINE



S. S. SAINT PAUL

Second of the "Twin Cities" of the American Line, the S.S. ST. PAUL was delivered to the Line in October 1895. The liner served the American Line with distinction for over twenty-five years.

Statistics: 11, 629 tons; 535 feet in length; 63 feet in breadth.

The postcard is a Tuck "Oilette" in that company's celebrated liner series.

New piers were constructed for the American Line in the North River at New York to provide a proper American terminal for the American Line's new queens. In a day and age when speed was king on the Atlantic and nearly every ship owner was obsessed with the idea of obtaining and holding the Blue Riband, the ST. LOUIS and the ST. PAUL were unique. Great in size, though they were for their day, and built with the idea of regular high speed crossings, the new American liners were constructed with the guiding purpose of making them the safest and most dependable vessels possible. It was rumored that more than one contemporary record breaker carried several thousand tons of ballast deep in their holds to keep the top heavy liners on an even keel under all conditions. There was to be none of this with the "SAINTS" and Cramp, who expressed horror at the very idea, was most emphatic about designing the new American liners so that they would at all times be on an even keel without excessive and costly ballasting. The goals and ideals of the rejuvenated American Line were eloquently expressed by the President of the Company, Clement A. Griscom, who remarked at the launching of the ST. PAUL, "the aim of the American line is not to cut down the ocean record by one hour, but rather to produce steamers that should be trustworthy and comfortable in all winds and weathers, departing and arriving on schedule."<sup>11</sup>

Clement A. Griscom had worked and planned for over twenty years to establish a line of steamships on the Atlantic second to none and worthy of flying the American flag. With the Maiden Voyages of the ST. LOUIS, June 5, 1895, and the ST. PAUL, October 9, 1895, he had succeeded

10. Cramp, pp. 37-38.

11. Marvin, p. 421.

brilliantly. The American Line could take justifiable pride in the finest and most well balanced fleet of passenger liners on the North Atlantic. The ST. LOUIS, ST. PAUL, NEW YORK, and PARIS ranked as the third, fourth, fifth and sixth largest commercial vessels in the world, and were all capable of keeping pace with any of their competitors. The American flag had been dramatically restored with honor to its rightful place on the North Atlantic, the greatest maritime trade route in the world. Subsequent events might alter this situation, but for the time being at least, the American Line was a powerful force to be reckoned with in the trans-atlantic shipping industry.

**A P P E N D I C E S**

APPENDIX A.

Philadelphia Commercial List and Price Current February 4, 1871.

Report of Washington J. Jackson, Secretary of the Commercial Exchange, to the Members of the Commercial Exchange on the events of the last year.

...

Third Topic: Steamship Line to Europe

After many years of fruitless effort, and hope deferred, the matter of a steamship line to Europe was taken in hand by the Pennsylvania Railroad Company in November last (1870), with results thus far highly gratifying. The Board of Directors, with entire unanimity, passed the following resolutions which are full of grave import to the citizens of Philadelphia.

Resolved, That the Pennsylvania Railroad Company will unite with the commercial, manufacturing and industrial interests of the City of Philadelphia in the establishment of a line of not less than four steamships, to be built in the United States, to ply between this port and Liverpool or other European ports, upon the following general basis:

A charter for the organization of a Steamship Company, to be obtained from the Legislature of Pennsylvania at its next session, the minimum capital of such company to be \$700,000, with power to increase it to over \$5,000,000.

The Pennsylvania Railroad Company will subscribe for \$400,000 of said capital on condition that \$300,000 be subscribed by other parties.

Bonds of the said Steamship Company, payable in twenty-five years, bearing five per cent, interest, gold, free of taxes, to be issued to the amount of \$1,500,000, which bonds, in the event of the steamship company failing to pay, shall be purchased, principal and interest, as the same mature, by the Pennsylvania Railroad Company, at the par value thereof.

The title of the company to be "The American Steamship Company of Philadelphia."

A committee was appointed on the part of Commercial Exchange Association, to act in conjunction with committees from other bodies, to take measures to raise the necessary means to insure the success of the enterprise. The following named gentlemen constitute the committee:—Seth I. Comly, William Brockie, Nathan Brooke, George W. Mears, L. G. Graff, A. McHenry, Christian J. Hoffman, Robert Gray, Washington J. Jackson, and Clayton McMichael.

It is gratifying to be able to announce that the amount required has been more than subscribed, and that the enterprise has therefore every prospect of success.

...

Philadelphia Commercial List and Price Current, April 6, 1872.

"American Steamship Company"

Silently, but steadily, this new enterprize, which the sages of New York and Boston have so confidently predicted would prove a fiasco, and which others pretended had no existence save on paper, is progressing towards a successful completion, and a few weeks hence we hope to be able to present to citizens and strangers, the novel spectacle, in American waters, of the launch of an American iron steamship, built of American materials, owned by American capital, and to be manned by American seamen.

On Monday last (March 31, 1872), a meeting of the stockholders of this company was held at the rooms of the Board of Trade, No. 505 Chestnut Street, Mr. Andrew Walker occupying the chair, and Mr. Edmund Smith acting as secretary. The annual report was read, from which we extract the following interesting details:

"The list of subscriptions to the capital stock of the company amounts to 7,047 shares, at \$100 each, of which the treasurer has received \$696,020 leaving a balance of \$8,680 yet due.

"Contracts were made on the 3rd. of August 1871, with Messrs. Cramp & Sons, for four first class iron propellers, all to be alike in model and machinery, and the material used to be, as far as possible, of American manufacture; each vessel to be of 3,016 tons burden, old measurement, 355 feet in length, 43 feet in beam, and furnished with independent, compound, vertical, direct-acting, surface-condensing, propeller engines. They are to be arranged to carry 75 first-class and 854 steerage passengers. The total cost of the four to be \$2,080,000. They are to be named respectively the Pennsylvania, to be completed by September 1, 1872; Ohio, to be completed November 1, 1872; Indiana, to be completed December 1, 1872; and Illinois, to be completed January 1, 1873. It is expected that the Pennsylvania will be launched in June next.

"Messrs. Cramp & Sons furnish security in the sum of \$400,000 for the faithful performance of their contracts. In the way of subscriptions there have been received \$1,358,000, leaving \$142,000 yet due. The report contains and (concludes) with a number of extracts from printed reports (already published) referring to the efforts of the company to secure aid from the General Government. There is also incorporated a recommendation of Secretary Boutwell that the Government shall grant a subsidy upon each transatlantic vessel built in this country, in order to aid the revival of American commerce. The document is signed by H. J. Lombaert, president of the company, for the board.

(continued)



APPENDIX B.

Philadelphia Commercial List and Price Current, April 6, 1872, continued:

Treasurer's Report

Cash received on account of installments to stock.....	\$ 696,020.00
On account of subscription bonds.....	1,358,000.00
On interest account.....	<u>3,175.92</u>
Total receipts.....	\$2,057,195.92
Paid to William Cramp & Son to date.....	\$ 617,500.00
Deposited with the Pennsylvania Railroad Company to secure the fulfillment of the steamship company's contract with the shipbuilders.....	1,420,500.00

...

"Mr. Derbyshire moved that the report, in connection with that of the treasurer, be accepted and published in pamphlet form. Agreed to.

"Mr. Hoffman moved that the new board of directors be requested to increase their number to eleven.

"Mr. Allen suggested that the new directors be taken from the stockholders at large, and not from the Pennsylvania Railroad Company.

"Mr. Hoffman agreed to this, and the motion as amended was adopted.

