SHELL'S FORMER SAILING SHIP TANKERS

Malcolm Cooper

The combination of heavy wartime losses, the dislocation of shipbuilding resources and the disruption of normal trading practices by port congestion and government requisitions during the First World War produced acute tonnage shortages across the British shipping industry. This was a particular problem in the tanker sector. Here the general problems were accentuated by the disproportionate impact of losses on a relatively small and specialised fleet. In addition, the war itself had accelerated the replacement of coal by oil, not least in the Royal Navy's most modern ships, and increased demand in its turn had broadened the already global reach of the oil industry and its transportation network.

Even before the war ended, both the government and private sector oil companies were casting around for solutions to the tanker shortage. New building would take time, not least because yard space itself was at a premium. One solution was the adoption of war standard ships to bulk oil carriage, a programme which produced the AO and Z type classes - ordered as dry cargo vessels but with tanks built into their hull space. Another, more exotic expedient was to convert sailing vessels to steam or motor tankers.

The genesis of the conversion programme

The idea was the brainchild of Cornelius Zulver, the Marine Superintendent of the oil company Shell. Zulver sought to produce much-needed tanker tonnage by fitting diesel engines originally produced for submarines but now surplus to Admiralty requirements into the hulls of otherwise redundant sailing ships. On the face of things, this might have seemed a needlessly complicated procedure, but a number of factors, apart from the availability of the engines themselves, weighed in its favour. The first was simply that there were a number of sailing vessels available – ships with little obvious commercial future, whose conversion would not make inroads into dry cargo carrying capacity, and whose owners were likely to be only too willing to sell at prices well above their peacetime break-up value. The second was that conversion itself was more straightforward than might first have seemed the case. The great advantage of a sailing ship hull was that it was basically an empty shell into which tank storage could be fitted, encumbered neither by hold bulkheads nor midship machinery space. The partial removal of masts and rigging was a fairly quick process, as was the construction of a basic superstructure. It should also have been fairly straightforward to retro-fit engines into the after part of an otherwise empty hull. The size of the hulls and consequent dependence on compact propulsion machinery would mean that the resulting tankers were likely to be neither fit nor economical for long-distance work. They could, however, fill the need for coastal tank tonnage to employ in distant waters.

In 1917-1919, the Anglo-Saxon Petroleum Co. Ltd. acquired a total of eight sailing vessels for conversion to twin-screw steam or motor tankers. Shell was acting with the full support of the government's Shipping Controller. Indeed, the conversion programme appears to have been supported by active government intervention. In three cases, the Shipping Controller acted as the initial purchasing agent for the acquisition of the vessels and only sold them on to Shell at a later date, either during or after conversion itself. In at least one case the Controller appears effectively to have forced an unwilling sailing ship owner to sell.

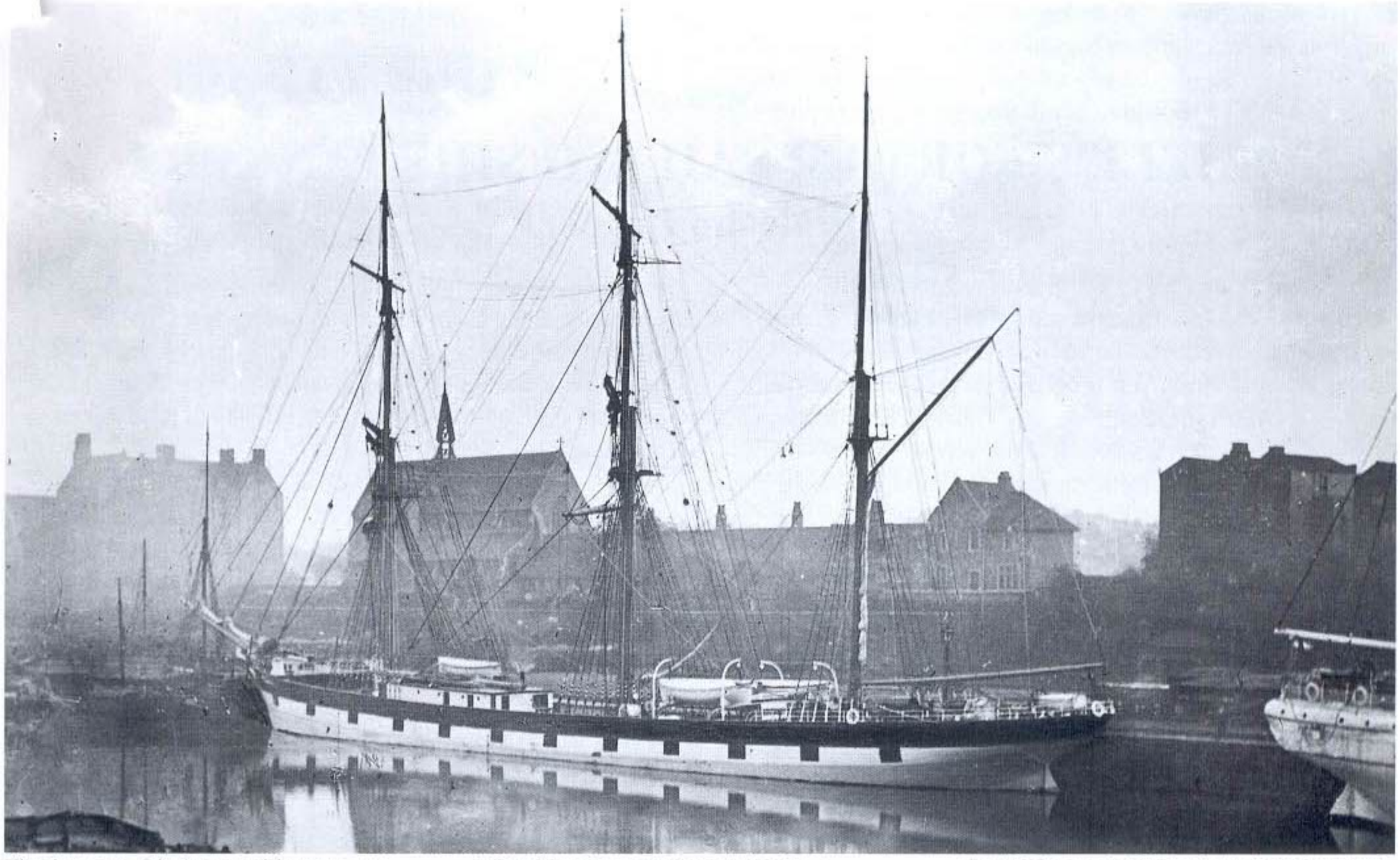
The ships themselves had all been built by British shipyards between 1891 and 1902, a period which witnessed the final flourish of investment in new sail tonnage. Five were products of the minor sail construction boom of the early 1890s; and one was a member of the fairly small group of British vessels built after 1895 when the boom had just about run its course. The last two had been built by Archibald McMillan of Dumbarton for foreign owners in 1902. The one other builder to contribute two vessels was Workman Clark of Belfast, building to the order of two separate Irish owners.

Most of the ships had fairly tangled or even exotic histories. Every vessel had long since been sold by its original owner, largely as a result of the mass exodus of British ship owners from a sailing trade squeezed by falling profits and increasing insurance costs. In several cases the war itself had added further twists to the ownership record. After conversion, the ships were all eventually given a name ending with *Shell*, and in each case the new owner managed to find a name starting with the same letter as that carried by the sailing ship at the time of its acquisition!

While the vessels were UK-owned at the time of purchase, and all were ultimately registered in London, acquisition and conversion were both global in scope. Many of the sailing vessels were in far-flung foreign ports when ownership changed. With some of the conversions taking place in the Far East, roughly half the fleet never saw a UK port during their tanker careers. In addition, the re-building programme was very drawn out. While the first acquisitions were converted very quickly, the momentum appears to have gone out of the programme with the return of peace. By the time the last of the group emerged in its new guise, some of its earlier peers had already departed the scene by one means or another.

