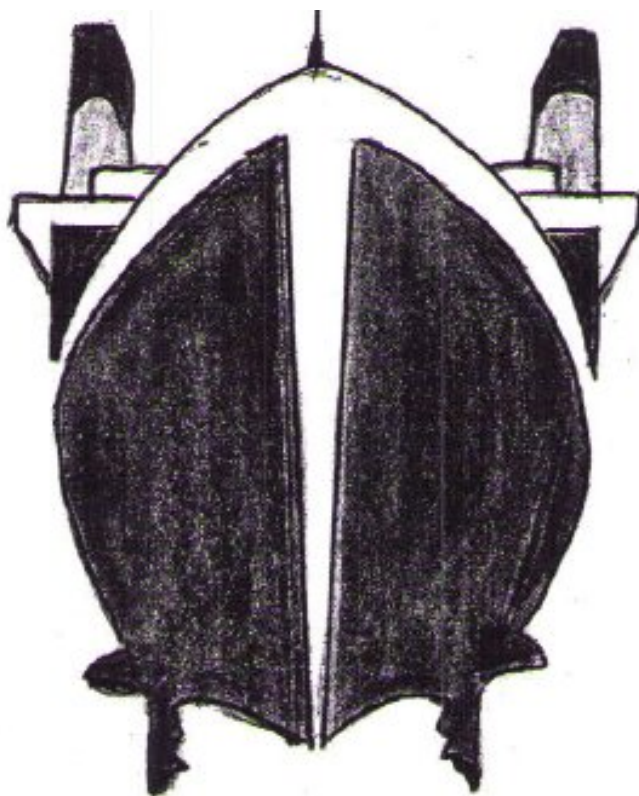
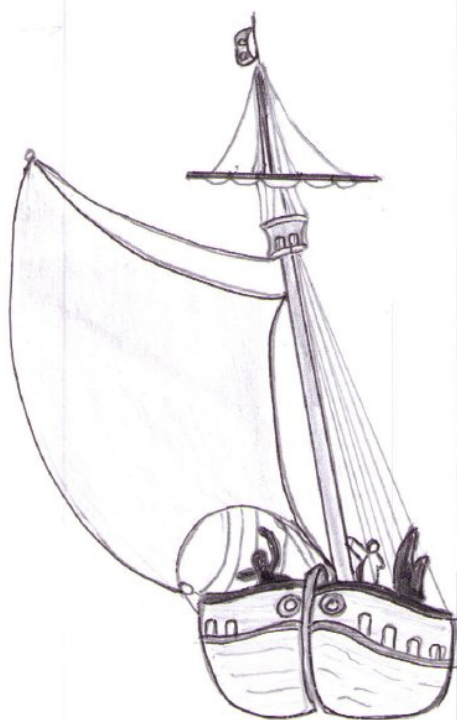


# **HOLYHEAD SERVICES**

## **1561-2011**



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## THE EARLY PACKETS

Early in the reign of Elizabeth I the Government of Ireland felt that a new shipping route was needed to transmit the mails and pass officials between Dublin and London. Holyhead was the nearest point in Britain to Dublin, but it was not accessible to wheeled traffic and generally unattractive to commercial interests. The accounts of Sir William Fitzwilliam, then Vice-Treasurer of Ireland, show that on 3rd July 1561<sup>1</sup> John Apperce (or Appierce) of Holyhead was employed at the rate of 16 pence per day to set up the service. On 1st February 1561 Patrick Tirrell, a sea-captain of Howth, was contracted to supply a Barque, based at Howth, at the rate of 2s/6d per day while in service. This was later increased to 2s/8d. John Apperce then supplied a second vessel himself, to be based at Holyhead, at the same rate. Sir William was having major treasury problems – in 1563 the garrison's wages were three years in arrears and in 1564 he recorded that he owed Patrick Tirrell the sum of £23-19s-8d, and to John Apperce £57(?) -9s-9d. The system of contracting with someone to supply a service for an agreed subsidy lasted until the end of sail on the route in 1821. The boats were likely to touch anywhere between Balbriggan and Arklow, and powers were given to requisition horses to bring mails and officials to Dublin.

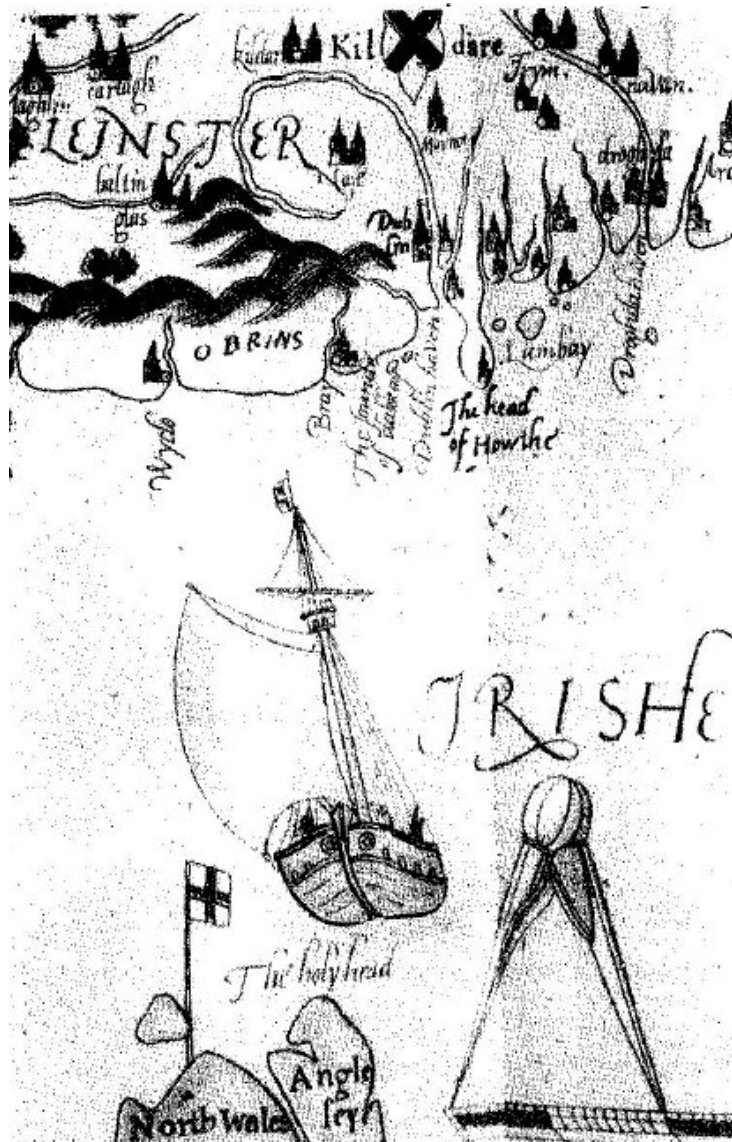
The exact progress of the service for the rest of the sixteenth century is not very clear. On the 14th August 1581 an inquiry was held in Chester into the boarding and plunder of the packet Margaret between Dublin and Holyhead by pirates. These pirates seem to have originated in Beaumauris, then Anglesey's main port. On 30th September 1583 the post boat owned by Andrew Radcliffe was paid off. Sir William Fitzwilliam (by now Lord Deputy), writing in 1596, mentions that some of his letters had been four times at sea. In 1599 Sir Robert Fenton wrote from Holyhead stating he was detained waiting for the post boat – a similar letter from John Bingly is dated January 1605.

In 1606 the existence of a wooden quay at Howth, erected in Elizabeth's reign, is mentioned. Presumably this was used by the packets. The year 1608 saw Sir Arthur Chichester, the Deputy, writing to London to defend the captain of the post boat, Robert Pepper, against complaints. Pepper was said to be building a new boat. He received £10 per lunar month to provide the service. In 1618 he received £13-6s-8d compensation for damage incurred in a storm.

Henry Carey (Lord Falkland), then the Deputy, gave a letter in 1624 to Andrew Hooper, captain of the post boat praying the treasury to pay him his due. The payment of £10 per lunar month had not been paid for two years. To maintain his ship Hooper had been forced to pawn all his goods, so that he had been left with scarcely "a shirt, and his wife with a smock". In December 1628 Captain Hooper was allowed to transfer his position to Captain William Longfield. In July 1631 the captain of a guard ship stationed at Holyhead claimed that the packet had been robbed by Turkish pirates!

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<sup>1</sup> Until calendar changes in 1752 the year ended in late March. Eleven days were then dropped. I have given dates as I found them.



*Gough's Map, 1567*

In 1635 a regular weekly post was established between London and Dublin – a letter cost 6d – but the service was interrupted by the disorders of 1641. In that year Nicholas, 23rd Lord of Howth, made arrangements with some fishermen to carry essential mails across the Irish Sea. In 1644 the French traveller M. Boullaye-Le-Gouz noted the newly built quay at Ringsend, and it was to here the service came when restarted. By 1646 the Parliament's forces controlled both Dublin and Holyhead. Stephen Rich had already earned their gratitude by, among other things, taking the captured garrison of Conway Castle to sea in his ship and "setting them swimming towards Ireland". From 1st November 1646 he was to supply two ships, one based at Holyhead and one at Dublin. The subsidy was £11 per ship per month. However, in a few years the contract passed to Thomas Swift, described as Governor of Holyhead and a "Commissioner of the Gospel" for Wales. St. Cybis Church in Holyhead had been closed for worship by the Parliamentarians. Swift had the tower raised by 17ft for use as a look-out. Regular posts were re-established in 1653.

At the Restoration of the Monarchy the contract went to a Captain John Bartlett, but he was forced to charter ships from Swift, who continued to dominate the service. A subsidy of £400 per annum was now paid for three boats, and proportionately for a fourth. In 1664 the Government asked the packets to race from Holyhead to Dublin against a strange vessel built by Sir William Petty of 'Down Survey' fame. Described as a "double bottom ship", this was a flat-bottomed vessel with two distinct keels and it worked on principles similar to those of a catamaran. Petty's boat won the race, and he brought it to London where it was officially christened *Experiment* by the King the next year. It perished in a storm the following year, with the loss of 17 lives.

This was not the end of the story, for in 1684 Petty persuaded fourteen of his friends, including the patriot William Molyneux, to subscribe £20 each for another 'double bottom', "which shall pass between Dublin and Holyhead a hundred times a year, let whatsoever weather happen". The ship was built by the Surveyor General Sir William Robinson in Dublin, and named *St. Michael the Archangel*. It boasted a fine cabin, and had accommodation for twelve horses. The draught was only 3½ feet. In addition to sail it had provision for eight sets of oars. Trials in the Liffey around 16<sup>th</sup> December were a failure, and she nearly capsized. The sailors declared "they would not venture over the Bar with her for £1,000 apiece". Samuel Pepys, in London, had a large bet with Petty that the ship would fail.

In 1670 a Major Deane was providing three packets, one of which was wrecked in December with the loss of 122 lives. This and another wrecking led to the requisition of a 'Holland' build boat. The most common route from Conway to Holyhead was along the strand to the Menai Straits opposite Beaumauris, and by ferry to that town. Holy Island, on which Holyhead stands, had been linked to Anglesey. In 1686 Lord Clarendon, the Viceroy, spent some days on this journey, mainly trying to get around the mountain at Penmaenmawr. The packet, incidentally, landed him at Dunleary.

