Appendix 3

In 1950, as Eastern Shipping Corp’s Nuevo Dominicano, the New Northland became the first ship to cruise year-round from Miami.

THE FURTHER CAREERS OF THE NEW NORTHLAND AND NORTH STAR

Although its two most successful cruise ships never returned to the fleet after the war, it is worth looking in more detail at what happened to the New Northland, especially as she returned to trade in waters where she had traded for Clarke in Florida and the West Indies, and indeed the North Star, after her conversion for a wartime role had ended her usefulness as cruise ship.

Seaway Line Acquires the "New Northland"

Clarke having decided not to take back the New Northland, her sale to Seaway Steamship Line had in fact been announced even before she left Lagos, in an Associated Press report from Jacksonville dated April 3, 1946: -

The first post-war announcement of steamship service for Jacksonville came today from the Seaway Lines of New York and Montreal which operates regular cruises to the West Indies. J C Lanier, local representative, said the first sailing would be Monday, December 2 and on alternate Mondays and Thursdays thereafter.

The schedule calls for a morning departure from Jacksonville,
with stop-overs at Nassau, Cap Haitien and Havana, and return to Jacksonville the tenth day.

The ship will be the s.s. *New Northland* which for two [sic] winter seasons prior to suspension of service due to the war sailed out of Miami every third day for Nassau. The craft was acquired by Seaway Lines several months ago.

Eric Wharton, Clarke's pre-war passenger traffic manager, was now president of Seaway Steamship Line. The company's shareholders were American, including one, Earl Stein, who came from Chicago but now lived in Fort Lauderdale, where he owned the Hotel Gulfstream. His Earl Stein Service & Mercantile Company and Stein Amusement Company ran slot machine concessions on board American-based passenger ships such as the 4,272-ton *Milwaukee Clipper* on Lake Michigan, and also had an interest in a day excursion ship that ran between Chicago and Michigan City, Indiana.

The American Society of Travel Agents carried the *New Northland* story in its "Travel News" in 1946: -

The big news from the Southeast this month and right in line with the slogan "Ships are coming back" is the announcement ... of the introduction this coming December of a direct cruise service from Jacksonville to the West Indies. The service is to be under the management of S Eric Wharton with offices at 19 Rector Street, New York City.

The service is to be by the steamer s.s. *New Northland*. Many travel agents will remember Mr Wharton as being connected with the Clarke Steamship Company prior to the war. They will also know the *New Northland*, which has been acquired by the new company for this special service from Jacksonville.

The *New Northland* has recently been turned back from the Canadian Government War Service to the new line and is undergoing extensive repairs and alterations.

Clarke's New York office had represented Seaway Lines' *Georgian* when it cruised the Great Lakes in the 1930s, and Wharton had joined Seaway Lines' Detroit office in the spring of 1941. At the end of her 1941 season, however, the *Georgian* had gone to the navy for use at St John's. She had been laid up at Sorel in 1945, and on July 19, 1946, after Seaway Lines acquired the *New Northland*, it sold
her to the Wah Shang Steamship Co Ltd of Shanghai, who also bought the *Saguenay* from Canada Steamship Lines. The two ships then steamed out under their own power to Shanghai, a voyage of 15,500 miles, to become the *Ha Sin* and *Kiang Yong*. The *Georgian* would trade for several years on the China coast, while the *Saguenay* soon went to C Y Tung as the *Yangtse Phoenix*.

The *New Northland* joined Seaway Steamship Line after the *Georgian* had been "sold east," and would now carry their colours in her stead. Her funnel would bear the same burgee with the letters "SL" on a white diamond that the *Georgian* had carried on the lakes. But the *New Northland* would sail from Florida, in waters more familiar to her. A revived Seaway Line (now referred to in the singular) opened offices at 409 West Adams Street in Jacksonville, but would later move to 120 Julia Street.

On October 13, 1946, the "New York Times" carried news that indicated a delay of a couple of weeks in the start-up date: -

News of a cruise every ten days comes from the Seaway Line, with the s.s. *New Northland* initiating service Dec 18 from Jacksonville, Fla. The itinerary includes Nassau, Haiti and Havana, three favorite havens for vacationists seeking an escape, if a short one, from northern winters. The ten-day cruise offers sharp contrasts. From cosmopolitan Nassau with its British flavour, the journey continues to semi-tropical Cap Haitien, where voyagers have an opportunity to cover the scene of Emperor Christophe's tragic exploits, and thence to Cuba's capital for a round of night clubs and waterfront sightseeing. The present plan is to continue these cruises throughout 1947.

The *New Northland* was refitted in Liverpool's Langton Dock by the Birkenhead-based firm of Grayson, Rollo & Clover Docks Ltd. There, all armaments and stiffening were removed, her mess decks were stripped, her original mainmast, which had been replaced by a shorter military version, re-stepped and most of her original furniture restored. An experiment was also tried, fitting Dunlop rubber flooring in working areas to cut down on maintenance. Four months later, on November 9, she left Liverpool for Jacksonville, resplendent in white and ready to return to cruising.

Her public room arrangement was the same as it had been before the war, but a few modifications had been made to her staterooms. Aft on Saloon Deck, six former cabins de luxe, twin-
bedded cabins with private bath, F, G, H, J, K and L, had been replaced by ten with upper and lower berths, 50 through 59, with additional bathrooms across the corridor. Meanwhile, amidships on the same deck, twin-bedded cabins N and S had been eliminated in order to install private bathrooms in four surrounding staterooms. Overall, the changes had added two cabins, or four berths, to her capacity and had replaced six en suite cabins aft with four midships in a better location.

Wharton was kept busy that year, travelling to and from the UK in anticipation of the New Northland re-entering service. On one trip, he arrived at New York on the Queen Mary on August 13, but the next time he returned it was by Pan American Airways from London on November 7, two days before the New Northland left Liverpool. Unlike Desmond Clarke, who had crossed the Atlantic in his new ship in 1926, Wharton had no time to consider making the crossing in her. He had a new business to launch.

Cruising from Jacksonville

Seaway Line, a Canadian firm, kept the New Northland's registry in Quebec, where it had been throughout the war, and hired a new Canadian crew. But instead of cruising the Gulf of St Lawrence, she would now sail year-round from the Commodore Point Terminal in Jacksonville. Wharton was quite familiar with the north Florida port, having operated the North Star on her first cruise from there in 1939. Basing a ship in Jacksonville, 366 miles north of Miami, reduced the travelling time for passengers from the north, cutting 7½ hours off the rail journey. This was about a quarter of the time it took to travel from New York or a third of that from Washington.

Because of her pre-war reputation, Seaway Line kept the name New Northland, and its brochures even copied Clarke literature, right down to the photographs of lounges and cabins and the clauses in the small print. In a 1946 issue of "The Seahorse" port guide prepared Seaway Line passengers, the new owners announced: -

As hosts, we assume a responsibility. We must, first and foremost, carry you comfortably between ports. To that end, we have the stout, well-equipped New Northland, a cruise ship that has endeared itself to the travel-wise during the pre-war years. Completely refitted, refurbished and spanning fresh from the shipyards, she is yours to enjoy.
Wharton relied on a lot of Clarke resources for his new line. He appointed a former Clarke master, Capt Simon Bouchard, returning to the *New Northland* after an absence of six years. It had been Bouchard who had succeeded Capt Boucher at Halifax in 1940. In Havana, Seaway Line engaged Dussaq Co Ltd, the agent Clarke had used pre-war. And the photo that appeared in the new issue of "The Seahorse" even showed the ship as she had looked in her prime, in Clarke colours!

In addition to engaging a Clarke master and port agents and using Clarke file photos for its brochures, Seaway Line song sheets even carried the same titles. Songs were numbered 1 through 39, starting with "God Save The King" and "O Canada" and following on to old favourites such as "Dinah," "Swanee River," "When Irish Eyes Are Smiling" and "Oh! Susanna," just as in her Clarke days.

Clarke may no longer have wanted the *New Northland*, but Wharton thought he had a proven product and was keen to re-enter the cruise business with a ship he knew well, and one that still had several years life in her. With a familiar ship and captain, and agents he knew, Wharton did his best to revive the Clarke Steamship Co cruising days of old. Meanwhile, Nassau journalist Etienne Dupuch, in a story to the "New York Times" headed "Nassau Awaits Tourist Boom," reported in its edition of December 8, 1946: -

Last year's shortage of hotel space will be relieved by the re-opening Jan 1 of the Fort Montagu Beach Hotel, second largest hotel here. The new owner, Hotel Holdings Ltd, is spending $500,000 to renovate the hotel which was occupied by troops during the war. The British Colonial Hotel, Nassau's largest, which was redecorated for its post-war opening last January, will reopen next Sunday, a month earlier than usual...

Pan-American World Airways operates a daily service from Miami to Nassau, making a flight in about an hour. The *Evangeline* of Eastern Steamship Lines will sail from New York every Friday, beginning Dec 27, in a series of Nassau cruises, with stopover privileges. The Seaway Line has scheduled Nassau as the first port of call for the *New Northland* on her year-round cruise service from Jacksonville, Fla, to the Caribbean.

Seaway Lines' first cruise left Jacksonville on December 18, 1946, with 157 passengers, close to a 90 per cent load. Five months after closing out her wartime trooping career, the *New Northland* was
back in business, but under new owners. Among those celebrating Christmas in their new ship were Mr & Mrs Eric Wharton and Mr & Mrs Earl Stein, representing the new owners. Soon, the "Official Steamship & Airlines Guide" was advertising "New Caribbean Cruises on the popular liner s.s. New Northland," along with the all-important notation "full commission to travel agents."

The New Northland thus became the first cruise ship to return to service after the war. And as well as offering cruises, the New Northland still carried cargo below decks, something that was not known by or of concern to most passengers. The first cruise of the Evangeline, meanwhile, was delayed until May.

For a while in 1947, the New Northland ran 10-day cruises calling at Nassau, Cardenas, a rum and sugar port about 100 miles east of Havana and a few miles from Varadero Beach, and Havana. Sailing from Jacksonville every ten days, cruise fares started at $160. In June 1947, however, Seaway Line replaced the unknown Cardenas with more exciting calls at Kingston and Port au Prince, with Seaway Line using the same agents Clarke had used before the war. The New Northland's cruises were extended to 13 nights, on a fixed day of the week sailing, every second Monday from Jacksonville. The Monday departures and Sunday returns echoed Clarke's pre-war custom of sailing the New Northland from Montreal on Mondays, and returning on a Sunday, giving people the weekend to get to and from the ship.

On June 7, 1947, the Kingston "Daily Gleaner" carried a story entitled "New Fortnightly Shipping Service Inaugurated Today": -

Another advance in the post-war cruise service between the USA and Jamaica will be made this morning, when a new fortnightly tourist cruise service between Jacksonville, Florida, and this island will be inaugurated with the arrival of the s.s. New Northland. The vessel will make eight special Caribbean summer cruises in all, with tentative plans for a continuation of the service in the winter tourist season. Due to arrive here about 8 o'clock in the morning, the New Northland is bringing 136 trippers and five landing passengers... The New Northland calls again at Kingston on the following dates: June 21, July 5 and 19, August 2, 16 and 30 and September 13.

As an aside, the same paper had said only the day before, under the heading "New Tourist Ship Arrives Tomorrow": -
The *New Northland*, a Canadian ship, which prior to the war was on regular service between Nassau and Miami has since her release from war services been refitted and renovated and has just completed a successful series of cruises between Florida, Haiti and Cuba...

Mr Eric Wharton, the president of the Seaway Steamship Line, the owners of the *New Northland*, will be making the first trip. He is an old friend of Jamaica and will be remembered by many as the operator of the *North Star* service from Miami for the Clarke Steamship Line in the years up to the outbreak of war.

On the day after the *New Northland's* first Jamaica call, June 9, the "Daily Gleaner" reported with details reminiscent of the *North Star's* first call in 1938: -

An enthusiastic reception was given to the s.s. *New Northland* of the Seaway Steamship Line, her passengers, and crew, as she arrived in Kingston on Saturday to start a new fortnightly cruise service between Jacksonville, Florida, and Jamaica.

Grace Wharf, where the vessel docked on arrival ... was decorated with flags down its whole length while from a flagstaff at the head of the pier the Union Jack flew in the morning air, saluting the visiting cruise ship. On the pier itself, the Jamaica Military band, colourful as usual, gave a musical welcome to the vessel as she came alongside. Handclaps spattered along the crowded shipside as the visitors thrilled to the martial music with which the band greeted them.

Later, after tours ashore, the visitors arrived at the Myrtle Bank Hotel ... To enjoy the specially prepared Jamaican lunch of pepperpot soup, codfish and ackee, roast suckling pig and mango sundae offered for their delight. And, as the band played on and the rum-punch and fruit-juices flowed, a special place was set where the President of the Seaway Line and the Captain of the *New Northland* were entertained by Mr F H Robertson, Chairman of the Tourist Board, and others.

Robertson had of course been one of the hosts at that very hotel when the *North Star* arrived for the first time in January 1938, and had travelled with Desmond Clarke on the first voyages of the *North Star* in each of 1938 and 1939. On June 30, meanwhile, the *New Northland* was delayed twenty-four hours in Jacksonville by the discovery of steel
shavings, which had badly damaged a compressor that had just been installed on her refrigeration machinery. Although detectives were called in, it was not known whether this had been caused by foul play.