Wartime acquisitions

The first vessel acquired for the conversion programme was easily the smallest. Built for their own account by the Bristol shipbuilders and owners Charles Hill and Sons in 1891, this modest-sized three-masted barque had served three owners under her original, rather prosaic name of *Gladys*. She had spent the bulk of her career with Shaw, Savill and Co., but was finally sold to Shell in July 1917 by the more obscure TalTal Shipping Co. Ltd. At the time she was laying at the South African port of Knysna and, with no qualified master available, she was sailed east to Hong Kong for conversion under the command of an officer holding only a first mate's certificate. The rebuilding process appears to have been fairly basic. The masts were left intact, the rig simply being reduced from barque to barquentine, only the most basic



The barque *Gladys* would seem an unlikely candidate for conversion to a tanker. With her unbroken sheerline, raised quarterdeck and single topgallants, she more closely resembled the small but elegant iron vessels of the 1870s and 1880s than the big steel carriers of the decade in which she was built. *[John Naylon collection]*

superstructure was added, and the cylinder heads of the 1915-built Swedish pair of four-cylinder diesels were left protruding above deck level. The vessel was renamed *Gaper Shell* in January 1918, conversion was completed a month later, and she was formally re-registered as a twin-screw motor tanker in May. Her subsequent career was brief, as she ran aground on passage between Singapore and Beira on 25th January 1919 and broke up four days later.

Shell's second acquisition took place a few days after the first. Once again the vessel was a three-masted barque, although both larger and newer than the *Gladys*. Like this vessel she had already served three owners, but in this case under three different names with three different ports of registry. Built in 1897 as the London-registered *Haytor*, she was sold after little more than a year to the short-lived Dundee fleet of Robert Ferguson and renamed *Earnmount* (Ferguson's ships were all given names ending in – *mount*, his most notable vessel being the *Islamount*, now restored as a Clyde museum ship under her original name *Glenlee*). Ferguson's small fleet was sold off around 1905 and *Earnmount* went to the established Liverpool-Welsh company of Robert Thomas and Co, who renamed her *Dolbadarn Castle*. Following acquisition for £31,500, she received another fairly basic conversion at Hong Kong. All three of her masts were converted to schooner rig, she was fitted with a rudimentary bridge amidships, and once again the cylinder heads of her twin diesels (an identical pair to those fitted in the *Gaper Shell*) were left above deck. She was renamed *Dolphin Shell* on the same day as her predecessor changed names, with conversion being complete by March 1918. She would remain in service, entirely in the East, until 1931.

The next two acquisitions in December 1917 and February 1918 were typical examples of the large four-masted barques produced in some quantity by British ship-builders in the early 1890s. *Celticburn* and *Howth* had been launched within two months of each other, the first for Shankland's Greenock-based Burn Line, and the second for Sir Robert Martin of Dublin. Both had changed owners, in the second case several times, but both were still carrying their original names when Shell stepped in. The *Celticburn* was not re-registered as the twin-screw motor tanker *Circe Shell* until April 1919 and did not leave UK waters for the Far East until early 1920. The *Howth* was actually at New York when she was purchased, but although she was quickly renamed *Horn Shell*, she actually sailed to Australia before proceeding to Hong Kong for conversion, with re-registration taking place in October 1919. Both vessels emerged rigged as four-masted schooners, sporting identical pairs of new eight-cylinder Vickers diesels – this time located entirely below deck. Neither ship enjoyed a very long second career in Far Eastern waters, with both leaving the fleet by the end of 1925.

Shell's last direct acquisition was the largest former sailing ship to enter the fleet and the only one to be fitted with steam engines rather than diesels. She could also lay claim to one of the most unusual past histories. Built in 1902 at Dumbarton as *Urania* for B. Wencke Sohne of Hamburg, she was one of only a handful of German sailing ships built outside Germany after the 1890s. Having been sold along with the rest of her fleet mates to another Hamburg firm in 1906, she was captured at sea by the Royal Navy in 1914 while sailing homewards ignorant of the declaration of war. Condemned as a prize, she was sold to R. Brailli and Company of Cardiff and registered at London with the unusual (and rather optimistic) name of *Speedonia*. Brailli formed the single-ship company Speedonia Ltd. to own his new acquisition. This company had a registered capital of only £2,000, suggesting that the Admiralty was more interested in getting rid of the vessel than in realising her

The heavily-rigged *Celticburn* was one of six baldheaders built by Barclay, Curle for Shankland's Burn Line. *[John Naylon collection]*

true market worth. Shell purchased her in June 1918, but she continued to operate as a sailing vessel under her original name until 1921. In that year she was at last renamed *Scala Shell* and taken in hand for conversion in the UK, emerging in her new guise as a twin-screw steam tanker in early 1922. She sailed for the Far East looking far less like a one-time sailing vessel than most of the fleet. Two of her masts were cut away entirely, and the yards were removed from the other two, making room for some normal tanker superstructure, including a substantial bridge/accommodation block amidships. Because of the significant delay between acquisition and conversion, the *Scala Shell* entered service after all seven of her diesel-powered compatriots.

Peacetime acquisitions from the Shipping Controller

The last three vessels of the Shell programme were all purchased from the Shipping Controller on 8th September 1919, more than a year after the company's direct acquisitions from the commercial market had ceased. In all three cases, conversion appears at least to have begun before the vessel changed hands and, as Shell had been appointed manager at the time of the original government acquisition, it seems likely that the vessels had been intended for the Shell tanker fleet all along.

The three were all large four-masted barques, but they had distinctly different pasts. The 1892-built *Goodrich* had spent only three years with her original owners before becoming the Russian-flagged but Finnish-owned *Fennia*. She was still Finnish-owned when acquired by the British government, although the exact date of this acquisition is not clear as the Shipping Controller did not bother to re-enter her in the British register until July 1919, after conversion to a motor tanker. Conversion was completed under government auspices and Shell did not purchase the vessel until six weeks after registration. The *Fennia* received identical twin eight-cylinder Vickers diesels to the *Circe Shell* and *Horn Shell*, but was given a far more drastic structural overhaul, losing all but one of her masts in the process. She differed from all five of the direct Shell acquisitions in being sent to the Mediterranean rather than the Far East. For some reason official sanction to change the names of all three of the vessels acquired from the Shipping Controller was not granted until 14th December 1920, and the name on the ship's register papers was not altered from *Fennia* to *Fionashell* until March 1921 when the vessel was laying at Suez.

The second of the trio acquired via the Shipping Controller was the *Oweenee* of 1891. She was British-built, but one of only a handful of non-wooden sailing vessels to be owned and registered in Atlantic Canada. Her Nova Scotia owners moved her to the London register in 1902, but did not sell her until 1908 after which she passed through the hands of three different owners, the last of them the Hudson's Bay Company, before government acquisition in April 1918. She was re-registered in the name of the Shipping Controller within a matter of weeks, but conversion on the Clyde (with another pair of eight-cylinder Vickers diesels) was not undertaken until 1919. After re-sale to Shell, the vessel was re-registered as a tanker in October 1919. Like the *Fennia*, the *Oweenee* received a fairly drastic overhaul, in this case retaining only one un-rigged mast. She also sailed for the Mediterranean, and was operating there when tardy official sanction of her new name, *Ortinashell*, caught up with her.

The last of this final triumvirate was probably the most famous, and almost certainly the only vessel that would have gone anywhere other than the scrapheap if Shell or the Shipping Controller had not stepped in. Another 1902 product of McMillan's Dumbarton yard, she was launched as the Uruguayan sail training ship *Ama Begonakoa*. She may well have been too much of a luxury for a small South American maritime power. One way or another she was laid up by 1910 when Devitt and Moore purchased her to replace the ageing *Port Jackson* in their cadet training venture and brought her back into service as the *Medway*. Less than 20 years old and restored to prime condition, she might well have sailed on well into the peacetime era. Devitt and Moore were certainly unwilling sellers (although a sale price of £41,000 will have helped ease the pain), and given that there were other, more obviously redundant, sailing ships about, it does seem a shame that she was consigned to a less glamorous future as the *Myrshell*.

