



GOOLE COLLIERS

Roy Fenton

Goole must be the furthest inland of the major British coal ports. Indeed, its situation in the flat, agricultural landscape where Yorkshire meets Lincolnshire seems an unlikely one for an important port. But neither the situation of Goole nor its success was an accident.

To compete with Tyne coal in the first quarter of the nineteenth century, the mines of South Yorkshire needed an outlet to the sea. To achieve this a number of navigations were planned, including the Knottingley to Goole line of the Aire and Calder Navigation. This linked coal-rich areas with the River Ouse, well below the ancient port of Selby whose trade was limited by some difficult stretches of river. It was desirable to have the canal junction as far down the Ouse as possible, and a point near Swinefleet or Reedness in the area known as Marshland would have been preferred in order to avoid Swinefleet bend. But continuation eastwards was thwarted by the works of a seventeenth century Dutchman, Cornelis Vermuyden, who had built his Dutch River in 1625. The new canal ran parallel with the Dutch River for its last few miles and had its outlet at the hamlet of Goole.

The expense of building the Knottingley and Goole Canal determined the directors of the Aire and Calder to build a port to compete with Hull. One of the foremost civil engineers of the day, John Rennie, planned Goole docks, which were executed after his death and opened in 1826. The directors believed that it only required its recognition as a custom's port independent of Hull for Goole to blossom. It did not happen quite as quickly as hoped, however, and the

older Humber ports of Hull and Grimsby, with their deep water and growing railway connections, competed successfully. A brilliant innovation, and determined work to improve the lower Ouse, were necessary for Goole to fulfil its potential.

The man of the hour was William Bartholomew, who in 1864 introduced coal-carrying compartment boats to the Aire and Calder. These rectangular, floating tubs could be marshalled into a train to be propelled by a tug. Like large coal wagons, they were cheap enough to be left whilst a canalside colliery got round to loading them, or to be moored in Goole docks to provide a store of various varieties of coal until a ship arrived. Installation of hydraulic hoists to bodily lift the boats completed an early application of containerisation. The 'Tom Puddings', as they were quickly dubbed, gave the Aire and Calder a way of transporting coal from pit to Goole which was even more efficient than its railway competitors. As General Manager and Chief Engineer of the Aire and Calder, Bartholomew turned his skills and energy to improving the navigation of the lower Ouse, ensuring access to Goole for the steam colliers which were now coming to dominate the coastwise and export coal trade.

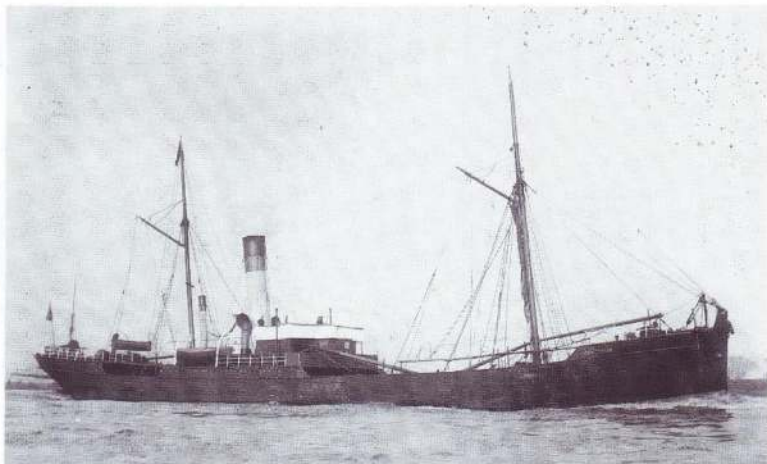
The photographs of colliers serving Goole which are reproduced here were taken at the high noon of the coal trade in the decade before the first world war. From Barnard and Straker negatives, they show a cross section of the many ships which steamed up the Humber and Ouse to load Yorkshire coal for shipment to ports in the south of England or continental Europe.

RALPH CREYKE

Short Brothers, Sunderland; 1879, 755gt, 208 feet

The most important shipping company on the Ouse was the Goole Steam Shipping Co. Ltd., founded in 1864 when a group of local worthies were dismayed at the bankruptcy of a company providing steamship services from Goole to continental ports. The company's services and fleet expanded rapidly, partly by absorbing smaller local companies, and reached a peak of about 25 ships in the mid-1900s. By then, however, it had itself been taken over by an even larger organisation, the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway Company.

Early Goole Steam Shipping directors were honoured by names of steamers, RALPH CREYKE being the squire of nearby Rawcliffe. The ship here is the second of the name to have been built within a year, the first being lost off Lundy in 1878. Note how the galley chimney mimics the ship's funnel, with its yellow base, red band and black top. In 1909, RALPH CREYKE was sold to one of the company's retired masters, E.P. Atkinson



who, it is said, was bored with retirement and wished to found a shipping fleet. His Ouse Steamship Co. Ltd. founded with his son Edward, survived until 1961, becoming Goole's last collier owner. RALPH CREYKE,

however, was not so fortunate and was lost on 16th October 1912 when in collision with the D.F.D.S. steamer VIKING in the River Scheldt.