In 1689 James Vickers agreed to provide three ships for £450 per annum. One of his ships, the *Grace*, was captured in 1692 by two French privateers commanded by Lamport Lolory and a certain Walsh, who were supporters of King James II. The ship was plundered and Vickers had to pay fifty guineas to ransom the hull. He was awarded £150 compensation by the postmaster general, and the subsidy was raised to £500 per annum. In 1696 the *William* was blown across Dublin Bay and wrecked at Sutton. Of about 80 people on board only the captain and cabin boy survived. One of those who perished, a Brigadier-General Fitzpatrick, was buried in the choir of St. Patrick's Cathedral.

In 1699 the *Flying Post*, the first regular Dublin newspaper, began and was followed by many others. These papers were virtually reprints of London newspapers and depended for their existence on the prompt arrival of the packet. They were often disappointed! The principal local input was the 'port news' and the Dublin papers give a unique record of people considered 'important' using the Holyhead service. The *Irish Times* continued this tradition up to the Second World War.

In 1715 J. Mackey, a director of the Dover to Calais packet, was authorised to operate ships on the same conditions as James Vickers. We find Vickers' heirs seeking compensation for the loss of the packet *Ann* in 1706, and for damage to another ship as late as 1720. In 1723 Thomas Wilson, a Dublin merchant, was granted the contract for seven years, subsequently extended for another seven. He supplied three ships for £300 per annum and kept all receipts, so he had to maximise his revenue.

The descendants of Thomas Swift established an Inn at Holyhead known as 'Welsh's', and this was where people waited for the packet. Jonathan Swift was a regular user in the early eighteenth century, and in 1825 Sir Walter Scott transcribed this poem said to have been written by Swift on a window of the old Inn:

Oh Neptune. Neptune, must I still  
Be here detained against my will  
Is this your gesture when I'm come  
O'er mountains steep, o'er dusty plains  
Half choked with dust, half drown'd with rains  
Only your godship to implore  
To let me kiss another shore  
A boon so small, but I may weep  
While you're like Baal. fast asleep.

Swift arrived on horseback at Holyhead on 3rd September 1727 and stayed at Welsh's, but the gales blew and on 25th September he wrote in exasperation:

Lo, here I sit at Holy Head  
With muddy ale and mouldy bread,  
I'm fastened both by wind and tide,  
I see the ships at anchor ride.  
All Christian vittals stink of fish,  
I'm where my enemies would wish,  
Convict of lies is ev'ry sign,  
The Inn has not one drop of wine.  
The Captain swears the sea' too rough,  
(he has not passengers enough).  
And thus the Dean is forc'd to stay  
Till others come to help the pay.

He finally departed on 28th September but the ship had to put back and he found himself in Welsh's again on the 30th. (Incidentally, throughout the eighteenth century Holyhead's bread was supplied from Dublin in the packets.) In 1731 May Granville, then known as Mrs Pendarves and later to be Swift's friend Mrs Delany of Glasnevin, travelled with her aunt on the *Pretty Berry* – they paid five guineas for the best cabin. In 1735 William Bulkley travelled from Holyhead on the *Wyndham* and returned on the *Cartaret* with Thomas Hughes of Holyhead as captain. He paid the standard half-guinea fare each way.

John Power succeeded Thomas Wilson as contractor, his ships were larger and the subsidy more generous. He received £900 per annum for three packets of

from 60 to 70 tons, each manned by eleven men and two boys. This rate was being paid to Thomas Blair in 1763, then it increased to £1,080 per annum. He had three ships – the *Earl of Bessborough*, the *Hampden* and the *President*. When he replaced the latter two, the subsidy increased to £1,137. In March 1768 another three packets were contracted for and it was intended to have sailings from Dublin six days a week. In 1772 the Post Office decided to take a more direct interest in the service, and to contract with five sea-captains for one ship each. The first five packets were *Dartmouth*, *Le de Spenser*, *Hillsborough*, *Clermont* and *Bessborough*. The contract price was £380 per ship per annum, all receipts to be retained by the operator. It was agreed that the seamen were to be free from impressment and to be paid 30s per month with £2 to be allowed for maintenance.

John Wesley, the founder of Methodism, travelled to Dublin on twenty-one occasions from 1747. He used various routes but principally Holyhead, paying the standard half-guinea fare. In 1758 he wrote:

I learned two or three rules, very needful for those who travel between England and Ireland.

1. Never pay 'til you sail.
2. Go not on board 'til the captain goes on board.
3. Send not your baggage on board 'til you go yourself.

In 1771 he recorded walking with one John Pritchard from the port to the new 'Gravel Walk Chapel' to preach – this building survives in Blackhall Place. He arrived in the *Clermont* in 1789 for a last emotional visit – he was then aged 86 years, an unusual lifespan in those times.

John Wesley landed at a number of points in the then extending port of Dublin and at Dunleary. On a few occasions he took a small boat to the shore rather than wait for the packet to dock. However, the mail packet station was still Ringsend and fares for the 'Ringsend Cars' which plied from there to the city were laid down by officialdom. By 1767 the creek at Dunleary was enclosed by a pier which survives as the inner pier at the 'Coal Harbour'. This harbour shelved to a beach of hard sand said to be dangerous in stormy conditions, but it seems to have been much used by the packets. When the railway was extended from its first terminus to the site of the present Dun Laoghaire Station most of this harbour was cut off from the sea. William Dargan, when converting the 'atmospheric' line to Dalkey to a standard railway, dumped his spoil in the cut-off portion, largely filling it in. Later a gas works was built on the site. In 1790 the small harbour at the Pigeon House was built, with a fine hotel and this remained the official mail packet station.



*Former hotel building at Pigeon House*

In North Wales, the road over the Synchnant Pass, near Conway, was completed in 1768 and wealthy travellers began to bring their coaches, which they could use as cabins when tied down on deck. In 1780 a Shrewsbury Inn Keeper began a stage coach service from Holyhead to London and an official mail coach started in 1788.

On 8th March 1780 the *Bessborough* and *Hillsborough* were captured by French-based privateers and had to be ransomed by the Post Office. Over £5,000 was paid. In December 1790 the *Charlemont* sailed from Holyhead and after nearing Dublin was blown back again. She picked up more passengers but was wrecked shortly afterwards – about one hundred lives were lost. In 1796 two wherries of 40 tons each were contracted for by the Post Office to sail when the packets were not available; a third was added in 1798. The contractor was one Stephen Draper, who received £49-2s-6d per month per vessel. He was to make other valuable contracts with the Post Office. John Lees was secretary of the Irish Post Office from 1774. His son Edward became joint-secretary with him in 1801, when only eighteen years old. They seem to have greatly enriched themselves through their office. Edward became sole secretary on his father's death in 1811. When the Duke of Richmond reformed the Post Office in 1831 Edward Lees was transferred against his will to Edinburgh. One of the earlier official enquiries that the Lees withstood was in 1809, when Draper's contract for the wherries was judged to be greatly over-generous. A pamphlet published in 1831 by a disgruntled ex-employee named O'Neill implies an intimacy between Edward Lees and Draper's wife, Ann.





*Edward Lees*

John McGregor Skinner was the second son of the Attorney General of New Jersey and was born there about 1760. He lost an arm and suffered other wounds in 1776 on H.M.S. *Phoenix* in the American War of Independence. In 1780 he was sent to the West Indies where he lost an eye. As captain of the Falmouth packet *Princess Royal* he successfully defended her against a French brig, *L'Adventure*, in 1798. It appears that out of regard for this action he was appointed to Holyhead in the *Leicester*, replacing the *Dartmouth*. He recruited his crew at Holyhead, which by then seems to have been the normal practice. Some of the surnames mentioned at this time are still to be found among Sealink crews today.

On 9th November 1799 Captain James Furnace of the *Loftus*, which had replaced the *Le de Spenser*, was told to unship his passengers and some carriages and horses and proceed to Chester. There he took on board four prisoners and five officials. The prisoners were Napper Tandy and three companions who had been extradited from Hamburg for trial in Dublin. Napper Tandy was not in good health but relations between the prisoners and their guards were convivial. Furnace landed his passengers at the Pigeon House where a large crowd greeted Napper Tandy. The captain claimed £100 for loss of traffic and feeding the party – the Post Office gave him £60.

Ships were getting bigger but complaints continued, including a perennial one about ships being held for certain passengers. One serious complaint concerned Captain Skinner, who normally had a good record. On 1st September 1809 he was persuaded to hold his ship, the *Union*, for a certain Lady Harrison. He waited until 7th September when he sailed without her. When he returned on 10th she was finally ready.

Around the turn of the century various authorities urged the building of a new harbour at Howth which would be more accessible to the packets than the Liffey. The old harbour at Howth had silted up and in 1805 an Act authorised expenditure of £10,000 there. Work began in 1807 but as early as 1808 Rev. William Dawson, who had campaigned earlier for the new harbour, warned that its position would make it a sand trap. His advice was ignored but he was to be proved right. In 1813, in view of developments at Howth, the Government purchased the hotel and other buildings at the Pigeon House. The Pigeon House Fort was built with the old hotel as its nucleus. In 1897 the Fort was sold to Dublin Corporation for development as an electricity generating station.

Edward Lees was a great supporter of Howth Harbour and he had a house built for himself there. He also had apartments in the new G.P.O. in O'Connell Street, as had the Drapers. He offered a piece of plate to the first captain to use the new harbour. Captain Skinner won it. On 1st August 1818 Howth became the official mail packet station for Dublin. The building of the harbour caused considerable development of the town of Howth - a new Catholic church (now the Parish Hall) was erected in 1814 and a Church of Ireland church (now replaced) in 1816. In 1814 the number of passengers carried in the packets was 14,576. The average time taken from Holyhead was 20 hours 27 minutes and the average time from Dublin to Holyhead was 17 hours 7 minutes. The move to Howth reduced the latter to about 15 hours.

### THE COMING OF STEAM

A private steam packet company operated one trip from Howth to Holyhead on 13th September, 1816, but little happened until a ship named the *Talbot* plied on the route in the summer of 1819. Edward Lees, still Secretary of the Irish Post Office, was involved in the steam packet company. This was greatly resented by all involved in the post office service. The post office ordered two ships from Evans of Rotherhite, but meantime chartered the *Talbot* to carry mail. When a second vessel *Ivanhoe* appeared similar arrangements were made. The new ships *Lightning* and *Meteor* were ready in July 1821.



*The Footprints of George IV in Howth*

King George IV arrived on his visit to Ireland in the *Lightning* on 12th August at Howth. Captain Skinner was in command. A sculptor was engaged to mark and subsequently carve an imprint of the King's feet on the quayside where he first landed. The official state welcoming party was at Dunleary, expecting him to arrive there. He broke from his escorts and shook many hands in the crowd – neither the absence of the Government nor the news of the death of his estranged wife, Queen Caroline, depressed him. A prominent Roman Catholic, Bowes Daly, who had hoped to petition the King, had his pocket picked in the crush. The King eventually returned to Britain from Dunleary, which was renamed Kingstown in his honour. The *Lightning* was renamed *Royal Sovereign King George IV*, and spent most of its existence working between Waterford and Milford Haven. In 1837, in order to free the name for another vessel, she was renamed *Monkey*!