The prolonged transformation of the sailing ship *Medway* into the motor tanker *Myrshell* gives an insight into the long distance nature of the Shell conversion programme. The *Medway* actually made her final departure from the UK on 12th September 1916, when she sailed from Barry Docks for Santos via St Vincent in the Cape Verde Islands. She departed Santos on 9th December of the same year for the Chilean nitrate port of Tocopilla. Between February 1917 and April 1918 she made three round trips to South Africa, and was actually lying in Capetown when the Shipping Controller acquired her on 30th April 1918. The London register book

was updated to show the new owner's name on 21st May, but the ship herself departed South Africa for Colombo seven days later, still with her original Devitt and Moore crew aboard. After a two-week stay in Ceylon, she finally arrived at Hong Kong on 1st September 1918, where her mercantile crew agreement was finally terminated and her master relieved on 15th November. Conversion was completed at Hong Kong in March 1919, and she was re-registered as a motor tanker on 28th April 1919, still under the name of the Shipping Controller. She also received a pair of eight-cylinder Vickers diesels, but structural alteration was more in line with the earlier Far East conversions than the other two ships sent to the Mediterranean with the vessel emerging rigged as a three-masted schooner. Formal sale to Shell took place on 8th September 1919, but the name change, in this case to *Myrshell*, was again not authorised until December 1920, and the vessel's certificate was only amended to show the new name at Singapore on 10th April 1922.

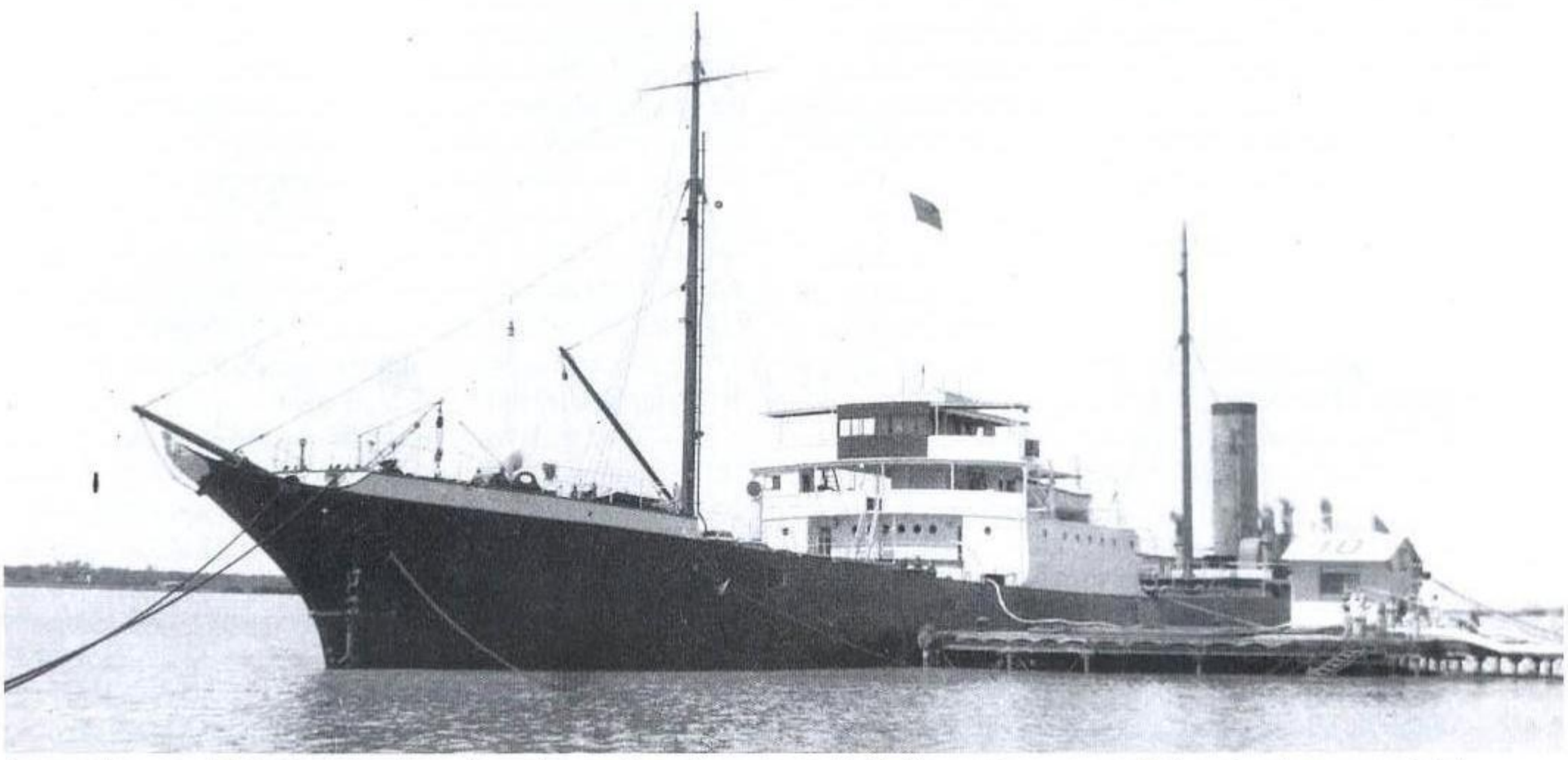
Post-conversion careers

Only a few of Shell's sailing ship conversions were to enjoy particularly long or active careers. The *Gaper Shell*, as already noted, was lost before the conversion programme was even complete. By the summer of 1921, only months after she had finally gained her new name, the *Fionashell* was being used as a storage vessel at Piraeus, and later the same year the *Horn Shell* was consigned to a similar role in the Far East. The *Circe Shell* was reduced to a depot ship in April 1922 and was sold at Yokohama at the end of the same year. The *Myrshell* in turn was consigned to a harbour role, this time at Singapore, in 1923. Finally, in 1925, the *Fionashell* and the *Horn Shell* were both sold out of the fleet, the former to a Gibraltar-based subsidiary and the latter to the Japanese.

