

TEA TIME TALK

(BY WILMA J. MARCH)

It is a far cry in the history of navigation from the Atlantic crossing of Columbus and later that of the Pilgrim Fathers to the present crossing of "The stateliest ship afloat", the Queen Mary. Transportation has grown in leaps and bounds since those days. On land, sea and in the air, miracles have been wrought. This article to-day deals with the history of transportation by water. This takes us farther back than the Spaniards' discovery of America. Indeed it goes back prior to the birth of Christ. Long before the Christian era the Egyptians, the Phoenicians and the Greeks made use of sails to propel small crafts of their time. To an extent the Greeks and especially the Romans, propelled by oars the ocean vessels with which they navigated the Mediterranean. In the larger boats, called galleys, the oars were arranged in two or three rows, sometimes called banks. The largest type of vessel used in ancient times for commercial or war purposes was the trireme equipped with three banks of oars. The life of the oarsmen in these galleys was a hard one, and slaves were commonly employed. This practice gave rise to the term "galley slave". The sailing vessels employed by the Danes, Norsemen, Italians, Venetians, Spanish and Portuguese and also the early English navigators were small crafts which seldom ventured far from sight of land. But beginning with the 14th century the increasing use of the mariner's compass made it possible for sailing vessels to make voyages of great length. According to present standards the ships then employed seem terribly small. Few people now living would care to cross the ocean in the tiny caravels in which Columbus and his party made their first crossing in 1492. Nor would many willingly undertake the trip in a boat the size of the Mayflower, though it was a bit more staunch than any of the three manned by Columbus and his men. But those brave Pilgrim Fathers leaving their native soil at Plymouth, England, thought not of fear but of victory. Their stalwart determination carried them along with the waves, and as the latter soared to the heavens, their faith and courage mounted in combat. It is little wonder that they survived the treachery of those mountainous billows and landed in America to make a settlement, which they also named Plymouth. That was in 1620 when the spirit of adventure was rampant. In small sailing vessels of this type men those days were making voyages halfway round the world, and in few instances daring sailors were circumnavigating the globe.

The Mayflower was a typical sailing vessel of its time. It was a three-masted, square-rigged ship, only 100 feet long and between 20 and 25 feet wide. It was registered as of 150 tons burden. Aboard this ship were 102 Pilgrims and the crew. The Speedwell, which started across the ocean with the Mayflower but had to turn back, was only one-third the capacity of the Mayflower.

The great revolution in transportation came when mechanical power was substituted for wind power on the ocean and for muscle power on the land. In performing the service of transportation mechanical power was first applied to vessels. As early as 1787 John Fitch, a Pennsylvania farmer, propelled a boat on the Delaware by steam power. Twenty years later Robert Fulton ran the Clermont from New York to Albany by steam power. He demonstrated the practical success of steam navigation. The first transatlantic steam crossing was made by the Royal William, which sailed from Quebec to the Isle of Wight in 1833. This was a wooden vessel, but in 1845 an iron steamer, the Great Britain, was put in operation upon the transatlantic service. In 1840 the first of the four Cunard steamships was built for regular service.

At the beginning of the 19th century many ships were owned and operated by the merchant princes of America. When the Cunard and other British companies began their service the shipbuilders and seamen of America sought to increase the size and speed of the wooden sailing vessels so as to enable them to compete successfully with the new rival,

the steam ship of iron. Out of this competition grew the famous American Clipper ships. These were square-rigged sailing vessels, some of them 2000 and 3000 tons gross, fifteen times the size of the Mayflower. They derived their name from the long, overhanging prow and their sharp lines forward.

For a time the clipper ships held their own in competition with the steamship, but as the marine engine became more efficient and iron and steel vessels of increasing dimensions were constructed sailing tonnage rapidly declined. Some of the clippers were capable of carrying 7000 tons but they had played their role and they soon passed from the stage.

The steamship has had an interesting history. The marine engine first employed to propel vessels across the Atlantic was installed in wooden vessels with paddle wheels. Then English builders began to use the screw propeller for transoceanic service about the year 1840. It was more than a decade later before American builders substituted the screw for the less efficient paddle wheels. Indeed, even some of the British lines, such as Cunard, kept to the use of paddle wheels until 1860. Then the celebrated Great Eastern, the most discussed ship of that century, was equipped with both screw and paddle wheels. Incidentally it may be said that this ship was too large to be successfully driven by the engines of its day.

The ocean vessels of to-day have little resemblance to those of a century ago. The remarkable increase in the size of ships is indicated by the developments of the first thirty years of this century. Manretania, which began operation in 1908, was considered a marvel because she registered nearly 30,700 tons gross. She held the transatlantic speed record until 1929. In 1910 the Olympic was launched. This ship's length was slightly over 850 feet and its gross tonnage 46,439. Then in 1912 came the Emperor, later renamed the Berengaria; the Vaterland, later renamed the Leviathan, and the Bismarck, later renamed the Majestic, all approximately 900 feet long. The Bremen, also a 900-foot ship, was launched in 1929. It crossed the Atlantic in almost nine hours less time than the Mauretania. The first liner to exceed 1000 feet in length was the Normandie, launched in 1932. This French liner measures 1020 feet and its gross tonnage is 75,000.

