

1907 “Her Name Was Barry” 2007

A paddle steamer built for, and named after, the town of Barry, Glamorgan. South Wales.

PS Waverley (ex - Barry, 1907)

Service dates: 1907 – 1941



PS Waverley (ex Barry) 1907

The above picture clearly has been altered to change the name on the bows to Waverley and thus shows her in her time as Barry.

Builders: Built as Barry by John Brown & Co 1907

Launched on 4th May 1907 by John Brown at Clydebank

Propulsion type: Paddle two cylinder compound diagonal

Engines : Compound diagonal 25.5 and 54 in x 54 in

Dimensions : 225.5 ft x 26.6 ft

471 Gross Registered Tonnes

Tonnage: Net 185 Gross 642

Owners: Barry Railway, Barry & Bristol Steamship Company, P & A Campbell Ltd

Built as PS Barry for the Barry Railway Company in their new venture to capture a share of the Bristol Channel excursion trade

On the withdrawal of the Barry Company from steamer operations in 1910 she passed to the Bristol Channel Passenger Boats Ltd.

Came into Campbell ownership in 1911

Requisitioned in World War I, being stationed in Greece, based in Salonika and taking part in the Gallipoli landings.

Refitted by her builders in 1920

Renamed Waverley in 1926 and sent to the Brighton station replacing Ravenswood

Became HMS Snaefell in World War II and sent to the Tyne, based at North Shields

Attended Dunkirk where she was involved in the rescue of her grounded stablemate Glen Gower.

Sunk in a bombing raid off Sunderland on July 5th, 1941

The Barry Railway Company

The Barry Railway Company was promoted by interests in coal mining and steel in the South Wales valleys as an alternative to the existing rail service to Cardiff docks and as such, its interests were very much in transporting the commodities of its sponsors. It had no immediate interest in steamers although it vigorously promoted the docks at Barry and encouraged development in general, including the holiday resort at Barry Island. The company persuaded P and A Campbell to run steamers from a pier built alongside the dock, but later put their own fleet on the station.

Having decided to compete for the steamboat business, they set about development of a fleet capable of taking the Campbell's at their own business and PS Gwalia and PS Devonian appeared in 1905. PS Westonia became the third steamer, bought second-hand, and PS Barry joined the fleet in 1907.

Competition with the Campbell's was never going to be easy, especially as there was some bad blood between the two companies following disagreement over the terms of Campbell's use of Barry Pier. The Barry Company was to run steamboats only until May 1910, selling their fleet to avoid mounting debts and a shareholder's revolt against a board which remained sympathetic to the venture.

Although the "Red Funnel" fleet as it became known gained a great measure of popularity, the company was dogged by legal disputes with its main competitors, the Campbell's, legislation restricting their freedom to develop services and the legacy of the high cost of its three magnificent new steamers

As a railway company, parliamentary powers were required to operate steamships and the powers granted generally included provisions which limited operations to routes genuinely associated with the mother company's principal business (ie: railway connections to non-accessible locations). The powers were also granted to take account of the legitimate interests of existing operators.

The Company were limited to calls on the southern bank of the Channel between Weston and Ilfracombe, with additional summer excursion destinations allowed so long as the cruises started and finished at Barry. To circumvent these restrictions, the company resorted to the ploy of registering their vessels in the names of its directors and set up an operating company, the Barry and Bristol Channel Steamship Company. The Campbell's resorted to successful legal action which ensured that by July 1907, the Barry Railway Company was required to abide by the terms of the original legislation.

Services were maintained despite deteriorating financial fortunes, but as a cost saving measure, PS Gwalia was sold to the Furness Railway Company on May 7th 1910. Five days later the remaining three steamers were sold to Bristol Channel Passenger Boats Ltd. The latter company struggled to make the business pay and after two seasons, sold out to the Campbell's.

2007 the Centenary of a Paddle Steamer built for, and named after, the town of Barry.

Built at the world-famous shipyard of John Brown on Clydebank, who built the great liners Queen Mary, Queen Elizabeth and QE2, the Paddle Steamer Barry was built for the Barry Railway Company's fleet and sailed on her trials on May 24, 1907, before leaving the Clyde to begin her pleasure steamer career from Barry and the Bristol Channel.

Built as PS Barry for the Barry Railway Co, this fine looking steamer sailed between Barry, Minehead and Weston in the summer and Barry to Burnham on Sea in the winter. In her next few seasons she also sailed to Ilfracombe and Mumbles.

PS Barry was acquired by Bristol Channel Passenger Boats Ltd in 1910 and was absorbed into the Campbell's empire after two seasons service. She saw war service in the Great - War, the Barry's distinguished war service (1914-1918) has been described as outstanding, after a period transporting German prisoners, the Barry achieved everlasting fame by sailing to the Mediterranean and carrying troops at the Gallipoli landings. She was used as a transport and store carrier in the Gallipoli campaign. She was almost lost there when a mine twice struck her paddle wheels but fortunately did not damage her. The PS Barry was the last ship to leave Suvla Bay after the evacuation and later served at Salonika.

After further service in the Mediterranean she was decommissioned and was reconditioned by the Ailsa yard in Troon in 1920. In 1926 she was renamed Waverley by Campbell's and was transferred to the South Coast. She went back to the Bristol Channel in 1934 and 1935, but returned to the South Coast afterwards.

Her pleasure steamer days continued until 1939

Returning to pleasure steamer sailings after the First World War, Barry continued to give pleasure to countless thousands of passengers until 1939, then she returned to serve her country again in the Second World War as a minesweeper, until she was bombed and sunk off the north east coast of England in 1941. Waverley / Barry was sadly lost on 5 July 1941 after being bombed when on minesweeping duties off the North East Coast.

Barry was of similar size to the Waverley of today the link between Barry and the present Waverley is unique. Although the funnel colours of the Barry Railway Company were red and black, the Barry sailed on her first season with a red, white and black funnel – the same colours as the funnels of the Waverley today and then, even more amazingly, when sold to P&A Campbell to become part of the White Funnel Fleet Barry, was re-named Waverley.

Originally on the Weston to Minehead and Barry service, she was similar in appearance to Glen Usk. She joined Campbell's in 1911 and was renamed Barryfield from 1917 to 1920, when she reverted to her original name.. In 1926 she was again renamed, this time as Waverley (II) to commemorate the earliest of Campbell's Bristol Channel steamers. Transferred to the South Coast in 1926, Waverley sailed from Eastbourne, Brighton and Hastings, as well as some cross channel work. She had a bow rudder fitted in 1934. Sadly, she was lost on war service in 1941.

Information has been gained from various sources and we will attempt to contact the main contributors. If by chance we have used any of your work. Please allow us in tribute to continue. We are willing to share our information with all.

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From the Her Name Was SS. Archive



Never before published in any way



Nearing Ilfracombe



Prior to returning to Barry



C. 1970


These pictures belong to Her Name Was: And are released for the centenary of the PS Barry 2007.