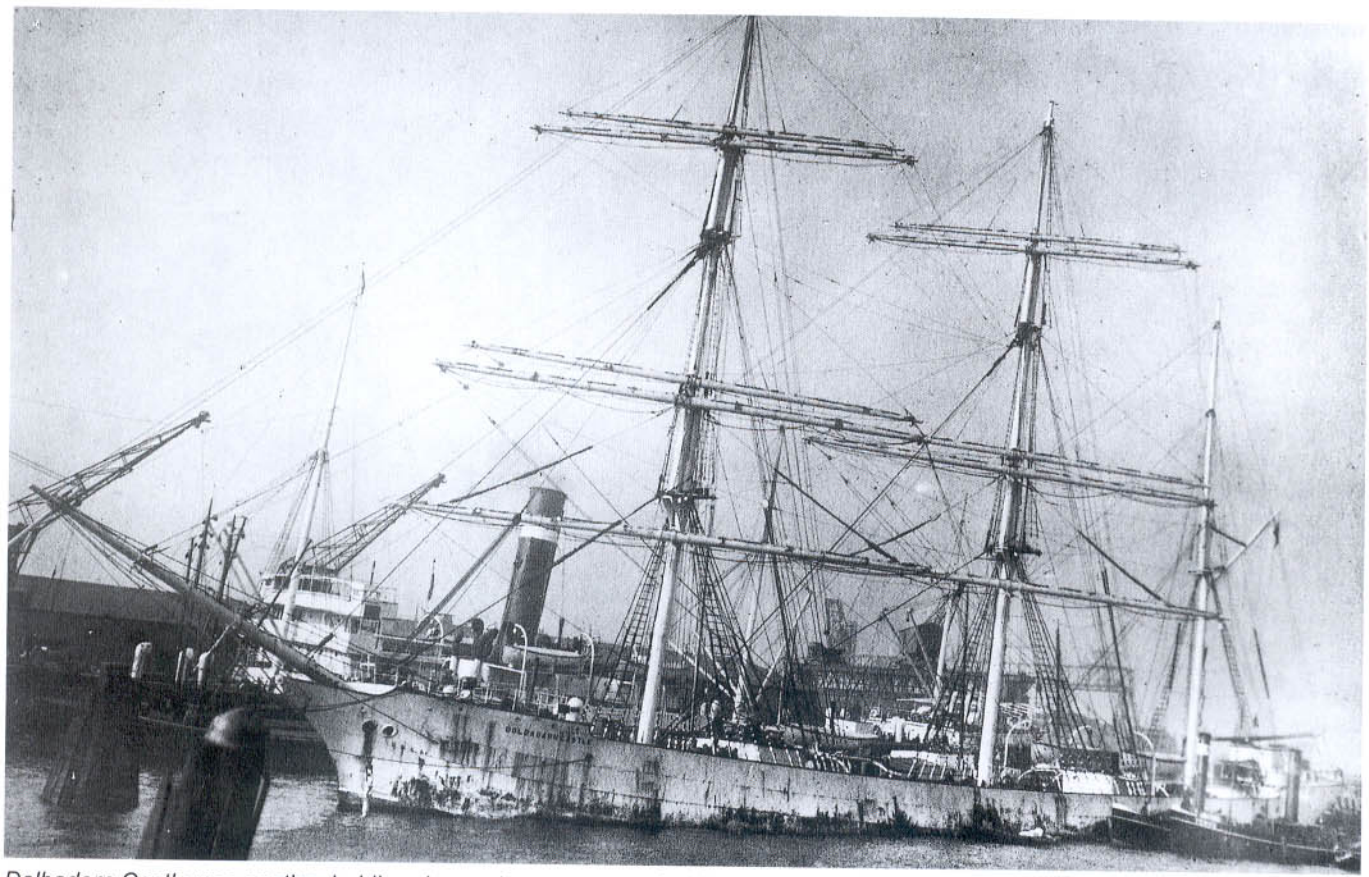
Four vessels thus saw out the 1920s in Shell ownership, but of these the *Myrshell* remained a depot ship, while the *Ortinashell* was restricted to service in the Red Sea. Only the *Dolphin Shell* and the *Scala Shell* were actively engaged on deep-sea service, both in the Indian Ocean and Far East. Three vessels were sold for scrap in Japan during the Great Depression, the *Dolphin Shell* and *Scala Shell* at the end of 1931, and the *Myrshell* in April 1933. This left only the *Ortinashell*, which was sold in 1937, again as a storage hulk, to a Shell subsidiary in Egypt.

Both the *Circe Shell* and the *Horn Shell* appear to have been broken up in Japan within a few years of their sale and were deleted from 'Lloyd's Register' in 1926-7. At the outbreak of the Second World War, therefore, only the *Ortinashell* and *Fionashell* were still afloat, performing harbour storage duties at either end of the Mediterranean. The former survived to go to the breakers in 1946, but the *Fionashell* enjoyed the unusual distinction of falling prey to an Italian 'human torpedo' attack, being sunk at Gibraltar on 20th September 1941 by explosive charges undoubtedly intended for a more important target.

Shell's sailing ship conversions were presumably conceived as nothing more than a stop-gap measure. However pressing the need for tonnage might have been, war-induced inflation made the project a relatively expensive one. In the mid-1930s, Shell provided the Inland Revenue with details of the acquisition costs of most of its ships in an attempt to win tax relief for capital losses incurred on vessel disposals. These returns included the five former sailing ships disposed of between 1925 and 1931. The costs in question varied considerably. While the *Horn Shell* had cost a fairly modest £35,034 to acquire and convert, the equivalent figures for *Fionashell*, *Myrshell* and *Scala Shell* were £72,400, £76,000 and £98,000 respectively, while the *Dolphin Shell* topped the list at a hefty £135,126. There is no obvious explanation as to why the *Horn Shell* was so cheap compared to her fleet mates. The two most expensive vessels were the pair which remained in active service the longest, so it seems fair to assume that their final cost included a fair amount of maintenance and repair work, particularly in the case of the *Dolphin Shell*, whose hull was a decade older than her compatriot, and which had received a far less comprehensive initial conversion.



As a tanker, *Scala Shell* retained her clipper bow although a substantial bridge and accommodation structure was added amidships. *[World Ship Society Ltd. collection]*

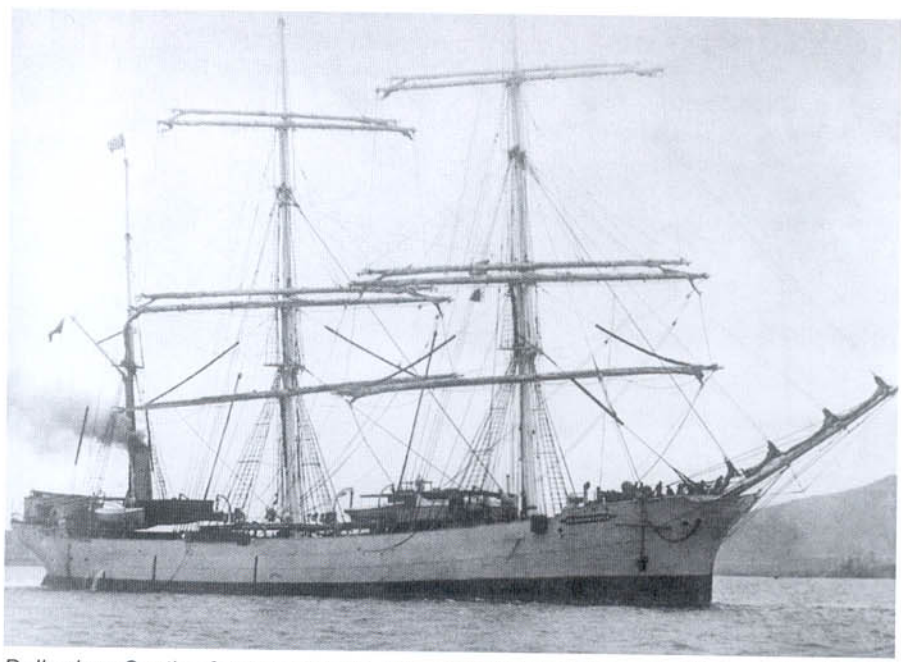


Dolbadarn Castle was another baldheader, and was commanded for many years by John Baxter, who went on to take charge of the *Scala Shell*. *[John Naylon collection]*