Then, a month after she began calling at Kingston, on her July 7 sailing, a 21-year-old Jamaican, Aubrey Jenkins, managed to stow away on the *New Northland*. Once apprehended, he was jailed in Havana for 20 days and then escorted to Jacksonville for three more days in jail before being returned to Jamaica in the *New Northland*. He was allowed to work his passage back home and on arriving back in Jamaica in August he was set free on the proviso that he promised never to stow away again.

By now, the *New Northland* was calling at the same ports the *North Star* had served pre-war, Kingston, Port au Prince and Havana, plus Nassau, which she had served herself. But because of her more modest turn of speed, and the fact that she started from Jacksonville, the round voyage took 13 days compared to 7 days with the much faster *North Star*. And cruise fares now began at $215 for the longer cruise instead of $75 for a week.

**An Accident in Havana**

On Saturday August 2, 1947, the *New Northland* arrived in Jamaica with 145 passengers, and cleared at 2 am on Sunday for Port au Prince. However, on this same cruise, as she was entering Havana on August 6, she had a dramatic accident. Carl Netherland-Brown recorded this in his article "The Canadian Steamship *Northland*": -

Just after passing Morro Castle, and still at full speed, the steering gear failed. Backing full, and with both anchors down, she struck the protective boulders of the scenic waterfront boulevard which surrounds downtown Havana. Another twenty feet would have put *New Northland* in contact with automobiles. A large crowd watched in amazement as tugs strained to pull the ship free. Two days later, with a temporary patch on her nose, *New Northland* sailed for drydocking in Jacksonville... Passengers were sent to Miami on the Peninsular & Occidental steamer *Florida*, and then home by train.

When the *New Northland*'s passengers left Havana in the *Florida*, at least it had been their last port of call and they had received most of their cruise. In fact, they had the slight bonus of the adventure of
being able to travel in two different ships.

**Engine Problems**

The next cruise of the *New Northland* left Jacksonville late on Monday, August 11, with 163 passengers, a 92 per cent load, under Capt G Whittaker Neely. On her way to Nassau, she broke down in the early morning hours of August 12. Her plight was reported in Jacksonville's "Florida Times-Union," under the heading "Ship Towed to Port as Pump Fails": -

The luxury steamship *New Northland* was being towed back to Jacksonville last night after failure of an engine pump forced temporary postponement of a Caribbean cruise, agents of the ship reported. The ship, which sailed from here early Tuesday morning, broke down about ten miles off St Augustine light. Roy Bowman, Jacksonville manager of the ... Seaway Steamship Line Ltd, which operates the vessel, said the ship was expected to reach dock here early today, under tow of the Merrill-Stevens tugboat *Utility*.

As he and his wife happened to be on board for that particular voyage, Bowman was in a good position to report and was also to be able to deal with the passengers. A later report in the same Jacksonville newspaper, headed "Cruise Party Will Depart After Delays" reported progress: -

Vacationing passengers aboard the cruise ship s.s. *New Northland* voted last night to continue their trip despite a delay caused by the failure of an engine pump at sea off St Augustine Tuesday, Seaway Steamship Line reported. With 163 passengers originally booked for the cruise to Nassau, Port au Prince, Kingston and Havana, 123 voted to continue the trip, Roy Bowman, Jacksonville manager for the operating line, said. The ship is now scheduled to sail late this afternoon. Earlier, when the vessel was towed back to this port, the operators had hoped to sail by yesterday afternoon, but were unable since repairs to the pump had not been completed. Bowman said the passengers were "very sympathetic" and that those who cancelled their sailings did so because they would be unable to stay away long enough for the full two-weeks cruise. Future sailings have been delayed one week until the ship goes into drydock this fall. The liner will now leave Jacksonville September 1, 15 and 29.
The itinerary was reworked and instead of making her planned call at Kingston on Saturday the 16th, it was delayed until the following Thursday. On arrival, immigration officials boarded at Port Royal in order to speed up formalities and the ship was at berth in Kingston by about 2 pm. Bowman, who had been reported in the Jacksonville press, also spoke to the "Daily Gleaner." Rather than talking about the delays, with 123 happy passengers on board, Bowman talked about future plans, and the story appeared on August 22:

Mr Roy Bowman, general manager of the Seaway Steamship Line Ltd, and his wife were among the trippers who arrived in the island Thursday from Jacksonville, Florida, in the luxury liner New Northland. In a hurried shipboard interview with the "Gleaner" the shipping official revealed that his company was trying to develop both a passenger and freight service from Jacksonville to the Bahama Islands and the West Indies. This he said depended on whether there were sufficient prospects. He also said that it was planned to increase the present service and that the spring of next year should see a weekly service instead of the present fortnightly one. Commenting on the current Caribbean cruises, Mr Bowman said that they had been extremely popular and hinted that the bookings for The new schedule of the New Northland on December 1 of this year were very promising.

On her next voyage, on September 6, the New Northland arrived in Kingston to some acclaim for the entertainers she had on board. The "Daily Gleaner" story was headed "American Musicians Due on s.s. New Northland today": -

The s.s. New Northland, largest tourist passenger cruise ship to call here this season, is due to arrive here this morning at eight o'clock with a complement of passengers and the grand Jazz musicians who will play with Willie Nelson's Buccaneers as well as create a sensation with a number of small band arrangements at Morgan's Cove tonight... Morgan's Cove welcomes the passengers and officers and men of the s.s. New Northland this evening and extend a cordial invitation to Jamaica's cafe society to enjoy a pleasure-packed evening.

This Willie Nelson was of course not the one who became popular later in the 20th Century but the musicians arriving in the New
Northland included "ace-high trumpeter" Al Crabtree and "his two pals Johnny (with the torrid drums) and George, top-ranking accordion player."

Hurricanes and a New Winter Season

This was the first time any line had attempted year-round cruise service from Florida and despite good winter bookings and even into the summer, as the autumn drew closer bookings began to fall. The "Daily Gleaner" reported on September 26, 1947, under the heading "New Northland Cruises Cancelled":

Plans for a full fall programme of Caribbean cruises by the luxury liner New Northland have been cancelled. Unsatisfactory bookings due to the hurricane season have been responsible for the decision of the operators of the vessel. Tentative plans are for the vessel to resume her cruises early in December. The New Northland had a successful round of summer cruises operated out of Jacksonville, Florida, calling at the Bahamas, Haiti, Jamaica and Havana. She maintained a fortnightly schedule here out of her home port bringing on each occasion tourists representing a cross-section of American and Canadian life.

A new brochure was soon released with details of winter cruises from Jacksonville from December 1947 through May 1948, and the company opened a new office in New York's Rockefeller Center. The New Northland re-entered service as planned that December and, apart from running aground briefly at Port Royal, Jamaica, on the 13th with 180 passengers, she was soon back on her regular island circuit again.

On December 31, 1947, another ship, the 2,485-ton Granton Glen, owned by Culliford & Clark Ltd of London, began "thrice weekly cruises" taking up to 75 first-class passengers between Miami and Nassau. Ordered by the British Government as the War Mist, she had been completed at Manitowoc, Wisconsin, in 1918 as the Lake Greenwood. Converted by A H Bull & Co of New York in 1922 into the passenger and mail ship Catherine for overnight service between San Juan and St Thomas, she had served as the naval transport USS Stratford during the war. The Culliford Shipping Co Ltd would operate the Granton Glen between Miami and Nassau for only one season, however, before the long-standing Culliford & Clark went into liquidation.
On January 10, 1948, the New Northland arrived in Kingston with 107 passengers, twenty of whom disembarked for a stay in Jamaica. On February 16, Capt Neely got married on the New Northland in Jacksonville and the happy couple celebrated a working honeymoon on the next cruise. On their call in Kingston, he and his new wife were entertained at the "Glass Bucket" night club.

Offering competition to the New Northland and the Granton Glen, Eastern Steamship Lines' Evangeline and Yarmouth were now offering weekly sailings from New York to Miami, Nassau and Havana, part of which could be booked as a $60 cruise from Miami to Nassau and back. But one had to wonder what sort of competition when Paul Gallico reported on a cruise he made in his nationally syndicated column "Thinking Aloud" on April 5, 1948: -

I made a steamer trip from Miami to Nassau and back via an American coastal steamship line. Brothers, was that something! The food was the kind you get in a fourth-rate hash house, and the service surly, unfriendly and incompetent.

I am mentioning this because every so often somebody raises a holler that the European steamship lines, the British, French, Dutch, Italian and Swedish, get all the American tourist trade and what is the matter with the American lines.

Meanwhile, Saturday, March 20, 1948, saw the New Northland bringing Sax Rohmer, author of more than thirty "Fu Manchu" detective novels and creator of the famous "Fu Manchu" radio programs, to Kingston. Having decided to leave post-war England, Rohmer and his wife had come to Jamaica long enough for them to make the quota for foreign residents admitted into the United States.

The End of the Seaway Line

But on March 23, 1948, the same issue of the "Gleaner" that reported the arrival of the Rohmers in Jamaica carried more ominous news, under the heading "New Northland May Cease Trips to Caribbean": -

The tourist trade here may be affected if the Seaway Steamship Line's New Northland does not get at least one hundred trippers when she returns to Jacksonville, Florida, on March 28. The
vessel might cease to make the Caribbean cruise. The New Northland started her winter cruise to the Caribbean on December 8 last year, and twelve trips to the Caribbean were planned, terminating on May 23. So far, the vessel has made only eight trips. On Saturday, the vessel brought 148 passengers, 18 of whom will spend a few weeks here. Eighteen passengers who were here before rejoined the vessel. Should the New Northland discontinue her cruises to the Caribbean, it is learnt that the vessel will be placed on the St Lawrence-Labrador run.

Something was in the air, and despite the New Northland having usually been quite heavily booked, there were underlying problems. The changes of route might have said something about cargo requirements, something that Bowman had alluded to, and while passenger details were well reported cargo details were not. Although it was interesting that the Seaway Line was thinking about sending the New Northland back to the St Lawrence, this sounds more like a desperate scheme dreamt up at the last minute. In the event, she would never return to Canada.

Very soon, the Seaway Line was out of business. The Havana accident, the pump failure and the autumn lay-up all took a financial toll on a company that was employing a very expensive post-war crew. The New Northland was arrested for debt and suffered a strike of crew members, who were sent back to Canada. Even though Seaway Line had continued to operate until the spring of 1948, a curious note remains today saying that the company had been "removed from corporate status" on October 31, 1947. But whatever the details of the Seaway Line's failure, this was the end of the New Northland's career under the Canadian flag.

After the last of the company's accounts were settled, Eric Wharton went into business on his own, setting up a travel agency called Wharton Travel Service in Jacksonville, where he continued to sell cruises, including to the West Indies, the Great Lakes and of course cruises in the Gulf of St Lawrence on Clarke's North Shore and North Gaspé.

In May 1948, not long after the Seaway Line closed its doors, the newly formed Flota Mercante Dominicana, or Dominican Line, paid $1.325 million for the laid up New Northland. Renamed Nuevo Dominicano, she ran at first between New York and the Dominican Republic ports of Ciudad Trujillo and Puerto Plata. Before long,
however, she would be making a name for herself as Miami's first year-round cruise ship.

**Canadian Maritime Unions**

The Seaway Line had lasted for a little more than a year. But in addition to any other financial problems, the *New Northland* had been beset by union trouble, particularly in the stewards' department, and this was something that was affecting many Canadian shipowners after the war. Carl Netherland-Brown commented briefly:

> Almost from the start, *New Northland* suffered from labor unrest. The Canadian Seamens Union was on the rise, and within a few years would cause the withdrawal or reflagging of most Canadian ships and services.

Despite sailing with respectable passenger loads, the use of high-priced labour had put the company into a money-losing situation. These same strong Canadian maritime unions were also affecting Canadian National Steamships last two "Lady Boats," as well as the rest of its fleet. A year later, Canadian National would sign a contract with the Seafarers International Union to replace the unruly Canadian Seamens Union, a change that would come about on April 8, 1949, when newly-hired SIU crews boarded the *Lady Rodney* and two other Canadian National ships in Halifax.

At the root of this problem lay the huge wartime expansion of the Canadian merchant marine, with all the cargo ships that had been built for the war effort. Private companies had been appointed to manage the ships, but the state-owned Park Steamship Co, in negotiating the union agreements, had accepted pretty well any wage demand that the Canadian Seamens Union made in order to keep the ships at sea. A 1945 report by the Department of Transport revealed that the average monthly pay for an able-bodied seaman had more than doubled in four years, from $65.62 in 1940 to $134.43 in 1944. This of course created unrealistic expectations when peace returned and private companies had to take over the labour negotiations from the Park Steamship Co, whose 176 ships were all sold off by the end of 1947.

**The "New Northland" Becomes the "Nuevo Dominicano"**
After the Seaway Steamship Line had bought the New Northland, they had returned her to service from Florida, under the same name and still under Canadian flag, but based in Jacksonville. Seaway had operated her through the winter, spring and summer of 1947 before she laid up for the autumn, and then into the early spring of 1948 before the line finally closed.

In May 1948, the newly-formed national shipping line of the Dominican Republic, Flota Mercante Dominicana, or Dominican Line, purchased the New Northland and gave her her third name, Nuevo Dominicano. After reconditioning in Ciudad Trujillo, her first voyage left there on May 18, carrying tourists and a small amount of cargo to Curacao and Aruba before being placed on a longer route to and from New York.