By 31st December, 1821, the steamers had carried 13,743 passengers and were showing a profit. As steamers were introduced the Post Office purchased the sailing packets from their captains. Three of these ships became coal hulks at Holyhead. By 1824 there were three steamers named *Aladdin*, *Harlequin* and *Cinderella*.

The cabin fare was one guinea, with 2s/6d to the first steward and 1s/-d to the second. The steerage rate was 5s/-d. Servants were half-price. A seat in the mail coach from Howth to Dublin was a substantial 3s/6d, but there were many jarveys offering a cheaper rate.

Land communications with Holyhead were improved by the building of the bridge at Betys-y-Coed in 1815, and Thomas Telford was engaged to improve the roads from London, and also the Howth/Dublin road. Telford's suspension bridge over the Menai Straits opened in January, 1826. The Admiralty insisted on a clearance over the water of 100 feet to allow ships to pass. In 1823, however, the City of Dublin Steampacket Company was founded by Charles Wye Williams, backed by the wealthy Bourne family, who were major mail coal contractors in Ireland to the Post Office. They operated a service to Liverpool. The Post Office introduced four new ships, too big to use Howth, and decided to operate them Kingstown/Holyhead/Liverpool from 29th August, 1826. In November the call at Holyhead was dropped. The great harbour of refuge was taking shape at Kingstown, and the ships used a jetty at the East Pier. But a daily service to Holyhead continued, and a telegraph was erected on Holyhead Mountain to signal the impending arrival of the steamer so that coaches could be held if necessary.

Travellers had been complaining of the severity of Customs examinations, particularly at Dublin. A Select Committee of the House of Commons urged in 1819 that travellers should be allowed to sign a certificate stating that they had no dutiable goods. Only if contraband was suspected should the bags be opened. But the problem persisted until full financial integration of Britain and Ireland in the 1820s. Travellers between Holyhead and other parts of Britain often used the service. In 1822 Rev. William Griffiths left the theological college in Carmarthen to become Congregational Minister at Holyhead. He caught a ship en route from Bristol to Dublin at Tenby and travelled in the *Royal Sovereign* to Holyhead. In 1843 he travelled to Dublin again. He then took the Dublin/Bristol service to get married in the Moravian Church in the latter city. His son, Sir John Purser Griffiths, was to become consultant engineer to Dublin Port and Docks Board. The condition of the Holyhead packets gave cause for concern, and in 1831 Captain Skinner spoke out against Post Office management. His words were sadly borne out on 30th October, 1832. Both he and his mate were washed off the *Escape* and drowned when a bulwark collapsed. A fine Egyptian-style obelisk was erected overlooking the old harbour at Holyhead in his memory. It proved a useful landmark for shipping. The building of the Dublin and Kingstown Railway sealed the fate of sand-filled Howth. The packets transferred to the East Pier, Kingstown in April, 1834. The railway opened in December 1834 and handled mails and passengers into Dublin. Incidentally, Catholics working at Kingstown Harbour in the early 1830s found that they could attend Mass on a prison hulk, the *Essex*, moored in the harbour, on Sundays. The Catholic Church locally was very crowded on Sundays at this time.

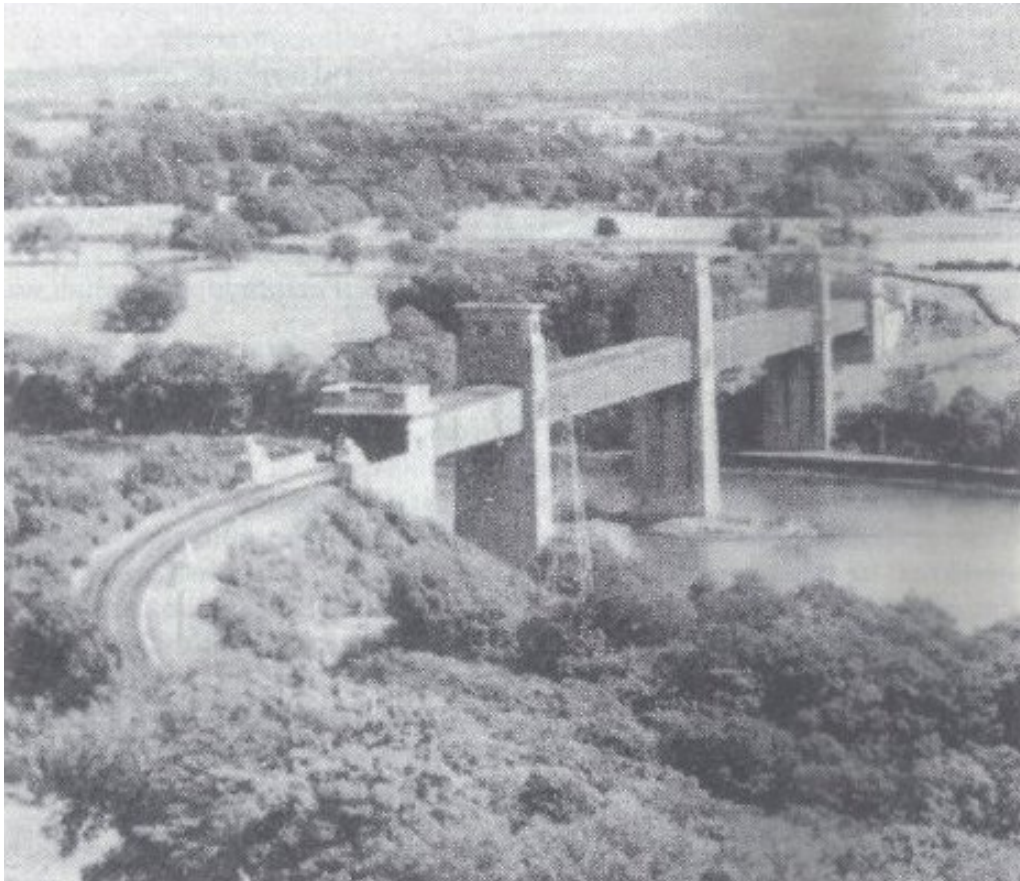
In 1838 the Post Office decided to divide the mail between the Admiralty Packets and the City of Dublin Steam Packet Company, and the latter company began to operate from Kingstown to Liverpool. The Irish Railway Commission of 1836

recommended Holyhead as the port for London/Dublin services, but the opening of rail links to Liverpool led to its becoming the official mail packet station in January, 1839. But the Admiralty were not prepared to abandon Holyhead, and continued to send some mails through that port. In 1843 the Chester and Holyhead Railway Company was incorporated and a bill for the construction of the line got its first reading on 14th March, 1844. The Board of the new company had links with the London and Birmingham Railway, which became part of the London North Western Railway (L.N.W.R) in 1846. The Prime Minister, Sir Robert Peel, suggested that the line use the atmospheric system then in use between Kingstown and Dalkey. As his favour was needed Robert Stephenson was sent to examine this line. His report convinced the Board to decline Peel's suggestion. By 1846 the work was well under way and the Board decided to recruit eight scripture readers to minister to the contractors' men – 2 on Anglesey and 6 on the mainland. But in May, 1846, there was a riot among the navvies near Chester and special constables were enrolled from the workforce to keep order. The majority of the workers were Welsh, a minority were Irish and others. In general the absence of racial or sectarian strife was widely noted. In September, 1846 the company formed a steam packet committee to seek powers to run ships, but this was opposed by the City of Dublin Steam Packet Company. Eventually the construction of four iron ships began, in the names of the Directors themselves, as quietly as possible, but the Admiralty also began to construct steamers superior to those they had used up to now. In March, 1847, the steampacket committee made an offer to the Treasury to provide a mail service of two passages each way daily for £35,000 per annum, and expressed a willingness to purchase the Admiralty steamers.

Construction of the great breakwater at Holyhead had begun, intended to form a harbour of refuge, and continued for many years. The Railway Company by now seems to have been under the impression that they would be supplanting the Admiralty at Holyhead, and agreed to contribute £200,000 of the estimated cost of £700,000 of the Harbour of Refuge. It was agreed that the "inner part be appropriated to the company subject to its use by Her Majesty's Government." Some land at the base of the new breakwater was bought by the company. The building of the line involved two major bridges. At Conway, George and Robert Stephenson had to build a bridge over the estuary which would not detract from the splendour of Conway Castle. This was soon achieved, but construction of the immense bridge over the Menai Straits was not completed for some years after the rest of the line. Many men lost their lives in falls from this bridge. A Bill authorising the company to operate steamers finally passed in 1848, Sir Robert Peel declaring that the natural terminus of the line was Dublin. On Monday, 31st July three new steamers arrived at Holyhead, the Admiralty's *Banshee* and *Llewlyn* and the Holyhead and Chester Railway Company's *Cambria*. At 8.45 p.m. a new train, the *Irish Mail* left Euston – it still runs today. The mail and passengers had to be brought by coach over the Menai Straits, but all had arrived in Holyhead by 9 a.m. on 1st August. The mail packet station was moved back to Holyhead from Liverpool, and both Admiralty and railway steamers began to operate in connection with the trains from that day. In Kingstown John Gray was established as agent to the Railway Company. He organised a staff to sell tickets. He based himself in 14 Windsor Terrace, near the harbour, and also



used number 11 Windsor Terrace for some time. Talks resumed between the Company and the Admiralty, but had not reached any conclusion by October; when the Company's bankers became restive. They demanded the return of loans amounting to £75,000, and the Company had to turn to the L.N.W.R., whose influence was thereby increased.



*The Menai Bridge before the fire*

The company had expected to pick up at least the Admiralty's share of the mail contract, but heard of arrangements being made with the City of Dublin S.P. Company, and objected. On 1st July, 1849, the Government approved that the contract would go to tender. A bout of competitive tendering followed, but City of Dublin tendered for £25,000 per annum, or £30,000 if purchasing two of the Admiralty steamers at an agreed price. This tender was felt to be below the actual cost of providing the service, and the Railway Company found itself under pressure at this time to pay part or all of the £200,000 they had promised towards the Holyhead Harbour of Refuge. The lowest the Company could tender for was £30,000, so the contract went to the City of Dublin S.P. The Admiralty service was wound up in May, 1850. Some of the Holyhead sailors got positions on the railway ships, others ended up as shore workers.

The railway steamers were named *Anglia*, *Cambria*, *Hibernia* and *Scotia*. The *Hibernia* was converted to operate a freight-orientated service from North Wall. This ship was sold to the Waterford and Limerick Railway in the 1870s, and used as a coal hulk in Waterford. She is recorded as being disposed of for breaking up

in 1897, but I have been assured that her hull was in the River Suir until the end of the Second World War. The steamer left Kingstown at 6 a.m., connecting with a 2 p.m. train from Holyhead, and arrived in London at 10.30 p.m. After the completion of the Menai Bridge, departure time became 8.30 a.m. Passengers could leave London, Euston at 9 a.m. and arrive at Kingstown at 10.30 p.m. Moves were made to set up a freight service from North Wall, and John Roberts was appointed agent - he was later to become Irish Traffic Manager. In January, 1852 a new service for perishable traffic (mainly fish) was inaugurated leaving North Wall at 7 p.m. The connecting train was due in Manchester at 06.30. A full freight service commenced on 27<sup>th</sup> September 1852. The railway made a substantial investment in cattle wagons to work from Holyhead. A cattle yard was laid out at North Wall, and a new head office was constructed.