FLEET LIST

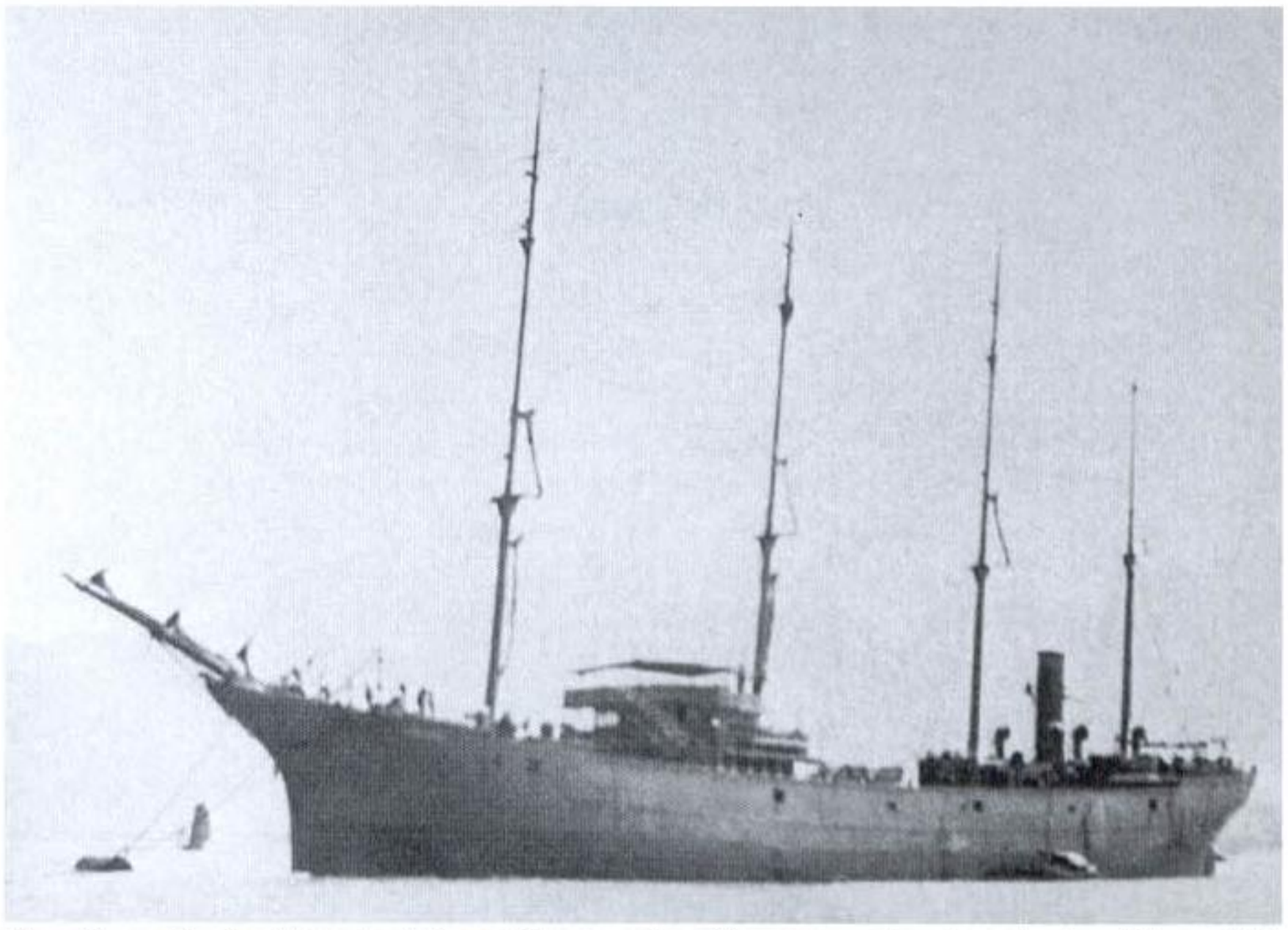
1. GAPER SHELL 1917-1919
O.N. 98824 1,422g 1,036n
237.5 x 36.4 x 21.2 feet
Two 4-cyl. 2SCSA oil engines by J. and G. Bolinders, Stockholm; 640 BHP, 7 knots.
11.7.1891: Launched by Charles Hill and Sons, Bristol (Yard No.17) for Charles Hill and Sons, Bristol as the three-masted barque GLADYS (1,363g/1,345n).
5.9.1891: Registered at Bristol (9/1891).
8.7.1897: Sold to Shaw, Savill and Co., London.
3.7.1912: Sold to the Taltal Shipping Co. Ltd. (S.J. Eggar, manager), London.
24.7.1917: Acquired by the Anglo-Saxon Petroleum Co. Ltd., London.
30.7.1917: Registered at London (135/1917) still as a sailing vessel.
16.1.1918: Renamed GAPER SHELL.
7.5.1918: Registered at London (172/1918) following conversion at Hong Kong to a twin-screw motor tanker.
25.1.1919: Wrecked on Matamede Island, near Angoche whilst on a voyage from Singapore to Beira with a cargo of benzene and kerosene.
2.4.1919: Register closed.

2. DOLPHIN SHELL 1917-1931
O.N. 108228 2,008g 1,603g
267.0 x 40.1 x 23.5 feet
Two 4-cyl. 2SCSA oil engines by J. and G. Bolinders, Stockholm; 640 BHP, 7 knots.
18.6.1897: Launched by William Hamilton and Co., Port Glasgow (Yard No.131) for John Holman and Son, London as the three-masted barque HAYTOR (1,989g/1,860n).
1.7.1897: Registered at London (94/1897).
26.11.1898: Sold to Robert Ferguson, Dundee.
27.1.1899: Transferred to the Earnmount Sailing Ship Co. Ltd. (Robert Ferguson, manager), Dundee.
4.10.1901: Renamed EARNMOUNT.
18.10.1901: Registered at Dundee (8/1901).
10.2.1905: Sold to Robert Thomas and Co., Liverpool.
14.2.1905: Registered at Liverpool (12/1905).
3.3.1905: Renamed DOLBADARN CASTLE.
8.3.1905: Transferred to the Dolbadarn Castle Ship Co. Ltd. (Robert Thomas and Co., managers), Liverpool.
27.7.1917: Acquired by the Anglo-Saxon Petroleum Co. Ltd., London.
13.8.1917: Registered at London (143/1917) still as a sailing vessel.
16.1.1918: Renamed DOLPHIN SHELL.
22.5.1918: Re-registered at London (196/1918) after conversion at Hong Kong to a twin-screw motor tanker.
27.11.1931: Register closed on sale to Japanese ship breakers for £1,800.



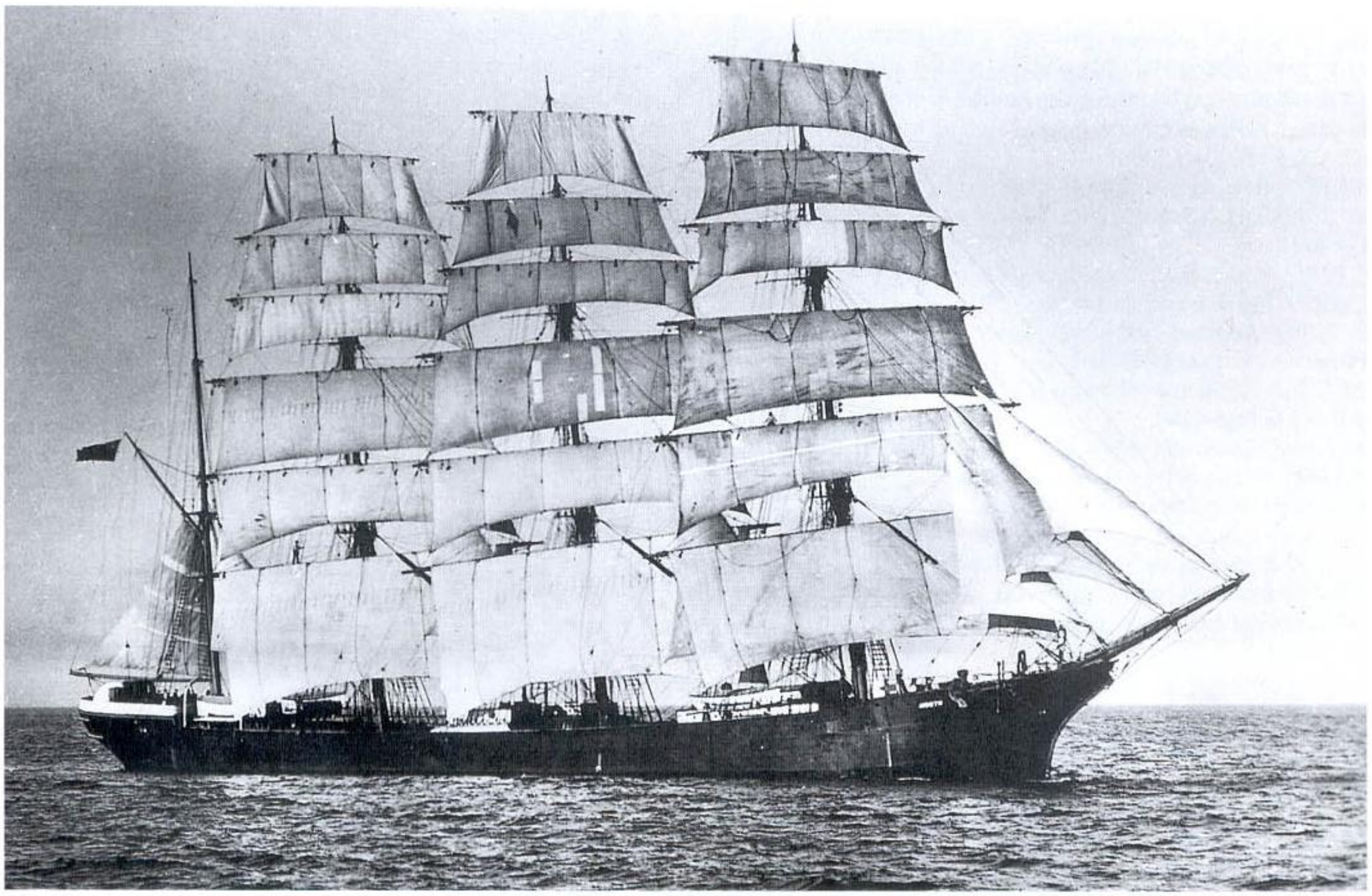
Dolbadarn Castle after conversion *[Photographic Services, Shell International Ltd.]*