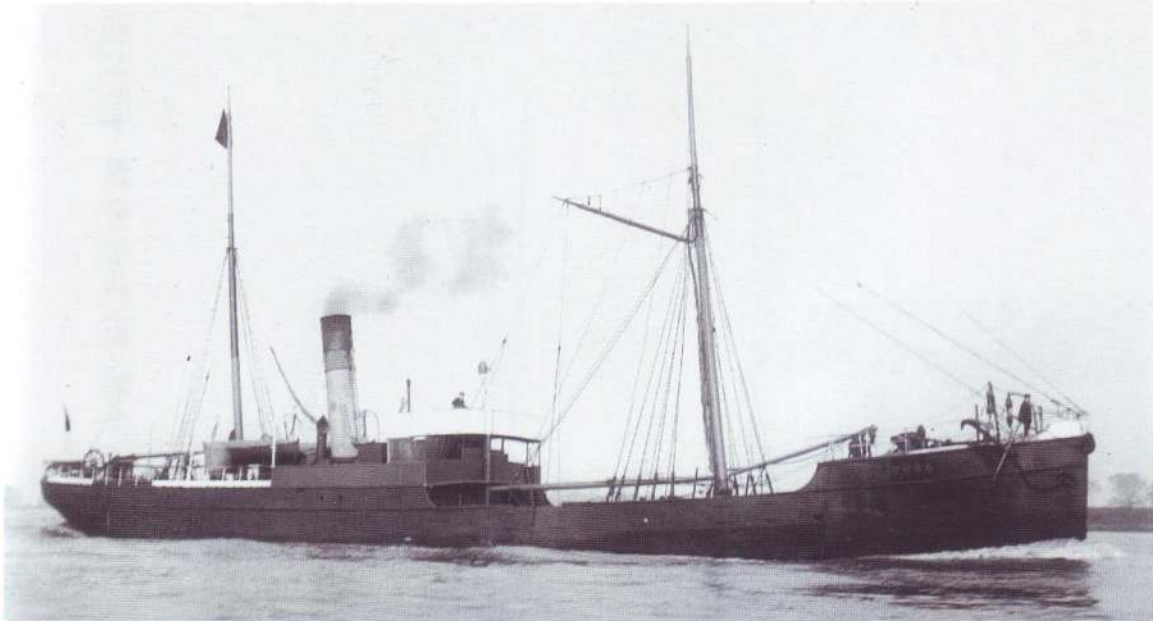
ALTONA

*W.B. Thomson, Dundee; 1877,
672gt, 202 feet*

The year 1895 saw seven ships of the Yorkshire Coal and Steamship Co. Ltd. join the fleet of the Goolle Steam Shipping Co. Ltd. Their ALTONA is seen here making plenty of smoke, and with her anchor at the ready. Of particular interest are the pulley wheels suspended from the foremast gaff. Gaffs were long a feature of Goolle colliers, but these pulleys are perplexing: were they and their halliards part of the gear for whipping coal out of the ALTONA's hold, a method of unloading which should have disappeared - without regret - with sailing colliers?

On the outbreak of war in 1914 her Germanic name was unacceptable, and ALTONA was renamed RIVER CRAKE. Despite her age, she survived several changes of ownership. At the beginning of 1922 owners Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway merged with the London and North Western, but in a year these were swallowed up to become part of an even larger combine, the London Midland and Scottish Railway Company. In October 1927, after fifty years' service, RIVER CRAKE was towed to Sunderland to be broken up.





ROSA

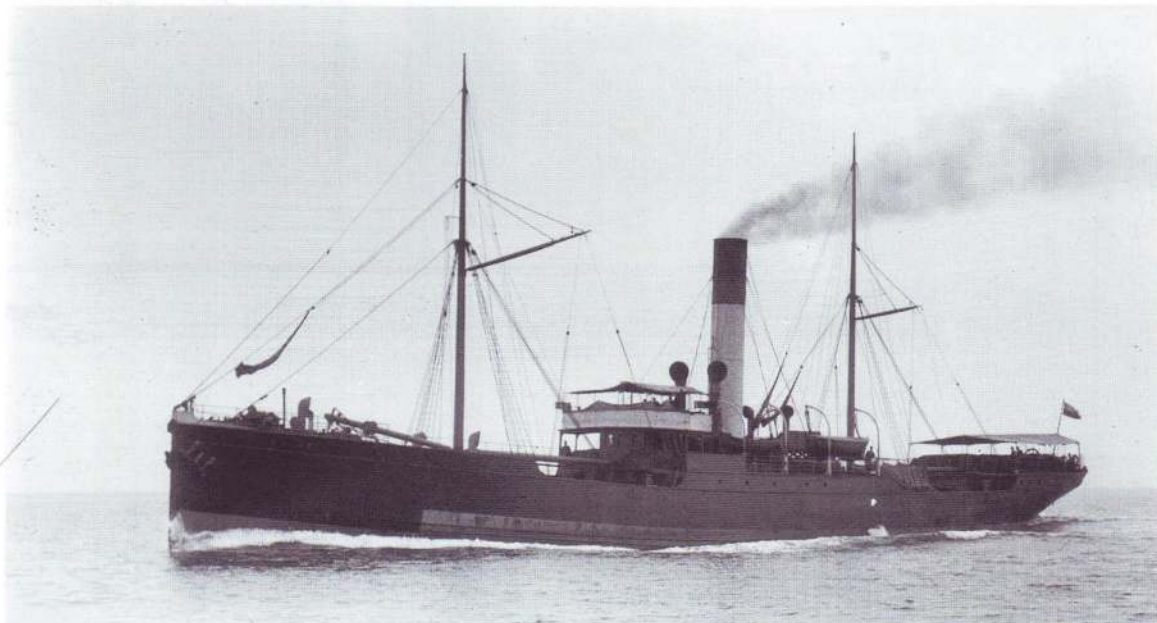
Goole Engineering Co., Goole; 1875, 462gt, 180 feet

Purchase of three ships of the Humber Steam Shipping Co. Ltd. in 1895 was part of the first wave of expansion of the Goole Steam Shipping Co. Ltd. This resulted in the old ROSA, a ship born and bred at Goole, painting her funnel in the new owners 'soot, blood and suet' colours.

Another distinguishing feature apparent in several accompanying photographs of the Goole company's ships is distinctive patterns of dark bands painted on the masts.

ROSA just survived the takeover of the company by the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway in 1905, and was sold to Preston owners who renamed her STORM in 1907.

Thereafter she was owned in Dublin, Guernsey and Sligo; but despite ownership in the west of Ireland met her end in the familiar waters of the North Sea. On 8th September 1917 she was torpedoed by a German seaplane off the Sunk Light Vessel whilst carrying coke from the Tyne to Dunkirk.