Almost a decade earlier, in 1939, President Rafael Trujillo, dictator of the Dominican Republic, had himself owned two ships, the 1,668-ton Presidente Trujillo (i) and 1,973-ton San Rafael, which carried a few passengers, through Naviera Dominicana, a private company. This pair had traded between Dominican ports and Curacao, Martinique and Puerto Rico, but were lost to German U-boats within a couple of weeks of each other in May 1942. Although Trujillo had collected more in insurance than the ships were worth, when he decided to re-enter the shipping business, rather than using his own money he had decided to do so through the vehicle of a state-owned line.

The New York "Herald-Tribune" carried news of both the sale and her new service from New York on June 20, 1948, under the heading "The New Northland Sold":

The West Indies cruise vessel New Northland, which formerly operated out of Jacksonville, Fla, has been sold to the Dominican Republic and has begun trips from New York to the Dominican Republic. The ship has been renamed the Nuevo Dominicano. It has accommodations for 170 passengers, all in outside staterooms. Each round trip will require sixteen days, with stops of two or three days at Puerto Plata and Ciudad Trujillo, but passengers will have to arrange for hotel accommodations while in port, according to Garcia & Diaz, agents. The ship will sail from New York every eighteen days. Dominican sources report that additional ports may be added to the ship's itinerary later and that it may then be operated as a regular cruise ship.
While the "Herald-Tribune" was only now reporting on the sale of the New Northland, the "New York Times" had already reported on her maiden arrival in New York three days earlier, in its issue of June 17: -

The rebuilt passenger liner Nuevo Dominicanó, the largest liner ever to fly the flag of the Dominican Republic, arrived in New York harbor yesterday to open passenger and cargo service to the Dominican ports of Ciudad Trujillo and Puerto Plata. Formerly the New Northland, the 3,500-ton vessel will have space for 296 passengers and 1,000 tons of refrigerated cargo. Coming up the bay, the trim liner was greeted by whistles of harbor craft and the traditional plumes of water from city fireboats. A party to welcome the ship went down the bay and boarded the vessel to greet Capt Juan Beotegui Zamesa... The vessel docked at Pier 53, North River. According to Garcia & Diaz, agents for the Dominican Republic in operating the vessel, its first sailing from New York will be next Monday.

The higher passenger number quoted by the "New York Times" probably included deck passengers, but the "Herald-Tribune" had the right number of berths. Garcia & Diaz advertised her as a "ship carrying 170 first-class passengers," sailing every three weeks, with fares starting at $105 one-way and $200 round trip. Her competition was the Porto Rico Line's 7,114-ton Borinquen, which carried 350 "cabin class" passengers and called at San Juan and Ciudad Trujillo. Sailing every two weeks, she charged the same one-way fare to Ciudad Trujillo but had a round trip fare of $189. Carl Netherland-Brown tells us what happened in his article "The Canadian Steamship Northland": -

She was renamed Nuevo Dominicano and was painted black all the way up to the main deck, making her look very different, and more like a cargo ship. The funnel was buff with black top and a blue admirals flag with white stars thereon. Passengers were very few on the new run, but Nuevo Dominicano did a good job carrying cargo for the Dominican Government. Soon, she proved too hot in black and reverted to the white hull, but was not well kept and was always rust-streaked when arriving at New York.

The 1948-49 "Janes Fighting Ships" listed Nuevo Dominicano as a Dominican Navy transport. Indeed, she did make special military voyages to Spain and Venezuela, but these were rare, and she was never painted grey.
Classed as a naval auxiliary, to be used to as a troopship in case of emergency, the *Nuevo Dominicano* was registered in Ciudad Trujillo and manned by a Dominican Navy crew of 59. Another Dominican auxiliary, the 300-foot ex-RCN "River" class frigate *Presidente Trujillo* (ii), was outfitted as a presidential yacht. Indeed, one account says that she was used as a wedding yacht for one of Trujillo's daughters. Other than President Trujillo, only Greek shipping tycoon Aristotle Onassis was able to claim a yacht that had once been an RCN frigate. Onassis *Christina* was the largest and most luxurious yacht in the world when introduced in 1954 and would number amongst her guests, on more than one occasion, Winston Churchill.

The *Nuevo Dominicano* lasted about a year and a half on the New York run and it was while on this run that she carried one of her more interesting cargoes, consisting of 400 tons of liquid chocolate from the new Chocolatera Sanchez factory at Puerto Plata, the first such shipment to New York. But her failure to attract enough passengers to fill her extensive passenger accommodation while running from New York would soon make her available for other employment that was more suited to her design.

**Year-Round Cruising From Miami**

On February 6, 1949, the "Miami Daily News" had called P&O's *Florida* "Miami's only passenger steamship" and reported that the three flights a day to Nassau were all running full, but at the end of that year, on December 26, it carried another news story headed "Liner to Sail on Luxurious Ocean Cruises": -

Miami will have a new drawing card to attract visitors to this area in 1950. The two-fold attraction, to be inaugurated next month, is a luxury cruise plan - one to Nassau and the other to the Caribbean. This is the first time that either of these two cruises has been offered since pre-war days when they enjoyed wide popularity...

Eastern Shipping Corp will offer the service beginning January 21. The cruises, which promise to be the last word in luxury, will be made aboard the s.s. *Nuevo Dominicano*, formerly the *New Northland*. The 177-passenger liner will leave from Pier 2 on its maiden voyage - a 12-day trip to Jamaica and the Dominican Republic. It will make the circuit every two weeks thereafter.
After its return from the Jamaica run, the liner will leave for Nassau, spending one night in the Bahama capital. These trips will be made every two weeks beginning about February 4.

Jack Crosland, Miami agent for the shipping corporation, said bookings now are being made... The fare for the Jamaica cruise will be $240 round trip. The Nassau fare has not yet been announced. The shipping office here is located at 28 SW 1st Ave.

Four days later, on December 30, the "Daily Gleaner" revealed the details of her latest employment from an interview in Kingston with Frank Leslie Fraser, who spoke about service to both Kingston and Montego Bay, as well as the Dominican Republic: -

A new direct fortnightly service between Miami, Florida, and Jamaica was announced yesterday by Mr F Leslie Fraser, well-known personality in shipping circles. He arrived by plane from Miami in transit to Ciudad Trujillo.

Main point of Mr Fraser's interview with a "Gleaner" representative shortly before he left for the Dominican Republic was that the cruise vessel New Northland, which used to visit these shores, had been remodelled and renamed the Nuevo Dominicano, and that commencing next month she will make regular fortnightly trips to Jamaica. Second point was that the Nuevo Dominicano would be the only cruise ship to sail from Miami.

Mr Fraser, who is the general agent for Flota Mercante de l'Estado Republica Dominicana, told the "Gleaner" that the luxuriously remodelled vessel would make fortnightly trips to Jamaica, with stops on Tuesday at Kingston and on Wednesdays at Montego Bay. Itinerary would include Jacksonville and Miami, Florida, and Ciudad Trujillo on the 12-day West Indian cruise.

In addition, and by arrangement with the Nassau Government, the vessel will call at Nassau on Thursdays, leave on Friday morning and be in Miami by Saturday morning. Miami is the starting point of the West Indian cruise, which will commence at 7 pm on January 24 next.

Local agents for the vessel are - Kingston: Jamaica Fruit and Shipping Company; and Montego Bay: Messrs J E Carr and Company...
"No country in the world's history has made more progress in the last decade than the Dominican Republic," declared Mr Fraser, who is president of one of the largest banana exporting companies in the Republic.

Four days after that, on January 3, 1950, the "New York Times" carried a story headed "Dominican Cruises to Start on Jan 21," disclosing details of the change in operation for the Nuevo Dominicano. The sub-title "12-Day Tours Are Announced Between Miami, Kingston and Ciudad Trujillo" gave the substance of that change: -

A cruise-cargo service between Miami, Fla; Kingston, Jamaica, and Ciudad Trujillo, Dominican Republic, said to be the first such service, will be started on Jan 21 by the Flota Mercante Dominicana (Dominican Merchant Fleet), it was announced yesterday.

The steamship Nuevo Dominicano has been transferred from the New York-Dominican Republic service for the purpose, according to the Dominican Republic Information Center. The cruises will last twelve days.

The cruises will start from Miami every second Saturday and continue on a year-round basis. On her run from Kingston to Ciudad Trujillo, the Nuevo Dominicano also will stop briefly at Montego Bay, Jamaica. In addition to passengers, the ship will carry general cargo southbound and bananas and other cargo northbound.

The information center said that before her first run on the cruise route, the Nuevo Dominicano would begin a service from Miami to Nassau, Bahamas, every second Thursday on a year-round basis, making her first run Jan 19 and returning to Miami on the 21st.

Cost of the twelve-day cruise will range from $240 to $360 a person, and rates for the run to Nassau will be from $49 to $72.50. All rates quoted are exclusive of taxes. The approximately 3,500-gross ton Nuevo Dominicano can carry 177 passengers.

The New York-Ciudad Trujillo run for passengers and cargo has been taken over by the Yoro, which has accommodations for
twelve passengers, it was explained. She will be joined in the service by the *Colister*, a recent purchase of the Flota Mercante Dominicana. The two vessels will maintain a ten-day sailing schedule from both ports.

The 1,462-ton *Yoro* was a former Standard Fruit & Steamship Company banana boat that has been built by Swan Hunter in 1911, while the *Colister* is better known to us as Farquhar's *Farnorth*, which had gone to Fraser in 1937 as the *Southern Lady*. In 1942, Fraser in turn had sold her to J S Webster & Sons of Kingston, Jamaica, who had renamed her *Colister*.

**F L Fraser and the Eastern Shipping Corporation**

Apart from a lack of tourists from New York, there was another reason behind the move to Miami. This new employment resulted when, in 1949, a new company, the Eastern Shipping Corporation, had come onto the scene, Proposing to put the *Nuevo Dominicano* into cruise service from Miami, where she had operated so successfully before the war, Eastern was owned by Frank Leslie Fraser, the same Fraser who just a few years earlier had purchased four of Clarke's wartime ships. Now he was proposing to enter the cruise trade with its former flagship.

Under Fraser's direction, the *Nuevo Dominicano* was completely refurbished and readied for cruising out of Miami once more. Owing to her good reputation as the *New Northland*, and despite the fact that she had been renamed, Eastern still advertised the old name in brackets, with the new Eastern Shipping Corp brochure exclaiming: -

An exciting life will be yours aboard the s.s. *Nuevo Dominicano* (formerly known as the s.s. *New Northland*) with luxury accommodations for 177 passengers, completely refitted from stem to stern to provide all cruise comforts, modern services and delicious cuisine. Attractively and comfortably furnished staterooms make this a giant, floating hotel for your enjoyment. You will delight in the spacious decks for sports or promenading, comfortable lounges, sunbathing and swimming in the ships swimming pool.

The new swimming pool had been installed where her forward hatch had been, and between the two rows of additional cabins that had been added forward of the dining room in 1936. In his article,
Netherland-Brown described some aspects of her cruises: -

*Nuevo Dominicano* cruises had all the traditional trimmings, and proved popular. Colorful paper streamers were thrown upon departure, and with a lively meringue band playing loudly on deck, the *Nuevo* was literally the West Indies afloat. President Trujillo took a personal interest in the vessel and often came aboard to visit. He always touched his white gloves to the frame of his life-size portrait, which hung in the main staircase, checking for dust. President Trujillo instructed that passengers aboard the *Nuevo Dominicano* be treated as honored guests of the nation. All the ladies were presented with small tropical corsages as they came ashore, and there was always native music on the dock.

Trujillo, who had renamed the capital city of Santo Domingo after himself, had reason to take a personal interest in Fraser's cruises. Eastern's cruising operation not only gave him the revenue to be able to maintain the *Nuevo Dominicano* to a good standard, but it also brought many new tourists to the Dominican Republic at a time when he needed American dollars.

At the same time, Fraser took on additional responsibilities with the Flota Mercante Dominicana. The "New York Times" carried the background in a January 24, 1950, story that carried the heading "More Ships Sought For Banana Trade": -

The Dominican Republic is negotiating the purchase of additional merchant tonnage to handle increased traffic in bananas and general cargo between Ciudad Trujillo and United States Atlantic ports, it was reported yesterday.

The information was confirmed by F Leslie Fraser, recently appointed general administrator of the Flota Mercante Dominicana (Dominican Merchant Fleet), who said the republic expected to add "several" vessels to her growing fleet in future...

The new general administrator is also president of the Dominican Fruit and Steamship Company, which is said to be the largest exporter of bananas from that West Indian nation.

Present plans call for the additional ships to carry bananas and general cargo northbound from Dominican ports and general cargo on the return voyages. At present two Dominican-operated
vessels, the *Yoro* and the *Colister*, are operating this service on a ten-day schedule. Each vessel has passenger space for twelve persons.

The principal Dominican ship is the *Nuevo Dominicano*, formerly the *New Northland*, which has just been put into twelve-day cruise service between Miami, Fla, and Ciudad Trujillo, via Jamaica, on a year-round basis. The vessel also makes a shorter cruise between the Florida city and Nassau, Bahamas, between voyages to the Dominican Republic.