3. CIRCE SHELL 1917-1922
O.N. 98320 2,810g 1,798n
296.0 x 45.6 x 25.7 feet
Two 8-cyl. 4SCSA oil engines by Vickers Ltd., Barrow-in-Furness; 1,260 BHP, 8 knots.
6.2.1892: Launched by Barclay Curle and Co. Ltd., Whiteinch (Yard No.374) for Robert Shankland and Co, Greenock as the four-masted barque CELTICBURN (2,654g/2,499n).
19.3.1892: Registered at Greenock (6/1892).
9.10.1908: Sold to Thomas Shute and Co., Liverpool.
27.10.1908: Transferred to the Ship Celticburn Co. Ltd. (Thomas Shute and Co., managers), Liverpool.
7.12.1917: Acquired by the Anglo-Saxon Petroleum Co. Ltd., London.
15.3.1918: Registered at London (64/1918) still as a sailing vessel.
8.4.1919: Renamed CIRCE SHELL and re-registered at London (122/1919) after conversion to a twin-screw motor tanker.
4.1922: Reduced to a depot ship in the Far East.
12.1922: Sold at Yokohama to the Rising Sun Petroleum Co. Ltd. for use as a storage vessel.
14.3.1923: Register closed.
1927: Deleted from 'Lloyd's Register'.

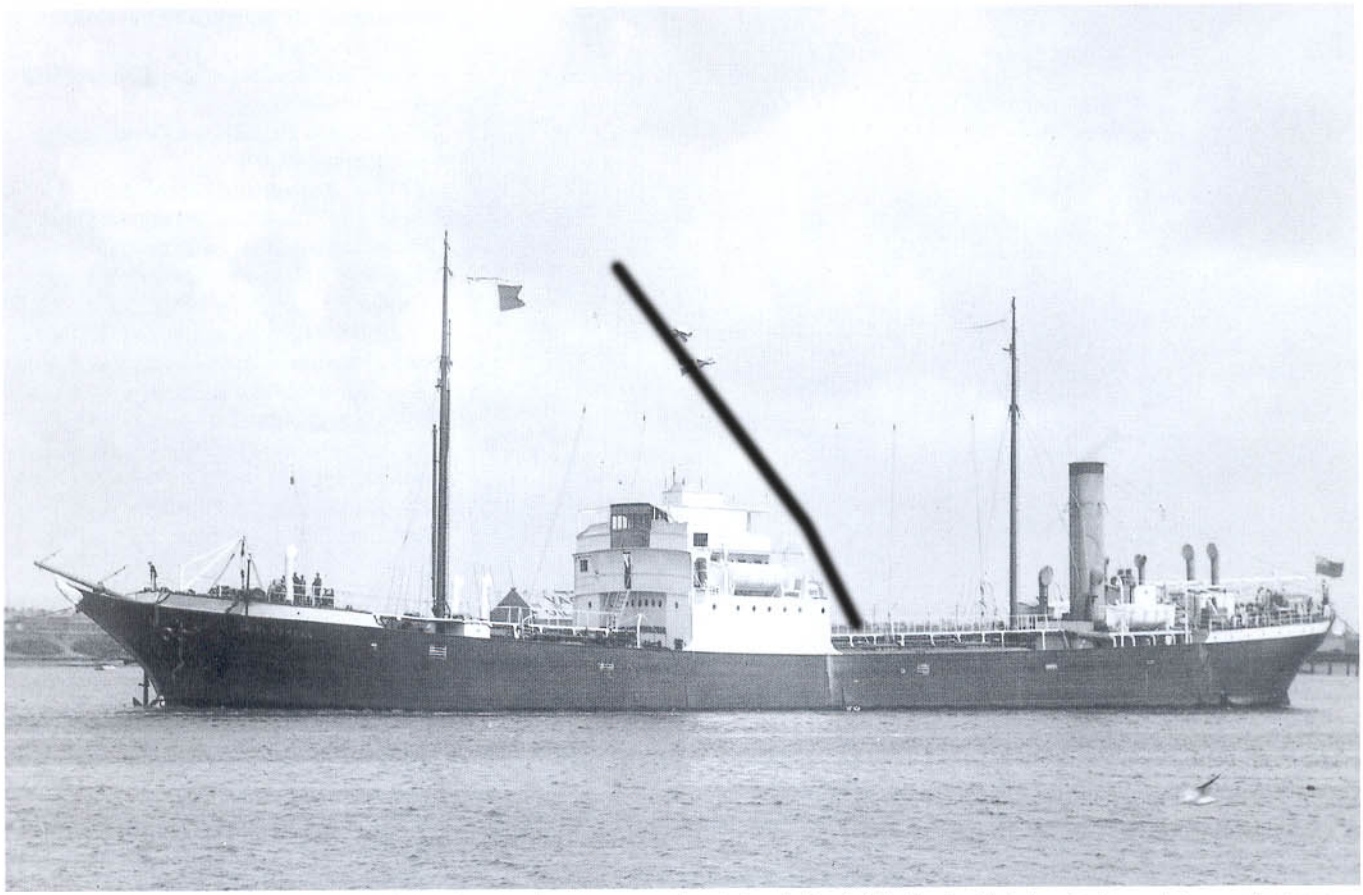


The *Circe Shell* retained all four of her masts after conversion to a tanker. *[J. and M. Clarkson collection]*

4. HORN SHELL 1919-1925
O.N. 99741 2,413g 1,507g
284.4 x 41.9 x 24.5 feet
Two 8-cyl. 4SCSA oil engines by Vickers Ltd., Barrow-in-Furness; 1,260 BHP, 9½ knots.
23.12.1891: Launched by Workman Clark and Co. Ltd., Belfast (Yard No.89) for Sir Richard Martin and Co., Dublin as the four-masted barque HOWTH (2,244g/2,166n).
8.3.1892: Registered at Dublin (3/1892).
27.6.1904: Sold to E.A. Beazley and John Edgar, Liverpool.
8.7.1904: Registered at Liverpool (55/1904).
14.7.1910: Transferred to the Howth Shipping Co. Ltd. (John Edgar, manager), Liverpool.
14.10.1913: Sold to Frank Windram and Co., Liverpool.
22.2.1918: Acquired by the Anglo-Saxon Petroleum Co. Ltd., London.
8.3.1918: Registered at London (55/1918) still as a sailing vessel.
12.4.1918: Renamed HORN SHELL.
24.10.1919: Registered at London (527/1919) after conversion at Hong Kong