The City of Dublin Steam Packet Company had acquired most of the First Class traffic with the mail contract, and its faster ships. The Holyhead and Chester decided to look to the other end of the market. Large numbers of harvesters and other workers passed regularly between Ireland and Britain, and it was on this area that the company concentrated. The 1848 Act had required that passengers be carried at reasonable rates, not exceeding the rate charged for sixty miles travel on the rails. This was certainly obeyed, and rates were cheaper than the City of Dublin. The trains connecting with the mail service did not have third-class carriages, and this helped our ships. Passenger canvassers were recruited in Dublin, and they were expected to be able to speak Irish. Staff stood on the platform of the Broadstone Station to greet the harvesters coming from the West. They wore glazed black hats with the words "Holyhead and Chester Railway" emblazoned in yellow on them. Passenger numbers increased from 19,225 in 1850 to 26,308 in 1851, and to 27,252 in 1852. The City of Dublin officers made much fun of this strategy, and from the stage-Irish view of rural Ireland called our ships the "pig boats". This name, resented at first, became something of a badge later. Chartered and second-hand steamers were used from North Wall. The *Roscommon* had been a City of Dublin steamer. She left North Wall in snow on the morning of 15th February, 1853. Captain Browne decided to investigate some strange lights near the Bailey Lighthouse and came upon the wreck of the City of Dublin's *Princess Victoria*. The *Roscommon* rescued 45 people, and landed them at Kingstown.

In Holyhead, land at the site of the present passenger terminal was acquired from the Admiralty in 1860, and a coffer dam built across the inner harbour to facilitate development. More land was acquired from the Board of Trade who took over the Admiralty's remaining responsibilities from 1/1/1863. The development of the Inner Harbour as a rail/sea terminal was not finally completed until 1880. Extensive covered lairages were built where cattle could be rested after the sea journey - a fine hotel was to perform a similar service for two-legged passengers.

## TWO ADMIRALS

Constantine Moorsom was born near Whitby in Yorkshire in 1792. His father commanded the *Revenge* at the Battle of Trafalgar. He joined the navy in 1807, and distinguished himself in an expedition against Algiers in 1816. He was on half-pay from 1827 but published on naval matters and was active in the anti-slavery cause. He was eventually advanced to the rank of Vice-Admiral in 1857. His brother William was a distinguished engineer and surveyor in the expansion of railways in Britain, and he himself became a director of the London & Birmingham. This company merged with other railways to form the London North Western Railway in 1846. Constantine became chairman of the LNWR in 1852, and in 1858 the LNWR took over the Holyhead & Chester, giving control of the Holyhead railway shipping services. He immediately immersed himself in marine matters with the Marine Superintendent, Captain Hirste. However Admiral Moorsom died on 26<sup>th</sup> May, 1861.

In 1865 another naval captain on half-pay, Charles Dent, became marine adviser to the LNWR. He eventually became Vice-Admiral, retired. Though he was not actually appointed marine superintendent until 1890, he took a leading role in developments at Holyhead, including aspects of the design of the steamers. He had served in the Baltic during the Crimean War, and married a Greek lady in 1863. His sight failed in 1892 and he died in 1894.



## DUBLIN'S WELSH CHURCH



*Welsh Church, Talbot Street*

The early nineteenth century saw a great religious revival in Wales and the crews of the Holyhead packets were naturally affected. There was considerable trade between Dublin and Wales and usually Welsh seamen were in port. Some captains organised prayer meetings on their ships for the sailors. Later services began to be held in Welsh in the German Lutheran Church in Poolbeg St, usually referred to as the "Dutch Church". In 1831 Dr William Roberts of Anglesey came for a year to be Minister in Dublin and he devoted much of his time to the sailors. A Captain Evan Lloyd of Barmouth wrote to the Welsh Methodist Journal, Y'Drosofa, stating that a Welsh pastor was needed in Dublin and Rev. Robert Williams of Chester was sent on a mission to Ireland. He put the services in Poolbeg St on a regular footing and began to work with the sea captains towards the establishment of a Chapel. In 1837 the Lutheran Church was damaged in a religious riot and Rev. Williams had to look for new quarters. A number of moves followed but on 1<sup>st</sup> March 1838 the foundation stone of the new chapel was laid in Talbot Street, on the corner of a lane called Moland Place. The site was leased for 999 years at £10 per annum. The area was run down at this time. The Church was named "The Bethel", a favourite name for seamen's chapels, and had seating for 300 people. The cost of the building was £500. On one side of the aisle were pews for ladies, fitted with doors. The men's pews on the other side had no doors but were fitted with spittoons for the sailors. Smoking was permitted. The pulpit was so high that those in the front seats got stiff necks looking up. The official founders were David Elias (Pentraeth), Robert Hughes (Carnwen), Owen Hughes, Edward Edwards, Richard Jones, William Thomas and John Roberts (all from Holyhead). Including Rev Williams and his wife, there were eighteen registered

members living in Dublin. The total cost was £500 and North Wales Churches contributed to pay off the debt. The ground landlord gave £115. In 1839 caretaker's quarters were added and a Mrs Campbell was appointed. Thomas Humphreys, a joiner, became treasurer. His son was the first child baptised in the church in 1839. Rev. Williams made a number of trips through Ireland and learned Irish so he could speak to the people. He returned to Chester in 1842. The services were taken by visiting preachers until Rev Edward Jones was appointed in 1865. He was succeeded by the Rev. J. R. Jones in 1878 and by Rev. John Owen in 1885. A gallery was added in 1862.

A new minister, Rev. John Lewis, came to the church in 1894. He had been a schoolmaster in Wales and then a writer on the "Manchester Guardian". He was nicknamed "Sullivan" - I don't know why. The church was renovated and gifts came from many sources, including Roman Catholics. Rev. Lewis was constantly about the city and wore a flat hat like a continental priest. The people referred to him as the "Welsh Bishop" - rather ironic for the Pastor of this very nonconformist establishment. A new organ was supplied by Crane & Sons of 40 Upper Sackville Street; it came into use on the first weekend of July, 1898. The church normally held two Sunday services, one in English and one in Welsh. Its continued survival was due in no small measure to the generosity of Sir John Purser Griffiths of the Dublin Port and Docks Board, who was the son of Holyhead's Congregation Minister. Though he followed his mother's Moravian faith he gave £50 each year to the Talbot Street Church from 1901 until his death in 1938. He helped Rev. John Lewis purchase a house in Home Farm Road, Drumcondra. He also purchased War Bonds, the interest on which went to the St. David's Society of Dublin and was used to support the church. Sir John was made a Freeman of Dublin in 1936. Earlier in the century Ernest Blythe was attracted to the Welsh services and Rev. Lewis taught him Welsh. The Carla Rosa Opera Company came to Dublin annually for many years and most of them attended the Welsh Church. Their singing was a highlight of the year.

The transfer of Passenger services from North Wall to Dun Laoghaire meant that fewer sailors came to Church and changing traffic patterns accelerated this trend. The resident congregation, always small, also dwindled. In 1934 Rev Lewis retired and returned to Wales. Reduced rates were still offered to Welsh Ministers to come over but what turned out to be the last service was held on 27<sup>th</sup> August, 1939, by the Rev. W.J. Jones of Boderern. The church was rented for some years to a Baptist Congregation but was sold in 1944. It became Griffith's Shoe Shop for about forty years and is now a snooker hall. The resident congregation had reduced to the Welsh Professor John Lloyd-Jones of U.C.D., his wife, our claims inspector Mr J.T. Evans, his wife and his son, Howell. Mr Howell Evans, who retired from Sealink as a Freight Representative, is now the last survivor of the congregation and I am indebted to him for most of the above information. He was a founder member of the Dublin Welsh Male Voice Choir, and secured the interest from Sir John Purser Griffith's War Bonds to help support the choir. The Records of the Dublin Welsh Church are now in the Anglesey County Records Office in LLangefni.

## EXPANSION

In 1868 a fine new steamer, the *Countess of Erne*, was built for the Company in the Dublin Dockyard of Walpole and Webb. Unfortunately a few years later when Walpole and Webb were asked to tender for another steamer they declined, stating it was beyond their capabilities. Two new steamers, the *Duke of Sutherland* and the *Duchess of Sutherland* were introduced in 1868 and 1869. In 1888 the *Duchess* was converted to twin-screw operation, but the *Duke* was scrapped at this time. The *Edith* followed in 1870. She was converted from paddles in 1885 and lasted until 1912.

In 1863 the Dundalk and Enniskillen Railway approached the L.N.W.R. with proposals to develop a port and railways in the Carlingford Peninsula and soon changed its name to the Irish North Western Railway. A company was incorporated by Act of Parliament on 21st July, 1863, but financial problems caused much delay. The L.N.W.R. involvement deepened, and in 1869 Sir Richard Moon, Chairman of the L.N.W.R. became Chairman of the Dundalk and Greenore, as it was then known. The channel for ships at Greenore was deepened, and the port and station were constructed. The L.N.W.R. laid out the small town of Greenore, naming the thoroughfares Euston Street and Anglesey Street. The Company contributed to the building of a school and provided water. Later they were to provide electricity for Greenore. A fine hotel was built incorporating part of the station. Subsequently a golf course was provided to encourage tourist traffic. Quay Street Station was built in Dundalk, and the Dundalk to Greenore railway line opened for business on 30th April, 1873. Next day the steamer service commenced, with much fanfare. Rolling stock was built to the Irish gauge in Crewe. Three engines began the rail services, two more came in 1876, and a sixth in 1898. Five of the six engines were still in existence in 1952, when they were unfortunately broken up. The first sailing from Greenore was taken by the *Edith*, and the first sailing from Holyhead was by the *Countess of Erne*. Later two new ships, the *Eleanor* and the *Earl Spencer* were introduced. The line from Greenore to Bridge Street, Newry, was constructed between 1873 and 1876. The I.N.W.R. had been unable to meet its modest financial obligations, and the Greenore company became virtually part of the L.N.W.R. The I.N.W.R. retained a seat on the Board, and this passed to the Great Northern Railway of Ireland when the I.N.W.R. became part of that Company in 1876.

From 1<sup>st</sup> September, 1873, the improvements by the Port and Docks Board eliminated tidal delays. Two new 20-knot paddle steamers, the *Rose* and *Shamrock* began an express day service in July, 1876. The third class fare to London became 21s0d. Port to port was 5s0d, but passengers wishing to use the "express" ships had to pay a minimum port to port fare of 50d. These prices were still much cheaper than the City of Dublin's second class fares. The service now was:

### DEPART NORTH WALL

9.30 a.m. Sunday excepted  
12.30 p.m. Sunday excepted  
7.30 p.m. Sunday excepted

### DEPART HOLYHEAD

1.30 a.m. Monday excepted  
5.30 p.m. Sunday excepted  
8.00 p.m. Sunday excepted

An express night service was introduced with another pair of new ships, *Lily* and the *Violet* in 1880. They departed North Wall at 7.30 p.m., and passengers arrived in London at 08.35 next morning. There were now four sailings six days per week. Tickets could be purchased from the Company's offices and from Carson Bros. of Grafton Street.