COLNE

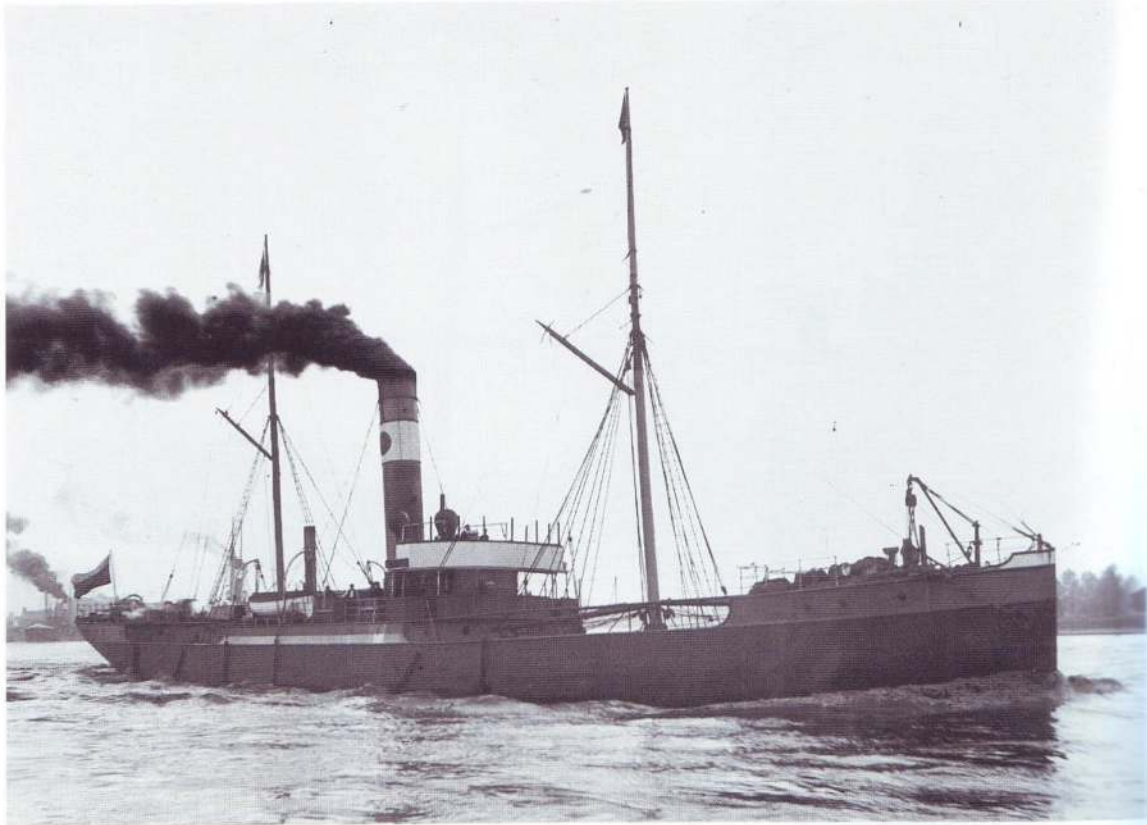
Clyde Shipbuilding and Engineering Co. Ltd., Port Glasgow; 1903, 875gt, 235 feet

Although coal was their most important outward cargo, the fleet of the Goole Steam Shipping Co. Ltd. also carried produce inward. Some ships, including COLNE, were fitted with refrigerated machinery for employment on the Copenhagen route.

Reflecting this, COLNE's running mate HUMBER had a grey hull at one time, and COLNE shows traces of such a colour in this photograph.

The two ships' fates were intertwined. In March 1906, COLNE was in dry dock, and her Copenhagen sailing was taken by HUMBER. COLNE was then loaded with

coal for Rotterdam and on her deck was stowed machinery and bales of wool. Crossing the North Sea during the 12th of March she ran into heavy seas. She took a list and her deck cargo jammed her steering gear. West of the Maas Light she broached and foundered, only seven of her crew of nineteen surviving.



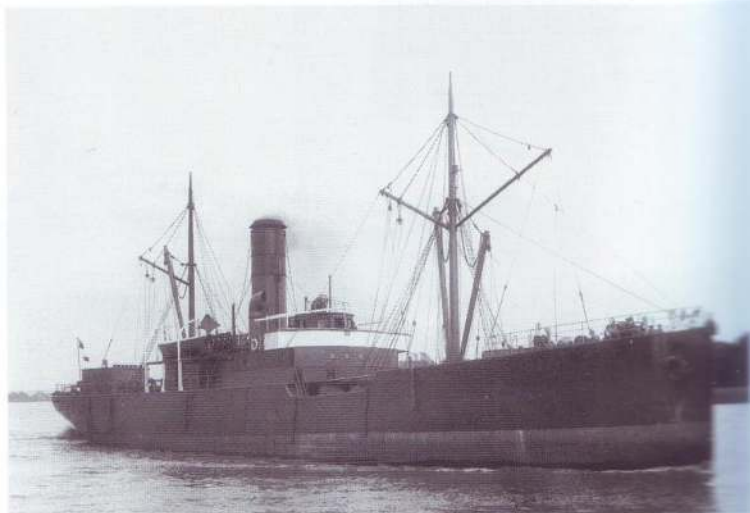
GOOLE TRADER (above)
William Dobson and Co., Low Walker;
 1884, 738gt, 221 feet
 At first glance, a typical Ouse collier - an observation confirmed by her name: but look at the ensign at her stern, a flag which has become familiar again in recent years. GOOLE TRADER flies the Russian flag, although she is owned and registered in the port of Åbo in Finland, which was under the

control of the Czar until 1917. Apart from her name, GOOLE TRADER's credentials as an Ouse collier are impeccable. Built as the OUSE, she represented the first use of the river names which became a hallmark of the Goole Steam Shipping Co. Ltd. and its successors. When sold in 1909 she was put to work carrying coal from Goole to Åbo by her new owners, Ångfartygs A/B

Transito. This pre-first world war view may show her first sailing for the new owners: the black funnel is freshly painted with a white band carrying a red ball and in it a yellow star. A houseflag which echoes the design of the funnel band is at the main: GOOLE TRADER hoisted the Finnish flag once Finland gained its independence shortly after the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia, and lasted until broken up in 1929.