"A recess of ten minutes was then taken to proceed to an election for a new board of directors.

"Messrs. Kennedy, Flanagan and Derbyshire were appointed tellers.

"Upon reassembling the tellers announced that the following named gentlemen had been elected:

"President, Herman J. Lombaert; directors, Edward C. Knight, Washington Butcher, Josiah Bacon, John Rice, B. H. Bartol, John Price Wetherill, Henry D. Welsh, D. B. Cummins, Samuel T. Bodine."

APPENDIX C

Philadelphia Commercial List and Price Current, August 17, 1872.

"Launched"

Thursday last, we venture to predict, will be an eventful day in the chronology of Philadelphia for years yet unborn. Being the day in which the first steamship of the Philadelphia line was launched from the shipyards of Messrs. Cramp & Sons, at the foot of Beach and Norris Streets, great interest was attached to the event by men of all classes in the community, and it was not surprising that the attendance was immense. The popular curiosity and excitement in the Richmond district ran very high, and in some of the industrial establishments a half holiday was allowed to the operatives. The Hall of the Commercial Exchange Association, on Second Street, was also closed, the members having agreed to attend in body, and testify by their presence, as most of them had previously done by more substantial means, their interest in the final success of the great undertaking.

The scene before the launch was exciting in the extreme. The piers, the steamboats, and the smaller boats were all decorated with their best and gayest bunting, and they were all crowded with human beings. All eyes were turned again to the quiescent mammoth on the stocks, decorated with hundreds of streamers, signal flags, and other bunting. There lay the mighty monster of the deep awaiting the word that would baptize her in the element where she is hereafter to exist. She looked like an inanimate body, patiently pausing for that breath of life which would perfect, figuratively, the existence of the ship--the vessel destined to bear our flag aloft as the representative of peace and plenty to the lands across the seas.

The launching of a vessel, especially one of the dimensions of the PENNSYLVANIA, is a very complex and critical operation, and it was not without some difficulty and danger that her baptism by water was effected. At precisely twelve minutes past ten o'clock the elder Mr. Cramp gave the order to the axeman to cut away the remaining pinions and shores, which was the work of but a moment, and then the noble craft started towards her future home. She moved gracefully down the ways for the space of a minute, amidst the cheers of the vast throng, the blowing of a hundred steam whistles, and a salvo of artillery. In a few minutes the noble craft the PENNSYLVANIA was afloat, and she indeed looked like "a thing of beauty and a joy forever," as her massive form for the first time floated on the waters of the Delaware. The success so far is highly creditable to the Pennsylvania Railroad Company, the merchants of Philadelphia, Messrs. Cramp & Sons, and all the enterprising men who had a hand in the organization of the

APPENDIX C

Philadelphia Commercial List and Price Current, August 17, 1872, continued:

movement. In form and dimensions the new vessel is near perfection as art and science can achieve anywhere, and we trust that the development of our trade and commerce will make in the no distant future similar events necessary.

Now that the great enterprise is thoroughly under way, we trust that Philadelphia merchants and all having ~~har~~ ~~pross~~ interests at heart, will foster and encourage it by all means in their power. The foreign commerce of our city is ample to justify the originators investing so large an amount of capital in its development, and with the facilities which will be afforded to shippers and importers by this new company, there can be no doubt that it will receive an impetus which even the most sanguine have not anticipated.

Our exports during the last fiscal year were more than three millions in excess of the preceding one, two-thirds of which consisted of petroleum. This being a product of the State, rightfully belongs to Philadelphia as the natural outlet, and yet a large proportion finds its way to New York and Baltimore, where shipping facilities are more liberally supplied. Our import trade has heretofore, been mainly transacted through New York, and notwithstanding the introduction of the new system of transporting goods in bond, hundreds of importers persist in following the old pathways of their forefathers, and New York continues to monopolize much of the profit and credit accruing from the trade of the city (Philadelphia) and the States (Pennsylvania). With the opening of this new line of trans-atlantic steamers, we should be able to date a new era of prosperity to the city, and no doubt this result will be achieved, if our merchants do their simple duty in co-operating with the zealous and well directed efforts of the Pennsylvania Railroad Company, to whom we are mainly indebted for this new element of progress. Let all good citizens take a practical interest in the success of the enterprise, and it will be assured from the outset. With our manufactures (sic), whose products are estimated at over \$1,000,000 per day in value, to say nothing of our steady increase of petroleum and other valuable products of our Commonwealth, we have ample basis for a large foreign commerce, sufficient to keep afloat the four magnificent vessels now near completion, as well as many others which are ~~are~~ ~~ere~~ long to follow.

APPENDIX D

Philadelphia Commercial List and Price Current, April 12, 1873.

"The American Steamship Co."

The annual meeting of the stockholders of the American Steamship Company, was held on Monday last, (April 7, 1873), Mr. Charles H. Cummings, presided.

The second Annual Report of the Board of Directors for the past year was submitted, from which we learn that:-

"The execution of the contract with Messrs. William Cramp & Sons for the construction of four iron steamers for the company has been considerably delayed, so that as yet none of them have been delivered.

The first three steamships have been successfully launched--the Pennsylvania, August 15, 1872; the Ohio, October 30, 1872; and the Indiana, March 25, 1873. The plating of the Illinois is nearly completed, and it is expected she will be launched about May 15 proximo.

The Pennsylvania will make her trial trip some time during the present month, and will be ready for delivery to the company not later than May 1st. The Ohio will make her trial trip about June 1.

The Board of Directors have appointed Captain George Sumner to the command of the Pennsylvania, and Captain Morrison to the command of the Ohio. Messrs. Richardson, Spence & Co., have been appointed agents of the company at Liverpool upon fair and reasonable rates of commission. On the death of Mr. Washington Butcher during the past year, Mr. E. C. Knight, a member of the Board was unanimously elected president of the company.

Mr. Robert W. Smith was elected to the office of secretary and treasurer.

The list of subscriptions to the capital stock of the company amounted to 7,047 shares of \$100 each.

The amount received to date from installments on stock is \$701,500; leaving yet due \$3500. The amount received to date in payment of subscriptions to bonds is \$1,410,000, leaving \$90,000 yet due and unpaid, all of which is collectable.

During the past winter a bill prepared by a committee of the board, authorizing the Postmaster General to contract with this company for the establishment of (an) ocean mail steamship service between the United States and England, was presented in Congress by the Hon. Leonard Myers. It was read twice and referred to the Committee on Commerce. No action was received prior to adjournment."

Board of Directors for next year: E.C. Knight, President; Josiah Bacon, John Rice, B. H. Bartol, John Price Wetherill, Henry D. Walsh, D. B. Cummins, Samuel T. Bodine, M. Baird, N. Parker Shortridge, and Strickland Kneass.

APPENDIX E

Philadelphia Evening Bulletin, May 21, 1873.

THE PENNSYLVANIA

S A I L I N G D A Y

List of Passengers and Cargo

The magnificent steamship Pennsylvania of the American Steamship Company's line, to ply between Philadelphia and Liverpool, will sail from the Company's wharf, under command of Captain George Sumner, to-morrow (sic) morning at six o'clock. To-day, there is a busy scene upon the wharf, and, although much of the cargo is already aboard, goods were being received this morning, and packed away. The passengers, by request of Mr. Louis C. Madeira, the General Agent of the Company, will all have their baggage on board during the day. So that everything will be ready for the departure of the vessel at the appointed time.

The Passengers

The first engagement of a state room was made by Major Thomas T. Firth, of the Pennsylvania Railroad Company, and the other state rooms were speedily taken.