It was necessary to carry Sheriff Street over the new railway by means of a long bridge, and it was decided to move Wapping Street further to the east. Parliamentary approval was obtained, and the old street, which was not really built up, was blocked off. Premises and land belonging to the G.N.R. were acquired and New Wapping Street" was laid out. Some traces of the old street survive. Because of the increase in traffic the Port and Docks Board introduced a one-way street system in the area in 1878 - a letter of thanks was sent to them from London.

From the 1850s a hotel called the "Holyhead and Chester" had functioned in 47 North Wall. In 1878 the Company acquired the "Prince of Wales" hotel from Mr. J. Kavanagh, a publican of Prospect Square, Glasnevin. His premises there are still a popular pub. On to the rear of the existing structure the Company built part of a new hotel, which was to eventually replace the old building. A covered footbridge was built to link the hotel with the station, over the entrance to what had been Wapping Street. The old building was later demolished, but the new hotel was not completed until about 1890. Mr. Skipworth, the Manager, had gardens laid out which attracted favourable notice. The manager of the hotel was always a woman.



*The Hotel, North Wall*

Relations with the City of Dublin S.P. deteriorated after the 1858 loan was repaid, and the L.N.W.R. continued to seek the Mail Contract. It considered the facilities at North Wall to be superior to those at Kingstown, particularly as the railway to Westland Row was not connected to the other Dublin lines. The developments in

Holyhead had been completed, giving an easy rail/sea transfer. The City of Dublin, remained at the old wooden Admiralty Pier at Salt Island, and periodically tried to get the Board of Trade to improve their facilities. The Post Office invited new tenders in 1882, and the following January announced that the L.N.W.R. had secured a contract for a through sea and rail service. The City of Dublin, with the aid of the "Freeman's Journal", succeeded in mounting a major agitation which concentrated on the fact that the contract was going from an "Irish" to a "British" company. The L.N.W.R. did not counter this campaign effectively, and the City of Dublin achieved the support of both Nationalist and Unionist M.P.'s. The Government brought pressure on Richard Moon and the L.N.W.R. Board to withdraw. Eventually they gave in, to the annoyance of the Irish staff. The contract was re-advertised and the L.N.W.R. could not tender for the sea portion. Conditions imposed by the Post Office on the City of Dublin S.P. led to the linking up of Westland Row with the other termini in Dublin by the "Loop Line" in 1891.

In 1884 the last paddle steamer built for the Company, the *Banshee*, was introduced for the non-express sailings. She was the first of the steamers to have electric lighting. But already two twin-screw cargo vessels had entered service, the *Holyhead* in July, 1883 and the *North Wall* in September. As well as cargo holds they had accommodation for 800 cattle with a new ventilation system designed by Admiral Dent, the Marine Superintendent at Holyhead. The *Holyhead* was on route from North Wall with a full load and a few steerage passengers when she collided with the German sailing ship *Alhambra* at 11.45 p.m. on 30th October 1883. Some of the German crew were killed in the collision. The *Holyhead* lowered its boats and threw lines to the other vessel. The German captain had his seventeen-year-old daughter on board, and he called her on deck. She came on deck in her nightdress, but then ran back to her cabin to clothe herself. Her father ran after her, calling her. Suddenly the *Alhambra* sank and both were lost. Meanwhile the *Holyhead*, with her bows stove in, was fast sinking. Captain Hicks got everyone into the life boats, except two crewmen trapped in the foc'sle - William Buckley and John Evans. They perished when the ship sank within twenty minutes of the collision. However, the design of these ships was considered successful and three more followed: the *Irene* in 1885, *Olga* in 1887 and *Anglesey* in 1888.



*North Wall Station circa 1900*



Between 1895 and 1898 three new ships were built for the Greenore crossing, *Rostrevor*, *Connemara* and *Galtee More*, and the service was improved. The Company was also building four new 21-knot steamers for Dublin, bearing the traditional names *Cambria*, *Hibernia*, *Anglia* and *Scotia*. From Friday, 1<sup>st</sup> July 1898 the day service from North Wall was speeded up. One could leave North Wall at 10.15 a.m. and arrive in London at 8.45 p.m. From London the departure was at 11.00 a.m. and arrival at North Wall was at 8.30 p.m. (Irish time was still 25 minutes behind British time).



*Queen Victoria arrives in Holyhead, 1900, from the Royal Yacht*

Two new ships, primarily for cargo, were introduced, the *South Stack* in 1900 and the *Snowdon* in 1902, but need was felt for a new design which could combine livestock with sundry cargo and provide for a few steerage passengers. It was decided to name the new ships after Irish mountains that started with the word 'Slieve'. The first, *Slieve More* came in 1904. It was instantly successful, and was followed by the *Slieve Bawn* in 1905. The *Slieve Bloom* and *Slieve Gallion* came in 1908, replacing older ships.



*Eden Quay Office, destroyed in 1916*

## WORLD WAR I

When the First World War broke out the Admiralty requisitioned the four express vessels, *Anglia*, *Cambria*, *Hibernia* and *Scotia*. The Company then transferred the *Rathmore*, *Greenore* and *Galteemore* to the Dublin services. An entire division was gathered together in the open areas to the rear of North Wall, and staff worked hard to transport it to Holyhead.

The *Hibernia* was fitted out as an armed merchant cruiser, *H.M.S. Tara*, and sent to the Mediterranean with her existing crew. On 5th November 1915 she was torpedoed and sunk. The German submarine *U35* surfaced. The survivors were brought, some in the lifeboats and some on the submarine's deck, to Bardia in what is now Libya. About ten lives were lost in the sinking. Another badly injured man died just after landing. The men were handed over to Senussi tribesmen, who were to some extent under the control of a Turkish officer. They were subject to great privations, and more died. The captain, another Captain Hughes, insisted on writing letters to his superiors as provided for under the Geneva Convention. He gave them to the Turkish officer who didn't forward them. But one of the letters was found when an armoured car column, sent from Alexandria under the Duke of Westminster to seek the crew, searched an Arab. This gave them the sailors' location. On St. Patrick's Day 1916 a surprise attack was made by the column. Many of the Senussi Guards were killed and the prisoners freed. Four of the seventy-five survivors were resident in Ireland. The sailors buried the dead Senussi near the graves of their own comrades. The wailing of the Senussi women was long remembered.

Meantime the *Anglia*, acting as a hospital ship, had been sunk by a mine in the English Channel on 18th November 1916. Shortly before this King George V, hurt in a fall from his horse in France, had been a patient on her. The Government paid compensation for the loss of the two ships. The Company had already decided to build four new vessels, powered by the new steam turbines, to replace the express steamers, when the war ended.



*The Sinking of the Anglia on 18<sup>th</sup> November 1916*

At the end of the war the *Curraghmore* was completed and used on Dublin/Holyhead for the time being. Four new ships had been ordered, bearing the traditional names. In July 1918, the Admiralty had ordered that two of them, *Anglia* and *Cambria*, be completed as mine layers. This work had to be reversed at the end of the war. The two surviving express ships were returned by the Admiralty. In 1920 the old *Cambria* was re-named *Arvonía* and the old *Scotia* became *Menevia* to free the names for the new ships.

In 1920, the City of Dublin S.P. Company had become unable to fulfil the Mail Contract, and it finally fell into the hands of the L.N.W.R. At 3.50am on 28th November the first of the new ships to come into service, the *Anglia*, left Holyhead with the mails. The *Curraghmore* worked on the service with her. The new *Cambria*, *Hibernia* and *Scotia* were in service in 1921. The Company had to accept the onerous demands of the Mail Contract, which meant financial penalties if the ships were late. These four new ships were capable of 25 knots, the fastest before or since on the service. The *Anglia* suffered from a number of problems, and was damaged when she hit the pier in Holyhead on 15th January 1922. She was laid up in Barrow in 1924, and seldom used until scrapped in 1955. The new improved *Slieve* boat, *Slieve Donard*, appeared, and survived until 1954. Her bell is in Dun Laoghaire.



*North Wall in the 1920s. The gardens and football pitch to the rear of the hotel were soon to become a cattle yard.*

The General Strike in Britain, which began at midnight on 3rd May 1926, closed Holyhead. The Greenore passenger service had resumed in 1920, continued with the *Curraghmore* from 1921, but was dropped after the strike. Sailings from



Greenore then fell to three per week. The Company now had control of the *Colleen Bawn* and the *Mellifont* of the Lancashire and Yorkshire's Drogheda service, and some of the older ships were disposed of. The *Arvonian* had already gone for scrap in 1925, the *Greenore* and *Galtymore* met a similar fate in 1926. The *Rathmore* ended up on the Tilbury/Dunkirk service, where she was renamed *Lorraine*. The *Menevia* was scrapped in 1928.

Much of the cargo fleet was now reaching the end of its useful life, so a revised version of the 'Slieve' class was designed. The *South Stack* was scrapped in 1931, the old *Slieve More* in 1932, the old *Slieve Bawn* in 1935, *Snowdon* in 1936 and *Slieve Gallion* in 1937. A new *Slieve Bloom* came in 1930 and *Slieve More* in 1932. The *Slieve League*, a very fast ship, came in 1935. The *Slieve Bernagh* was launched on 7th March 1936 but was used mainly on the Heysham/Belfast run until near the end of her days. The last of these ships, *Slieve Bawn*, incorporated a number of modifications and came at the start of 1937. Though oil was supplanting coal, all these ships were coal-fired. The Company feared supply difficulty with oil as war clouds loomed.

## WORLD WAR II

The outbreak of war in 1939 brought many problems starting with a general increase in costs. Once more rates increases in Britain were subject to Regulation 7B.B. The L.M.S. together with its shipping services was brought under Government control. The Admiralty requisitioned the *Scotia*. She was bombed and sunk with heavy loss of life at Dunkirk in 1940. The passenger service from Dun Laoghaire was reduced to one sailing per day. The *Cambria* relieved here and on other routes. She survived an attack by a German bomber in 1943. Holyhead was closed at night, so the cargo vessels arrived at North Wall in the evening and sailed in the morning. In 1938 sailings on the Greenore route fell to two per week. With the impact of the War it was reduced to once weekly. The *Slieve League*, fastest of the cargo boats, usually took the crossing.



*The Slieve League viewed from the gasometer. The old offices, 49 North Wall, rise behind the shed. A hydraulic crane of 1878 can be seen in the open shed door.*

After the war only one passenger sailing, at night, was maintained all year. The *Princess Maud* had been built for the Larne/Stranraer route in 1931, replacing an earlier ship of the same name. This ship had been named for the English Princess who married King Haakon and became Queen of Norway. In 1946 this ship was the first of the railway fleet to be converted to oil-firing and was transferred to Dun Laoghaire/Holyhead. She was used intensively in 1947 because the coal shortage kept the *Hibernia* and *Cambria* tied up much of the time. The *Princess Maud* was not stabilised and was later to be compared unfavourably with the new *Hibernia* and *Cambria* when they appeared.



*The Cambria*

The old *Hibernia* and *Cambria* were withdrawn, and two new vessels bearing the same names came in April and May 1949. The *Princess Maud* was relief vessel and took extra sailings in summer. The new ships were slower than their predecessors, but much more comfortable.

