

CYRIL LLOYD ROBERTS will say:-

I am a Senior Ship Surveyor to Lloyd's Register of Shipping, and have been a Ship Surveyor with the Society since 1930.

In July 1946 I received instructions from the London Office of the Society to meet the Owners' Representative and Mr. Hughes his Naval Architect on board the M.V. "PANAGUSTA", formerly "L.C.T. 430", at the New Medway Steam Packet Company's Repair Works at Rochester for preliminary discussions on the question of the proposed alterations and classification of the vessel.

Preliminary plans ^{of} and proposed alterations were produced at this meeting, and the Naval Architect was advised that upon completion of his plans he should submit these to the London Office of the Society for approval.

On the 20th September 1946 the plans having been submitted, approved and the work commenced, I again visited the Repair Yard to examine the progress of the work and indicate roughly what would be required for ~~an~~ assignment of a ~~freeboard~~ ^{load line}.

Subsequent visits were paid by me during the course of the conversion until completion. The examinations and recommendations which I made during these visits are outlined in my Journal but of course ^{the entries} do not include all details attendant upon ~~the~~ survey. This conversion was a new departure both for the Consultant, the Contractors, as a result of which, considerably more detailed work was necessary than in the case of a ship constructed on normal lines, there being a number of arrangements on board which were perfectly satisfactory for the craft as a naval vessel, but which could not be accepted for the purpose of the Merchant Service.

The main alterations carried out on the vessel consisted of the following:

- (1) The fitting of a raised forecastle 21 feet long by 3 feet in height.
- (2) The closing in of the open part of the existing forecastle.
- (3) The stiffening and welding up of the brow doors.
- (4) The fitting of a companionway on the fore deck to the forward pump room.
- (5) The fitting of a collision bulkhead on Frame No. 1 above the double-bottom and the strengthening of the existing portion in the double bottom.
- (6) The fitting of a watertight bulkhead on Frame No. 11 except in way of the Duct Keel.
- (7) The plating over of the well forward of Frame No. 39 at the top of the existing coaming, which was reinforced to form a trunk, with hatchways according to Rule fitted on top of this trunk, and the supporting of the deck by new pillars and girders.

- (8) The plating over of the well abaft Frame No. 39 at upper deck level and the fitting of an additional deckhouse on this deck.
- (9) The fitting of a watertight bulkhead on Frame No. 17A in the centre space only (the remainder was existing) to provide a complete watertight bulkhead at this station.
- (10) The covering of the engine room hatchway by a companionway.
- (11) The fitting or modifying of auxiliary steering gear, belting, cargo gear, boats and rails on deck and trunk.

In the structural alterations, ~~both~~ riveting or electric welding were used for connections, both processes being carried out in accordance with the Society's Rules and requirements. All watertight or ~~air~~ tight compartments were satisfactorily flood pressure or hose tested in my presence in accordance with the Rule requirements.

The Electric Welding was carried out by efficient operators having several years experience and from my observation of the work in progress, all the necessary precautions to ensure sound welding were taken.

The Electrodes used were of approved type and in the main of Murex Manufacture, and the Amperage used was correct and was controlled by means of an ~~ammeter~~ *automatic regulator* on the machines.

The welding was carefully examined visually and tested by hammering with satisfactory results. The general standard of workmanship was considered satisfactory and in accordance with requirements of Lloyd's Register of Shipping.

On the 10th January, 1947, it was indicated that the vessel was about to proceed to the Mediterranean, and I received instructions from the London Office to issue a Provisional Freeboard Certificate (subject of course to my satisfying myself as to the adequate preparation for the voyage) I made a survey of the vessel whilst afloat at Rochester and found her to be to my complete satisfaction and fit to proceed to the Mediterranean, subject to adequate temporary shoring and battening arrangements being made for the voyage. On satisfactory completion of these requirements my official survey terminated and accordingly the Provisional Freeboard Certificate was issued on the 14th January, 1947.

For reasons unknown the vessel did not immediately sail for the Mediterranean and as far as is known a coasting voyage to the East Coast was carried out for which no Certificate was issued. Subsequently, however, application ^{*Provisional Loading and Stowage*} was made for the issue of a Certificate ^{*for the Thames*} to cover coasting voyages to Boston Lines, for a limited period pending departure for the Mediterranean, and having again surveyed the vessel afloat at Deptford on the 15th February, 1947, on instructions from the London Office, the required Certificate for coasting voyages to Boston Lines, prepared in the London Office on the 14th February, ~~was~~ ^{*with*} issued. This was the last occasion I saw the "FAMAGUSTA".



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W 992-0154 2/3

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In March, 1947, information was received that the vessel was about to leave for the Mediterranean, and that the temporary shoring and battening required for the trip which had been meanwhile removed, was being re-instated. The original Provisional Freeboard Certificate dated the 14th January, 1947, was still valid as regards date, ^{of repairs} and as I was confined to the house with fractured ribs as a result of an accident, my colleague Mr. S. ^{Engelmann} illex inspected the vessel on my behalf at ^{Engelmann} on the 12th March and satisfied himself that the temporary requirements had again been satisfactorily complied with.

~~I refer to my Survey Report for additional details of the ship's construction.~~

In conclusion I was personally concerned with the ^{this} type of landing craft to a considerable extent during the war and was responsible for the carrying out of a number of re-fits and sea trials on which latter I was present. At the time of the conversion of the "PAMAGUSTA" I felt the utmost confidence in the strength of the vessel from personal experience with craft of the same type and design. It is of interest to note that by reason of the number of compartments into which these vessels are divided, they were considered during the war to be extremely difficult to sink.

23rd February,
1949.



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W 992 - 0154 3/3