The full list of cabin passengers is as follows:

Major Thomas T. Firth	Herace Haug
Mrs. Thos. T. Firth	Willie Haug
Albert Gumper	Andrew Cone
Henry C. Lea	Mrs. A. Cone
Rev. Saml. Hazelhurst	Willis J. Hulings
Mrs. C. H. Grant	C. C. Butterworth
Miss Sarah Bowman	Rev. A. Frier
Miss Sarah Corlies	Wm. S. Scull
Miss A. M. Grant	Mrs. W. S. Scull*
John E. Graeff	C. M. Gilbert
Mrs. Jno. E. Graeff	Dr. Witmer
Mr. D. L. Grant	L. Sternberger
G. S. Benson Jr.	Chas. F. Haseltine
Thos. H. Patterson	Mrs. C. F. Haseltine
A. M. Eastwick	J. R. Blackiston
John Mellon	H. A. Blackiston Jr.
Col. George Orine	Mrs. J. R. Blackiston
Joseph Barry	Mrs. John Blackiston
Mrs. Chas. Gascoyne	C. M. Pierce, M.D.
Mrs. Fredk. Hansel	J. E. Gillingham
Wm. King	Mrs. J. E. Gillingham

\*Errata: The name Willie C. Scull should follow that of Mrs. W. S. Scull.

APPENDIX E

Philadelphia Evening Bulletin, May 21, 1873

Passenger List continued:

Mrs. Wm. King	Mrs. D.B. Garrison
Mr. A. Haug	Miss Mary Garrison
Mrs. A. Haug	Walter R. Garrison
Clarence Haug	Kate Young
George Haug	Doctor F.S. Dunlap
	Mr. Chas. Hazelhurst

Total, 56 cabin passengers and 58 in steerage.

The Cargo

The first engagement for the shipment of freight was made by Messrs. E. C. Knight & Co. and the goods of that firm were the first received on board the vessel.

The following is a list of shippers, and the character of the goods comprising the cargo of the vessel.

E.C. Knight & Co.,	110	hhds.	syrup
David H. Solis,	12	boxes	fur skins
H.W. Bartel,	100	barrels	molasses
do	100	tierces	"
Geo. Long,	11	tubs	lard
William Brockie,	100	casks	tallow.
do	100	"	"
do	100	"	"
do	100	"	"
do	50	"	"
do	100	"	"
D'Olier, Magee & Co.,	50	bales	cotton.
Prichett, Buagh & Co.,	58	rolls	leather
Henry Sloan & Sons,	44	bales	cotton.
do do	6	"	"
Peter Wright & Sons,	49	puncheons	molasses.
P. Rabill,	1	wagon,	8 hubs, 1 wrench.
P. Rabill,	1	box	harness, 1 bunch collars, 2
		bundles	fellees.
George H. McFadden,	11	bales	cotton.
Charles H. Cummings,	1,067	bags	oil-cake.
do	963	do	do
do	1,183	do	do
M. Rice,	1	case	personal effects.
Charles Ellis, Son & Co.,	1	case	
Henry Morris,	1	case	wearing apparel and
		books.	
Edward S. Mason,	18	bales	fur, 1 bbl. hams, 1
		bbl.	flour.
C. Thomas,	1	case	peaches, 1 case tomatoes.
Ricards, Leftwich & Co.,	17	hhds.	tobacco.
do	18	do	do

APPENDIX F

Philadelphia Commercial List and Price Current, April 11, 1874.

American Steamship Company

The annual meeting of the stockholders was held on Monday (April 6, 1874) in the Pennsylvania Railroad building, Fourth Street and Willing's Alley.

On motion of Mr. A. J. Derbyshire, Mr. Christian J. Hoffman was called to the chair and Mr. Robert W. Smith chosen as Secretary.

The annual report was read by the Secretary. It shows that since the last meeting the ILLINOIS has been successfully launched. The contract price for the construction of the four steamers, together with the cost of fitting them out, and other expenses of their construction not included in the contract, has exceeded the aggregate of capital stock and bonded debt. This deficiency is being met by a loan from the Pennsylvania Railroad Company.

In December last the attention of the board was called to the desirability of a consolidation of the business of this company, with that of the two steamers in the Liverpool trade of the International Navigation Company; the general advantages to be derived therefrom being a weekly service between the two ports, the concentration of the trade under one management at both Philadelphia and Liverpool, and the particular advantage to this company in what the directors hope will prove a material economy in the expenses of operating the steamers.

After careful consideration, a favorable contract was entered into in January last with Peter Wright & Sons to act as general agents for the management of the freight and passenger traffic of the company in this country. At the same time a new contract more favorable to the interests of this company than the existing, was consummated with Messrs. Richardson, Spence & Co., Liverpool, for the management of the European business. Both firms are also agents for the International Navigation Company, thereby harmonizing the interests of the two companies, and securing, it is hoped, the advantages already mentioned.

The report then alludes to the retirement of Mr. L. C. Madeira as General Agent, and mentions the appreciations of the Board for his services.

(continued)

APPENDIX F

Philadelphia Commercial List and Price Current, April 11, 1874, continued:

Up to the time of the change in the general agency, the steamers had completed fourteen round voyages.

The gross receipts from which amounted to.. \$ 577,692.02

Up to the same time the disbursements for running expenses were..... 524,372.27

Excess of receipts over disbursements for running expenses..... \$ 53,319.75

From which are to be deducted general agent's office expenses for rent, salaries, insurance, furniture, fixtures, etc..... \$ 18,000.00  
 Wharf expenses, including fixtures.... 7,900.00  
 Advertising and placarding at Philadelphia and Liverpool..... 22,000.00

Showing a gain of..... \$ 47,900.00  
 \$ 5,419.75

From which should be deducted amount received for prepaid passages, not yet come forward..... 4,992.45  
 Leaving a balance of..... \$ 427.50

The expenditures above of \$47,900 are of a character necessary in the starting of a new line, and from which, particularly the item of advertising \$22,000, no immediate return can be expected, and a large portion of \$7,900 wharf expenses, is of the character of permanent improvement.

It has already been fully shown that our port commands sufficient trade to permit full outward-bound cargoes at rates fully equal to those from any other Atlantic port, and should the inward trade continue to increase in the same ratio as it has since the starting of the road to the present time, that full cargoes will be carried each way. It is also expected that as the steamers have demonstrated their safety, speed and comfort, the passenger trade will in the future show a marked increase.

In January of the present year, the Post Office Department granted the company a mail service between the United States and Great Britain for its four steamers, giving both sea and land postages upon the mail matter carried by them. The directors are of the opinion that this will give the line a more favorable standing in both this country and Europe. The company has reason to congratulate itself that,

(continued)



APPENDIX F

Philadelphia Commercial List and Price Current, April 11, 1874, continued

while many other steamers in the same trade were, during the terrible hurricanes that swept the North Atlantic in February last, seriously disabled, those of this line, with the exception of the PENNSYLVANIA, received no injury, and that they have all proved themselves thoroughly seaworthy. The injury to the PENNSYLVANIA was comparatively slight, but the loss of her commander, two officers and seaman, is to be deeply regretted.

The report was accepted, and, ordered to be printed.

Mr. L. D. Baugh offered the following: Whereas, E. C. Knight, Esq., has declined permitting his name to be used for the presidency or as a director of this company, therefore,

Resolved, that the stockholders regret the determination of E. C. Knight, Esq., to retire from the gratuitous position of executive officer of this company, believing that in thus recognizing his services during the inception and early progress of this enterprise, we fully acknowledge the loss the company has sustained, but trust that under all circumstances we may have the advantage of his interest and advance for the furtherance of our project to full success. This was adopted.