From 1st January 1948, Britain's railways were nationalised, and the name "The Railway Executive" replaced that of the L.M.S. Later the name changed to "British Transport Commission", and then "British Railways".

Neither the Railway Executive nor C.I.E. were prepared to take over the Greenore operations. The railway was losing money, though the steamer service appears to have been profitable. An ominous sign was the take-over by G.N.R. of Keenan's local bus service. They now ran the buses in direct competition with the railway. The last sailing from Greenore was on the 29th December 1951, and the railway closed two days later.

#### Containerisation:

From 1948 the wartime shortage of containers began to ease, and their use greatly increased on the Irish services. An insulated variety, the 'F.M.', was developed for fresh meat exports. In 1953, excluding meat, there were nearly 5,000 loaded container movements. In 1954 the figure was nearly 6,000 and in 1955 reached 7,000. The "Slieve" boats carried containers on their long poop decks, but an extra ship was chartered to carry them.

The old *Slieve Donard* had been withdrawn in 1954, and plans were made for a new ship of the same name. It was planned to combine capacity for both livestock and railway containers, and stern doors were provided so that vehicles

could be driven on and off. The new ship appeared in 1960 and saw service as a car carrier on the Larne/Stranraer route in 1964. In the summer of 1966 she carried cars from Rosslare to Fishguard. Ships were chartered for container traffic from Fisher Lines of Barrow. The *Race Fisher* could carry 69 railway containers, each of which was normally loaded with about four tons of goods. After 1961 all sundry or groupage traffic was packed into containers in Britain, and stripped into the bonded warehouse for clearance in Dublin. The *Slieve Bawn* and *Slieve Bearnagh* were converted to oil in 1961. In 1964 the *Slieve Bloom* and *Slieve More* were withdrawn. Ships were "hired" from another B.R. subsidiary "Associated Humber Lines", and two – the *Harrowgate* and the larger *Isle of Ely* – were placed permanently on the routes to the Republic.

## CAR FERRIES

Tourists did not relish the sight of their cars being craned on and off ships, and B.R. responded to the lobbying of the tourist industry. A car ferry service was planned for Dun Laoghaire from July 1965. The Board of Works erected a temporary, and controversial, car ferry terminal at the East Pier in 1964. A new ship was ordered for the service. After a competition organised by the British Rail staff newspaper "Rail News" she was named *Holyhead Ferry I*. Staff did not consider this a proper name at all for a ship. The ship was not quite ready when the service started, so the *Normannia* was brought from the English Channel to inaugurate it. The Board of Works began work on a new extensive car ferry terminal at St. Michael's Wharf, which came into use in 1969. The *Princess Maud* was sold to Greek owners with the introduction of the new car ferry. She was re-named *Venus* and used for some years in the Mediterranean. She then went to Copenhagen as an accommodation ship for migrant workers. She went on fire there and burned out.



*The Slieve Donard of 1960*

## FLEET LIST

### Post Office

#### Wooden-hulled paddle steamers with ancillary sails

- 1821 LIGHTNING. Built Rotherhite. 102ft long by 20ft breath. Carried George IV to Ireland, renamed Royal Sovereign. Milford/Waterford mail service 1824 to 1836. Renamed MONKEY by admiralty in 1837, used mainly from Liverpool until dismantled in 1841.  
METEOR. Details as above. Sent to Milford 1824, and to Weymouth for Channel Islands mail service. Wrecked February 1830 on Portland Bill.
- 1822 VIXEN. Built Deptford. 115ft x 19ft.
- 1823 ALADDIN. Built Falmouth. 126ft x 21ft. Renamed JASPER by Admiralty in 1837, scrapped 1848.  
CINDERELLA. Built on Thames. 120ft x 20ft. Renamed Cuckoo in 1837. Scrapped about 1840.
- 1824 HARLEQUIN. Built on Thames. 119ft x 20ft. Renamed SPRIGHTLY in 1837, scrapped 1848.
- 1826 ESCAPE. Built Harwich. 120ft x 21ft. Captain Skinner lost from this ship, 1832. Renamed DOTEREL in 1837, scrapped 1848.  
WATERSPRITE. Built Harwich. 107ft x 17ft.  
WIZARD. Built Harwich. 120ft x 20ft. Renamed OTTER, 1837, in naval service until 1891.
- 1827 DRAGON. Built Harwich. 120ft x 21ft. Renamed ZEPHER, 1837, scrapped 1848.
- 1831 FLAMER. Built Rotherhite. 155ft x 22ft. Armed as a gunboat in 1848 and sent to West Africa, wrecked there 22nd November, 1850.
- 1834 GULNARE. Built Chatham. 120ft x 23ft. Renamed GLEANER, 1837.

#### Admiralty Paddle Steamers

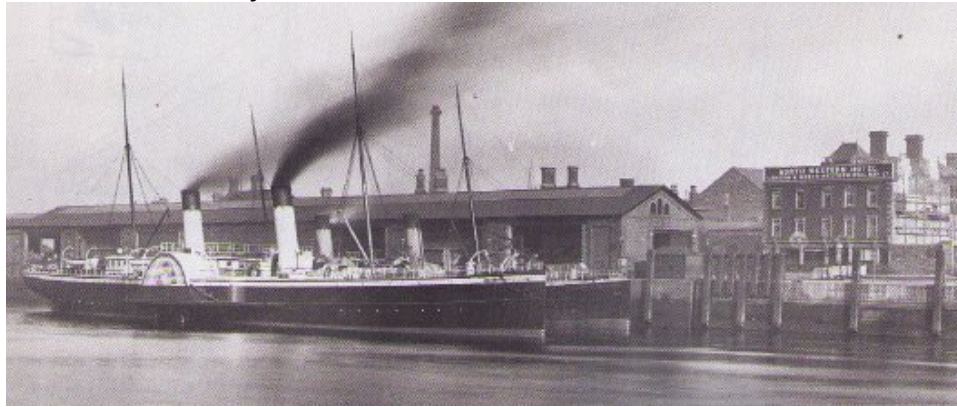
- 1845 TRIDENT. Iron hull. Built Blackwall. 161ft x 31ft. Scrapped 1869.  
FIRE QUEEN. Iron hull. 163ft x 20ft. Scrapped 1883.
- 1847 BANSHEE. Iron hull. Built Rotherhite. 189ft x 27ft. Scrapped 1864. A spirit in Irish Mythology.  
CARADOC. Iron hull. Built Blackwall. 191ft x 26ft. Scrapped 1870. A knight in Welsh Legend.  
LLEWELLYN. Wooden hull. Built Blackwall. 240ft x 27ft. Sold to City of Dublin SP Co. in 1850. Later renamed ST. PATRICK and lasted until 1895. Named for Welsh historical hero.  
ST. COLUMBA. Wooden hull. Built Birkenhead. 190ft x 27ft. Sold to City of Dublin SP Co. in 1850.
- 1848 VIVID. Wooden hull. Built Chatham. 150ft x 22ft. Remained in Royal Navy till 1894.

## Railway Steamers

- 1848 ANGLIA. Iron built. Ditchburn & Mare, London 190ft x 26ft. Sold 1861, used as blockade runner to Confederate States in US Civil War. Eventually sunk, but salvaged and sent to West Indies. Lasted till 1914.  
CAMBRIA. Iron built by Llaird, Birkenhead. 208ft x 26ft. Lengthened to 244ft 4ins in 1861. Scrapped 1884.  
HIBERNIA. Iron built by Bury, Curtis & Kennedy, Liverpool. 197ft x 26ft. Sold to Waterford & Limerick Railway in 1870 as a coal hulk until 1897.  
SCOTIA. Iron built by Wigram, London. 194ft x 27ft. Sold in 1861, also became a blockade runner.
- Acquired 1853 QUEEN. Wooden. Built Dumbarton, 1845. 158ft x 23ft.  
OCEAN. Wooden. Built Liverpool, 1836. Acquired from Cork SS Co. 155ft x 23ft. Scrapped 1862.  
HERCULES. Wooden. Built Liverpool, 1835. Acquired from Cork SS Co. 148ft x 25ft. Scrapped 1862.
- Acquired 1856 SEA NYMPH. Iron built by Caird, Greenock, 1845. Acquired from Belfast SS Co. after service in Crimean War. 206ft x 29ft. Carried wounded from Crimea to hospitals near Istanbul associated with Florence Nightingale. Scrapped 1880.  
TELEGRAPH. Iron built by Thompson, Greenock, 1853. Acquired from Belfast SS Co. after service in Crimean War. 244ft x 29ft. Scrapped 1884. There is a captured Russian cannon from Sebastopol, cast about 1796, on the East Pier, Dun Laoghaire.
- 1860 ADMIRAL MOORSOM. Iron built by Elder, Glasgow. 219ft x 30ft. Named after chairman of LNWR, who died the following year. Was lost after a collision with an American ship, Santa Clara, 13/01/1885, 16 lives lost.
- 1863 ALEXANDRA. Iron built by Llaird, Birkenhead. 227ft x 28ft. Named in honour of the Prince of Wales' marriage to Princess Alexandra. Scrapped 1889.
- 1864 STANLEY. Iron built by Caird, Greenock. 239ft x 29ft. Sold to operate a service from Derry in 1888, but scrapped in 1890. The Stanleys were the principal landowners in Holyhead.
- 1868 COUNTESS OF ERNE. Iron built by Walpole, Webb & Bewley in Dublin. 241ft x 29ft. At the time the Earl Of Erne was chairman of the Irish North Western Railway who were working with the LNWR on the Greenore project and the ship was named for his wife. Sold to Bristol Steam Navigation Co in 1889. Sent to Weymouth as a coal-hulk a year later. Wrecked at Portland Breakwater in September 1935.  
DUKE OF SUTHERLAND. Iron built by Leslie of Hebburn. 244ft x 30ft. The duke was a director of the LNWR. Scrapped 1888.
- 1869 DUCHESS OF SUTHERLAND. Iron built by Leslie of Hebburn. 251ft x 30ft. Converted from paddles to twin screw operation in 1888, and re-engined. Lasted until 1908.



- 1870 EDITH. Iron built by Leslie of Hebburn. 251ft x 30ft. Named for the wife of Sir Richard Moon, chairman of the LNWR. Took first departure from Greenore on 01/05/1873. Re-engined and converted to twin screws in 1885, and lasted till 1912.
- 1873 ELEANOR. Iron built by Lairds of Birkenhead. 252ft x 30ft. Named for a daughter of Sir Richard Moon. On 21/01/1881 she was wrecked at Lee Stone Point, Kilkeel, Co Down having gone off course in fog while on the Greenore service, no casualties.
- 1874 EARL SPENCER. Iron built by Lairds of Birkenhead. 254ft x 29ft. Named for the Viceroy who opened Greenore. Scrapped 1896.
- 1876 ROSE. Iron built by Lairds of Birkenhead. 292ft x 32ft. Service speed of 20 knots for express day service. Not affected by tides in the Liffey and all three classes of passengers carried. Scrapped 1894. Model in Science Museum, South Kensington.
- SHAMROCK. All details as for Rose, except scrapped 1898. In November 888 a controversial MP, J.D. Pyne, disappeared from her on route from Holyhead.