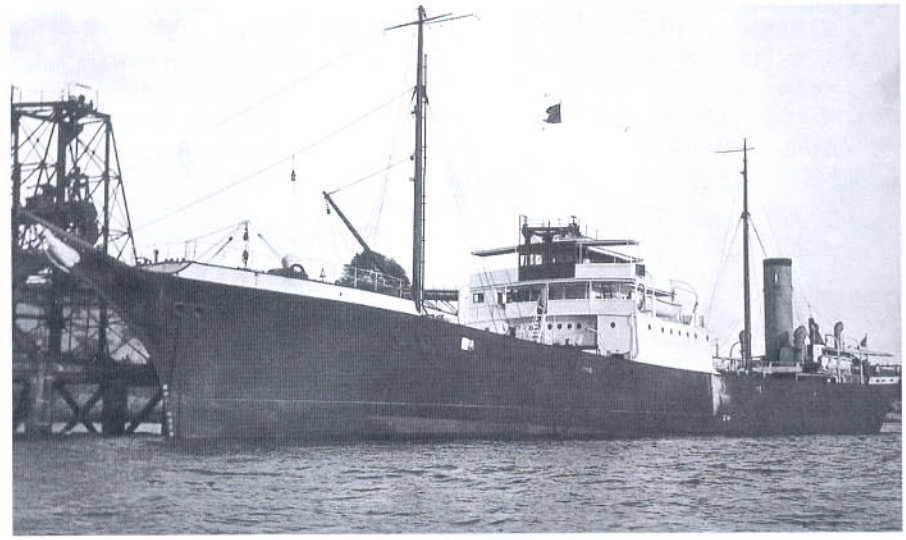
The *Howth* could not lay any claim to speed. In 1903 and 1904, she took 201 days from San Francisco to the UK, 76 days longer than the *Californian* which left San Francisco just one day earlier. *[John Naylon collection]*



The converted sailing ships seem to have been rather camera-shy, but not *Scala Shell*, of which two further photographs have been found. *[Ian J. Farquhar collection: Ships in Focus]*

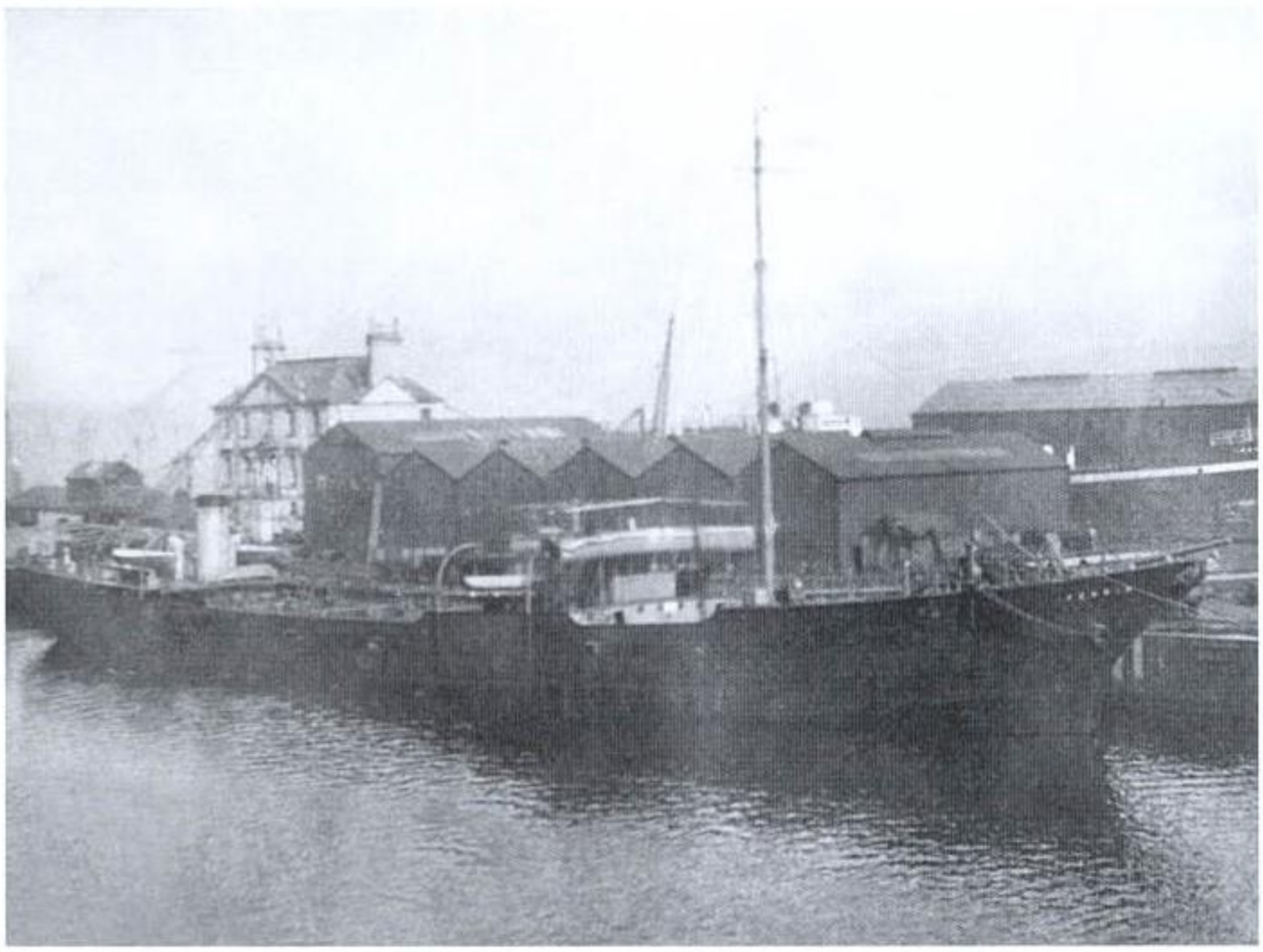
to a twin-screw motor tanker.
10.1921: Reduced to a depot ship.
17.9.1925: H.W. Malcolm, Osaka empowered to sell vessel at Yokohama for not less than 60,000 yen.
24.9.1925: Sold for £4,839 to Nippon Yusosen Kabushiki Kaisha, Tokyo for use as a storage hulk.
18.11.1925: Register closed.
1926: Sold to Kikutaro Aoyagi, Japan.
1926: Presumed broken up and deleted from 'Lloyd's Register'.

5. SCALA SHELL 1918-1931
O.N. 139002 3,585g 2,092n
330.0 x 47.0 x 27.3 feet
Two T.3-cyl. by Cooper and Craig Ltd., Dundee (16"/26½"/43" x 30"); 150 NHP, 900 IHP, 10 knots.
10.2.1902: Launched by Archibald McMillan and Sons Ltd., Dumbarton (Yard No.382) for B. Wencke Sohne, Hamburg, Germany as the four-masted barque URANIA (3,283g/3,097n).
30.1.1906: Sold to Rhederei Akt. Gesellschaft von 1896, Hamburg.
14.9.1914: Captured by the British cruiser HMS DIANA in the English Channel and sold as a prize to Speedonia Ltd. (R.D. Brailli and Co., managers), Cardiff.
4.5.1915: Registered at London (181/1915) as SPEEDONIA.
12.6.1918: Sold to Anglo-Saxon Petroleum Co. Ltd., London.
14.9.1921: Renamed SCALA SHELL.
22.3.1922: Registered at London (98/1922) after conversion to a twin-screw steam tanker.



12.1931: Sold to Japanese ship breakers for £4,500.
2.1.1932: Arrived at Osaka for demolition.
4.1.1932: Register closed.

6. FIONASHELL 1919-1925
O.N. 99952 2,444g 1,790n
284.2 x 42.1 x 24.5 feet
Two 8-cyl. 4SCSA oil engines by Vickers Ltd., Barrow-in-Furness; 1,260 BHP, 9½ knots.
11.6.1892: Launched by Workman Clark and Co. Ltd., Belfast (Yard No.93) for the Goodrich Ship Co. Ltd. (James R. Brady, manager), Belfast as the four-masted barque GOODRICH (2,243g/2,153n).
16.7.1892: Registered at Belfast (14/1892).
17.6.1895: Sold to Henry Drew, Ludlow.
21.6.1895: Register closed on sale to Raumo Nya Skeppsrederi A/B (J.W. Soderlund, manager), Raumo, Finland and re-named FENNIA
1907: Sold to Finska Rederi A/B (W.A. Soderman, manager), Helsingfors, Finland.
1911: Owner re-styled A/B Finska Skolskeppsrederiet.
1918: Acquired by the Shipping Controller (Anglo-Saxon Petroleum Co. Ltd., managers), London.
22.7.1919: Register re-opened at London (382/1919) after conversion to a twin-screw motor tanker.
8.9.1919: Acquired by the Anglo-Saxon Petroleum Co. Ltd., London.



