

with whom I had travelled several times. He was a strict disciplinarian. So much for ship adoption which is adopted in many countries especially England, The Masters of the two ships Drakensberg and Rochester still write to the boys. I should have mentioned that when the Drakensberg comes into port here the boys, a few go down to the ship on arrival and have morning coffee and later about fifty are entertained to a buffet lunch on deck.

As soon as I had got into the swing of things and settled down Mr. Gibb decided to take his overseas leave and leave me to run the show, I must say that I did so enjoy entertaining the Company's friends and my friends to lunch on the ships. As I have mentioned there were drinks before and after lunch.

I enjoyed meeting the ships in the early mornings and having coffee in the Captain cabin and later breakfast to which I always invited the pilot and Immigration and they looked forward I am sure to these meals. Now in meeting and seeing a ship off, Gibb and I took turns, it was just a case of walking up the gangway. How different to some years back when the ships, mail steamers, worked at anchor in the roadstead. Sometimes bad weather would come up and the ship had to pull in the anchor and go out to sea and perhaps on to the next port. I, with several others were on one occasion carried on to Durban. An attempt had to be made to recover the anchors which the ship had to leave when they have had to either slip the cable or it has been broken. However many anchors were never recovered though they are always marked with a buoy

Yes later when the ships entered the harbour it was a pleasure to go aboard.

All the ships Captains and some of the Officers took the advantage of being given the courtesy of the East London Golf Course. One, Captain Oakley, as soon as I went aboard would ask if I could give four of them a lift out to the course. Well I would pick them up shortly after breakfast aboard, took them to the course and later picked them up and we went aboard, and as it was after one, and they had no time to change, go to the Captains cabin where there was beer and a lovely lot of sandwiches etc. in which I joined.

On one voyage Oakley arrived in Port in the Edinburgh Castle, and as soon as I walked into his cabin told me that his one eye was giving him blazes and he could not carry on. I rang up the eye specialist and made an appointment right away. The poor chap could hardly bear the sun as we drove up to the Blumenthals Surgery. After a long examination Blumenthal told John Oakley that he would have to go into hospital and have an x ray. He said that was impossible and turned to me and said "You know that Chairman of curs." Well the doctor said "Have you any one eyed skippers in the fleet because that is what will happen you will lose that eye". He said he wanted the mouth xrayed as he was sure that teeth were the cause. John said "But I have had no teeth for the last twenty years, all mine are false". "Never mind there stumps left in". Well he had the x ray. I phoned Cape Town and gave them the story and said we had decided that Jimmy James the Chief officer, a fine officer, would command the ship for the trip to Durban and back to East London. Well Smith the dentist got to work cutting the gums where the Xray had shown a stump. The first he pulled out but there was sign of decay. However when he extracted the next two the pus began to flow. The cause of all the trouble. Well John spent Christmas day in hospital but was out in time to take command on the ships return two days later. A new man and the eye has never troubled him again after the pus had been drained.

I would like to relate an amusing story in connection with Jimmy James the Chief Officer. It was an outward voyage when they were off the African Coast near Bakar that they received a distress signal from an Arab Dhow. The Captain stopped the ship, lowered a boat and Jimmy went to investigate. The trouble was that they had no food or water and this was taken to them. Then as Jimmy James climbed aboard again one of those inquisitive ladies asked what the trouble was and how long the

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the Dhow had
been at sea.
"I don't madam
but he said
God Bless
Queen Victoria