An election for directors for the ensuing year was then held. Messrs. Wm. Brockie, E. K. Stevenson, and Alexander P. Colesbury, acting as tellers. The following gentlemen were elected: Henry D. Welsh, president; Josiah Bacon, John Rice, B. H. Bartol, John Price Wetherill, D. B. Cummins, M. Baird, N. Parker, Shortridge, Strickland Kness, Edmund Smith, Wm. D. Winsor.

APPENDIX G

Philadelphia Commercial List and Price Current, April 10, 1875.

American Steamship Company

At the Annual Meeting of this Company held on Monday Last (April 5, 1875), the old Board of Directors was re-elected, with H. D. Welsh as President for another term. The Treasurer's report for the past year shows the gross receipts to have been \$976,453.61, against a total of \$828,558.01 disbursements for ordinary and operating expenses, \$39,122.96 for advertising, \$8,670.32 wharf expenses, \$66,585.25 extra-ordinary repairs, salvage suits, etc., and \$88,465.33 for expenses of agencies, etc., leaving an adverse balance of \$48,914.26. The floating debt of the Company, amounts to \$351,656.17. This is accounted for in the fact that the cost of building and equipping the steamers owned by the Company exceeded the capital subscribed to the extent of \$153,106.42, leaving the Company altogether without working capital. Considering the general depression of trade during the past year the figures given are more encouraging than those furnished by the leading lines of Foreign steamships from New York. These show an aggregate falling off in receipts for 1874 of \$27,000,000 (sic). In contrast with these figures, the American Line may be considered to have done remarkably well. From passengers the receipts of the year were \$288,932 and from freights \$683,502.12. Rates have been unprecedentedly low, as is well known, and had they been up to the average of former years, the amount of business done would have yielded a handsome profit. The next year promises to be a highly prosperous one for our favorite line, and a dividend to the stockholders may be confidently predicted.

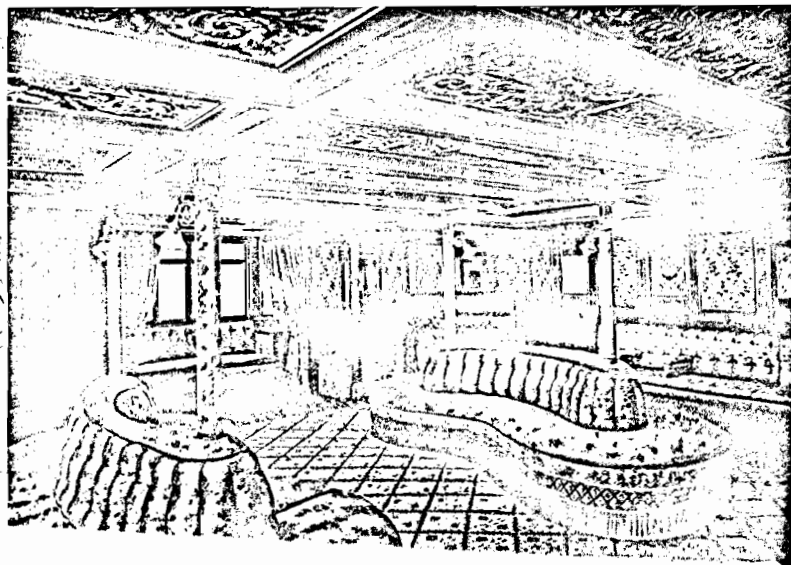
### TWIN S. S. NEW YORK AND PARIS.

The New York and the Paris may justly be said to be the embodiment of the finest skill and workmanship which modern marine architecture has exhibited, and in point of comfort and rapidity of travel they are in the highest rank.

The dimensions of these vessels are: Length on water line, 525 feet; length over all, 560 feet; breadth, 63¼ feet; moulded depth, 42 feet; gross tonnage, 10,800. Siemens-Martin steel was exclusively employed in building the immense outer shell of the hull, which has a double bottom throughout, this arrangement being adopted so as to prevent any danger arising to the safety of the passengers should the steamer run aground.

There are in each ship 15 water-tight compartments, separated by transverse bulkheads extending from the keel to the saloon deck and rising 18 feet above the load water line. These bulkheads are solid structures of immense strength, containing no doors or openings of any kind, so that, should an accident occur, no aperture has to be closed at the last moment, and each section is complete in itself. Three of the water-tight compartments are set apart for the boilers and one for the engines, the latter space being further divided by a longitudinal bulkhead, so that the machinery is duplicated in the strictest sense of the term. The first cabin passengers are housed in the three water-tight compartments in the central part of the vessel, two compartments abaft are set apart for the second class passengers, while the compartments at each end are devoted to steerage passengers and cargo.

The grandest internal feature of the New York and the Paris is, beyond all doubt, the first cabin dining saloon, located forward on the saloon deck. This is an apartment of truly noble proportions. It extends almost entirely across the ship, and the arched form of roof, with its cathedral glass centre, gives a majestic outline which is possible under no other arrangement. The space usually allowed between decks, even in the best passenger steamers, is about 8 feet, but in the New York and the Paris the principal dining saloon is carried through two decks and a half, the height attained at the crown being 20 feet, while the length of arch is 53 feet and the span 25 feet.



DRAWING -  
ROOM  
STEAMSHIPS  
NEW YORK  
AND PARIS.

## THE AMERICAN LINE

In this handsome chamber, accommodation was originally provided for 260 passengers, but alterations have recently been effected in each ship, adding a dining saloon amidships, which enables 420 persons to dine at the same time.

Well-known artists were engaged to decorate the dining saloon, and everyone will admit that they have succeeded admirably in their efforts. A white composition of peculiar ductility was used for the internal covering of the arch and of the organ loft, which overlooks the saloon. The panelling is brightened by appropriate representations of sea nymphs, dolphins and tritons, and the mythical marine company is completed by the presence of mermaids in the form of intermediate brackets. Cozy little alcoves are ranged around the sides of the saloon, and here those who do not seek the popularity of the central tables may dine in home-like privacy. These dainty nooks have decorated panels in sycamore, with oak wainscot and maple lintels, and the whole of the appointments are *en suite*.

At the after end of the dining saloon is the grand staircase, rising by easy treads from a spacious vestibule to the promenade deck, and giving entrance to two apartments of marvelous beauty.

The first of these is the drawing-room, which is a favorite lounge of the lady passengers, in fair weather and in foul. It is adorned and appointed with exquisite taste. The ceiling is formed in deep panels, surrounded by a fretwork in gilt; and large mirrors, set in bright frames to correspond, are fixed to the walls of the apartment.

An oriel window built under the stained glass dome of the dining saloon commands an excellent view of that room, the opposite gable being utilized as the organ loft, which can, in like manner, be approached from the promenade deck.

On the after side of the stair hall is the library, another sumptuous apartment, constructed in the form of an hour-glass, thus securing the *maximum* of light at the



LIBRARY  
STEAMSHIPS  
NEW YORK  
AND PARIS

## THE AMERICAN LINE

*minimum* sacrifice of deck space. The sides of this chamber are lighted from windows overlooking the promenade deck, and a central skylight makes it exceedingly bright.

There is a lining of wainscot oak round the library, and the names of many illustrious authors appear in carved scrolls upon the panels, while quotations from sea poems are inscribed upon the stained glass of the windows. Upon the shelves are about 900 judiciously selected volumes.