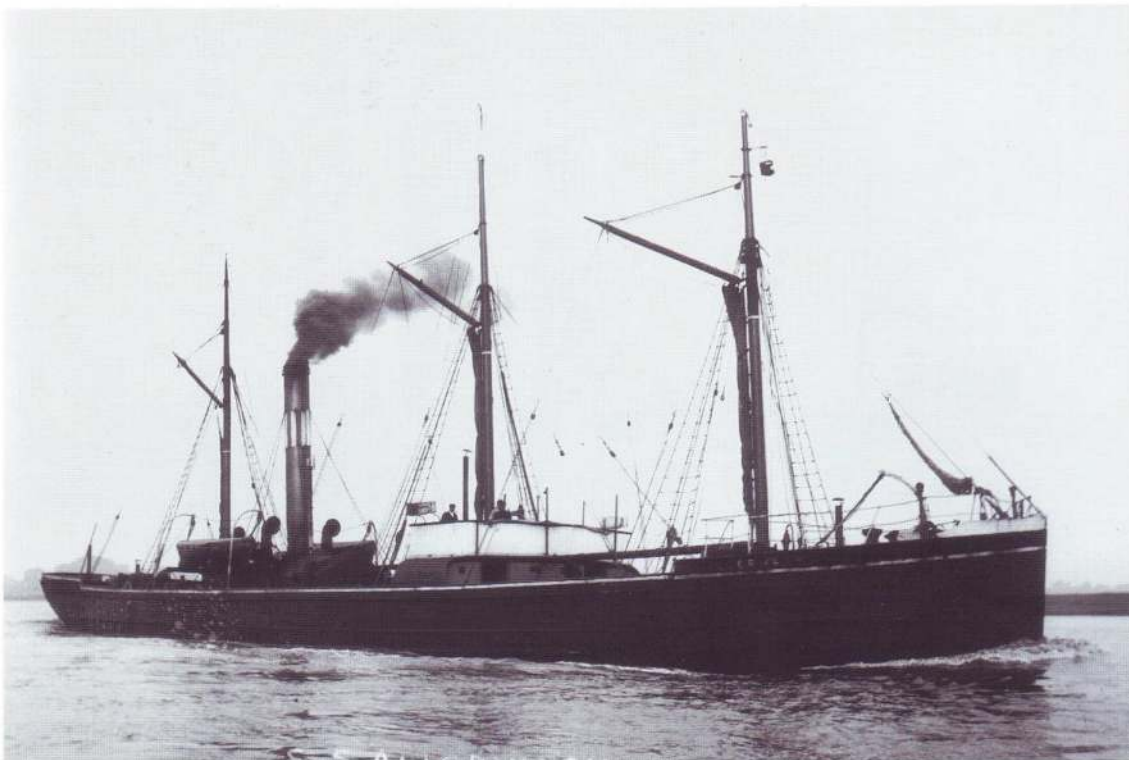
ALT (right)
William Dobson and Co., Low Walker;
 1911, 1,004gt, 240 feet
 The Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway invested heavily in shipping after obtaining control of the Goole Steam Shipping Co. Ltd., and the company's services continued to receive new steamers. In 1909 delivery began of a group of near-sisters which eventually numbered ten, amongst which was the ALT. Her full complement of gaffs also displays the pulleys seen on the ALTONA. Note also the light catwalk over her fore well deck.

After the grouping of the railway companies in 1923, it was felt that the new owners - the London, Midland and Scottish Railway - took less interest in the Goole steamer services. They were more remote than the Lancashire and Yorkshire, with offices in far-away London and other shipping services to concern them. Symptomatic of this was the formation of Associated Humber Lines Ltd., which represented a rationalisation of the Goole services and those of the London and North Eastern



Railway out of Hull, Grimsby and Immingham. ALT, however, survived all this, not to mention two world wars. She did not go for scrap until early 1955, when

her place on the Dutch sailings had been taken by the new motor vessel FOUNTAINE ABBEY.



ALLERWASH

Kerman and Co., Millbrook, Southampton; 1861, 381gt, 168 feet

ALLERWASH is the daddy of all the colliers shown here, built within ten years of the pioneer of this class of ships, JOHN BOWES. Mystery surrounds the origins of the ALLERWASH: her Southampton builders are obscure, to say the least, and the original owners who had her completed as AMERICAN have escaped detection. When registered at Newcastle in 1870, the registrar described her as "foreign name AMERICAN", but this does not guarantee she had always been non-British, as at the time the simplest way to get round rules which made it all but impossible to rename a British ship was to make a nominal sale to foreign owners, buy her back and re-register the ship under a new name.

As ALLERWASH her owners from 1870 to 1897 were William Benson and his successors, colliery owners who lived at Allerwash House, not far from Hexham in Northumberland, where the South and North Tyne meet. Design of iron steamers was evolving rapidly in the 1860s, and Benson had ALLERWASH rebuilt twice. In 1870 she was modified by Edward Lindsay at Newcastle's delightfully-named Mushroom Quay, and just five years later was sent to Palmers at Jarrow to be extended by 36 feet and to receive a new, two-cylinder compound engine.

After this flurry of activity, ALLERWASH settled down to steady plodding up and down the east coast with coal for London and the south east. Sale to Freear and Dix of Sunderland in April 1897 meant she was

seen frequently in Goole, and the unusual red and white vertical stripes on the funnel band show that she was in their ownership at the time this photo was taken. Her narrow funnel and the rounded casing below the bridge leave little doubt about her age. Note too the fullest suit of sails to be seen in any of the colliers in these photographs, and - if the printers have done their job well - the skipper's pipe.

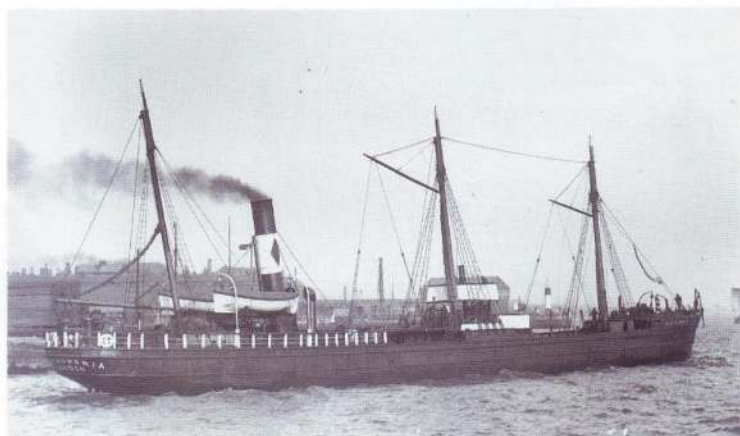
The exact fate of the ALLERWASH is as uncertain as her origins. In August 1923 Freear and Dix sold her to Germany and she was broken up soon afterwards. Her new owner, H. Diederichsen of Kiel, is not known to have been a shipbreaker, and it would be interesting to know where this veteran of over sixty years on the coast met her end.

