

S.S. "LONDON MERCHANT", 7899 tons gross.

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This vessel, which has just been completed by the Furness Shipbuilding Company, was launched in November 1921, and in accordance with the Rules the date of build should be recorded as August 1922.

In January last letters were received from both the Builders and the Owners (Messrs. Furness, Withy & Company) stating that the construction had been unavoidably delayed owing to circumstances beyond their control, and requesting that date of build of 1923 might be assigned. The Builders and Owners were informed at this time that careful consideration would be given to their request when the First Entry Reports on the ship were received.

The First Entry Reports have now come to hand from the Middlesbrough Surveyors, together with a letter from the Builders stating that the ship was only handed over after successful trials on 25th May 1923, the unusually lengthy period between launch and completion being entirely due to the Owners' decision to revert from double reduction to single reduction geared turbines, involving a complete rearrangement of machinery, the construction of which was seriously delayed owing to labour troubles.

The Builders add that during the fitting out period the Owners and themselves have taken special care to maintain the efficiency of the hull, special protective coatings having been applied, and the ship having been drydocked for examination in July 1922 and again in May 1923.

An examination of the number of visits paid to this vessel shews that she has been under the constant supervision of the Society's Surveyors during the whole of the period following the date of launch, and in the circumstances the Owners' request is submitted for the favourable consideration of the Committee, with a view to the date of build being recorded as "MAY 1923".

8.6.23.