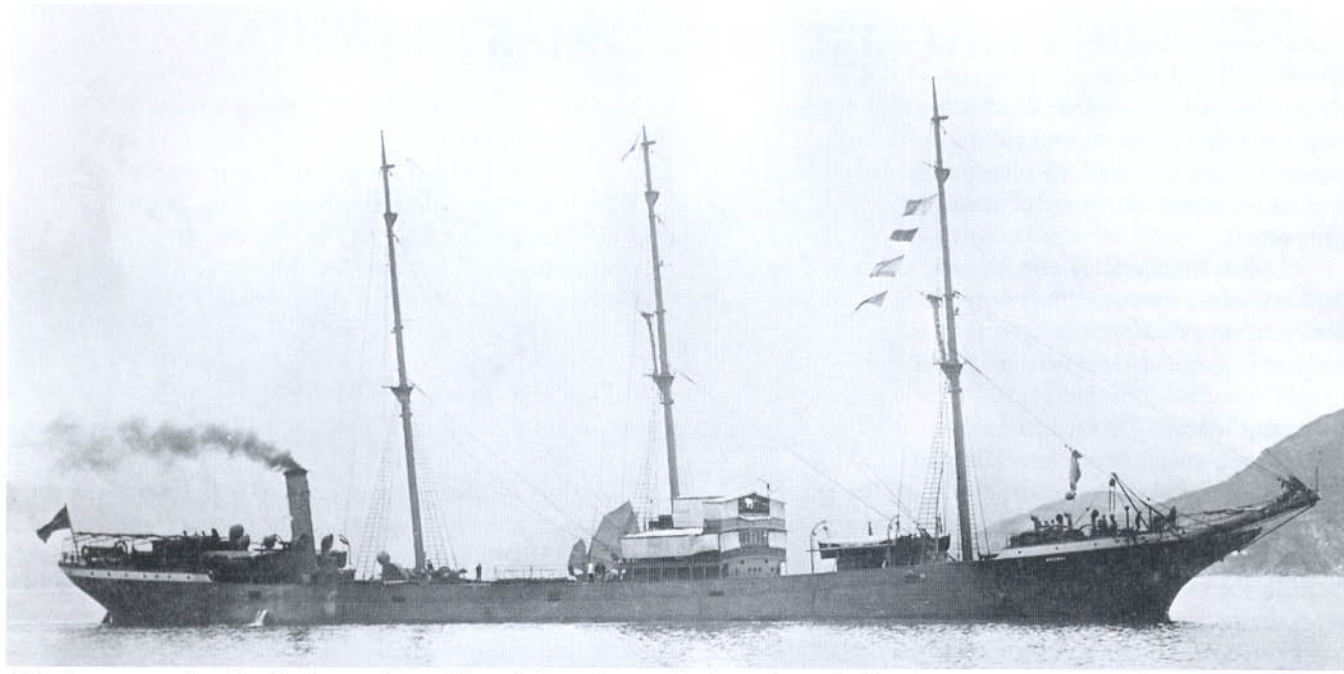
Fionashell in the 17-month period when she sailed as *Fennia*. *[Photographic Services, Shell International Ltd.]*

14.12.1920: Permission granted to rename FIONASHELL (vessel's register altered 4.3.1921).
5.1921: Employed as a storage vessel at Piraeus.
31.7.1925: Sold to Mackintosh and Co. (Gibraltar) Ltd., Gibraltar for £8,000 for use as a storage hulk.
11.9.1925: Registered at Gibraltar (1/1925) in the name of Oil Fuel Depots (Gibraltar) Ltd., Gibraltar.
20.9.1941: Sunk in the Bay of Gibraltar by explosive charges from a piloted torpedo (Maialis) launched from the Italian submarine SCIRE.
23.5.1942: Register closed.

7. MYRSHELL 1918-1933
O.N. 129109 2,636g 1,661n
300.0 x 43.2 x 24.8 feet
Two 8-cyl. 4SCSA oil engines by Vickers Ltd., Barrow-in-Furness.
26.5.1902: Launched by Archibald McMillan and Sons Ltd., Dumbarton (Yard No 384) for Cia. Anon. de la Fragata Ama Begonakoa (Sota y Aznar), Montevideo, Uruguay as the four-masted barque AMA BEGONAKOA (2,511g/2,299n).
1906: Transferred to Compania Naviera Sota y Aznar, Montevideo.
1910: Sold to Thomas Lane Devitt, London and renamed MEDWAY.
7.7.1910: Registered at London (62/1910).
16.12.1910: Transferred to Devitt and Moore's Ocean Training Ships Ltd., London.
30.4.1918: Sold to the Shipping Controller, London.
21.5.1918: Registered at London (192/1918) with Anglo-Saxon Petroleum Co. Ltd., London as managers, still as a sailing ship.
28.4.1919: Registered at London (208/1919) after conversion at Hong Kong to a twin-screw motor tanker.
8.9.1919: Acquired by the Anglo-Saxon Petroleum Co. Ltd., London.
14.12.1920: Permission granted to rename MYRSHELL (vessel's register altered 10.4.1922).
5.1923: Reduced to a depot ship at Singapore.
4.4.1933: Register closed on sale to Japanese ship breakers for £1,500.

8. ORTINASHELL 1919-1937
O.N. 100264 2,603g 1,561n
309.0 x 42.0 x 24.6 feet
Two 8-cyl. 4SCSA oil engines by Vickers Ltd., Ipswich; 1,260 BHP, 9½ knots.
5.8.1891: Launched by Richardson Duck and Co., Stockton-on-Tees (Yard No.393) for the Oweenee Ship Co. Ltd. (F.C. Mahon, manager), Windsor, Nova Scotia as the four-masted barque OWEENEE (2,432g/2,334n).
29.9.1891: Registered at Windsor, Nova Scotia (10/1891).
11.2.1902: Registered at London (26/1902).

The beautifully-maintained *Medway*, ex-*Ama Begoñakoa*, was kept in the Australian trade by Devitt and Moore prior to the First World War. Besides accommodating upwards of 20 cadets, she could lift a deadweight cargo of 4,000 tons. *[John Naylon collection]*



After her conversion the *Medway* retained three tall masts, and had a rather primitive bridge structure added. *[Photographic Services, Shell International Ltd.]*

20.7.1908: Sold to the Thames and Mersey Shipping Co. Ltd. (William Lewis and John Herron, managers), London.
28.4.1913: Sold to the Ship Carnarvon Bay Ltd. (Samuel Roberts, manager), Liverpool.
8.5.1917: Sold to the Hudson's Bay Company, London.
4.4.1918: Sold to the Shipping Controller, London.
21.5.1918: Registered at London (193/1918) with Anglo-Saxon Petroleum Co. Ltd., London as managers, still as a sailing vessel.
8.9.1919: Acquired by the Anglo-Saxon Petroleum Co. Ltd., London.
14.10.1919: Registered at London (498/1919) after conversion to a twin-screw motor tanker.
14.12.1920: Permission granted to rename ORTINASHELL (vessel's register altered 4.3.1921).
8.12.1937: Sold to the Shell Company of Egypt Ltd., London as a storage vessel.
1946: Sold to Egyptian ship breakers.
1.11.1947: Register closed.

The *Owenee* was photographed under tow on the Avon. Although built in 1891, the same year as *Howth*, she carried the classic clipper rig of three skysails (here sent down) over single topgallants and royals. She was one of the fastest ships during the last days of sail, going from Prawle Point to Port Pirie in 66 days on her maiden passage. *[John Naylon collection]*