

# SCRIBBLINGS



*From Bill Miller*

*Mar 2022*

*Above: The Queen Mary 2 passing under the Verrazano-Narrows Bridge at New York in a superb painting by Stephen Card*

**Fri Mar 18<sup>th</sup> Back Across the North Sea:** Chats here'n there! Lunch with a couple from Dundee in Scotland, who tell me that they live under

a railway bridge, have done over 60 cruises and have visited 48 states (with only Hawaii & Alaska to check off). Another lady but from Philadelphia happily reports that she has been on 154 cruises. Her 155<sup>th</sup> will be next fall and seven weeks around Africa on Holland-America. She noted, "We will add 13 countries on that trip to our list." Still another man reports: "I grew up near the London Docks and was raised by my mother, grandmother and an aunt. My father seemed always to be away, to be at sea. He worked for the Orient Line for 35 years and sailed on such liners as the *Orontes*, *Oronsay*, *Orsova* [seen below at Sydney] & *Oriana*." Still another man shares that his favorite ship (with 8 trips onboard) is the *Astoria*. He recites the ship's history (over some 74 years) and that it was the *Stockholm* of *Andrea Doria* collision fame.





*Amidst lots of other ships of all kinds, the Queen Mary 2 travels between Hamburg & Cherbourg at a more moderate 18 knots*

More Recollections! With 1,900 passengers currently onboard, it seemed like a small army emerged (after my talk today on British liners) of long-ago British seamen: A former steward is quite proud: He made the last three voyages aboard the *Dominion Monarch* (Shaw Savill Line and seen below) on the long run (3 ½ month-long roundtrips) between London/Southampton, Las Palmas, Capetown, Durban and then onward to Fremantle, Melbourne, Sydney, Auckland & Wellington. “She was a gorgeous old ship, done in very traditional style,” he recalled. “One room had a full display of armor & swords.” ... Another was a dining room waiter on the *Arlanza* of Royal Mail Lines, on the run between London, Rio and Buenos Aires. ... Still another

served on the Union-Castle Line and was aboard their *Good Hope Castle*, when it burned, was badly damaged and was nearly lost [Jun 1973]. He also served aboard such Castle ships as the *S A Oranje*, *Pendennis Castle* and *Reina Del Mar*. He left the sea, later became a policeman and was part of the security team for the Queen. ... Finally, a former waiter with Cunard, beginning in 1957, he served aboard both the *Queen Mary & Queen Elizabeth*, but also the *Ivernia*, *Parthia & Carmania*. ... Finally, a man from Yorkshire and in a life far from the sea later but went to London, joined the office of British India Line (at 3 Aldgate), but then was sent to sea – serving on the schools cruise ships: *Nevasa*, *Dilwara & Devonian*. “We did all sorts of cruises – the Med, western Europe, Scandinavia, the Northern Cities, even the isles of Scotland. The passengers were divided – a few hundred adults up forward, then hundreds of British school kids in dormitories in aft sections. The two joined together, however, for top-knotch lectures & classes – about history, art, foreign cultures. It was all very, very popular back then – and very affordable.”



*Built in 1939, the Dominion Monarch was retired in 1962, but just before going to Japanese scrappers, she was used as a floating hotel for the 1962 World's Fair at Seattle. Hotel beds were needed and the ship had 500 berths.*





*The sisters Good Hope Castle & Southampton Castle, 12-passenger, high speed freighters, but which ran the very last contract sailings between the UK & South Africa in October 1977*



*The very popular schools cruise ship Nevasa – but seen during her final voyage out to a Taiwanese scrapyard.*

A short walk from one deck to another and – hark! – I run smack into Celia Imrie, the noted & very fine actress (*Marigold Hotel*, tons of other films plus lots of TV and of course theater and now the author of several books including her latest, *Orphans of the Storm*, which includes the sinking of the *Titanic*) and author-actress Fidelis Morgan (they are best friends and also of TV & theater fame including *As Time Goes By* & much more).



Then a few steps later -- but how many years have passed? I ran into Mike Doyle, the ship's comedian of the night. Mike & I sailed together on P&O's original *Oriana* back in Aug 1979. But was that really 43 years ago!

