



26 JAN 4

POST OFFICE

CHESHIRE

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Mr. & Mrs. Hewson
Langbark
Sask
Canada

15 Centurion Drive Meols.

Tuesday, January 21st 1941 -

Dear Susan & Geoff - Very many thanks for two letters rec^d yesterday evening - we are so glad the parcel was not lost. it is very wonderful that your 3 parcels to us & ours to you & also Frank Clarke's kind present & yours to Brian all arrived safely. I am sorry Barbara took flu - in the ^{previous} letter you said Geoff & Tom had had it, I hope you escaped. Sometimes I play we are going on a journey with Geoffrey & Day 'where shall we go?' & he says 'to see Aunt Susan in Canada'. We have had a heavy snow fall so I am not going to see Brian tomorrow, but hope to go on Sat[?] weather permitting. Now it is thawing & raining fast but the roads will be deep in slush tomorrow - yesterday & today cars have often had to be dug out & buses & cars have skidded so that it has caused accidents. The train was only able to go as far as Hoylake - The electric trains are more troublesome than steam ones in bad weather. Little avalanches of snow have been

sliding off roofs all day. We have been having a very pleasant time as far as enemy planes are concerned lately - probably on acct^y of the weather. Geoffrey has greatly enjoyed the snow, he has high waterproof boots - & a sledge, he often comes with messages on his own acct^y & I am there every day. The cake was very rich & was much enjoyed. Auntie E. has had a cold & has been in bed but is up today after dinner.

I am very glad the house quarter door is paid off. The new washer should be a very great help. Is it like Elsie's? Sat^y 25th Your letter written on the 15th Dec^r arrived today - it should have come before the cash two which both came on the same day. We did not get to see Brian today - the roads are in a bad state with partly melted snow. Yesterday the buses were not running even to Hedwall, & Barbara now has a bad cold & cough so I wrote to tell Brian & have been at Pat's all today to help with the children. Geoffrey went over door this aftⁿ as it was Neil's birthday party - Baby Elizabeth is very good at amusing herself.

She dances & makes up games
for herself & is very happy.

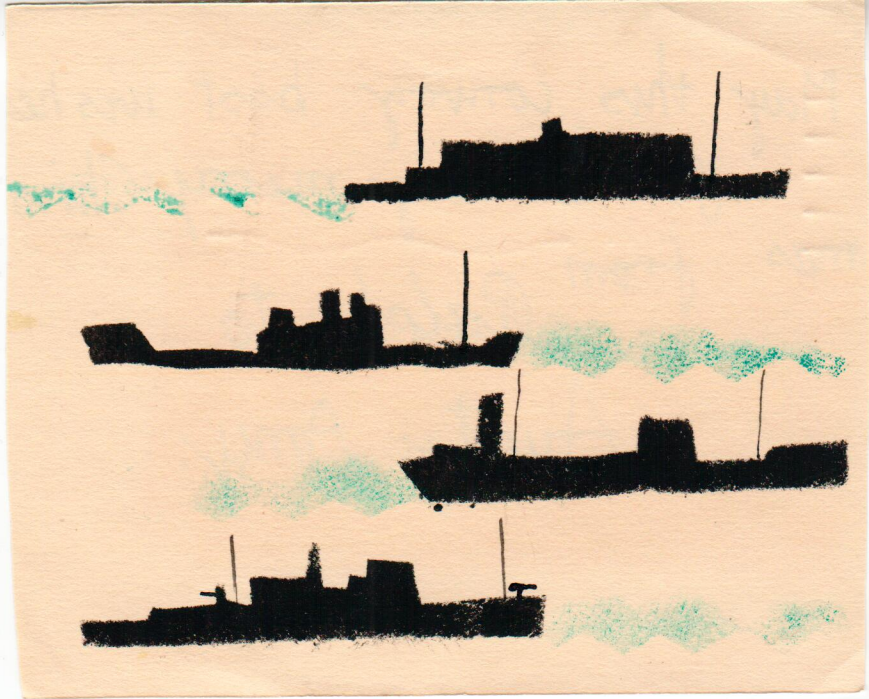
You were very lucky with
the cow & calf - Geoffrey. How
is the Jersey cow doing. is she
more delicate than the Canadian
ones? Do you ever hear of
Ronald Postlethwaite? his
sister Marjorie has just been
married. I will enclose cut-
tings from newspapers & also
one about the St. Seiriel, the
Holland's steamer & its seven
trips to Dunkirk. Is it not
wonderful the way so many
were saved. It has rained
hard all day, so will wash
away the remaining snow.