The first-class smoking room, 45 feet long and 27 feet wide, affords ample space for 130 gentlemen. The walls and ceiling of this room are panelled in American walnut, and the upholstery is in figured scarlet hide.

Upon the promenade and saloon decks no fewer than 40 rooms are set apart in 14 suites for the use of families who wish to have separate accommodation. Each of these suites consists of bedroom, sitting-room, private lavatory, and in most cases a private bath. The bedrooms in these suites are fitted with single and double beds, the berths being, as in a Pullman car, closed by day and open at night.

The promenade deck extends from one end of the ship to the other, a distance of nearly 190 yards. This splendid space is always kept perfectly clear. The lifeboats hang from the davits at a height of 8 feet above the promenade, and passengers are protected by an awning deck. In order that the wishes of everybody may be consulted, the extensive area thus reserved is divided by rails running fore and aft, the inner enclosure being kept for passengers who wish to sit in the comfortable deck chairs provided, while the outer line is at all times available as a promenade.

Placed on the main deck, below the level of the grand dining saloon, and entirely isolated in an independent steel shell, without any aperture except those of the capacious ventilating shaft leading into the three great smoke-stacks, the principal kitchen is literally out of sight, smell or hearing.

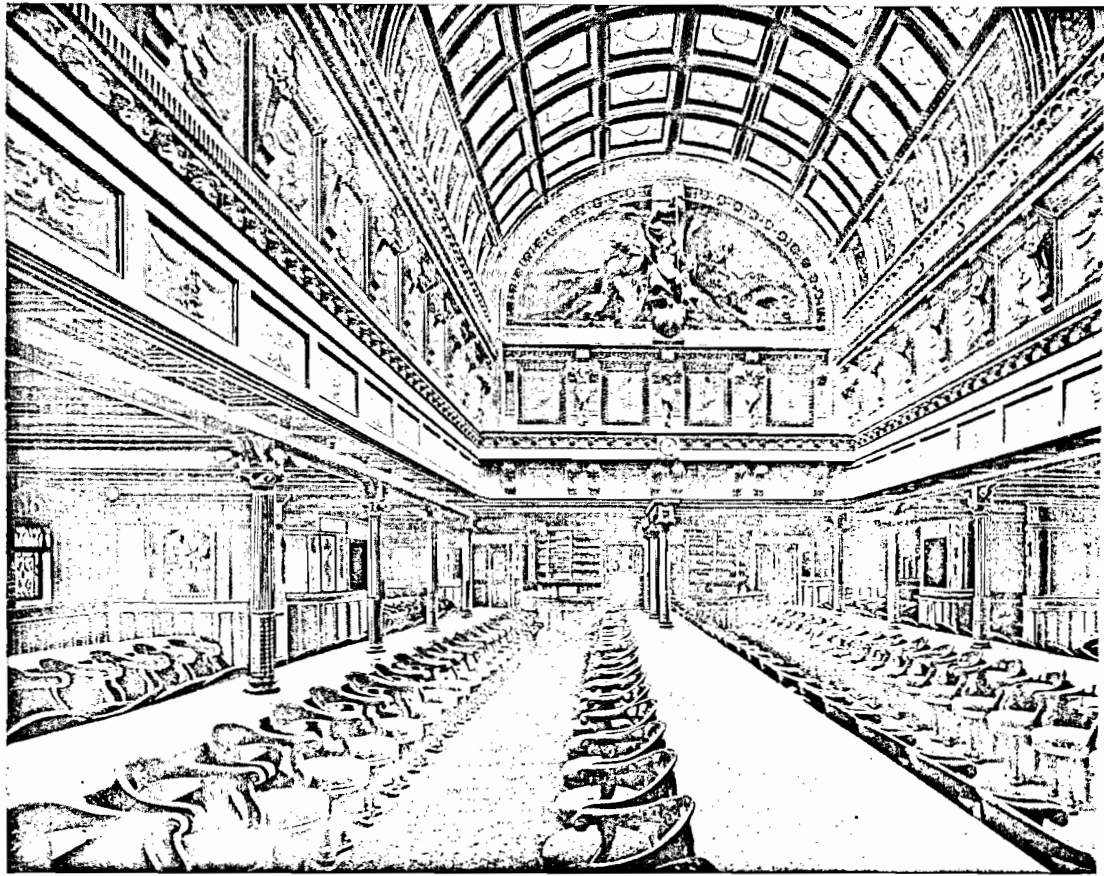
The second cabin dining saloon is a handsome and well lighted apartment 27 feet long and 40 feet wide, providing seats for 150 passengers. The second cabin passengers enjoy the luxury of their own smoking-room, together with the exclusive use of the after part of the promenade deck for the full width of its space.