The republic also has one 300,000-gallon tanker, which carries oil and gasoline from Aruba to Ciudad Trujillo, Mr Fraser said, and five 250-ton interport schooners. The latter were intended as temporary replacements for vessels lost in the war, but will be kept in service, he said.

Fraser, with his experience of running banana boats, and as president of the Dominican Fruit & Steamship Co C por A in Ciudad Trujillo, had been able to parlay his wartime service and his own fleet into the basis for establishing a new Dominican Republic merchant fleet. The *Louis Hébert* had been trading to the Dominican Republic when she was lost in January 1944 and the five interport schooners mentioned sound very much like his own. Not only that but the *Yoro*, which was sailing from New York, had been owned by Fraser. He had purchased her in 1949, along with the 1,184-ton *Teapa*, to run bananas from the Dominican Republic to Miami. Meanwhile, Dominican Fruit & Steamship were now appointed local agents for the *Nuevo Dominicano*, and in addition to his role at Dominican Fruit, Fraser was president of Fraser Fruit & Shipping in Cuba and managing director of the Maple Leaf Shipping Co in Montreal.

**The Cruise Business**

The outcome of all this was that Fraser's Eastern Shipping Corp had been able to get a start in the cruise business using a ship that was well known in Miami. Capt Carl Netherland-Brown, who joined the *Nuevo Dominicano* and worked on board her after she moved to Miami, gives us his view of the cruise operation: -

Late in 1949, Mr F Leslie Fraser, owner of Jamaican plantations and banana boats, and a personal friend of Dominican President Trujillo, chartered *Nuevo Dominicano* for a cruise service
between Miami and the West Indies. The vessel was given a much-needed refit, a coat of white paint, and arrived looking her best at Miami. The funnel was white with black top and the usual admirals flag insignia with five stars...

These Miami-based cruises began in January 1950 and were operated by the Eastern Shipping Corporation, of which F Leslie Fraser was sole owner.

During 1950-51, *Nuevo Dominicano* was manned as before by Dominican Navy deck and engine personnel. Capt Juan Beotegui Zamesa, of Basque descent, was in command and ran the ship well. None of the Dominicans spoke English but it didn't seem to matter except that the captain did not dare to entertain or dine with the English-speaking passengers.

The stewards were mainly Jamaican veterans of the Canadian steamers *Lady Drake* and *Lady Somers*, sunk during World War II. Food and service proved excellent during this period. The purser's department and the cruise director were Americans and somewhat made up for the Dominican shortage of English.

The "New York Times" reported on April 16 that, starting in the spring of 1950, the *Nuevo Dominicano* would offer more Nassau voyages: -

The *Nuevo Dominicano*, which made two Miami-Nassau cruises each month during the winter, has inaugurated a spring and summer schedule which includes six stops at Nassau each month. The vessel will visit Nassau twice on her nine-day cruises, one to Ciudad Trujillo, the other to Kingston, Jamaica, stopping at Nassau on both outward and homeward legs. The vessel also will make two Miami-Nassau cruises each month, with a two-day stop in Nassau.

This new program of alternating Nassau cruises with Nassau calls on her longer voyages allowed the Eastern Shipping Corp to boast of a "Regular Weekly Sailing to and from Nassau." This was true as fas as it went, but one week the sailing was her normal cruise departure on Monday and the next week it was the Nassau weekend cruise leaving on Friday. Agents and tour operators such as Fort Lauderdale Travel Service and Delray Beach Travel Service, the latter of which was also advertising Nassau by Bahamas Airways from Palm Beach, included Eastern's Nassau cruises in their own brochures: -
Nassau Weekend Steamer Cruises via s.s. *Nuevo Dominicano*.  
Departing Miami Alternate Fridays 5 pm  
Returning Miami Following Mondays 8 am  
From $49.00 per person (plus taxes)

Fraser's participation in the cruise trade helped to bring the number of passengers sailing from Miami back up to 61,000 in 1950, almost back to the 1937-38 level of 66,458, when there had been many more ships sailing. This was mainly because the *Nuevo Dominicano* now sailed year-round. She had become very popular, filling for example for a July weekend cruise with Elks on convention, and on a similar cruise in September with the mayor of Miami and members of his city commission. Miss Fort Lauderdale 1950 travelled on a 4-day Nassau cruise in June, a prize for having won the title, posing on deck before the ship sailed from Miami.

**The "Ciudad Trujillo"**

While the Eastern Shipping Corp was busy selling cruises on the *Nuevo Dominicano* from its office at Pier 3 in Miami, the Dominican Line was booking her cargo spaces. Meanwhile, the Dominicans also purchased and renamed the *Colister*, a fact that was duly noted by the "New York Times" on May 7, 1950: -

The 1,712-ton freighter *Ciudad Trujillo*, formerly the British ship *Colister*, will arrive here tomorrow on her first voyage under the flag of the Dominican Republic, it was announced yesterday by Rohner, Gehrig & Co, agents.

The ship, now owned by the Flota Mercante Dominicana, which also owns the *Nuevo Dominicano*, will continue the route she has been on for the last several months between New York and Dominican ports. She will sail from here every three weeks on the six-day voyage to Trujillo City. In addition to her crew of twenty-two men, under the command of Capt H Jeffcoat, there are accommodations for ten passengers.

The *Ciudad Trujillo*, once *Farnorth*, had joined the *Nuevo Dominicano*, once *New Northland*, under Dominican flag and assisted in transporting supplies for construction projects in the Dominican Republic. But the *Ciudad Trujillo*’s passenger accommodation had been reduced over the years from the several dozen that she had
carried as the *Farnorth* down to just ten now.

**Famous Passengers**

The *Nuevo Dominicano*’s original 12-day cruises had left Miami’s Pier 3 every other Saturday for Kingston, Montego Bay and of course Ciudad Trujillo, with fares starting at $240. And between cruises, she had been on the Miami-Nassau run, with a 2-day sailing every other Thursday at 4 pm, from $49 round-trip. In January 1951, the 9-day cruises that had alternated with her 4-day cruises cruises to Nassau were replaced with 10-night cruises to Jamaica that alternated with 11-night cruises to the Dominican Republic, with both cruises calling at Haiti. The Nassau calls on the longer cruises now became outward only but the "regular weekly sailing" to Nassau was still advertised "on alternate Mondays and Fridays."

The *Nuevo Dominicano*’s most famous passengers were probably screen actor Clark Gable and his wife, who travelled to Nassau for a golfing holiday in December 1950 and returned to Miami on January 8, 1951. The newspapers reported their passing, on the way to New York and then home to California, and the Dominican Republic tourist authorities took pains to record this visit in a guide called simply "Dominican Republic": -

> The *Nuevo Dominicano*, formerly the *New Northland*, compares favorably with any first class cruise ship. Quarters are kept immaculately clean. Meals are excellent. And services under the direction of the colorful Andy Gattuso, cruise director, are quite superior. The recent trip over from Nassau by Mr and Mrs Clark Gable reflects the class of trade the ship is serving. It is most popular with professional and school people, and like all cruise ships, provides plenty of life for the lively, and plenty of leisure for the lazy.

Another of her passengers, however, William Dayton of Arlington, Virginia, who travelled to Nassau not long afterwards, had a somewhat different memory of what was his honeymoon cruise: -

> In 1951 my wife and I, as newlyweds, travelled on this vessel from Miami to Nassau and back. At that time this British-built ship had apparently seen better days. The stateroom was not air-conditioned and was cooled by an ancient electric fan which threatened to self-destruct at any time. The instructions for
putting on life jackets and going to the lifeboats were in Spanish. I recall seeing a larger-than-life portrait of Trujillo.

On our return trip the ship developed a severe steam leak, which stopped us for about an hour. When I asked a crewmember what the problem was, he replied "Maquina muy mala." Altogether it was a memorable voyage.

Nevertheless, Dayton remembered his short cruise to Nassau with fondness. On her longer voyages, as the Nuevo Dominicano approached Kingston, the Jamaica Fruit & Shipping Co, the same firm that had represented Clarke's North Star and Seaway Line's New Northland, usually advertised any open space. A typical notice, appearing in the "Daily Gleaner" on February 9, 1951, read as follows:

Eastern Shipping Corporation. s.s. Nuevo Dominicano, sailing for Miami via Port au Prince, tomorrow, 10th February, has limited passenger accommodation available. For further particulars apply: Jamaica Fruit & Shipping Co Ltd

In an account from one of her longer cruises, taken from the memoirs of Vincent Livelli, a musician on board, the mood in Haiti was summed up on the event of his first arrival in Port au Prince:

In 1951, we were on our maiden voyage to Haiti. Fascinated by the amateur films of Voodoo brought to us in 1945 by Maya Deren, we had expected to be welcomed by drumming, a rumba band as in Havana, or a steel band, as we glided doucement over the calm, pitch-dark water of the harbor. We had arrived around midnight when all was asleep, wrapped in dark shadows, with mysterious mountains whose heights were well hidden and inestimable. How were we to know until morning that the casino operators, experienced in showmanship, had installed a red carpet that began at the foot of our gangplank. They had hired for our shore excursions taxi drivers and pretty guides that knew some English, eliminating those who spoke only creole. The casino croupiers and table men were from France, the menu was select, printed in both languages, Château Margaux and the rest were available, along with Haitian absinthe, illegal as toxic in America. Chanel No 5 was in the air and an aperitif was extended to the ships officers aboard the s.s. Dominicano. But who would have thought that in the stillness of a pitch-black late-night arrival, as we silently made for our mooring inch by
inch, that we would hear coming across the harbor Claude Debussy's Claire de Lune.

Indeed, Port au Prince did have a big new casino, the Casino International d'Haiti, right on the harbour, complete with dining, dancing in an open air ballroom swept by breezes from the bay, and gambling. It also spawned a travelling jazz band, the Orchestre Casino International. But gambling also played an important role in Trujillo's Dominican Republic, where many hotels had casinos, and apparently as well on board the *Nuevo Dominicano*, where Livelli commented on the influence of organized crime: -

Out of Dania, Florida, where they controlled Jai Alai and dog races as well as the Gulfstream Racetrack, the mob succeeded in placing a foothold aboard the s.s. *Nuevo Dominicano* in the form of a shipboard casino consisting of three restored one-armed bandits. These relics were encrusted with barnacles, having been brought to the surface from the bottom of the Hudson River where Mayor LaGuardia had thrown them.

Whatever was behind the slot machines, and perhaps they were even the original ones installed by Earl Stein, the Eastern Shipping Corp had successfully inaugurated year-round cruises from Miami. Meanwhile, another post card, mailed from to friends in Omaha, Nebraska, on January 25, 1952, reflected the service being offered by Eastern when it said, "Greeting you all from Kingston, Jamaica. Rather nice little boat, Summer time, here. Rex."

But at the end of three years it was decided to end the charter on the *Nuevo Dominicano*. Netherland-Brown picks up the story: -

For three years, except for occasional mechanical problems, all went well for the *Nuevo Dominicano*, but with a capacity of only 177 passengers, there was not much room for profit. Cargo was carried gratis for the Dominican Government as part of the charter agreement, and this left Eastern Shipping and Mr Fraser paying the bills. The charter expired at the end of 1952, and was not renewed.

One of the last groups the *Nuevo Dominicano* carried for Eastern Shipping Corp was 100 delegates of the Florida Accountants Association, who travelled to Nassau in late November. The *Nuevo Dominicano*'s days with the Eastern Shipping Corp finished with a bang, though, as related by the "St Petersburg Times" on December
More than 1,200 Florida residents took part in the special Nassau cruises offered by the s.s. *Nuevo Dominicano* during November and December. According to Victor Puig, general agent of the line, the response to special Nassau cruises for Floridians "rather scared him." He announced two cruises for November, and when they filled in four days, he scheduled six more. Even with the last cruise he had a waiting list of nearly 50 persons and because of this enthusiastic response the cruises for Floridians will be resumed next fall. Meanwhile the s.s. *Nuevo Dominicano* has resumed her regular all-year schedule of three-day Nassau and 11-day West Indies cruises, sailing fortnightly on Friday and Monday.

It was Puig who took over at the end of the Eastern charter. As manager of the Southeastern Terminal & Steamship Company, a company that Fraser also controlled, he had operated a fleet of banana boats and previous to that had been with the West India Fruit & Steamship Co. Puig had succeeded Eastern's traffic manager Frank Chase, a former United Fruit Co executive who had moved on to another firm.

Fraser's absence from the cruise business would only be temporary, however. During three full years of cruising from Miami the *Nuevo Dominicano* had not only become the first year-round Miami-based cruise ship, but she had also allowed Eastern Shipping Corp to gain some valuable experience and establish its cruising credentials. The ship Clarke had used as a base for winter cruising from Florida twenty-five years earlier had proven herself as a model for year-round Caribbean cruising.

**A New Jamaica Contract**

With Fraser no longer on the scene, a new Jamaican contract was awarded in 1953 to the Arnold Bernstein Shipping Company of New York, whose 5,596-ton 300-passenger *Silver Star* had first arrived in Miami in June 1952 to trade to other Caribbean ports. On December 20, 1952, the "Daily Gleaner" revealed the details in an article headed "Direct Jamaica-Miami Ship Line Soon." In it, F H Roberston remembered the superb service once offered by the *North Star*: -
Jamaica will again be linked with Miami, Florida, by a direct passenger service during the coming tourist season, after a lapse of 14 years. This announcement was made yesterday by the tourist commissioner, Mr F H Robertson.

