

Report: Antwerp to Chester August 12 to 26, 2014 on board the MS *Independent Pursuit*

Flag: Liberia

Port of Registry: Monrovia

Manufacturer: Jiangsu Yangzijiang
Shipbuilding Co. Ltd.

Call Sign: A8MB5

Net Tonnage: 26435 t

L.O.A.: 208.9m

Breadth: 29.8m

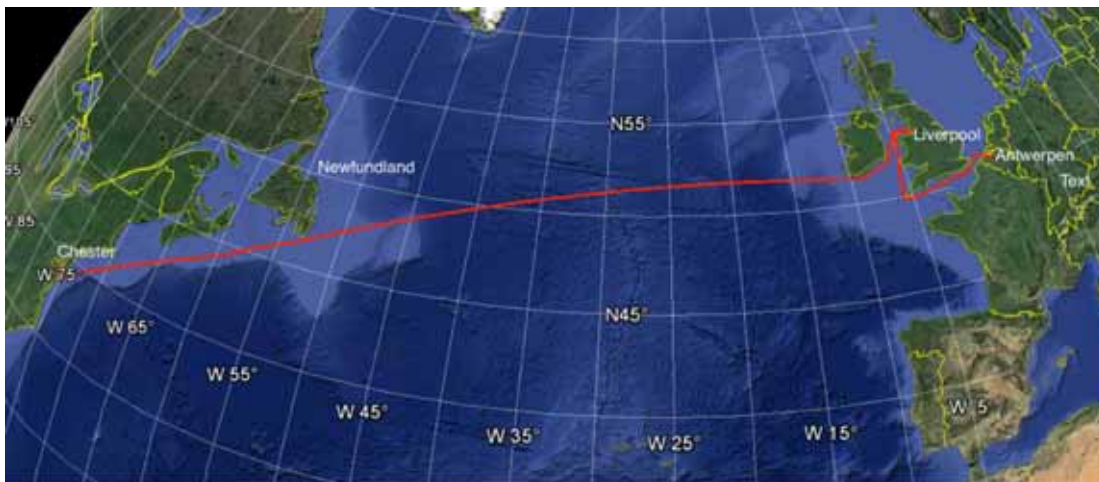
Draught: 11.6m

Engine Power: 21660kW (29046 hp)

Container Intake 2546 TEU

Speed/Consumption/Day: 22kt/88.0mt

Route



Crew

1	Timofei, Cristian	Master
2	Radu, Constantin	Chief Officer
3	Nueve, Ronald Monton	Second Officer
4	Solanki, Dipesh Amrutlal	Third Officer
5	Balogh, Wieslaw	Chief Engineer
6	Tureac, Mirkea Bogdan	Second Engineer
7	Komagorov, Viktor	Third Engineer
8	Neacsu, Bogdan	Electrician
9	Piloton, Edgardo Lubaton	Bosun
10	Ebesate, Cyrus Taborete	AB 1
11	Piroque, Elnie Lucasan	AB 2
12	Azucena, Brian Abangan	OS
13	Rogalski, Bartlomiej Michal	D/CDT
14	Deterala, Estelito Jr, Deocarez	Fitter
15	Ramos, Garry Jose Gutierrez	Oiler
16	Nacpil, Arnel Arcilla	Chief Cook
17	Orinday, Raymundo Jr. Plata	Mess Man
18	Sulewski, Marek	E/CDT

On August 12, 2014 we arrive rather late in the evening at the Independent Maritime Terminals, Quay 242, Hansa Dock, in Antwerp with an enormous amount of luggage. In the ship's Office of *Independent Pursuit*, the Chief Officer asks for our papers. "Are you sure this is the ship you are supposed to travel on?" He checked our form and with a wide smile welcomes us, despite the fact that he had not been informed of our arrival.

Crew members help diligently to lug the heavy bags we need for the trip to the Owner's Cabin on the 5th Superstructure Deck, many steep stairs up, just below the bridge, a spacious place to live for our stay on the ship with an impressive view over the pier.

The remaining luggage with the stuff for our sailboat *Silmaril*, waiting for us in the York River Yacht Haven in Gloucester, is lock away somewhere on the Poop Deck. We were briefly told about mealtimes and the rules concerning moving about in the whole ship, before we go to bed.

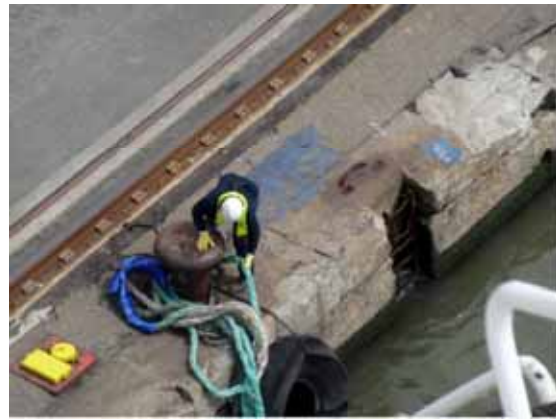


After a hearty breakfast cooked by the Chief Cook and served by the Mess Man (he is wearing the orange drill outfit and not his usual white t-shirt and black pants in this picture). Next day in the early afternoon the crew of the *Independent Pursuit* got ready to leave. We watched the maneuver from high above with great interest and joyful anticipation.

