

...on; "Leda of Maiden, Essex; "Moss Rose" of Sheerness; and "Thark," "Aqua Belle," "Hilfronor," "Pauleter," "Marsayru" and the "Bystander." The latter boats are probably all from the Thames region.

"All assistance in tracing the craft, together with owners' addresses, will certainly be appreciated," Mr. Baxter stated.

Already, I am pleased to say, one vessel has been traced by waterside contacts. This is the bawley "Endeavour," which is at Leigh working as a cockle-boat under new ownership.

Gravesend tugs and similar vessels which were involved at the time are well listed in connection with the Dunkirk evacuation. Practically the whole of the Thames "Sun" tug fleet took part, for example, mostly crewed from Gravesend.



Gravesend waterman
Mr. C. W. Wenban.

One man with strong memories of those vital days, 25 years ago, is waterman Mr. C. W. Wenban, of Clarendon Road, Gravesend. In giving his account,

Mr. Wenban firmly emphasizes that he was only one of many from the Gravesend waterfront who volunteered to go across the Channel.

Like so many others, Mr. Wenban became involved in a fairly casual manner to begin with. He was standing on the Royal Terrace Pier watching some shipping when he was asked if he was free to take up the crew of the Gravesend steam tug "Challenge." When he was told that the job was probably connected with getting the troops out, Mr. Wenban immediately volunteered as a deck hand

to La Manche. "Challenge" had just let go of the barge, having run it at the beach at full speed ahead, when we watched a dive bomber come into the attack. The plane went for the barge and dropped a bomb which blew the barge right out of the water. There were five army men on the barge. According to my information, only one survived, and he was a Gravesend man whom I later met in Dover."

The tug "Challenge" carried out a few towing jobs for the Navy control before setting back under orders for Dover harbour. "On our way back we found a damaged destroyer loaded with troops," continued Mr. Wenban. "We got a line to her and towed her into port, where the troops were able to disembark safely."

When entering Dunkirk waters for the first time, the first vessel that the crew of the "Challenge" observed was her sister tug "Contest," which was also crewed from Gravesend. Both tugs were unarmed.

Back at Dover, a few more towing jobs were done. One task was to issue ladders around to Navy ships in the harbour. These were later used to enable thousands of troops to embark from the Dunkirk harbour arm down to the decks of the rescuing destroyers. When a returning destroyer was rammed by a cross-Channel ship at the entrance of Dover harbour, Mr. Wenban was one of those who went into the water that was thick with oil to rescue men who had been thrown overboard by the impact. He got two men out into a French naval pinnace.

On the final night of the

... was the Soviet merchant ship "Kirovsk," of 5,518 gross registered tons. She had arrived from the Russian port of Ventspils on the Baltic coastline of Latvia and was moored at the buoy off the pilot's pier while awaiting a London berth. "Kirovsk" had earlier called at Newport on her way to the Thames.

This cargo ship is of an earlier design than some of the Soviet vessels seen in numbers, during recent months bringing in timber imports, and is similar in style to the vessel "Atkarsk" which called last year to the Tilbury stage with imported horses. "Kirovsk" was last reported some three months ago passing Gibraltar heading for the Baltic, but like the similar "Atkarsk" has also been used on Russian trade routes to Cuba.

The "Kirovsk" was constructed eight years ago at the yard of Wartsila Kon Chrichton-Vulcan in 1957, and has a Sulzer engine of Swiss design installed by her builders. She measures 457ft. 5in. in length, on a breadth of 57ft. 11in.

After a short wait off the local shore, this vessel made her way into the Greenland Dock, London, where she was due to begin discharge of her 4,200 ton general cargo.



Metcalf's 'Jim M' goes to breakers

A WELL-KNOWN little coaster to the waters of London River, the "Jim M,"

launching title of "Empire Tarahan."

Of 148ft. in length and of 410 gross tons, the "Jim M" ran on various routes which included bringing coal on occasions to the local river-front wharves. A motor ship, with a working speed of just over 8 knots, the "Jim M" has been lying at the Company's local Town Wharf, West Street, over the past few weeks.

Here, her engines were removed by cranes at the adjoining Commercial Wharf undertaking, for only the hull of the ship has been sold. The removed diesel engine is being stored at the Town Wharf for the time being, and will possibly be installed in another vessel within the Company.

Master of the "Jim M," in recent times, has been Captain McGuckian who sailed her with a total crew numbering seven, including himself. Some of the last runs made by "Jim M," before the decision to withdraw her, were between Keadby to Norwich with cargoes of coal.

Upon completion of preparations, regarding engine removal, the "Jim M" was quietly towed away from the local frontage to the breakers yard of Messrs. Ward, at Grays. The towage was carried out by the tug "Knocker White."

The Metcalf family and Shipping Company have long connections with Gravesend. Their fleet today includes a large number of fine general-cargo and tanker craft which are in constant use around our coastal waters. Many of the fleet are of modern design, and their latest vessel, the "Frank M," is shortly expected to make her first voyage into the Thames.



PORT ITEMS 'Port Victor' due from Australia

EXPECTED to enter the Thames on Sunday is the Port Line cargo liner "Port Victor," which is on a voyage from Port Pirie in

due yesterday from Chalmers, while another Line craft "Port gill," of 1958 construction due on Wednesday.

OTHER SHIPS EXPECTED:

Today (Friday): from Ravenna, to "Aragon" (Royal M. from Buenos Aires Royal Docks, "L from Indonesia (" from motor ship) Norge" for Hole (Norwegian tanker tons).

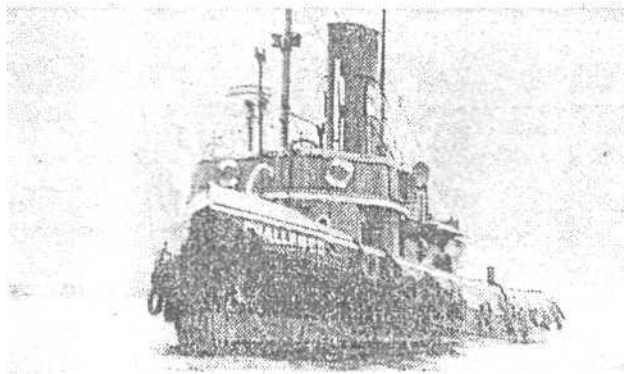
Saturday: "A from Izmar, "Ast Whampoa for W Dock, "Cattara" from, "Constance for Northfleet de jetty from Risor, "I Cadiz for London "Tindforn" from Sider for Thames

Sunday: "Beaver" St. John (N.B.) f Albert Dock (C Pacific Line), "Clan from Chittagong (Line), "Marieholm Quebec for Purfleet duwa" from Africa "Miguel" from El P Coryton, "Trentino Haifa,

Monday: "Alli" fric Sea for Purfleet "Blanca" from Va "Baltic Trader" fr sinki for Surrey Dock, "Carlo" from holm for Millwall "Chitral" from Ma King George Dock, St. Albans" from "Corinthic" from N minster (Greek ship dar" from New Wes "Suecia" from Got (Swedish Lloyd Lin

Tuesday: "Carito Vancouver for Royal "Rio Primero" from Aires, "Starforn" Puerto Miranda for Haven.

Wednesday: "E from Beira and East



Dunkirk vessel "Challenge" of the Elliott fleet.