"Ever since the termination of the war the Tourist Board had been endeavouring to replace the pre-war service which was operated between Miami and Jamaica by the s.s. North Star of the Clarke Steamship Company and which contributed a considerable volume of traffic to our tourist trade at that time," he said...

Negotiations have been completed with the Bernstein Shipping Line to operate the s.s. Silver Star on regular direct sailings this season from Miami to Kingston, the ship remaining in Kingston for a full day and night and making the trip back to Miami with a call at Nassau.

The service Clarke had offered with its North Star had made quite an impact on Robertson. But possibly because the Seaway Line had gone out of business, he seemed to have forgotten that the New Northland had made fortnightly calls at Jamaica in 1947-48 and had gone on to do the same later as Nuevo Dominicano, although alternating with Ciudad Trujillo meant that sailings had not been as frequent.

Compared to the North Star, the Silver Star, a Swiss-owned German-crewed ex-British landing ship converted in Belgium, had a chequered career, interrupted by engine breakdowns and labour disputes, and eventually her sale to Argentina. Nevertheless, there were times during this period when all three ships, Silver Star, Nuevo Dominicano and Florida, were in port together in Miami.

**The Dominican Republic Steamship Line**

Meanwhile, while Fraser reconsidered his plans, Carl Netherland-Brown recounted the balance of the Nuevo Dominicano's career: -

In order to continue the service, the Dominican Government formed the Dominican Republic Steamship Line. This was made to appear as a private company, and a Cuban national was placed in charge. Unwisely, the Dominican naval personnel were withdrawn and a mixed crew took over the deck and engine
With the *Silver Star* having arrived, the *Nuevo Dominicano* no longer called at Jamaica, but ran 11-day winter cruises on alternate Mondays from Miami to Nassau, Ciudad Trujillo and Port-au-Prince, starting at $195, and 3-night Friday weekend cruises from Miami to Nassau from $54. The 11-day cruises also offered a short one-way passage from Miami to Nassau.

The line still did well with occasional charters as well. "Trucking News," for example, reported on one of her Nassau cruises returning to Miami in 1953: -

One hundred and twenty-nine boardmen and their wives on their way to the quarterly Board of Governors meeting of the Regular Common Carrier Conference docked here aboard the chartered cruise ship *s.s. Nuevo Dominicano*, January 17, two days before their four-day conference in Miami.

From July through September, she offered 3-day cruises, every Monday and Friday at 5 pm, from Miami to Nassau. She also ran an 11-day month-end cruise in July and August and then no more were planned until the winter season in late December. In May, and again in October, she would make a one-way trip to Ciudad Trujillo, returning to Miami a month or so later.

Although these things are always subjective, an indication of the standard of operation of the *Nuevo Dominicano* without Fraser can perhaps be gauged from a post card sent by one Phil Kalver to the Burger Travel Service of Youngstown, Ohio, during this period: -

Dear Lou & Irv, Don't book anyone on the *s.s. Nuevo Dominicano*. The ship is infested with rats, ants, and cockroaches, and the food is plain lousy and in very short variety. The Dominicans are not yet ready for the Americans.

The new management was not only failing in passenger service, but maintenance standards had begun to drop too. Beginning six months after the announcement of their Nassau cruise successes, Netherland-Brown began to recount what happened next: -

No ship should have had to endure the embarrassment *Nuevo Dominicano* suffered in 1953. "Lloyd's Casualty Lists" recorded
her moments of woe with regularity: -


After repairs, the Classroom Teachers National Conference, an annual event previously held on college campuses, took place for the first time on board ship when she left Miami on July 6. Taking over the *Nuevo Dominicano* for her 11-night cruise to Nassau, Ciudad Trujillo, Port au Prince and Havana, one of the teachers journals reported boarding the ship on a hot Miami summer day: -

In Miami, Florida, 169 sweltering teachers waited to board the s.s. *Nuevo Dominicano*, which would be home for twelve wonderful days. Finally, the heat and waiting were forgotten as the ship's orchestra played "Anchors Aweigh" signaling our departure. Believe it or not, this was the 10th Annual Classroom Teachers Conference.

It was not long before she was in trouble again. Netherland-Brown continues his review of "Lloyd's Casualty List": -


When she arrived in Miami that day, the "Miami Daily News" carried the story under the heading "Voyagers Demand Cruise Ship Probe": -

The disabled cruise ship s.s. *Nuevo Dominicano* was towed to port in Miami today, and some of the 159 passengers demanded an investigation of their treatment. The passengers complained that they were not provided with food, water or sanitary facilities during the 18 hours the vessel tossed without power in the Gulf Stream.

A breakdown of the main fuel pump was said by a company spokesman to have disabled the ship 42 miles east of Miami.

Cmdr John B Lyman, chief of the Merchant Marine Safety Division, Coast Guard, ordered an immediate investigation into
the seaworthiness of the ship. He said the probe was started soon after the ship docked and that it would not be allowed to sail on schedule at 5 pm today unless it was found to be in perfect sailing condition.

The passengers, many of whom were seasick, told of two fires which broke out during the night. Mrs Dorothy Mauldin of Marietta GA said the two crewmen woke her at 2 am to tell her about the fire. "They had life preservers on," she said. Mrs June Matthews of Houston, Tex, said she hadn't had a glass of water in more than 24 hours. A grievance petition was circulated among passengers demanding an immediate investigation of the lack of adequate sanitary and water facilities after the vessel became disabled.

Victor Puig, general agent for the Dominican Republic Steamship Co, said the liner became disabled when the main fuel pump broke, causing a loss of steam. He said the ship was repaired soon after arrival, however, and would sail at 5 pm today with a full complement for an 11-day cruise in the Caribbean.

The vessel, with 86 crewmen aboard, was towed to the Government Cut by Coast Guard cutter Androscoggin. Two tugboats took over there and brought the ship in. The ship arrived at the sea buoy off Miami Beach about 2 am today, but the tugs were unable to reach her until 6 am because of choppy seas and strong winds off the coast...

The Nuevo Dominicano was 26 hours late in arriving in Miami. She had been due at 8 am yesterday after leaving Nassau at 5 pm Sunday. Ordinarily, the cruise takes one night for the 142 miles between Miami and Nassau. The steamship company heard first learned of the breakdown at 3 am yesterday. Puig said he made every effort to hire a commercial tug to tow the ship to port, then turned to the Coast Guard as a last resort.

The Androscoggin, captained by Cmdr Randolph Ridgely, left Miami at 12:35 pm yesterday, and reached the vessel at 4:30 pm. The tow to Government Cut took about ten hours...

Capt Paul E Ruel, commander of the Nuevo Dominicano .. was unavailable for comment on the cause of the breakdown. The captain was asleep when the ship arrived in Miami. Officials said he had been up since the fuel pump broke down. "He's got to
take the ship out at 5 pm," they said.

Meanwhile, the Coast Guard inspection found the *Nuevo Dominicano* seaworthy and she managed to sail that day on her 11-day cruise with a passenger list of 139. The failure that had affected the previous cruise seemed to have been the same problem she had in August 1947, when, still named *New Northland*, she had been operating for Seaway Line. Netherland-Brown "Lloyd's Casualty" notes continued six weeks later: -

September 21, 1953: *Nuevo Dominicano* departed Miami for Nassau and Ciudad Trujillo. Late in evening of September 24, vessel stopped owing to lack of fuel. Tug *Rescue* towed *Nuevo Dominicano* to Miami, arriving September 29. Survey showed no defects.

At this point, the US Coast Guard suspended the passenger certificate and required a general refit of the safety equipment. The Dominican Republic Steamship Line announced to the press that the *Nuevo Dominicano* would be sent to Rio Haina dockyards in the Dominican Republic for complete overhauling, and would depart from Miami within the week. During the next few days, the ship was stripped of furniture, linen, silverware and china. Most of the crew was sent home by air.

The 753-ton *Rescue* was a salvage tug of the Merritt-Chapman & Scott Corporation, usually based at Kingston, Jamaica. Now, however, Miami port director Capt Charles Olsen came to his own conclusion and his view was carried by the "Miami Daily News" on September 30, 1953, in a story headed "Cruise Ship Faces End of Career": -

The *Nuevo Dominicano* has made its last trip as a passenger cruise ship out of Miami, Capt Charles A Olsen, city port director, said today. "It's suffering from old age," Olsen said of the ship which last night came in on the end of a tow line for the second time in less than two months.

Olsen said the Coast Guard would give the ship a thorough inspection but that "it had made it's last trip." Olsen said the 27-year-old ship with 23 passengers on board had a mechanical breakdown after leaving Port au Prince, Haiti, and was taken in tow by the salvage tug *Rescue*.

Victor Puig, official of the line operating the cruise ship, said
cause of the breakdown would not be determined until today. On August 10, the Nuevo Dominicano broke a fuel pump after leaving Nassau with 159 passengers and had to be towed 60 miles to Miami.

A month later the ship suffered a breakdown in its boiler draft system at sea but made Miami under its own power. It was under a cloud of smoke so dense that some observers on shore thought the ship was on fire.

Netherland-Brown gives us a final view of her last departure from Miami, where as the brand-new New Northland she had first arrived twenty-six and a half years earlier to start cruising to Nassau and Havana: -

Under a cloud of black smoke, Nuevo Dominicano, manned by her skeleton crew, sailed slowly out of Miami on October 9, 1953. Waterfront observers wondered if it would be for the last time.

Under the auspices of the Dominican Republic Steamship Line and the command of a relief captain, the Nuevo Dominicano's October 9 departure from Miami, in ballast for Ciudad Trujillo, would indeed be her last trip from Miami, where she had first arrived on January 9, 1927, twenty-six years and nine months to the day earlier.

**The Loss of a Good Ship**

On October 10, just a day out of Miami, the Nuevo Dominicano ran aground near Nuevitas, a port on the northeast coast of Cuba that had once been served by the Munson Lines. Netherland-Brown once more recounts the scene: -

Within twenty-four hours she was in trouble again, reportedly aground off Nuevitas, Cuba, in latitude 22º north and longitude 77º west. The salvage tug Cable was sent out from Key West, and on October 13, Nuevo Dominicano was refloated. A survey showed she was not leaking, and she proceeded at slow speed down the north coast of Cuba.

On October 17, 1953, Nuevo Dominicano ran aground again, this time on Punta Guarico, near the colonial town of Baracoa, and not far from the eastern tip of Cuba. This was a very rocky and
exposed coastline, and the vessel was reported as hard ashore, pounding, and abandoned by her crew. The exact position was in latitude 20°38" north and longitude 74°45" west.

The salvage firm of Merritt-Chapman and Scott sent their tug Rescue from Kingston, Jamaica, on a "no cure, no pay" basis. Upon her arrival at the scene of the wreck, northeast winds of gale force were blowing, and Nuevo Dominicano was pounding heavily, and swept by the seas. She could not be boarded until the weather moderated on October 20th. Compartments not leaking were intentionally flooded so that the vessel would rest more easily on the bottom, hopefully avoiding pounding and further damage.

On October 27th, the weather improved. A survey revealed that the bottom damage was not too severe, and the vessel was pumped out. Leaks were easily controlled, but efforts to refloat Nuevo Dominicano failed. The weather remained good until November 10, but the vessel remained aground. On the 12th, the weather turned bad, but salvage efforts continued, and Nuevo Dominicano was moved fifteen feet. She was also swung seventy degrees.

Little by little, the vessel was dragged off the reef through the use of anchors and cables. At last, on 26 November 1953, Nuevo Dominicano was refloated. She was towed a short distance, and was anchored in semi-protected waters between Moa Island and the coast of Cuba. A survey of her bottom, which was heavily damaged, had just been completed when Nuevo Dominicano suddenly went down, taking the salvage pumps with her. Within five minutes she was in her grave, resting on her side in one hundred feet of water at the bow, but due to the steep slope of the seabed, her stern was near the surface.

The Cable and Rescue were both owned by Merritt-Chapman, who had now come to the rescue of the Nuevo Dominicano three times in three weeks, the first time having been when the Rescue towed her into Miami in late September. In the four days between her release from her grounding near Nuevitas and grounding again at Punta Guarico, she had only travelled about 170 nautical miles and there was speculation that she had been deliberately grounded for the insurance money, said to be something between $800,000 and $1 million. The "Miami Daily News" had reported it this way in a front page story entitled "Jinx Ship Aground - $1,000,000 At Stake" on November 1: -
The cruise ship *Nuevo Dominicano*- which on several occasions balked at reaching port - is now obstinately resisting efforts to pry her loose from a coral reef off the eastern tip of Cuba.

But this time, an insurance payment of approximately $1,000,000 is at stake in the salvage operation, the "Miami Daily News" learned yesterday.

Salvage crews haven't been able to float her in two weeks of trying, however...

Since the vessel ran aground, shipping circles in Miami have buzzed with stories about the *Nuevo Dominicano* and the unusual mishaps which have befallen her and her passengers.

One report was that the crew had abandoned the ship to the insurance underwriters who have issued policies totalling about $1,000,000 on the ship.

The government of the Dominican Republic or high officials, including General Rafael Trujillo, "strong man" of the government, are generally believed to be the owners of the vessel.