We are both very excited and happy, already feeling quite at home on the big ship and its friendly crew.



The lines were cast off and *Independent Pursuit* turned from the pier out toward the lock and into the river Schelde.



The passage through the bridge is narrow, Pilot and Captain watch closely,

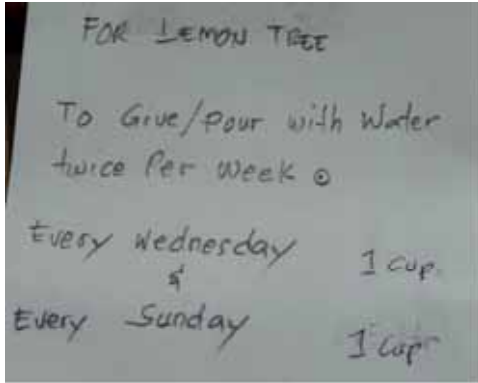


but the turning into the lock is even more impressive.

"Just wait until we get to Liverpool"! We wonder what kind of wizardry is expecting us there.



We are allowed on the bridge whenever we feel like it. It's a cosy place with its nice little reading corner and its "Lemon Tree".



A very caring person put these instructions with it. A touching gesture.

But I think it is a ficus that will never bare fruit, no matter how carefully tended! That makes me think of the great song:

"Lemon tree very pretty
and the lemon flower is sweet,
but the fruit of that poor lemon
is impossible to eat!"

Of course the great number of navigation instruments, panels, computers and all the other paraphernalia of the bridge of a cargo vessel impress us and excite Alex's never-ending curiosity.



The first sunset on a trip is always special. On our way to Liverpool, a lovely cloud picture in the sky gives us pleasure.



We reach Liverpool around 1300. And we are terribly anxious to experience the maneuver into the lock and the passage to the pier. the Pilot and his Helper came already on board hours ago.

We wonder how their ascent looks in bad weather!!



The crew at the stern are ready to cast the line to the tugger that will assist in the maneuver.

Independent Pursuit will have to perform a 180° turn to face the lock and steer into it. A second tugger is ready at the bow.

Pilot, Captain and Chief Officer watch the slow advance into the very narrow lock.



There is indeed no extra leeway at all. What a performance!

The same maneuver is performed in the middle of the night. *Independent Pursuit* leaves Liverpool again at high water. Alex is on the bridge until the ship is out of the lock, I stay in bed. It's too cold out there.

On our way back through the Irish and the Celtic Sea out to the open Atlantic we roam along the narrow passages of the main deck all around the ship, marveling at the size of the equipment. The lines virtually dwarf my hand, the anchor chain is awe-inspiring.



We enjoy the passage tremendously. The weather is nice, a bit cloudy at times . . .



. . . with some stretches of dense fog. Alex thinks about installing an automatic fog horn on *Silmaril*, in case we should really cruise in northern waters later this year.



The Chief Engineer gives us an extended tour through the engine room. What a place!

Alex has millions of questions. The Chief Engineer answers every one of them in great detail.

He seems to enjoy it!



Other crew members work here, the 2nd and 3rd Engineer and the Electrician.

After a memorable voyage with all the comfort, excitement and rest we welcomed, we experience a special visit to the bow of the ship on one of the last days.

Up a narrow ladder and out through a manhole, we climb up on the tilting deck above the work area on the main deck.

It's one of the Captain's favored places, especially during the summer, when a fine day allows a sunbath here away from the bustle of the ship. It's a great spot to take pictures or videos of dolphins, with luck even a whale!



We are not quite as lucky, no whales on this voyage, but a few groups of dolphins, astounding to see them swim in front of the bulb with the ship's speed of about 13kts.

On the bridge, the Chief Officer and the Chief Engineer prepare fishing gear. They want to go after catfish in the Delaware River before we reach Chester. No to good to eat, though, some say!



On this last day the crew clean the decks from soot.



The wind from aft kept blowing the exhaust over the ship dropping a fine layer of its black particles.

That is a drawback, but conservation of fuel is a real concern and the help of the wind is therefore always welcome.

On the bridge the watches are kept as usual. The 2nd and 3rd Officers do their duty conscientiously, as everybody on this ship takes their jobs very seriously.



We offer all of you heart-felt thanks and wish you safe journeys across all that water of the Atlantic Ocean!

This ends the little report on our trip with *Independent Pursuit*. We enjoyed every minute of it and are tempted to come back on board another time.



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