I will post this tomorrow (Sun-
-day) tho' I shall not go to
Church because I shall be
at Barbara's. There is a Friends'
Meeting held every Sunday at
W. Kirby in a Friends' house &
Aunties usually go - but they are
not going tomorrow - the roads are
so slushy & Auntie E. has not
been out yet since she had the
Cold. Please thank Amarah for
her letter & the story she sent,
I hope to write to her next time;
when I shall have more time.
With dear love from Mother.

X X X X X X X X X X X A
X X X X X X X X X X X B
X X X X X X X X X X X T

I enclose Paul's Xmas card to me
with his idea of a Convoy.

May this convey best wishes
for a very merry Chris-
mas from Ralph to
Auntie Amy.



EPIC WORK OF R ST. SEIRIOL

SEVEN TRIPS TO DUNKIRK

Making seven trips to Dunkirk in the midst of heavy bombing, the North Wales pleasure steamer St. Seiriol (1,586 tons), now on Admiralty service, played a brilliant part in the rescue of 335,000 men, in which a thousand ships of all sizes took part last May.

Only now is it possible to reveal the full story of her gallant work—as told by Mr. E. Keble Chatterton, the well-known naval writer, in "The Epic of Dunkirk" (Hurst and Blackett, 10s 6d). Merseyside was well represented among the rescuing craft. The Isle of Man Steam Packet Company, for instance, had eight of their ships engaged, and lost three of them—King Orry, Mona's Queen, and Fenella. The North Wales Company's vessels were St. Tudno, St. Silio and St. Seiriol, but it was the last-named that won particular notice from the naval authorities.

Exhausted Crew

According to Mr. Chatterton she proved one of the most useful vessels engaged, and her crew, subject to the immense strain of aerial attack, and without rest during her continual journeys to and from the historic beach, were finally in an advanced stage of physical and nervous exhaustion. A week before her first trip she had already managed to enter Calais and, defying bombs, had reached the quay and got away safely. Then, on May 27 she went over to assist at Dunkirk.

At first she was at the jetty, but afterwards lay off the beach, where her boats did invaluable service. She would send three boats to the beach, bring off an average of about forty-seven men in each, though bombs dropped from the planes "like rain," and load them on to waiting destroyers or other ships, and then fill up St. Seiriol herself with about 900 men on each of the seven voyages.

"How she survived was a miracle in itself," says Mr. Chatterton. "Often a dozen aircraft flew over simultaneously, circled round to make careful direction with their missiles, and raked the decks with machine-gun bullets."

When the Crested Eagle, an oil-burning ship, became a furnace after a direct hit, St. Seiriol got as close as possible, and for about five and a half hours her crew were toiling to pick up survivors.

Her chief officer, Mr. J. McNamee, performed herculean service. Immediately after this he was at the beach, wading in from the boats, helping men on to them, and ferrying them to the nearest large vessel. "On arrival in port he became partially paralysed below the waist, yet all that he asked was permission to go back and do one more trip." She had two masters during this time, Captain R. Morris and Captain R. D. Dobb.

The Royal St. Seiriol ?

"The exceptional courage and endurance of St. Seiriol," says Mr. Chatterton, "considerably impressed the naval authorities. Such trips also strained and shook her determined crew, so that on arrival at Dover the military doctor decided that all hands were unfit to carry on any longer. They were sent to their homes for rest and another crew took the ship to continue the brave duty that must ever be associated with this pleasure vessel."

Later, in June, St. Seiriol was evacuating refugees from Le Havre, again in deadly peril from fierce enemy assaults from the air, and again got back safely.

The part played by St. Seiriol in "the most difficult combined naval and military operation ever carried out" recalls the epic exploit of the Mersey ferry steamers, Royal Iris and Royal Daffodil, at Zeebrugge in 1918. When peace comes, perhaps St. Seiriol will achieve Royal fame.