Victor Puig, general agent in Miami for the Dominican Republic Steamship Line, said yesterday that he "believed" the government was the owner of the line but he wasn't certain. "I'm just the agent here," he explained.

Pedro Blandino, Dominican consul general in Miami, said his government is not the owner; that the Dominican Republic Steamship Line is a private company...

Puig said it was true that the crew had abandoned the ship, but it was not exactly true that the vessel had been abandoned to the insurance underwriters. "If the ship is salvaged, the company will take her back."

In Miami shipping circles, it was stated by several ship brokers that the insurance on the *Nuevo Dominicano* ran between $900,000 and $1,000,000 and that if the insurance companies are required to write the vessel off as a total loss, the payment will come at a most opportune time for the Dominican
government.

According to some sources, the Trujillo government is facing a critical shortage of US dollars.

Her final end was reported in the "New York Times" on November 26, 1953, under the heading "Jinxed Liner Sinks at Anchor in Cuba": -

After a successful salvage operation, the empty passenger liner *Nuevo Dominicano* rolled over and "died" in southern waters on Thursday night, it was reported here yesterday. No one was injured.

The 3,445-ton flagship of the Dominican Merchant Marine had gone aground off the north coast of Cuba on Oct 17, but the marine salvage department of Merritt-Chapman Scott successfully refloated her on Thursday. She was taken to the nearby roadstead of Puerto Cayo Moa, forty miles from Cape Maysi, the eastern tip of the island.

While at anchor for an underwater examination to see how much temporary repair work was needed to tow her to Jacksonville, Fla, the little liner capsized and sank. Evidently her bottom had been torn open too much for the portable pumps and beaching gear aboard to save her.

For the 296-passenger steamship it was the last in a series of misfortunes that had befallen her this year. In August she ran out of fuel while on her regular cruise route from Miami to Hispaniola. On Sept 27 she was again taken in tow after an engine breakdown, and on Oct 12 she ran aground.

The liner began life as the *Northland*... She was later renamed *New Northland*. Finally, she was purchased by the Government of Dominica [sic] and named *Nuevo Dominicano* in 1948. For a short while she cruised out of New York before going on the southern run. She was the largest ship ever to fly the Dominican colors.

A more colourful account is given in Vincent Livelli's memoirs. Although the loss occurred in 1953 and not 1952, and she was not being towed away for scrapping, it reflected the kind of thing that was being said on the street around the time of her loss: -
In 1952, the s.s. *Nuevo Dominicano*, on its way to be scrapped, was sunk, typically, for its insurance, off the coast of Cuba. Lloyd's of London, wise to mob crimes, sent divers down and discovered open sea cocks. They put the captain and others in jail in the Dominican Republic. The crew had been classified as being part of La Flota Mercante de la República Dominicana. They were classified as part of the navy and were paid one dollar a day. She was nicknamed a pirate ship, with her one hundred passengers and crew members dressed as pirates at the Captains Dinner on the last night out. With the loss of the ship, gone were the evenings in Haiti spent dancing to Cole Porter’s 1938 *Begin the Beguine*, drinking Five-Star Babancourt rum at Cabane Chachoune in Petionville, all now completely erased except in memories.

The master was indeed jailed and later released. And other sources say the Canadian insurers refused to pay out until they were threatened with losing all their Dominican business. Because the ships stern was in relatively shallow water, her screw and some steel from the after end were later salvaged, but the rest of her eventually had to be dynamited when a new port facility was opened at Moa.

This was a sad end for a very fine ship. During her career, the *New Northland*, later *Nuevo Dominicano*, had spent nine pre-war seasons sailing from Florida, one winter on her trade exhibition cruise to the West Indies and most of seven years post-war sailing year-round from Florida - in all, sixteen seasons in Florida. Although she had been built to cruise the St Lawrence, she had become the pioneer cruise ship from Florida, most particularly from Miami. She had been the first ship to offer 7-day cruises in 1927, the most luxurious ship yet on the Miami-Nassau run from 1928 to 1931, the first all-white cruise ship to sail from Miami, in 1935, and the first year-round cruise ship from Miami, in 1950.

In late 1954, the Flota Mercante Dominicana acquired the 7,707-ton *Canberra*, which had been carrying immigrants from Europe to Quebec and Montreal for the Greek Line, and renamed her *Espana*. Rather than cruise, however, the *Espana* would carry sugar to Spain and return with immigrants for the Dominican Republic. The master of the *Nuevo Dominicano*, Capt Zanesa, who had been on leave at the time of her loss, was assigned to the *Espana*.

In January 1955, Flota Mercante Dominicana signed an agreement with Thomas J Stevenson, who had previously headed up
the New York & Cuba Mail Line, once the Ward Line. As well as taking a 51 per cent interest in the Dominican Line, management of its fleet was assigned to T J Stevenson & Co Inc in New York. The Dominican Steamship Line, as it became, lasted into the 1970s, with its ships still carrying twelve passengers each on their runs between New York and Santo Domingo, as Ciudad Trujillo became known once more.

In the cargo fleet, the 2,060-ton Nuevo Dominicano II and 3,435-ton Nuevo Dominicano III, renamed Cibao and Fundacion, had been joined in 1953 by the 3,030-ton Rhadames and 3,028-ton Angelita, sister ships named for two of Trujillo's children. The new ships replaced the Yoro and the Ciudad Trujillo. The latter had become Fraser's Lewis Fraser, named after one of his own sons, in 1952. This was the second time this ship had been owned by a Fraser as it was the old Fraser Steamship Line that had first brought her south in 1937.

But most importantly and somewhat ironically, the Nuevo Dominicano had sunk not far from Fraser's own Cuban plantation at Baracoa, and her loss gave him some new ideas. While the Dominicans had failed miserably in their attempt at operating a cruise line, he had the experience and know how needed to run a good cruise business.

The Eastern Story

The story ends here as far as any direct link to Clarke is concerned, but Fraser, through his Eastern Shipping Corp, had decided to look for a ship to fill the gap left by the loss of the Nuevo Dominicano. In May 1954, a year and a half after ending the charter on the Nuevo Dominicano, Fraser bought Eastern Steamship Lines' Yarmouth, for $500,000, and registered her to the McCormick Shipping Corporation, a Panamanian concern that carried his wife's maiden name. Eastern was Fraser's operating company, but McCormick was the vehicle he used to own his ships and hotels, having recently acquired two hotels in Jamaica as well. He renamed her the Yarmouth Castle and on June 18, 1954, she began a series of 9-day Miami, Jamaica and Haiti cruises that alternated with 4-day Miami, Nassau and Havana cruises.

Later that year, at the request of the Bahamian Government, which no longer had the services of the Nuevo Dominicano, he renamed his ship Queen of Nassau (ii) and painted her white for a two-year contract to run between Miami and Nassau. Following the same
schedule as the *Nuevo Dominicano* the previous year, the *Queen of Nassau* left Miami for Nassau every Tuesday and Friday at 6 pm, with cruise fares starting at $50 in an inside cabin or $59 in an outside cabin. If Fraser had not been able to make money with the *Nuevo Dominicano* and her 177 berths, he would certainly be able to do so with the 500-passenger *Queen of Nassau*.

The "Miami Daily News" carried the story on August 8, 1954, under the heading "Miami-Nassau Travel Ties Firmed For The Winter":

Starting Labor Day, Miami and Nassau will be linked by the best seas and air transportation system of any domestic and foreign cities in this hemisphere. New service in the rapidly growing traffic between the two "favorite neighbours" will be the twice-weekly cruises of the 500-passenger liner the s.s. *Queen of Nassau*.

Lately known as the s.s. *Yarmouth Castle*, the newly-christened *Nassau* will leave Miami every Tuesday and Friday evening from her berth at Pier 3.

Meanwhile, she will continue her four-day cruises to Nassau and Havana. Tomorrow the next to the last of the nine-day cruises will leave for Nassau, Haiti and Jamaica. Last of these cruises will be made on Aug 23.

Simultaneous with the announcement of the new contract between the McCormick Shipping Corp, owners of the s.s. *Yarmouth Castle*, under which name she is now operating, and the Bahamas Development Board, was the announcement of the plans of the P&O Steamship Co.

The P&O, owner and operator of the s.s. *Florida*, has just continued plans for continuing the present weekly cruises to Nassau and the twice-weekly cruises to Havana. The *Florida* will go into drydock in Jacksonville on Sept 13. She will return to the Havana runs on Sept 29 and renews the Nassau cruises on Oct 1, according to Bruce Preble, assistant general passenger agent of the line.

The Friday schedules of the two cruisers will provide accommodations for 1,000 passengers, 500 on each ship. Both have air-conditioned public rooms and most of their rooms are
outside.

At the end of 1954, Fraser reunited the two sister ships by acquiring the *Evangeline* after she closed out Eastern Steamship Lines' last season on the Boston and Yarmouth run. In November she was purchased by the Volusia Steamship Company, a Liberian company controlled by William R Lovett of Jacksonville, owner of the Winn-Dixie supermarket chain. These two men had first met when Fraser had sold bananas to his supermarkets. This was only short-term, however, as by August 1955 she was under Fraser ownership, with the McCormick Shipping Corp. The purchase of these two ships spelt the end for the old Eastern Steamship Lines as Fraser's Eastern Shipping Corp now took them over to operate out of Miami.

While the *Queen of Nassau* took the Miami-Nassau run, Fraser had longer cruises in mind for the *Evangeline*. With new air conditioning installed in her lounges and half her cabins, on December 22, 1954, she began a series of 10-day cruises with itineraries alternating between Ciudad Trujillo, Kingston and Havana and Ciudad Trujillo, Port au Prince and Santiago de Cuba. After her first season, however, she reverted to the style of itinerary previously offered by the *Nuevo Dominicano* and *Yarmouth Castle*, 10-day cruises to Port au Prince, Ciudad Trujillo, Kingston and Port Antonio, Jamaica, and 4-day cruises to Nassau and Havana. At the same time the Jamaica Tourist Board paid Eastern a subsidy, which was to be used for advertising its services between the United States and Jamaica. Using the same system that had been used for the *North Star* before the war, Jamaica paid £7,200 for the *Evangeline*’s twelve winter cruises in 1954/55, and £11,750 was budgeted for her 1955/56 program. The actual amounts were paid on the submission of advertising tear sheets.

By 1955, therefore, things had come full circle. Fraser's two-ship operation was similar to Clarke's pre-war Miami operation, with one ship operating longer cruises and the other one shorter cruises to Nassau. The difference was that while Clarke had run a seasonal operation from Miami, Eastern's was year-round. Unfortunately, on November 20, 1955, Lovett's Volusia Steamship Co, through which the *Evangeline* had passed, lost its 3,344-ton war-built *Daytona* and crew of 24 off Massachusetts while carrying gypsum from Cape Breton Island to Philadelphia. A little over three weeks later, on December 13, her place in the fleet was taken by a banana boat, when Volusia purchased the 3,043-ton motorship *Quercy* from the French Line, renaming her *Arctic Reefer*. 
Although the Yarmouth and Evangeline were based in Florida, they also ran a number of 7- and 12-day summer cruises from Washington between 1957 and 1961. The 7-day cruises sailed to Nassau or to Bermuda and the 12-day ones to Nassau and Havana at first and later Nassau, Puerto Rico and the US Virgin Islands. Occasional cruises also left from New York.

The Yarmouth also went back to the Boston-Yarmouth run for one season in 1958, when the Canadian Government paid a subsidy to the Eastern Shipping Corp, but this was the last year any ship would operate on the old summer route. Her master in this service was Capt Paul Francoeur, a Canadian who had joined Eastern as a senior officer in 1954. Meanwhile, the Canadian Government was building a new drive-on ferry for Canadian National, which intended to operate it on a shorter route between Yarmouth and a new terminal at Bar Harbor, Maine.

Fraser continued to build his business. In 1959, he acquired the Arosa Star, the former Borinquen, buying her at auction for $512,000. He renamed her Bahama Star and promptly began advertising her as the largest cruise ship sailing from Miami. On December 29, 1959, "The "Evening Independent" in St Petersburg carried the story under the heading "Three-Day Miami-Nassau Trips Slated": -

Beginning Jan 1, three-day cruises from Miami to Nassau each Monday and Friday have been announced by Eastern Shipping Corp, general agents for the s.s. Bahama Star (formerly s.s. Arosa Star), one of the largest passenger ships to sail from Miami.

Cruises, with dock-to-dock service, are from Pier 3 in the heart of Miami direct to famed Bay Street in Nassau.

The Bahama Star is completely air conditioned, including all public space and every cabin, with hot and cold running water in every stateroom...

Low fares, beginning at $54 for the three-day cruise, include all meals and ship as hotel, even in port. For those who prefer to stay at a hotel in Nassau, the starting rate, round trip, is only $39, including two nights and four meals aboard ship...

In addition to the s.s. Bahama Star, Eastern Shipping Corp are general agents for the completely air-conditioned "Twin Sisters" -
s.s. *Evangeline* and s.s. *Yarmouth*, which cruise from Miami to the West Indies and South America. With three deluxe ships, all air conditioned from stem to stern, sailing on three, four, seven, 10, 12 and 13-day cruises there is a cruise to suit every whim.

