

Biography of Albert Lear

Michael Roe

October 12, 2002

Albert Lear was born in Manchester on 26 Jan 1884. He was an officer in the Merchant Navy. He qualified as a Second Mate at the port of Liverpool on 7 January 1907 (certificate of competency number 003921). He qualified as a First Mate on 28 September 1908, and as a Master on 4 July 1910.

He married Elizabeth Kenyon on 22 June 1909, in St. John's Church, Bootle. Their children were George Albert Lear (born 16 Sep 1913) and Connie Lear.

For his service in the First World War, Albert Lear was awarded the Mercantile Marine Ribbon and the British Medal Ribbon on 25 April 1923, and the Mercantile Marine Medal and the British Medal on 17 October 1923.

He served as Third Mate on the "British Mariner" (registration number 146530), as an officer on the "Nethergate" (registration number 139042), and as First Mate on the "Maid of Athens" (registration number 144697).

The "Maid of Athens" was owned by Michael A. Embiricos and the Byron Steamship Co. Ltd. ("Maid of Athens, Ere we part" is the title of a poem by Lord Byron). The ship was built at Stettin in 1906 and registered in London in 1920. It was 240 feet 8 inches long, of 1433 tons gross weight, 864 tons net.

Albert's last voyage started at Antwerp on 14 March 1928. This was to be a round trip, going to Varna and then returning to Antwerp. However, Albert became seriously ill while at sea. When the Maid of Athens passed the Lizard on 21 May 1928, they sent a signal: "Proceeding Falmouth, want immediate medical assistance chief officer." The ship stopped at Falmouth to put Albert ashore and leave his wages in the care of a local agent, and then continued on to Hamburg.

Lizard	Passed E	21 May 1928
Falmouth	Arrived	21 May 1928
	Sailed	21 May 1928
Hamburg	Arrived	1 June 1928
	Sailed	10 June 1928
Antwerp	Arrived	12 June 1928

Figure 1: Maid of Athens voyage details

Sources

Albert Lear held Certificate of Competency number 003921. His Dis.A number was 907865. The “Maid of Athens” had registration number 144697.

Sources in the Public Records Office, Kew:

- BT 127, volumes 10 to 11: index entry for Albert Lear’s Certificate of Competency.
- BT 123, volume 2, “Registers of certificates of competency, masters and mates of steamships, foreign trade”: Albert Lear’s Certificate of Competency
- BT 352: Microfilmed file index card for Albert Lear’s Certificate of Competency
- Index of First World War Mercantile Marine Medals: Gives details of Albert Lear’s medals, and his DisA. number.
- BT 348: Albert Lear’s discharge papers, giving the registration numbers of the ships on which he served
- BT 336: Changes in ship’s masters. These books are arranged in order of the ship’s number, and so can be used to find out a ship’s name from its registration number.
- BT 99, piece 3968: Crew lists for ship number 144697. Gives the ship’s name as “Maid of Athens”, and gives details of its voyages.
- “Mercantile Navy Lists and Maritime Directory 1925”: Gives ownership and technical details for the “Maid of Athens”, “Nethergate” and “British Mariner”.

Sources in the Guildhall Library:

- The following entries from “Lloyd’s List and Shipping Gazette” were referred to. In this table, the first column is the date of the issue of Lloyd’s list, the second column is the date of the reported event.

22 May	21 May	Marine casualties
22 May	21 May	Lizard, ships passed east
22 May	21 May	Movements of British Vessels
23 May	21 May	Falmouth, ships arriving
23 May	21 May	Falmouth, ships sailing
4 June	1 June	Hamburg, ships arriving
5 June	1 June	Movements of British Vessels
12 June	10 June	Hamburg, ships sailing
12 June	10 June	Movements of British Vessels
13 June	12 June	Antwerp, ships arriving
19 June	12 June	Movements of British Vessels
20 June	19 June	Antwerp, ships sailing
- “A Guide to the Agreements and Crew Lists: Series II (B.T. 99) 1913-1938”, published by Memorial University of Newfoundland, October 1987.