*The Shamrock and Duchess of Sutherland at North Wall, 1886*

- 1877 ISABELLA. Steel built by Lairds, Birkenhead. 254ft x 30ft. Spent career on Greenore service. Scrapped 1898.

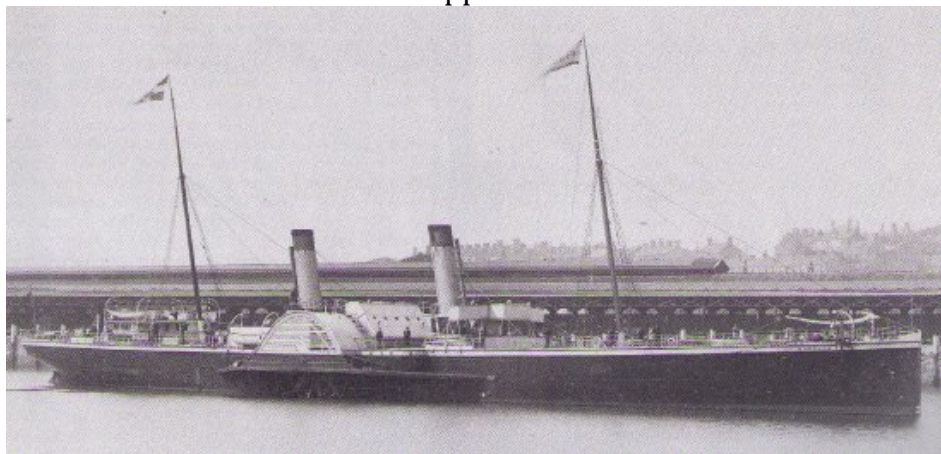


*Opening of Holyhead Inner Harbour, 1880.*

*Lily on right, Earl Spencer on left, Isabella beyond Earl Spencer.*



- 1880 LILY. Steel built by Lairds of Birkenhead. 300ft x 33ft. For the night express service. New engines, 1891. Sold for use between Liverpool and Douglas IOM in 1900. Scrapped 1905. Model in Liverpool Museum.  
VIOLET. All details as Lily, except sold for Liverpool/Douglas in 1902 but scrapped 1903. Model in Science Museum, South Kensington.  
ELEANOR. Steel built by Lairds, Birkenhead. 254ft x 30ft. Under construction when the 1873 Eleanor was sunk so she was given that name. On Greenore service until 1898, then North Wall until scrapped in 1902.
- 1883 HOLYHEAD. Twin screw steel. Built by Duncan of Port Glasgow. 300ft x 33ft. Freight orientated, had accommodation for 800 cattle and a new ventilation system. Entered service in June, on 31/10 sank after colliding with a German sailing ship, Alhambra, which sank first. 18 lives were lost with the Alhambra, 2 with the Holyhead.  
NORTH WALL. Details as Holyhead above. Scrapped 1905.
- 1884 BANSHEE. Iron and steel paddle steamer. Built by Lairds of Birkenhead. 310ft x 34ft. Last of the paddlers and the first of the ships to be lit by electricity. Had service speed of 19 knots, was re-engined in 1894 for economy, but kept her speed. Sold to the Mediterranean in 1906 and scrapped in 1909.



*The Banshee*

- 1885 IRENE. Steel twin screw, as were all following ships until the advent of motor vessels. Built by Harland & Wolff, Belfast. 301ft x 33ft. Named for a daughter of Admiral Dent, the Marine Superintendent at Holyhead who launched her. Scrapped 1906.
- 1887 OLGA. Same details as Irene but built by Lairds of Birkenhead with more economical triple expansion engines. Scrapped 1908.
- 1888 ANGLESEY. As Olga but built by Harland & Wolff. Scrapped 1911.
- 1895 ROSTREVOR. Built by Denny of Dumbarton. 272ft x 35ft. Made some trips to North Wall during WWI, otherwise on Greenore until 1926, when scrapped.
- 1897 CONNEMARA. Details as Rostrevor, sank after being struck by a collier, Retriever, at entrance to Carlingford Lough, on 03/11/1916. 86 lives lost from Connemara. A total of 94 victims of the tragedy are buried in a mass grave at Kilkeel. Model in Holyhead Maritime Museum.

CAMBRIA. Built by Denny, Dumbarton. 329ft x 39ft, with a speed of 22 knots. The first of four passenger-only express steamers bearing the traditional country names. All four requisitioned by the Admiralty in 1914, survived the War. Renamed Arvonian in 1920. Carried Free State troops and armoured cars from Dublin to Cork during the Irish Civil War. Relieved on various Irish Sea Routes. Scrapped 1925. Arvonian was an ancient name for North Wales.

1898 GALTEE MORE. Built by Denny, Dumbarton. 276ft x 35ft. Similar career to Rostrevor and also scrapped in 1926. Model in Holyhead Maritime Museum.

1900 ANGLIA. Details as Cambria. Was hospital ship in WWI and King George V was treated on board after falling off his horse in France. Hit a mine and sank on 18/11/1915.



*The Anglia*

HIBERNIA. Details as Cambria. Was sent to Mediterranean as armed merchant cruiser, TARA, with Holyhead crew still aboard. Sunk off Libya, 05/11/1915. Crew held prisoner there and ill-treated until survivors rescued on 17/03/1916.

SOUTH STACK. Built by Lairds of Birkenhead. 300ft x 36ft. Freight and livestock orientated. Scrapped 1930. Named after headland outside Holyhead.

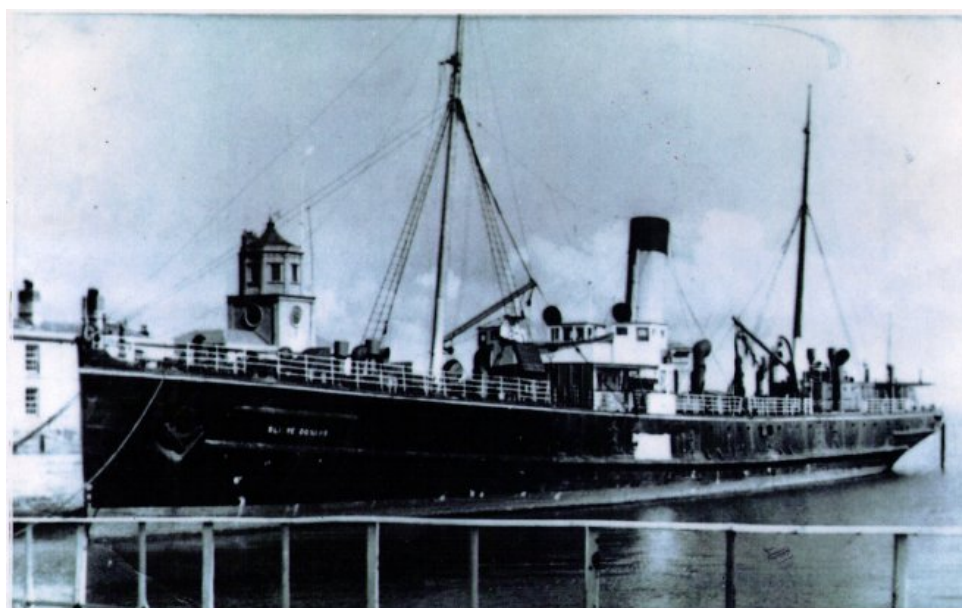
1902 SNOWDON. Details as South Stack. Lasted until 1936.

SCOTIA. Details as Cambria. Survived the War. Renamed Menevia in 1920, an ancient name for South Wales. Relief ship after 1920. Scrapped 1928.

1904 SLIEVE MORE. Built by Harland & Wolff. 300ft x 37ft. Similar to South Stack. Named for mountain on Achill Island. Scrapped 1932.

1905 SLIEVE BAWN. As Slieve More. Named for hill in Roscommon. Scrapped 1935.

- 1908 SLIEVE BLOOM. As Slieve More but built by Vickers, Barrow. Called after the midland mountain range. Sunk when struck by an American cruiser on 20/03/1918.  
SLIEVE GALLION. As Slieve Bloom. Served until 1937. Named for mountain in the Sperrins.  
RATHMORE. Built by Vickers, Barrow. 300ft x 40ft. On 14/03/1918 she was struck by a minesweeper, badly damaged and abandoned. 5 passengers lost, 727 passengers and 50 crew rescued. Did not sink and was towed into Dublin. At Greenore until 1926, then renamed Lorraine and used Tilbury/Dunkirk until scrapped in 1932. David Plunket, Lord Rathmore, was a director of the LNWR, and also of the Suez Canal Company. He died in the Railway hotel in Greenore in August 1919.
- 1912 GREENORE. Built by Cammel Laird, Birkenhead. 306ft x 41ft. First LNWR ship to have steam turbines. In 1926 the Greenore service ceased to carry passengers, except for grooms, cattlemen etc, and the ship was sold for scrap. There is a model of this ship in the transport museum at Cultra and another in Holyhead Maritime Museum.
- 1919 CURRAGHMORE. Built by Denny of Dumbarton. 307ft x 40ft. Begun in 1914 but work suspended due to WWI. Not completed until 1919. She carried the mails from Dun Laoghaire for the first time for the LNWR on 28<sup>th</sup> November, 1920. She also carried the Irish delegation to the treaty talks late in 1921. On Greenore service until 1926, on general relief on Irish Sea until 1930, when she was renamed Duke Of Abercorn and placed on Belfast /Heysham service in 1930. Scrapped 1935. Curraghmore was the family seat of the Beresfords in Co Waterford. The Duke of Abercorn was Governor of Northern Ireland at the time.
- 1920 ANGLIA. Built by Denny. 392ft x 45ft. Speed 25 knots. Four new steamers bearing the traditional names were ordered in 1914, but the order was suspended because of the War. At some stage it was decided to continue building the Anglia as a naval vessel, but the war ended and it reverted to the original plan. However, she had some problems and when it was decided to operate the mail service with three ships she was laid up in 1924. She was sold for scrap in 1935. Model in Holyhead Maritime Museum.  
HIBERNIA . As Anglia but survived the Second World War and was scrapped in 1949.
- 1921 CAMBRIA. As Anglia. Carried the Treaty delegation back to Ireland, collided with an Arklow schooner just out of Holyhead at 03.30, 06/12/1921. Survived an attack by a German bomber in 1943. Scrapped 1949.  
SCOTIA. As Anglia. Requisitioned by the Admiralty in 1939. Was sunk on her second visit to the beaches of Dunkirk on 01/06/1940. Over 330 lives lost.
- 1922 SLIEVE DONARD. Built by Vickers, Barrow. 300ft x 40ft. Carried cattle on two decks, cargo and small number of passengers. Scrapped 1954. Her Bell is in the Stena Line office in Dun Laoghaire. Model in Holyhead Maritime Museum.



*The Slieve Donard of 1922*

LNWR became part of the LMS (London, Midland & Scottish) on 01/01/1923.