Late in 1960, the McCormick Shipping Corp bought the 6,644-ton *Ariadne*, using the other ships as collateral. The *Ariadne* had been built in 1951 by Swan Hunter, in the same dock as the *New Northland* twenty-five years earlier, and had started cruising from New York to the West Indies for the Hamburg-American Line in late January 1959. Later, she had also cruised from New Orleans to the Amazon and Caribbean. The newly-acquired ship arrived at Miami from Southampton by way of Barbados, Trinidad, Kingston and Nassau in time for a 17-night Christmas cruise on December 21.

In May 1961, the new ship was registered to the Ariadne Shipping Co Ltd of Nassau, and for a while she carried both the letters "F" and "L" on her funnel, reflecting joint ownership by Fraser and Lovett. That summer she made a series of eight cruises from New York to Bermuda, as well as individual cruises from Boston, New Haven and Philadelphia. While the *Bahama Star* and *Ariadne* at first offered longer cruises, they eventually moved to the 3- and 4-day cycle, out of Miami and Port Everglades respectively. By the end of 1961, all of the *Ariadne*, *Bahama Star*, *Evangeline* and *Yarmouth* were owned by the McCormick Shipping Corp, as was the *Fleurus*, which Fraser acquired from the Anticosti Shipping Co.

**Fraser Sells Eastern**

Meanwhile, on May 27, 1961, an item in the "New York Times" recorded a change in the ownership of the Eastern Shipping Corporation: -

The Eastern Shipping Corporation, formerly controlled by the McCormick Shipping Corporation of Panama, has been acquired by W R Lovett of Jacksonville, Fla. Mr Lovett reported yesterday that the corporate name had been changed to Eastern Steamship Corporation. The company is general agent for the cruise ships *Evangeline*, *Yarmouth*, *Bahama Star* and *Ariadne*, which operate between Miami and the West Indies.

Where Fraser had liked the more British-sounding Eastern Shipping Corp, Lovett preferred the more American-sounding Eastern
Steamship Corporation. Three days after this announcement, Rafael Trujillo was assassinated in the Dominican Republic, bringing to an end a dictatorship that had lasted for thirty-one years.

By January 1962, Fraser had passed full control to William Lovett, a 71-year-old financier who was experienced in running banana boats himself. First had been the Yoro, acquired through Fraser in 1951, then the Arctic Reefer, in 1955. But the 1,459-ton British-built Cubahama, which his Suwanee Steamship Company purchased from Bahama Lines Ltd in 1959, was his first fruit ship. She had been built in Scotland in 1938 for Suwanee subsidiary Bahama Lines for the fruit trade between the Bahamas and New York, and Suwanee had been formed in 1933, at the same time as Fraser was getting started. Lovett also owned the Commodore Point Terminal in Jacksonville, from which the Seaway Line had operated the New Northland after the war.

Between 1945 and 1949, Bahama Lines had also owned the former St Lawrence trader Gaspé County, which it had sold to Venezuelan owners before she found her way to Trinidad. Like the Jean Brillant, the Gaspé County had traded from Miami each winter during the war, when she had first come to Bahama Lines' attention. In 1960, Suwanee had acquired the 7,210-ton cargo ship Mount McKinley, which was renamed Volusia in 1963. At its peak, Suwanee controlled nineteen ships trading worldwide and Lovett had a large map of the world in his office, on which small models of his ships could be moved about.

Unfortunately, Fraser died on July 22, 1962, only a few months after the sale, at the young age of 57. But Lovett apparently only took full control of Eastern after the Zim Israel Navigation Co Ltd of Haifa had shown an interest, presumably looking for a home for one of its smaller passenger ships. In November 1962, for example, Zim sent its 9,920-ton Jerusalem on a 7-day cruise from Miami to San Juan, St Thomas and Port au Prince, followed by a longer 48-day Mediterranean cruise with twelve days in Israel.

When Eastern finally did change hands the letter "F" for Fraser on the ships' funnels was replaced by "L" for Lovett. And by 1965, Lovett would rename the company once more, this time as Eastern Steamship Lines, just as the old Boston-based Eastern Steamship Corp had itself become Eastern Steamship Lines fifty years earlier. Some writers, confused by this and by the Yarmouth's return to her old Boston-Yarmouth route under Fraser in 1958, have concluded that the Miami company was the same as the Boston one, while others
surmised that it had bought the rights to the Eastern Steamship Lines name with the *Evangeline*, errors that have often been repeated.

Indeed, in February 1948, the Boston company had been advertising the *Evangeline* and *Yarmouth* on weekly departures, for Havana every Tuesday, 3½ days from $75, for Nassau every Saturday, 2½ days from $60, and for New York every Saturday, from $115 one-way and $160 round-trip. Although these sailings were advertised by Eastern Steamship Lines from Pier 2 in Miami, the ships had then still been under US flag, and, as with the *New Northland* in Jacksonville, union problems had caused their withdrawal by October 1948.

The new Eastern Steamship Lines was thus purely that of William Lovett. While the Miami company had operated its first cruises as the Eastern Shipping Corp with the *Nuevo Dominicano* in 1950, that had been two years later, and it was another four years before Fraser had bought the *Yarmouth* and *Evangeline*. Lovett’s change of name to Eastern Steamship Lines probably brought him a certain amount of goodwill, but it had taken him ten years to revive it.

Meanwhile, in 1963, the *Yarmouth* had been sold to another Miami company, Yarmouth Cruises Inc, and was soon joined by the *Evangeline*, which was renamed *Yarmouth Castle* to fit in with the Yarmouth Cruise Lines theme. These veterans were placed onto a new run that served Freeport as well as Nassau, on a schedule of four sailings a week. The *Yarmouth Castle*, of course, is best known now for the loss of eighty-seven lives in a fire off the Bahamas on the night of November 13, 1965.

**The End of the Peninsular & Occidental Steamship Co**

Eastern Steamship Lines had meanwhile kept the larger *Bahama Star* and *Ariadne*, but in 1968 it acquired the larger *New Bahama Star*, formerly Zim's *Jerusalem*, to replace the *Bahama Star*. Having failed to acquire Eastern, Zim had operated the *Jerusalem* from New York to Caribbean but in 1967 had chartered her to Peninsular & Occidental, where, as the *Miami* (ii), she replaced the *Florida*. However, on May 26, 1968, the "Miami Daily News reported that the ex-Israeli ship had found another new home. The story was entitled "New Name For Cruise Ship *Miami*":

The s.s. *Miami*, with a new look and a new name, will be back on the Miami scene in late fall for a Miami-Nassau cruise schedule.
Eastern Steamship Lines is retiring the s.s. *Bahama Star* and the s.s. *New Bahama Star*, formerly the s.s. *Miami*, will replace her.

This week, the s.s. *Miami* leaves for a European shipyard to undergo two-to-three million dollars of alterations and improvements. Her capacity will be increased to almost 1,000 passengers, public space will be changed to accommodate group and convention functions, and the air conditioning will be improved.

W R Lovett, President of Eastern Steamship Lines, said that the investment of two to three million dollars on improvements to the ship "will make her one of the finest ships on the high seas, devoted one hundred percent to passengers, carrying no automobiles or cargo."

The s.s. *Bahama Star*, which has carried approximately 325,000 passengers since January 1, 1960, from Miami to Nassau, will make her final cruise on November 1, 1968, from Miami to the Bahamas and the Caribbean.

The *New Bahama Star* was already the largest cruise ship sailing from Miami, but purchase by Eastern effectively meant the end of P&O, who had introduced the first *Miami* seventy years earlier, in 1898.

**Gotaas-Larsen Corporation**

Passenger numbers leaving Miami reached 188,000 in 1967 and 246,000 in 1968. In 1970, Lovett, now 79, sold out to Gotaas-Larsen Corporation of Norway, one-third owner of Royal Caribbean Cruise Lines, a company that was established in 1968. By then, the number of Miami passengers was 610,000 and growing but Lovett was quoted as saying that operation of his two cruise ships "was something of a headache." As well, Royal Caribbean was introducing three new ships to the Miami market in 1970-71 and others had also come onto the scene.

In 1972, Eastern's new Norwegian owners introduced its largest ship, the 24,458-ton *Emerald Seas*, acquired from Greek owners Chandris Lines, and partly in exchange for the smaller *Ariadne*. Gotaas-Larsen was involved in both Royal Caribbean and Eastern, but a conflict of interest was avoided by Royal Caribbean handling the longer-duration cruises while Eastern looked after the 3- and 4-day
market, now under its fourth name as Eastern Cruise Lines.

Miami passenger numbers exceeded the million mark in 1977 and Lovett died in 1978, at the age of 87. Ultimately, a merger of Eastern Cruise Lines, its West Coast affiliate Western Cruise Lines and Stardance Cruises led to another new firm, Admiral Cruises, in 1986. By 1986, forty years after Clarke had left Miami, the port was hosting three million passengers a year.

Meanwhile, as we have seen, Peninsular & Occidental's Miami- Havana ship Florida, the old 1930s neighbour of the New Northland, had also ended up running to Nassau. Having tried some weekend Miami-Nassau cruises in 1954, she had continued these when Eastern introduced the Queen of Nassau, giving Miami two Nassau departures every Friday. The Florida also offered two cruises a week to Havana, but the Cuban revolution would soon see her leave that trade altogether. Refitted, painted white with a buff funnel and re-flagged in Liberia, she switched to the Miami-Nassau run at the end of 1957, replacing the Queen of Nassau as the full-time ship. It had been thirty-two years since P&O's first Miami had come off the same run in 1925.

It seems the Bahamians were partial to white. Just as the New Northland went white in 1935, and the Queen of Nassau in 1954, the Florida, which had always had a black hull while serving Havana, had also now been painted white. After a decade of running to Nassau, the Florida would end up in Clarke's home port of Montreal, spending her last days at the World's Fair, Expo '67, as the floating hotel Le Palais Flottant, before being towed to Europe for scrapping. Her replacement, the Miami (ii), had meanwhile gone to Eastern in 1969 to become their New Bahama Star.

Admiral Cruises was taken over in early 1992 by Royal Caribbean Cruises, which decided to sell its older ships and to complete its "Future Seas" project as its 48,563-ton Nordic Empress. This was the first ship to be designed and built specifically for the Florida-Nassau short cruise market since Henry Flagler's Miami of 1898, the trade having been served traditionally by second-hand, seasonal or chartered tonnage.

The "North Star" Goes Trooping

Meanwhile, back in England, the former North Star had started a
new career that would see her last several years longer than the *New Northland*. At the end of the war, as the *Prince Henry*, she had been in a completely altered condition, a warship superstructure on a merchant ship hull. Gone were her long promenade decks, her lounges and most of her upper decks, and her gross tonnage was 5,576 tons, about 20 per cent less than when Clarke had owned her. Her sister ships, *Prince David* and *Prince Robert*, had been offered back to Canadian National, but they had declined.

In February 1946, while the *New Northland* was still trooping in West Africa, the *Prince Henry* returned to England after her duty as a headquarters ship in Germany. At this stage, Canada's War Assets Corporation sold her to the British Ministry of Transport for $500,000, the same price that Clarke had paid Canadian National in 1938. For about six months in 1946, therefore, the *New Northland* and the former *North Star* were both owned by the British Ministry of Transport. But now the *North Star* was about to go to work for the same Sea Transport Service that had been responsible for the *New Northland* in West Africa.

The *Prince Henry* went to Harland & Wolff's Southampton yard in April 1946 for conversion into a troopship, emerging in March 1947 as the *Empire Parkeston*, with the General Steam Navigation Co Ltd of London appointed managers. Her new name came from Parkeston Quay, the Continental passenger ship terminal at Harwich where she would now be based. From carrying 335 cruise passengers in all outside cabins before the war, she could now accommodate 995 officers and men. She had cabins for 182 officers, families and members of the women's services, while rows of bunks stacked three high accommodated 813 troops below decks. In her new role, she was given a black hull and grey superstructure with black funnels.

On April 4, 1947, by which time the *New Northland* had started cruising out of Jacksonville for Seaway Line and several new ships had been added to the Clarke fleet, the *Empire Parkeston* began overnight service between Harwich and Hook of Holland. Her role was to transport troops and mail for the British Army of Occupation on the Rhine, a service in which she would remain for fourteen years, the longest stretch of her career. Sometimes called a leave or furlough ship because of the troops she brought home on leave, she went into service opposite the 4,218-ton *Vienna*, managed by her former owners, the London North Eastern Railway, soon to be British Railways, and the 3,508-ton *Empire Wansbeck*, managed by Ellerman's Wilson Line Ltd.
The *Empire Parkeston* generally left Harwich just before midnight and arrived at Hook of Holland about 7 am the next morning, to connect with trains for Germany. She departed Hook later the same day, to arrive back at Harwich again about 10 pm. Barry Marchant, a driver with the Royal Sussex Regiment, remembered these ships from crossings he made in the 1950s:

The troop deck was way down in the bowels of the vessel where the accommodation consisted of rows and rows of narrow canvas bunks, three high, suspended from steel uprights by a short length of chain at foot and head ends. This was an overnight service and on arrival at the Hook we boarded a train for the journey across Holland, into Germany and eventually to our destination.