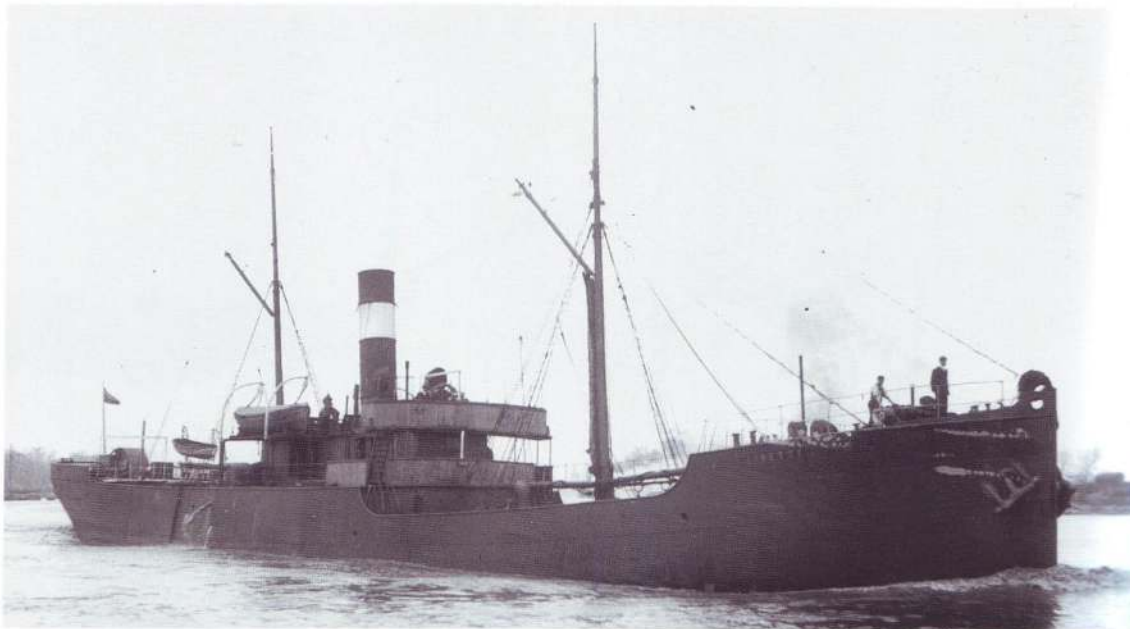
NORTHUMBRIA

Palmer's Ship Building and Iron Co. Ltd., Jarrow; 1869, 900g, 221 feet

NORTHUMBRIA was less than a generation away from the sailing collier, and several sailing ship features are evident in her design: not just the generous set of sails, but also the fidded topmasts, ratlines, rails rather than bulwarks round the poop, and an auxiliary steering position aft.

Original owners were J. Fenwick and Sons, London coal merchants with a particular interest in the Goole trade. In 1896 NORTHUMBRIA was sold to William Cory and Son Ltd., who added their distinctive black diamond to the funnel. On 23rd December 1915, NORTHUMBRIA put out of Leith Roads for London and was never heard of again.





LISETTE

S. McKnight and Co., Ayr; 1899, 899g, 220 feet
 From the 1880s up until the first world war, most east coast colliers of over 200 feet were designed with engines amidships. One disadvantage of this layout was the long shaft tunnel, which restricted capacity in the after hold. To overcome

this, and ensure even trimming, the after hold was built a deck higher.

This classic design is typified by the LISETTE, owned by the Goole and West Riding Steam Shipping Co. Ltd., and managed by H.W. Ezard. These managers favoured long company titles,

and in December 1917 LISETTE was transferred to the Yorkshire Coal and Steam Shipping Co. Ltd. She was soon to fall victim to a German submarine, UB 16 sinking her near the Shipwash whilst she was taking coal from Goole to Honfleur on 13th March 1918.



ALGAMA

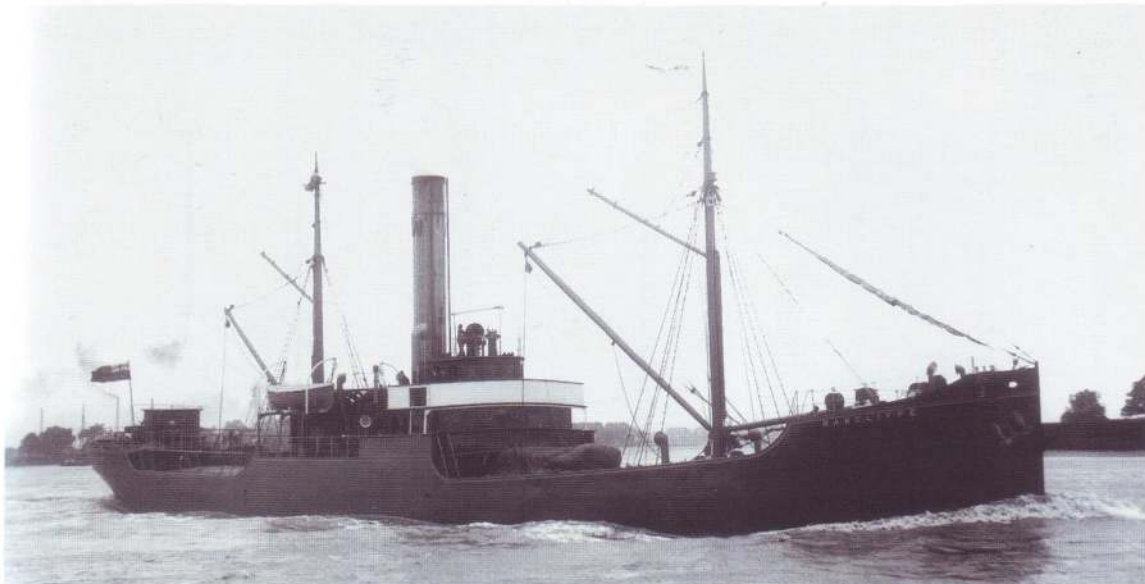
John Fullerton and Co., Paisley; 1904, 774g, 195 feet