1928	COLLEEN BAWN. Built by Vickers, Barrow for the Lancashire & Yorkshire Railway in 1903. 260ft x 36ft. They took over the Drogheda SP Co in 1902, built new ships for its Drogheda/Liverpool service, and opened an office at 15 Westmoreland St Dublin to promote the service, which became more cargo-orientated as time passed and became part of the LMS. Service withdrawn and replaced by B&I Line in 1928. On the Holyhead/North Wall service until 1931, then scrapped. The name means fair-haired girl. There is a model of this ship in the transport museum at Cultra.
	MELLIFONT. As Colleen Bawn. Sent to the L&Y service Hull-Zeebrugge in 1906, back to Drogheda in 1912. Was used mainly on Greenore service until scrapped in 1933. Named after ruined Cistercian Monastery near Drogheda.
1930	SLIEVE BLOOM. Built by Denny. 300ft x 40ft. Carried sundry cargo and the small railway wooden containers to Dublin and cattle on return. Had two cranes, large clear deck aft of superstructure for containers and small amount of passenger accommodation for livestock attendants etc. at stern. Withdrawn 1964.
1932	SLIEVE MORE. As Slieve Bloom, and withdrawn in 1964.
1935	SLIEVE LEAGUE. As Slieve Bloom, but faster. Used on Greenore service during the War years. Was the last coal-burner at Holyhead when sold to Belgian shipbreakers in 1967. Named for mountain in Co Donegal. Model in Holyhead Maritime Museum.
1936	SLIEVE BERNAGH. As Slieve Bloom. Converted to oil after WWII and spent most of her time on Belfast/Heysham. Scrapped 1973. Named for mountains in Clare and in the Mourne.
1937	SLIEVE BAWN. As Slieve Bloom with some improvements. Converted to oil after the War. Scrapped 1973.




1947	<p>PRINCESS MAUD. Built 1933 by Denny. 330ft x 51ft. For Larne/Stranraer. Served as troopship for US forces on D-Day. Holyhead ran very short of coal due to the big freeze-up early in 1947 and the oil-fired Princess Maud was sent to Holyhead. Provided extra summer sailings to Dun Laoghaire and relief there and from Fishguard. Sold to Greek interests after start of car ferry service in 1965. Renamed Venus. Used for some years in the Mediterranean, then went to Copenhagen as accommodation for migrant workers. She burned out there at Christmas, 1971, and was broken up in Spain, 1973. Maud was a daughter of Edward VII, who married the man who became King Haakon of Norway in 1905. Queen Maud Land in Antarctica is named for her. Edward VII then created her two nieces Princesses, one of them named Maud. This Lady became Countess of Stratherne, did not use the title of Princess, but launched this ship.</p>
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### Motor Vessels

1949	<p>HIBERNIA. Diesel Motor Vessel built by Harland &amp; Wolff, Belfast. 396ft x 56ft. Well stabilised. Worked to Heysham 1971/2 due to burning of Menai Bridge. Sold to Greece as Express Appolen in 1973. Broken up in India 1981.</p>
	<p>CAMBRIA. As Hibernia. Sold to Middle East in 1976 as Ataif. Sank at anchor in Suez Roads in 1981.</p>
1960	<p>SLIEVE DONARD. Diesel. Built by Denny, Dumbarton. 300ft x 40ft. Primarily for cattle, loose cargo and railway containers. Had stern doors and could accommodate 60 cars if cattle not being carried. Dockers in Dublin refused to work the only ramp in the port and she never carried cars on the central corridor, but relieved on Larne/Stranraer and Rosslare /Fishguard in the 1960s. Sold to the Red Sea after the closure of the service to North Wall in 1978. Scrapped in Pakistan after a few years. Model in Holyhead Maritime Museum.</p>
1965	<p>HARROGATE. Diesel. Built 1958 in Lowestoft for Associated Humber Lines. 303ft long. Open hold cargo ship. First chartered, later acquired, AHL was another subsidiary of BR. In 1968 converted to cellular holds for Freightliner containers. Put up for sale in 1971 after the arrival of new container ships. Best tender was for scrap. Selby and Darlington were sister ships also used occasionally from Holyhead. Isle of Ely was a somewhat larger ship, also acquired and used mainly on Fishguard/Waterford.</p>
	<p>HOLYHEAD FERRY I. Steam turbines. 369ft x 57ft. Built by Hawthorne Leslie, Newcastle for the new Dun Laoghaire car ferry service which started on 9<sup>th</sup> July 1965. She was not quite ready so the service was opened by the Normannia from the English Channel. Used mainly from Holyhead until sent to Dover in 1974. In 1976 she was converted to a drive-through ferry by Swan Hunter, Newcastle, and renamed Earl Leofric. She was heavy on fuel and went for scrap in Spain in 1981. Her sister ship, Dover, made some visits to Holyhead in the Seventies and is still in existence. Model in Holyhead Maritime Museum.</p>

	 <p><i>The Fleet at Holyhead, 1966. The Harrowgate, Slieve Donard, Cambria, Hibernia, 2 pre-war Slieves, Holyhead Ferry 1. Photo: Jim Ashby.</i></p>
1967	<p>CALEDONIAN PRINCESS. Diesel. 353ft x 57ft. Built 1961 by Denny of Dumbarton. Car ferry for Larne/Stranraer. Relieved at Holyhead and later at Fishguard. Sold 1983, was a night club at Newcastle for many years. Scrapped at Aliaga, Turkey late in 2008.</p>
1970	<p>DUKE OF LANCASTER. Diesel. 364ft x 55ft. Built 1956 by Harland &amp; Wolff, Belfast for Belfast/Heysham service. Converted to a car ferry with limited head-room. Relief at Holyhead and Fishguard. Sold in 1978. The following year was beached near Mostyn, North Wales and is still there.</p>
	<p>RHODRI MAWR. Diesel Container Ship. 107 metres x 17 metres. Capacity of 182 Freightliner ISO Containers. Built by Verolme Dockyard, Cork, to operate from Holyhead to Dublin Terminal and Belfast. Sold 1991 after closure of the Freightliner Service, still in service as Destiny, registered in Comoro Islands. Named for a 9<sup>th</sup> century King of Gwynedd.</p>
	<p>BRIAN BOROIMHE. As Rhodri Mawr. Named for a medieval Irish High King. Now the Abdul H operating in Turkish waters.</p>
1976	<p>AVALON Turbine steam ship built by Alexander Stephen, Glasgow, for Harwich/Hook of Holland. 405ft x 57ft, 6in. Converted as a car ferry in 1974. Served also on Rosslare/Fishguard. Sold for scrap late in 1980.</p>
1977	<p>ST COLUMBA. Diesel. 129m x 21m. Built by Aalborg Vaerfit, Aalborg, Denmark. The mainstay of the service until 1996, offering a multi-purpose service from Dun Laoghaire. Renamed Stena Hibernia in 1991 and Stena Adventurer in 1996. Sold to Greece in 1997, now operates between Egypt and Saudi Arabia for Namma Lines as the Massarah. Model in Holyhead Maritime Museum.</p>  <p><i>The St. Columba</i></p>

1981	ST DAVID. Diesel. 130m x 22m. Built Harland & Wolff, Belfast. Mostly at Holyhead and Fishguard, and at Dover from 1985. In 1991 renamed Stena Caledonia and sent to Stranraer, where she still serves. Model in Holyhead Maritime Museum.
1987	ST CYBI. Diesel. 119m x 16m. Ro/Ro freight ship built by Verolme, Cork in 1975 as Dundalk for B& I. Sold to Stena Line in 1980 as Stena Sailer. Chartered by Sealink 1987, purchased 1990 and named St Cybi after the patron of Holyhead. Sold to Greece in 1992 and passenger complement greatly increased. Scrapped in Turkey, 2006.
1988	VORTIGERN. Diesel. 386ft x 65ft. Built 1969 as train ferry by Swan hunter, Newcastle. Relieved at Fishguard in 1987 and at Holyhead in 1988, then sold to Greece. Scrapped in India, 2004. Was named after a Dark Ages chieftain in line with a BR policy of that time.
1990	HORSA. Dimensions as Vortigern, but built as car ferry without the rail tracks at Brest, France, 1972. Mainly served on Folkestone/Boulogne. Relieved at Holyhead 1990 and 1991. Sold to Greece in 1992 and still in service as Penelope A.
1991	STENA CAMBRIA. Built as St Anselm for Dover by Harland & Wolff in 1980. Dimensions as St David. Served on Dun Laoghaire/Holyhead until 1996, then back to English Channel. Sold to Spain in 1999. Presently running Barcelona/Balearic Islands as Isla De Botafoc.
1992	HENGIST. As Horsa. Relieved at Holyhead early 1992, then sold to Greece, where she still operates as Agios Georgios. As per the British Rail policy of the time these ships were named after figures from the Dark Ages. Hengist and Horsa were also the names of the two Ancient Britons in the 1964 film, Carry on Cleo!
1993	STENA SEA LYNX. Wave-piercing catamaran. 74m x 26m. Built by Incat, Tasmania. First fast ferry on route. Chartered vessel on Stena routes until 1999. Now named Mandarin and operated by Dae-A-Gosok, Pusan Korea. Model in Holyhead Maritime Museum.
1994	STENA LYNX II. 78m x 26m. Replaced Stena Sea Lynx. To other Stena routes in 1996, including Frederickshaven/Gothenborg until 1998. Now Jaume I on Algeciras/Tangier route.
1995	STENA TRAVELLER. 154m x 24m. Built in Norway, 1992. Opened Holyhead/Dublin Port Service on 23 <sup>rd</sup> November, for Ro/Ro freight only. Now the Lisco Patria, operating from Karlshamn to Klaipeda (Memel) in Lithuania.
1996	STENA EXPLORER. 127m x 40m. 4 aviation gas turbines built by Finnyards, Finland. Unrivalled standards of comfort with speed. Same length as that given for Noah's Ark in Genesis, but twice as wide. Her sister-ship Stena Voyager relieved her for refit in 1997. Special Linkspans at Holyhead and Dun Laoghaire for quick turnaround and supply and ropeless mooring. Model in Holyhead Maritime Museum.
	STENA CHALLENGER. 157m x 24m. Built in Norway, 1991. Replaced Stena Traveller, very similar but with a passenger capacity of 500 which allowed car traffic to be taken. Sold 2001, now the Leif Ericson operating in Canada. Model in Holyhead Maritime Museum.
1999	STENA LYNX III. 81m x 26m. Built by Incat, Tasmania, 1996. Relieved while Stena Explorer was on refit. After varied career at Fishguard and

	the English Channel returned to Holyhead in 2010.
2001	STENA FORWARDER. 186m x 26m. Built in Italy and chartered by Stena Line, replacing Stena Challenger on Dublin Port service. Now the California Star, operating on the Pacific Coast of Mexico.
2003	STENA ADVENTURER. 212m x 30m. Built by Hyundai, Korea, with 3,400 lane metres of deck space and can take up to 1500 passengers. A popular replacement for Stena Forwarder, two story ramps were constructed at Dublin and Holyhead for her.  <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Stena Adventurer</i></p>
2006	STENA SEATRADER. 183m x 22m. Built in Denmark, 1973 as train ferry Svealand for Lion Ferry. Bought by Stena in 1990, deployed to give extra Ro-Ro freight space on Dublin service. Sold at the end of 2008. Now operating as Seatrade from Bari to Greece.
2008	STENA NORDICA. 170m x 24m. Built by Mitsubishi, Japan in 2000 as European Ambassador for P&O. Acquired by Stena in 2004 and used mainly on Karlskrona /Gdynia route. Replaced Stena Seatrader, giving two round trips per day.



*Stena Explorer*