Fraser McKee and Robert Darlington, in their book "Three Princes Armed," gave a good summary of what was to follow for the former *North Star*:

*Empire Parkeston* continued on this rather monotonous back and forth service for almost 16 years, mostly making night crossings, which made seaman service in her not the most popular of the GSNC ships' service as it resulted in very rare nights at home for her crew. Due to all the military passengers and continuous trips, there was a considerable crew of 87, including 4 deck and 10 engineering officers, two military Masters-at-Arms for policing duties, and a permanent Dutch pilot to take them in and out of Hoek van Holland. She could carry 813 troops on the "bleak and gloomy" troop decks... As well there were cabins accommodating two to 11 persons for female troops, officers, families and traveling civilian officials. No meals were served to troops or passengers, but NAAFI (the familiar, to naval types, Navy, Army, Air Force Institute) provided a pay as you go canteen service. There were saloons forward for the men and aft for the officers and families, special rooms for mothers and infants, a fully staffed hospital, and "even the troop decks were air conditioned." To save money, as the crossing time was more than adequate, she usually operated with only two of her four boilers, sufficient for 16-17 knots.

In the context of General Steam Navigation, while the company operated a large fleet of coastal cargo ships, some of which would be chartered by Clarke in later years, its main operations around the
Thames consisted of day excursion steamers, many of whose crew could go home for the night. Longest-lived of these, the 2,061-ton *Royal Daffodil* and 1,851-ton *Royal Sovereign*, and the 1,472-ton *Queen of the Channel*, operated various day services from London to Gravesend, Southend, Ramsgate and Calais and would remain in service until 1966.

On Friday, January 19, 1952, the *Empire Parkeston* got a bit of excitement when she stood by in a North Sea gale twenty miles off the British coast as the 3,020-ton German four-masted training barque *Pamir*, with 40 German cadets, four British and one Italian, plus 46 crew on board, sent an urgent call after heavy seas had pounded off one of her anchors. Later the tall ship radioed that the weather had moderated and she would be able to proceed on her own. On September 21, 1957, however, the *Pamir*'s luck would run out when, carrying a cargo of grain from Buenos Aires to Hamburg, she sank in Hurricane Carrie off the Azores with only six survivors, four seamen and two cadets, out of 34 crew and 52 cadets.

Also in 1952, after the *Empire Parkeston* was in collision with the *Empire Wansbeck*, the Ministry chartered the *Charlton Star*, owned by the Charlton Steam Shipping Co Ltd of London, to stand in for the damaged *Empire Parkeston* while she underwent repairs from September to November. The *Charlton Star*, which ran between Tilbury and Hook of Holland, was none other than the former *Elisabethville*, which had operated together with the *New Northland* in West Africa. By now, Charlton Shipping, owned by the Chandris family of Greece, had also bought the *Empire Parkeston*'s sister ships *Prince David* and *Prince Robert*, which they converted to emigrant ships named *Charlton Monarch* and *Charlton Sovereign* in 1946.

The Harwich-Hook troopships ran on the same route as one of British Railways' chief Continental services, which operated jointly with the Zeeland Steamship Co Ltd of the Netherlands. The Dutch ships were familiar to the *Empire Parkeston* as two of them had been with her as HMCS *Prince Henry* when she led Force J1 to the Normandy beaches in 1944. Meanwhile, as opposed to the rather more erudite first class nightboat crossings available on the same route, Flight Lt Ken Senar remembered a typical troopship crossing from Harwich in 1953 in his memoirs:

Suddenly the Tannoy announced that we were being called forward to board the ship. I caught a glimpse of the name *Empire Parkeston* just visible on its grey bow. I also noticed that
it had two dissimilar funnels and looked old and battered.

Struggling with our luggage we were directed down alleys and companionways to our bunks in a large area filled with berths, three high and with little space for kit, undressing, or much else. Not only were there junior officers in there but what appeared to be some other ranks as well. The shipboard Tannoy kept blurting out instructions of one sort or another just to add a certain piquancy to the already existing hubbub. Emergency actions were relayed to us but I don't think much notice was taken of them.

Having organised myself and my belongings, and taking a careful note of where I had to find my way back to, I decided to explore my surroundings... I found a small NAAFI canteen and bought a drink and a sandwich. After the struggle with my baggage I was ready for a snack even though I had eaten earlier before arriving at Liverpool Street station.

The ship's engines started at about the same time that personnel in my 'cabin' were readying themselves for bed. The Tannoy told us what time Reveille would be and then remained silent for the night. But there was no silence: just about everything that could rattle rattled in synchrony with the throb of the engines, doors, pieces of kit, bunk frames, the lot. It was not a peaceful night, made worse by the odd character who made a dash to the latrines to be seasick.

Stanley Graham remembered another overnight crossing on his way to Berlin in 1955 in his own memoirs: -

The battalion embarked at Harwich on the *Empire Parkeston*, the troopship which was to take us to the Hook of Holland. We were crammed in to the ship and fed on mulligatawny soup, bread and tea... We set off and soon realised that the North Sea was in a bad mood. Before long the heads were awash in half digested mulligatawny soup. I have a funny idea that they had a good reason for feeding us on soup, it made it easier to clean up if there was a rough crossing. I was a bit queasy but survived without being sick and about seven hours later we disembarked and got on the Blue Train which was to take us to Berlin.

While trooping, the *Empire Parkeston* even managed to spawn a song, "The Shores of Old Blighty," written on board by folk singer
Graeme Miles while travelling in her in 1955 to two years of national service in Germany. The song has become a folk classic and must represent the feelings of many who travelled in her over these years:

We're two hundred soldiers on a troop carrying ship,
All dressed in our uniforms brown,
We're all bound for Germany on a night trip,
Serving our nation and crown.

Chorus:
And the shores of old Blighty we're leaving behind,
The dim lights of Harwich are fading away,
When we get to Germany how will we find,
Life on a serviceman's pay, sergeant,
Life on a serviceman's pay.

We're two hundred squaddies all barely but men,
And they've given us numbers instead of our names,
Oh how I wish I was back home again,
Each one is thinking the same.

By this time, the *Empire Parkeston* had been given new colours of a grey hull and funnels, with a blue trooping band around her hull and a white superstructure. Later yet her funnels became buff.

At the end of 1955 the *Empire Parkeston* twice had to come to the aid of her running mate *Empire Wansbeck* during the Christmas leave season. On December 17, she was called in to make two quick trips to bring 1,000 troops home from Hook of Holland after the *Empire Wansbeck* suffered a mechanical breakdown. Only a few days later, the *Empire Wansbeck* broke down again and this time ran aground off Hook of Holland. The *Empire Parkeston*, by now on her way back from Hull after some shipyard work, was diverted from Harwich to Hook of Holland to rescue another 900 troops who had now spent the night on board the *Wansbeck*. Finally arriving at Harwich in the *Empire Parkeston* on December 23, about twelve hours late, the troops were given two days extra leave as recompense.

**The Suez Crisis**

The *Empire Parkeston* made one exciting long-distance voyage, in 1956, in the Anglo-French attempt to seize the Suez Canal back from Egypt. Assigned to carry the 2nd Battalion Parachute Regiment
to Suez by way of Malta, she sailed from Southampton on September 8 with 400 service personnel. After remaining in the Mediterranean for some time, she finally arrived at Suez on November 6. James Paul and Martin Sprint commented on this voyage in their article "The Last Drop," about the 3rd Parachute Battalion's air drop from Nicosia to El Gamil airfield at Port Said on November 5:

The 2nd Battalion Parachute Regiment ... arrived via the troopship *Empire Parkeston*, sometime in the afternoon of the 6th. The Battalion's disembarkation was delayed due to sniper fire and the sudden arrival of two Russian built, T34 tanks only 200 yards from the harbour. RAF and Fleet Air Arm aircraft soon knocked these out. Due to this delay in disembarkation, 2 Para did not assemble at Raswa until 1900 hours, to spearhead the advance.

Shortly thereafter, a cease-fire was declared and the Anglo-French action ended. The *Empire Parkeston* was one of eight troopships used at Suez. On Christmas Eve 1957 the *Empire Parkeston* again came to the rescue of fleetmate *Empire Wansbeck*, which had suffered a loss of her steering gear at Hook of Holland. While troops being sent home for Christmas leave slept overnight on the *Empire Wansbeck*, the *Empire Parkeston* was sent to stand in, bringing some 1,000 troops to Harwich. This was reminiscent of what had happened in the lead-up to Christmas 1955.

**The "Empire Parkeston's" Last Years**

In her final years, the *Empire Parkeston* traded further afield than Harwich, making voyages to and from Tilbury, Leith, Folkestone, Cardiff, Plymouth and Southampton. In 1959, when she sailed into Dover bringing the 1st Battalion Gloucestershire Regiment back from Osnabruck, she became the first troopship to arrive in that port since 1940.

On one of her last voyages, arriving at Plymouth on June 13, 1961, the local paper, "The Western Press," carried a few words about her passengers:

After two years in the Hartz Mountains of Germany, the Somersets are home again. But not for long. In broiling sunshine, the packed troopship *Empire Parkeston* eased gently up to the quayside at Trinity Pier, Plymouth, yesterday. She was
bringing home 550 officers and men of the First Battalion Somerset and Cornwall Light Infantry - some of them with their wives and children.

The Somersets had hit a Force 8 during their voyage home and had a very rough trip down the English Channel. They would be heading off again in August to Gibraltar, after four weeks' home leave, in yet another troopship, Bibby Line's 12,773-ton Devonshire.

With time spent as a coastal liner, cruise ship, armed merchant cruiser, landing ship, headquarters ship and now as a troopship, the North Star now Empire Parkeston would manage a lifetime of over thirty years, half of its spent as a trooper. She arrived in Harwich for the last time on September 26, 1961, after which she was sold to Lotti SpA and towed to Italy, to be scrapped at La Spezia in early 1962. British troops would now be transported by air.

Her original ship's bell, still marked Prince Henry, is preserved in the officers' mess of the 24th Regiment Royal Logistic Corps in Bielefeld, Germany.

**A Note on Cruise Brochure Clauses**

Before leaving the New Northland and North Star, it is worth looking at a brochure clause that had been used by the Clarke Steamship Co and then carried on for half a century. It concerned the rather important item of passengers' valuables.

From Clarke's 1928 cruise brochure we find: -

Valuables: The company will not be responsible for passengers' money, jewelry or other valuables belonging to passengers, unless delivered to the purser for safekeeping and a receipt secured.

And almost fifty years later, in Eastern Steamship Lines' 1977 Miami-Nassau brochure for the Emerald Seas, we have: -

Valuables: The company will not be responsible for passengers' money, jewelry or other valuables, but they may be deposited with the purser for safekeeping.

Seaway Lines first adopted this small clause from Clarke
brochures when that company bought the *New Northland*. When she became the *Nuevo Dominicano*, it was carried on by Eastern Shipping Corporation (and the Dominican Republic Steamship Line), and from there it continued to be used by Eastern Steamship Lines.

Back in the Gulf of St Lawrence almost a quarter century later, the 1970 brochure for the *North Gaspé* still included the following wording: -

Valuables: The company will not be responsible for the loss of money, jewellery and other valuables belonging to passengers, unless delivered to and receipted for by the purser.

Another interesting clause also bears looking at. From the 1935 Miami-Nassau brochure for the *New Northland* we have: -

Wine List: The *New Northland* is fully licensed and wines, cocktails, spirits, beers, mineral waters and light refreshments, are available at very reasonable prices.

This clause was first introduced for the *New Northland*'s Miami-Nassau cruise trade, and the St Lawrence brochures still carried the rather more prosaic "The *New Northland* and *North Voyageur* carry a beer and wine license." In Eastern Shipping Corporation’s 1954 Miami-Nassau brochure for the *Queen of Nassau* we find: -

Wine List: The *Queen of Nassau* is fully licensed and wines, spirits, mineral waters and mixed drinks are available at very reasonable prices.

From the survival of these two little clauses from Clarke Steamship Co days, we can not only trace a direct line of descent but also find out what is really important to passengers!

**The Royal Caribbean Name**

Even the name Royal Caribbean could be traced back to Fraser, as it was the name his two sons had used to operate his estate after he died. Lewis Fraser, after whom the *Farnorth* had been named, had gone into the cruise ship catering business in Miami. Anne Kalosh outlined the story of the Royal Caribbean name in an article about Lewis Fraser in "Seatrade Cruise Review" in March 1996: -
F Leslie Fraser had run Eastern Shipping Corp, selling the company before his death in 1962. Lewis and a brother created a firm called Royal Caribbean to handle the estate. Their office at the old Port of Miami was one floor above the Yarmouth Steamship Co, managed by Edwin Stephan...

But it wasn't long before this fourth generation shipping man was drawn back to the sea. He looked up Ed Stephan, now general manager of Commodore, who was introducing Boheme in 1968.

As Fraser tells it, "Ed was looking for a caterer and I was looking to get back into the cruise business. I asked Ed if he'd consider me. He said, "Lew, what do you know about catering?" I said "Nothing, but I do know how to put together an organisation and I like the cruise business." He got the job.

It was a rough start. But gradually Fraser had things running so smoothly that when Stephan went on to launch his own cruise line, Fraser not only nabbed the catering contract, he also lent the name: Royal Caribbean.

Miami soon became the world's largest cruise port, handling more than 3 million passengers a year through a dozen cruise terminals. Indeed, by 1992, ten ships were serving the Florida-Bahamas short-cruise cruise trade that Clarke had first opened up in 1935 with the New Northland. and countless others were serving the 7-night cruise market that had been opened up by the North Star in 1938.