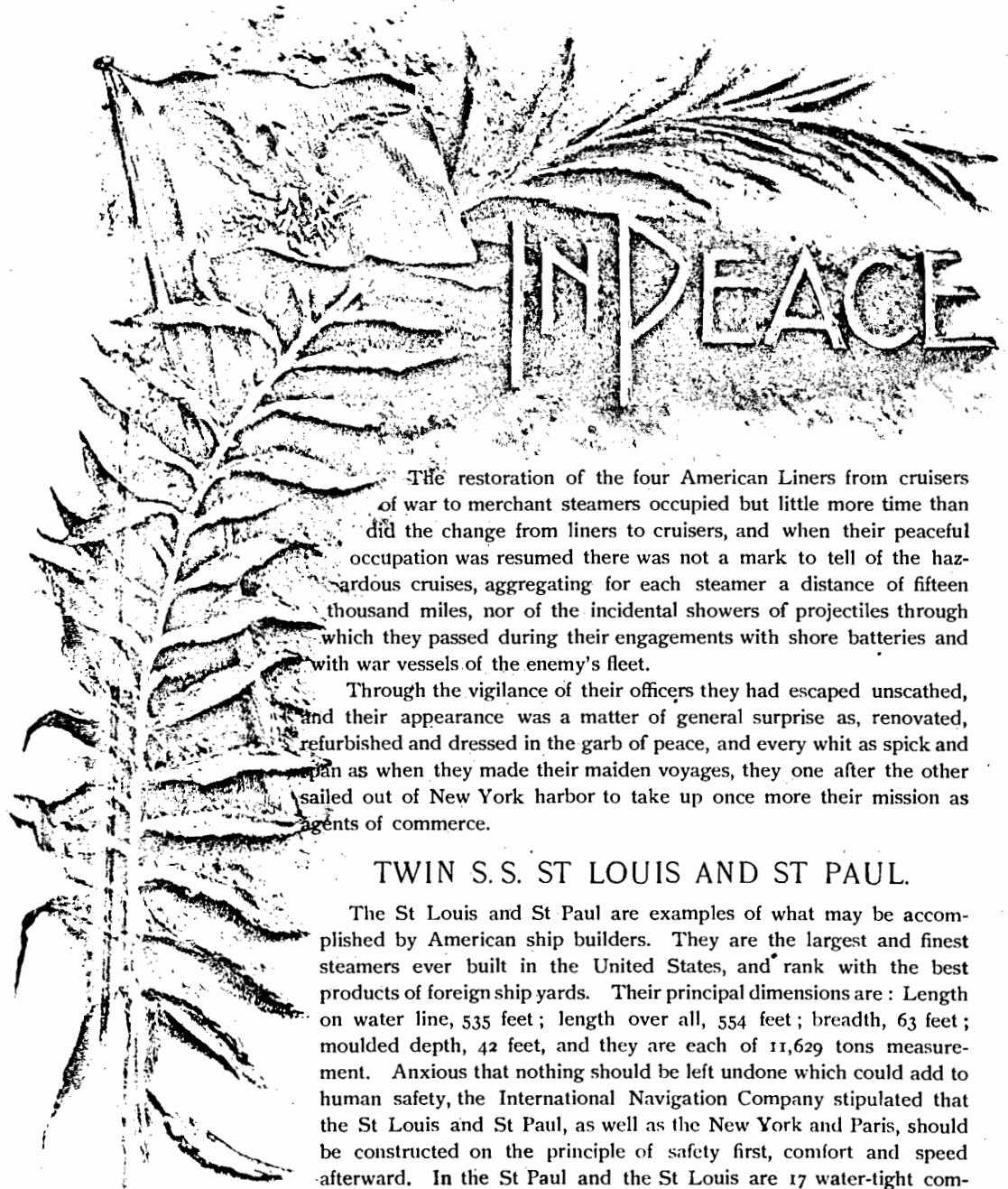


Though it is quite possible that restless ambition may in time bring about the creation of other ships in all respects equal to these four that are now the pride of loyal Americans, yet the St Paul, St Louis, the New York and the Paris must ever remain unique in the regard of all patriotic citizens of the Union as the first that demonstrated the incalculable advantage to the nation of possessing a fighting reserve of merchantmen to be called upon in time of need.

As long as they exist, they must remain an historical object lesson alike to those that are now too young to remember the stirring events of the recent struggle and to those that either actively or passively had an interest in it. As veterans of the Spanish-American war of 1898 they will ever possess an unbounded interest for those that sail in them or simply behold them; but, above all, they must needs appeal to all thoughtful persons as most wonderful examples of American adaptability.

DINING SALOON  
STEAM SHIPS  
ST LOUIS ·  
ST PAUL ·





The restoration of the four American Liners from cruisers of war to merchant steamers occupied but little more time than did the change from liners to cruisers, and when their peaceful occupation was resumed there was not a mark to tell of the hazardous cruises, aggregating for each steamer a distance of fifteen thousand miles, nor of the incidental showers of projectiles through which they passed during their engagements with shore batteries and with war vessels of the enemy's fleet.

Through the vigilance of their officers they had escaped unscathed, and their appearance was a matter of general surprise as, renovated, refurbished and dressed in the garb of peace, and every whit as spick and span as when they made their maiden voyages, they one after the other sailed out of New York harbor to take up once more their mission as agents of commerce.

### TWIN S. S. ST LOUIS AND ST PAUL.

The St Louis and St Paul are examples of what may be accomplished by American ship builders. They are the largest and finest steamers ever built in the United States, and rank with the best products of foreign ship yards. Their principal dimensions are: Length on water line, 535 feet; length over all, 554 feet; breadth, 63 feet; moulded depth, 42 feet, and they are each of 11,629 tons measurement. Anxious that nothing should be left undone which could add to human safety, the International Navigation Company stipulated that the St Louis and St Paul, as well as the New York and Paris, should be constructed on the principle of safety first, comfort and speed afterward. In the St Paul and the St Louis are 17 water-tight compartments, separated by transverse bulkheads extending from the keel to the saloon deck and rising 18 feet above the load water line, while in the New York and Paris, which are a trifle smaller, there are 15 of these compartments. Such is the buoyancy secured by this method of sub-division that the ships are practically unsinkable.



THE AMERICAN LINE



SMOKING ROOM  
STEAMSHIPS  
ST LOUIS  
ST PAUL



THE AMERICAN LINE

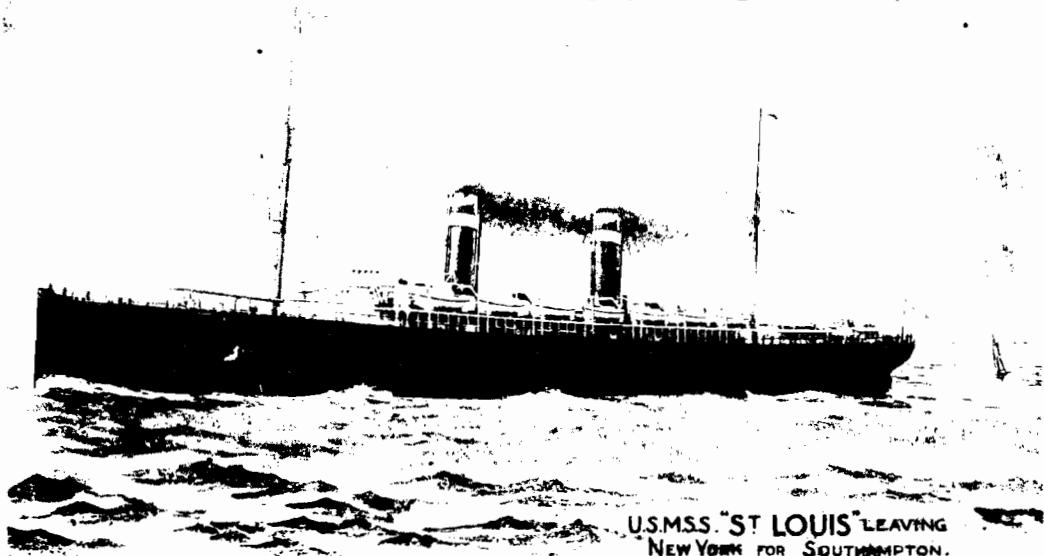
AMERICAN LINE U.S. MAIL STEAMER  
SOUTHAMPTON-CHERBOURG-NEW-YORK SERVICE.



S. S. SAINT PAUL

A fast Crossing - 1896 - NEW YORK-NEEDLES - 6d. 6h. 31m. (21.08k.)

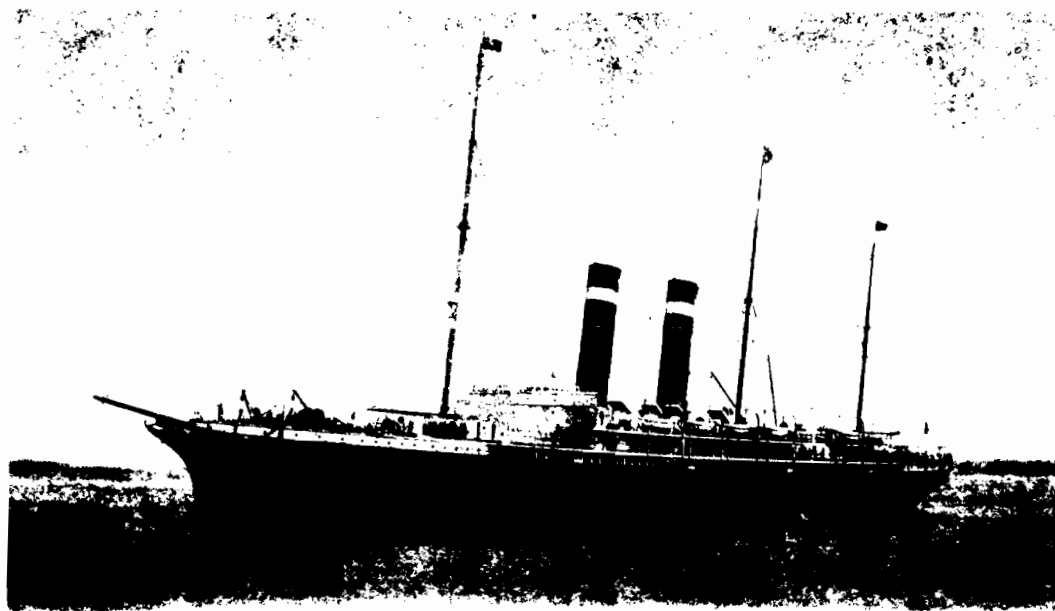
AMERICAN LINE



S. S. SAINT LOUIS

A fast crossing - 1896 - NEEDLES-NEW YORK - 6d. 2h. 24m. (20.33k.)