A classic type from the finest exponent of the art, ALGAMA typifies the British steam coaster with engines aft, bridge amidships and raised quarter deck. Note how the rake of each mast is increased slightly fore to aft: a technique which Fullertons often used to give the impression of parallel raked masts when viewed from sea level. The photograph was taken in the summer of 1913 or 1914, with a high noonday sun whose heat requires the engine room skylight to be wide open. The sun has not tempted the crew to

remove their caps, however; although a little shirt washing has evidently been carried out. Unfortunately, the exact nature of the flag being run up, or down, the foremast cannot be discerned.

ALGAMA's previous and subsequent careers were complex. She was built as LYCIDAS for Ritson and Son, who were themselves building ships at Maryport just two years previously. After a year or two as CLYDEBANK of Glasgow, she became ALGAMA in 1913, owned by R.H. Penney. This old-established Shoreham owner once had a fleet of sailing ships, but had now settled down to the

coastal coal trade, with a fleet whose names began AL and had white stars on their black funnels. ALGAMA returned to Glasgow owners in 1915, but Mann, Macneal's renaming her EASTFORD seems to have been vetoed, and she reverted to ALGAMA within a month. Post-war owners were Doreys of Guernsey and the Ashburnham Steamship Co. Ltd. of Cardiff. On 28th December 1923 she was en route from Cardiff to La Rochelle with coal (what else?) when she ran aground on the French coast. Although refloated she was later broken up.



RAWCLIFFE (top)
John Crown and Sons Ltd., Sunderland; 1906, 866gt, 215 feet

Certain of the Barnard and Straker negatives which have survived suggest that the photographer made efforts to photograph special sailings. Judging by the name pennant at the foremast head and the ship's clean condition, this shows the maiden voyage of the RAWCLIFFE. Collars and ties are also evident on the bridge deck. Certainly the letter W on the funnel indicates that it was taken between her completion in June 1906 and that December, when she was sold to the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway by her original owners, the Wetherall Steamship Co. Ltd. of Goole.

John H. Wetherall began shipowning in sail, and moved from Knottingley to Goole about 1898 to build up a fine fleet of steamers, all but one of which he had from new. Wetherall remained independent of the railway company, although he also sold them his new SALTARSHE in 1907, and survived in business until 1935. RAWCLIFFE

was not quite so long-lived, and with her near-sister SALTARSHE was dispatched from Goole to breakers at Bo'ness in December 1931.

Several features of RAWCLIFFE are worth noting. Few coastal sailors benefited from an enclosed wheelhouse in 1906, and those berthed aft had their passage forward helped by the provision of a walkway over the hatch. John Wetherall, who is probably one of those on the bridge, could be proud of his new collier: she was clearly fit to become a railway ship.

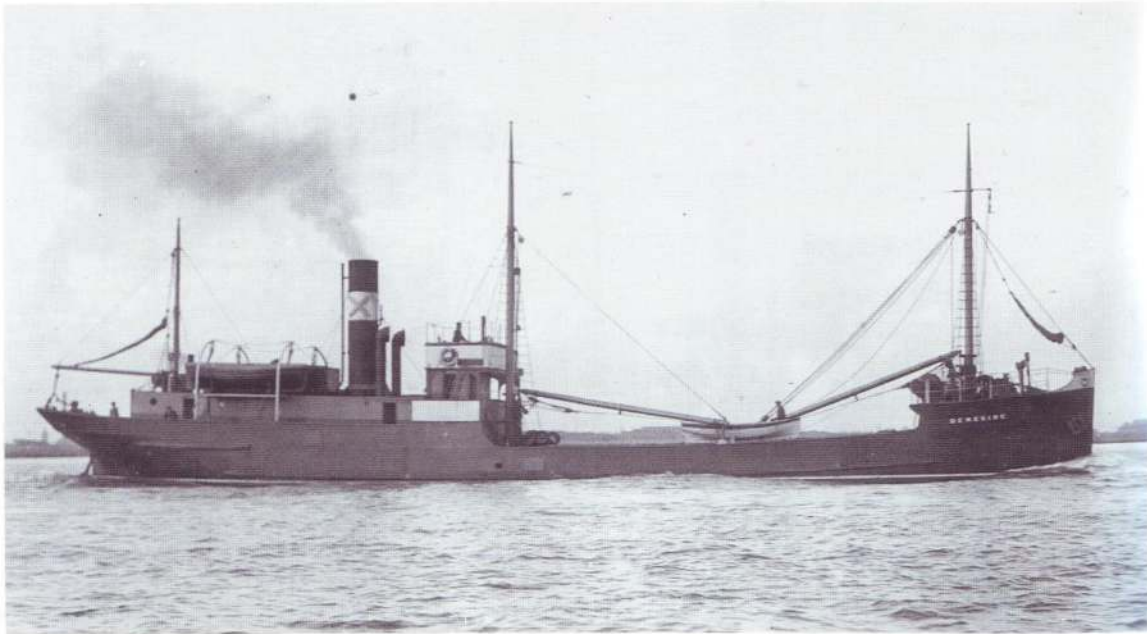
HAMPSHIRE (bottom)
John Crown and Sons Ltd., Sunderland; 1908, 833gt, 195 feet

Not only Goole-based owners traded to the port, and as her name suggests HAMPSHIRE was from Southampton. Her exact owners are not easy to pin down, and involved something of a consortium of coal merchants from the Hill and Willey families. The former family also had ships managed out of Newcastle by Witherington and Everett as the John George Hill Steam Shipping Co. Ltd.