There is a marked difference between the first Cunarder, the "Britannia", built in 1840, with a length of 207 feet, and the Queen Mary measuring 1018 feet and having a gross tonnage of 80,773. The comparative picture shows the strides which navigation has made in less than a century.

Next week this space will tell you of the many intensely interesting things about the Queen Mary, its novel forms of service, its history from long before it was launched, and its dream for the service of humanity.

This Should Save Time

One of our town merchants came through with a suggestion recently which could help to improve conditions during the shopping rush on Saturday evenings. During the afternoon, if the people were to phone in their orders, the merchants could go ahead and make up the order and have it ready for the customer when he, or she, called on Saturday night. Thus, although some persons might be late in getting to town, it would ensure prompt service for them, and would not only give the clerks a breather but it would also enable them to give better and quicker service. The question is really a worthwhile one and we hope to hear of more shoppers adopting it. Try it. Mrs. Housewife, and see how it works out.

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To Prolong the Life of Cut Flowers

In keeping the home beautiful, no information is more appreciated than authoritative advice on how to keep cut flowers fresh. With this end in view, the Lethbridge Experimental Station of the Dominion Department of Agriculture has assembled the essential facts of the art, both from their own horticulturists and from other authorities. Most flowers must be cut either early in the morning when the dew is still on them, or in the cool of the evening. Roses, peonies, dahlias, and gladioli respond best when cut in the evening but it is to be remembered that dahlias must be cut in full bloom; iris, poppies and pinks in half bloom, and peonies when they show a good colour. The "tip" about the bloom makes all the difference.

The method of cutting is also important. Slanting cuts with a sharp knife are best. Shears crush or bruise the stem and thus the free rise of water through the stalks to the leaves and blossoms is impeded. One great advantage of the slanting cut is that the stems are prevented from resting flat on the bottom of the vase and thereby checking the upward flow of water.

After the flowers have been cut, the next thing to do is to immediately soak them for several hours in deep, cool water. Their prolongation of life is helped by quick action the moment they are gathered. Thick-leaved flowers, such as stocks, snapdragons, zinnias, and petunia need at least 10 to 12 hours soaking before they are arranged in the vase. In the case of lilacs, spirea, honeysuckle, and other floral decorations of the woody sort, satisfactory results have been obtained by splitting, or pounding and scraping the stems before soaking. However with reference to dipping stem in boiling water before being soaked in cold, there is still some doubt, although on occasions such flowers as poppies, hollyhock, magnonette, and dahlias have benefited by this method.

Nearly everyone knows that cutting the stems of arranged flowers once a day help to prolong their freshness, but in this regard one common mistake is made: the cutting must be done under water. This prevents air bubbles from forming in the stems and preventing the free flow of water. Adding one-quarter to one-half teaspoon of charcoal or permanganate of potash, obtainable from any drug store, prevents the growth of bacteria on the cut end, and the use of one or two drops of creolin or similar disinfectant tends to prolong the life of the flower, but aspirin has not proved effective.

Pansies in particular find it difficult to draw water through their stems, so these flowers, and also nasturtiums, are benefited by being plunged up to their blossoms in cool water from half an hour at eight-hour intervals. Warm and hot draughts cause immediate wilting in cut flowers. Dahlias in particular being quickly affected. With regard to containers, one floriculturist has discovered that cut flowers last longer in copper vessels than in any other type of vase.

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When There Is No News

A throb of sympathy was roused in newspaper offices from coast to coast by a mournful wail from the Nantucket Inquirer, which laments the lack of news in the district. The Nantucket paper says: "There has not been a fire, there has not been a bank robbery, there have been no births, there have been no marriages, there has not been a railroad accident, there has not been a shipwreck. There has not been a murder, no one has fallen from a roof, no tramps or suspicious-looking persons have been seen hanging around, no airplanes have cracked up; there has not been a hold-up, no man has run away with another man's wife, no one has absconded with another person's money, there has been no president's birthday ball. As a matter of fact, there has not even been a real

good dog fight to liven up Main Street." Every weekly paper is from time to time a victim of this lapse of news, and so little can be done about it. The newspaper does not make the news, it merely records what happens. And in this recording it must have the interest and help of the readers. It is a common-place experience—it must be—for readers to say "there's nothing in the paper this week."

Perhaps there would be more news if all subscribers thought of the paper as theirs, and remembered to pass on any little items of which they are aware. Perhaps it is literally true there are periods in a community, when nothing of an eventful nature is happening. At any rate when readers say "there's nothing in the paper this week" they may rest assured that the newspaper office knows it, and has suffered grievously over the reluctance of the community to make news.

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