THE AMERICAN LINE

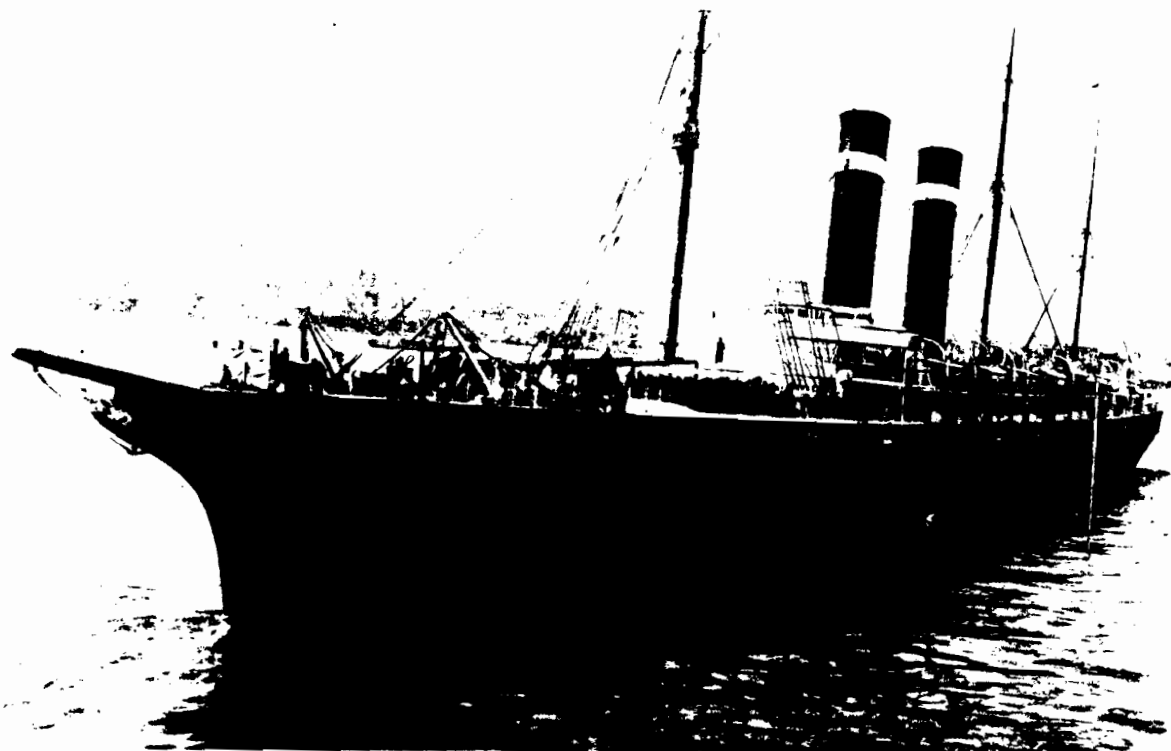


1/23 1905

S. S. NEW YORK (above)

S. S. PHILADELPHIA (below)

Extensive alterations were made to the ageing CITY OF NEW YORK (NEW YORK) and CITY OF PARIS (PARIS) in the early 1900's. By that time they were far out classed by newer tonnage but were still extremely respectable liners. The PARIS emerged from her reconditioning with a new name, the PHILADELPHIA and both liners lost a great deal of their majestic beauty through the removal of a funnel and a mast. These shots show the liners in later years.



THE AMERICAN LINE



On the two American-built steamers the quarters of the captain and navigating officers are upon the awning deck. To this deck the passengers have no access, and here the lifeboats and rafts are carried, where they can be easily and quickly launched.

While the primary consideration was safety, comfort was not neglected, and their speed has considerably exceeded the Government requirement of 20 knots per hour. The promenade deck is 170 yards in length, and is sheltered from sun and rain by the awning deck. Ample walking space is thus provided, while the deck house is constructed to form recesses or alcoves for steamer chairs. In this promenade deck house are suites of rooms, comprising bedroom, bathroom and sitting-room; here also are the smoking-rooms and the drawing-room, with its silk tapestries and its softly cushioned divans.

On the deck below is the main saloon, in which the entire complement of first cabin passengers can be seated at one time. It is 110 feet long and 50 feet wide, and has seats for 350 passengers at one time. It is situated amidships, between the two funnels, where there is the least motion. As is the case with the Paris and the New York, it is lighted from the top by a glass dome of large proportions and graceful shape, and on the side are rectangular windows instead of port holes.

In front of this saloon, and separated from it by the main companion-way, is the library, probably the largest room devoted to that purpose on any ship. Back of the main saloon is the pantry, and backed up against that is the pantry for the second cabin. Still back of this is the second-cabin saloon, also an unusually large room, and fitted with revolving chairs at the tables instead of the usual settees. The tables in this saloon, as in the first-cabin saloon, run lengthwise of the ship. Back of this is the doctor's office, and then a large space under the after promenade deck, where the steerage passengers may congregate in weather when shelter is needed.

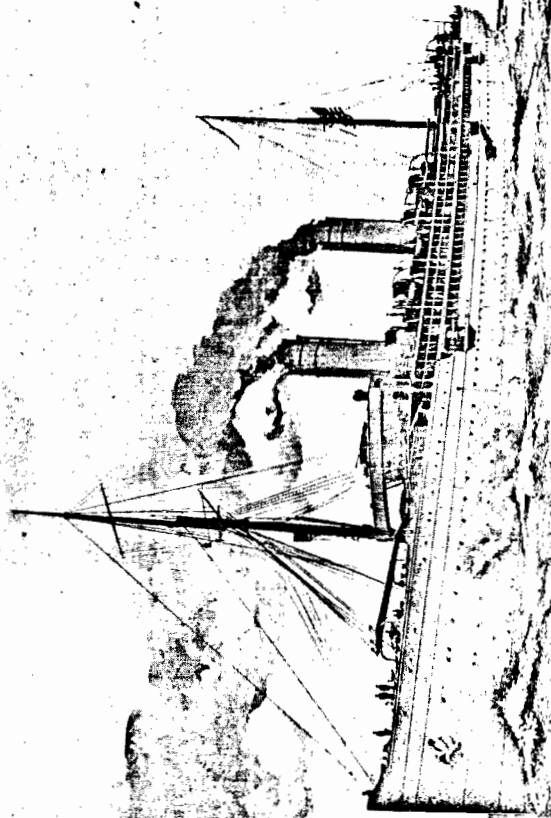
THE AMERICAN LINE



LIBRARY  
STEAMSHIPS  
ST LOUIS  
ST PAUL



THE AMERICAN LINE



SS ST PAUL



THE AMERICAN LINE

The large sums which are spent on the interior decorations of the modern steamship are not always spent wisely. There is great and ever-increasing luxury of equipment, but the taste displayed is commonly that of the abstract upholsterer, and whatever effect is produced is attained simply by the lavish use of expensive material. It was to avoid this pitfall that the company determined to put the general scheme of decoration, after the marine architect had drawn the deck plan, into the hands of a land



SUITE OF SITTING-ROOM, BEDROOM,  
BATH AND TOILET ROOM.

architect—to mark a contrast existing not in the nature but in the accidents of the case. The firm selected was the well-known Philadelphia firm of Furness, Graus & Co.