HAMPSHIRE had been built for the Goole coal trade, and was a repeat of the KNOTTINGLEY built a year earlier for John Wetherall of Goole. Apart from demonstrating her drab colour scheme, the photograph is of interest in showing her gaffs - almost obligatory for Goole traders - stowed alongside her masts.

HAMPSHIRE's career became complex after her sale in 1918 by owners who had by then agreed to call themselves Hill (Southampton) Ltd. She passed through the hands of three short-lived Cardiff companies, and in 1925 was bought by Stewarts of Glasgow who renamed her YEWMOUNT. Eleven years stability ended in 1936 when a London buyer renamed her simply JIM. Under this name she was a late war victim, lost with eight of those on board off Orfordness on 30th March 1945 whilst carrying pitch from Goole to Dieppe. The Admiralty considered that JIM had been sunk by a midget submarine, and if so it was probably one of the Type XXVIII or Seehund U-boats which enjoyed some success whilst operating from a base at Ijmuiden.

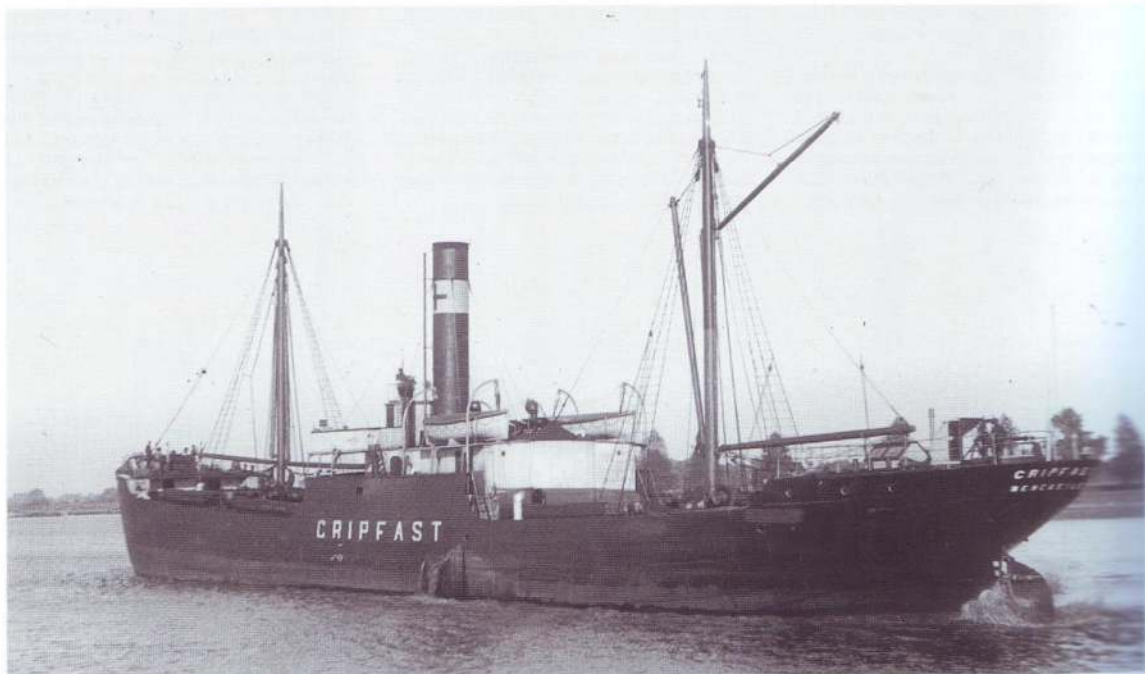




DENESIDE
J.T. Eltringham and Co., South Shields;
 1910, 329gt, 134 feet
 DENESIDE represents the smaller steam
 coaster, with bridge mounted on the
 quarterdeck. One of the crew can be seen
 attending to the cockboat on the hatch
 covers, a position which must have been an
 inconvenience in a trade where the hatch
 covers had to be taken off several times
 each week. Note too the tiny mizzen sail.

This size of coaster was popular with
 owners around the Irish Sea, who often
 traded to smaller harbours. But although
 DENESIDE ended her coasting days on the
 west coast, she was built on the Tyne for
 Sunderland owner Thomas Rose. He began
 shipowning in 1905, and adopted a naming
 scheme inspired by the address of his
 Sunderland office, Sunnside.

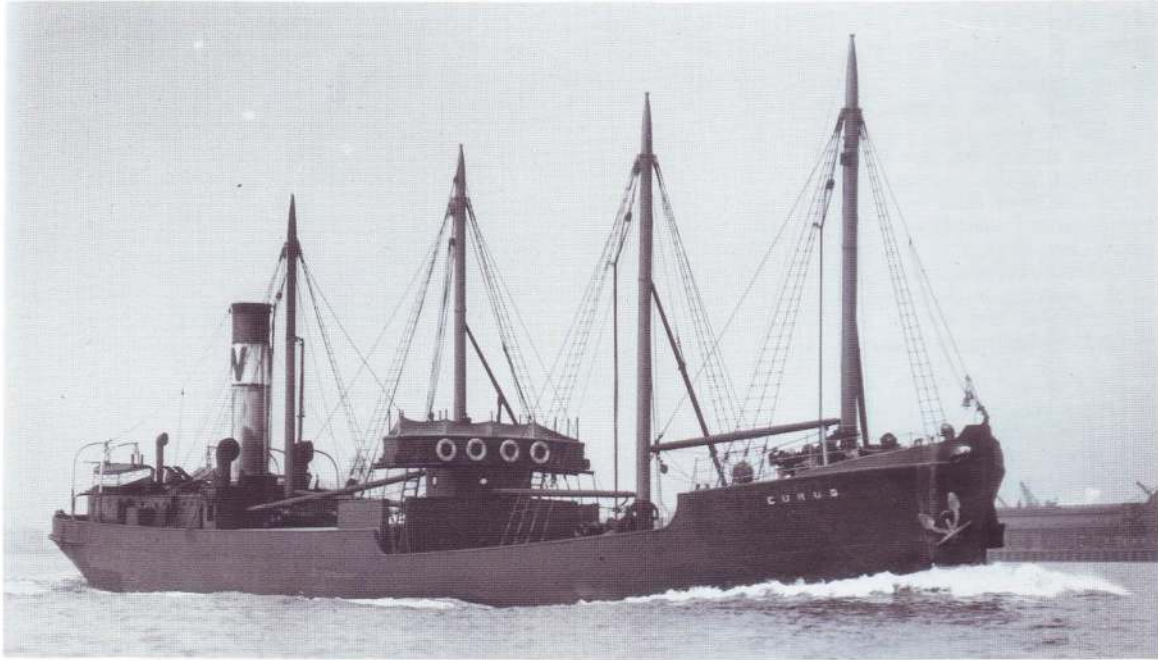
DENESIDE was sold in 1921, and after
 spells owned in Cardiff and Liverpool was
 bought in 1935 by the Larne Steamship Co.
 Ltd., a company associated with the coal
 merchants Howdens Ltd. When her
 coasting days ended in 1953, DENESIDE
 could still find employment dredging sand
 in the River Tay, and she survived until
 towed to Holland for breaking up in 1961.