The problem before Mr. Furness was a novel one, and it will be agreed that he has solved it happily. In order to secure an individual and original scheme, he determined, keeping in mind that a sea voyage is practically a holiday for all passengers, to give his coloring all the light, the openness and the brilliance possible. This was also in accord with the desire of the company to do away, as far as possible, with the darkness of the interior inherent in steamer construction. In order to treat the large surface at command with distinct and satisfactory handling, Mr. Furness made a free use of ground and leaded glass, and especially of panelling. For this he called into co-operation Mr. Karl Bitter, the sculptor of the Astor gates.

The general effect of Mr. Furness's decorative scheme, which is graduated and harmonized through the various saloons, is novel and striking. Brilliance has been secured by the employment of light and definite coloring and general openness and lightness of form; gold leaf and effects usually associate with "floating palaces" have been disregarded.

The first-cabin saloon is finished in white mahogany. The panels about and under the glass dome are filled in with paintings of musical figures and sea nymphs engaged in playful contest in the sea. At the after end of the glass dome is a figure of Neptune with his trident, in an attitude of supremacy over the waves, and directly opposite, at the forward end of the dome, is a spirited figure of a mermaid holding up the gallery to the saloon in which the pipes of the great organ are placed.

The entire scheme of decoration for the ship is one of light and serviceable color. In the special suites of rooms on the promenade deck, the sides of the rooms are in panels that suggest here and there old ivory, with a slight dash of color to set off the figures. The main companion-way is stately and is in red mahogany. The ladies' drawing-room is finished in ivory color, and the upholstering is of light brocade, with a delicate figure. The library is finished in oak. The first-class smoking-room has leather fittings and dark wood. It has accommodations for 100 persons, and the fact

that it is on the promenade deck is one of the novelties of the ship. It has bluish panels of attractive design.

The second-class apartments are as pleasing to the eye as many of the first-class apartments, even, on ships of the present day. The ladies' sitting-room is finished in cherry, with panellings of appropriate color. The second-class smoking-room is finished in birch and cherry, and is one of the most attractive apartments on the ship.

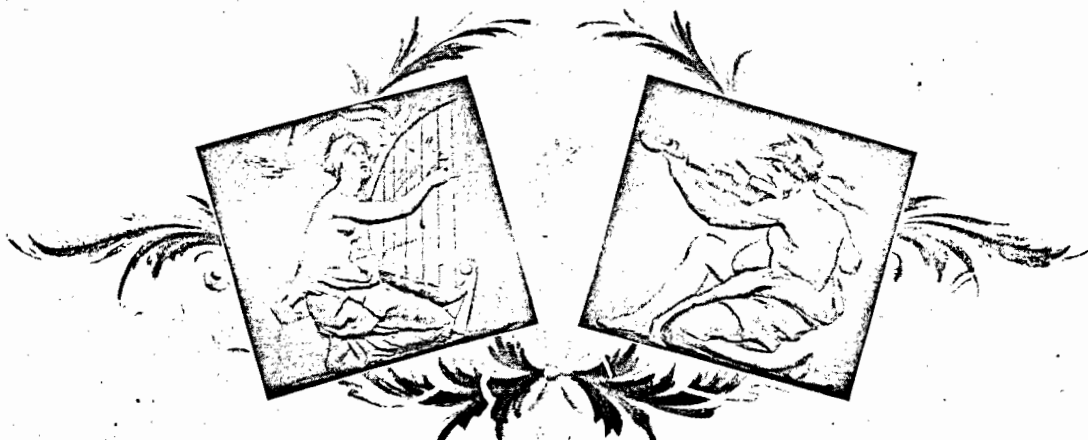
The whole of the extensive area of the upper and main decks is appropriated for sleeping-berths, the first-cabin rooms occupying the central section of the ship, the second-class being abaft of the machinery, the steerage forward and aft of the first and second cabins, and the quarters of the crew forward and aft again of the steerages.

The color scheme for the upholstery of the first-cabin staterooms is steel blue for one deck and old gold for the other. These rooms are of an unusual size, and as a rule are painted white. The ironwork is in sight in them, and, in the interest of absolute cleanliness, there has been no effort to cover it up with wood-work or useless decorations. The white paint makes an attractive room, and the color of the fittings gives a sufficient variety to the eye to make the rooms most pleasing.

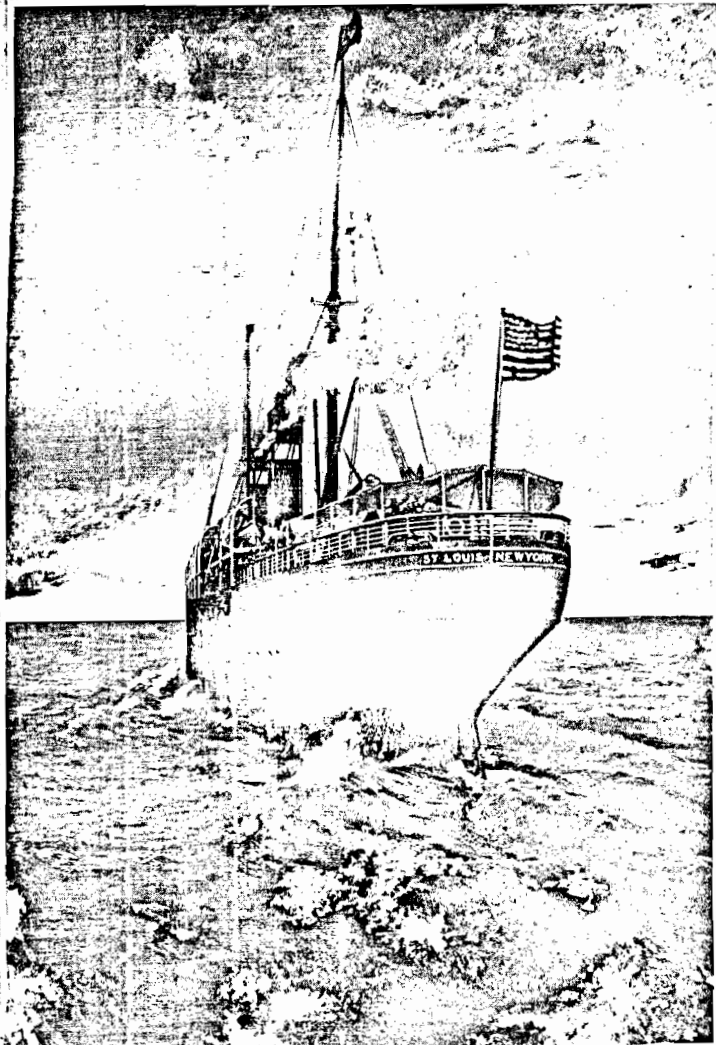
In cold weather fresh air is heated by means of ventilators near the top and the bottom of every apartment; the passenger may regulate the temperature and the ventilation as he chooses. By this superior system the inner rooms of the ship are as comfortable as the outer ones, the only difference between them being that the occupants of the outer rooms may get a glimpse of the water from the port holes.

The lighting system is also very elaborate. All told, there are more than 1300 electric lights in the ship, and four large dynamos are required in operating the extensive electric plant.

It will thus be seen that every possible attention has been paid with the end in view of securing a vessel that combines the three requisites of ocean travel in the order already given. Even the accommodations of the steerage are fitted with baths and sleeping accommodations in excess of those usually found. The passenger capacity of these ships is: First cabin, 350; second cabin, 200; steerage, 800. The crew numbers about 400.



THE AMERICAN LINE



SS ST LOUIS



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