GRIPFAST
John Crown and Sons Ltd., Sunderland;
 1910, 1,109gt, 225 feet
 E.R. Newbigin was a relative newcomer to
 shipowning, having begun in 1896. He built
 his first new steamer in 1908, beginning a
 sequence of names commencing GR. His

second newbuilding, GRIPFAST, came to be
 a victim of the insistence on running
 convoys through the English Channel
 during the second world war. On 9th July
 1942 she was sunk by German aircraft
 south of Portland Bill whilst carrying 1300
 tons of South Wales coal to Sheerness for

the government. One wonders if coal from
 the east coast would not have done just as
 well, and would have avoided the Channel
 passage which cost the lives of five of the
 GRIPFAST's complement and of three
 survivors of the steamer ROSTEN, sunk on
 the same convoy by an E-boat.



EURUS

John Fullerton and Co., Paisley; 1913, 825gt, 195 feet

For a modest-sized collier, EURUS has a formidable array of masts, and note too the supports for these on the port side. She belonged to Gregory B. Wadsworth, another Goole owner who maintained his

independence. Wadsworth began buying steamers in 1889, slowly graduating to new ships built by Fullertons. EURUS was the fourth of these, and indeed the last of the 12 ships to join his fleet.

Following Wadsworth's death, EURUS and his other remaining ship, ARGUS, were sold in

1921 and 1922. EURUS became first the Newcastle-owned SIMONSIDE, and later sailed out of Limerick as KERRY HEAD. Irish neutrality failed to preserve her from German aircraft, however, and KERRY HEAD and her crew of 12 were lost off Blackball Head on 22nd October 1940 having left Limerick in ballast for a British port.

Sources and acknowledgements

Photographs are from the collection of John Clarkson unless otherwise credited. We thank all who gave permission for their photographs to be used, and are particularly grateful to Fred Hawks, Ian Farquhar, David Jenkins, Kevin O'Donoghue and George Scott, to Tony Smith, Cliff Parsons and Keith Byass of the World Ship Photo Library, and to the museums and institutions listed for help in finding photographs.

In researching captions, sources have included *Lloyd's Register*, *Lloyd's Confidential Index*, *Lloyd's War Losses*, *Mercantile Navy Lists*, *Marine News* and *Closed Registers* (Class BT110) in the Public Records Office. The *Registers of Merchant Ships* by Bill Schell and Tony Starke have also proved invaluable. Use of the facilities of the World Ship Society's Central Record and of Lloyd's Register of Shipping is gratefully acknowledged. Especial thanks go to John Bartlett, Anne Cowne, John B. Hill, Bill Laxon and Gil Mayes.

Aberdeen and Commonwealth Line

Australian Coastal Shipping by Barry Pemberton (Melbourne University Press, Melbourne; 1979), *North Star to Southern Cross* by John Maber (T. Stephenson and Sons Ltd., Prescot; 1967), *Merchant Fleets 17: Aberdeen and Aberdeen and Commonwealth Lines* by David Savill and Duncan Haws (TCL Publications, Hereford; 1989) were consulted.

Kenneth Shaw - Captain/Owner

This article is based largely on a conversation with Captain Shaw at Arlingham in August 1996. His father, Hugh Shaw, gave a classic but typically modest account of his life in coastal sail in *Schooner Captain* compiled and edited by Norah Ayland (D. Bradford Barton Ltd., Truro; 1972).

Photographers in Focus - Skyfotos/Fotoflite

Captions draw partly on *The Constantine Group* by Harold Appleyard (World Ship Society, Kendal; 1983), *Merchant Fleets 24: Britain's Railway Steamers* by Duncan Haws (TCL Publications, Hereford; 1993), *The Townsend Thoresen Years* by Miles Cowsill and John Hendy (Ferry Publications, Dover; 1988), and *Farewell to the Train Ferry* by P.J. Cone in *Ships Monthly*, February 1996. Gerry Manning, aviation photographer and historian, kindly researched the career of G-AIZZ.

An accident waiting to happen

The major sources are the *New Zealand Herald* for January and February 1910 in Auckland Public Library and archives of the New Zealand Maritime Museum, Auckland.

The ANDRADA - A Victim of the Columbia River Bar

Sources include *The Last of the Windjammers*, volume II, by Basil Lubbock (Brown, Son and Ferguson, Glasgow; 1929), and *Pacific Graveyard* by James A. Gibbs (Binfords and Mort; Portland, Oregon; 1973).

Goole Colliers

For background on the development of Goole and its trade see *The Yorkshire Ouse - The History of a River Navigation* by Baron F. Duckham (David & Charles, Newton Abbot; 1967). Compartment boats are described in *Railway on the Water: Tom Puddings and the Yorkshire Coal Industry*, by Harold Crabtree and edited by Mike Clarke (The Sobriety Project, Goole; 1993). George J. Drury concentrates on Goole's trade and shipowners in *Sixty Miles from Spurn* in *Sea Breezes* for November 1957, and *Goole Steam Shipping Company's 91 Years* in the September 1955 issue. Ships' histories are from the author's researches.