

The *Empress of Russia* captured Kamaran Id., bombarded and destroyed the Turkish batteries at Lohia in the Red Sea. During these engagements the *Empress of Russia* was under fire and the Chinese behaved splendidly.

At the end of 1916 the *Empress of Russia* was recommissioned at Hong Kong as a troop ship with a full volunteer crew of Chinese, and carried Chinese labour battalions from North China to Vancouver during 1917. During 1918, also manned by a volunteer Chinese crew the *Empress of Russia* carried American troops from New York to Liverpool, finally returning to Vancouver in March, 1919. During the whole of her war service the conduct and behaviour of the Chinese was exemplary. The Naval officer in Command of the *Empress of Russia* whilst she was an armed Merchant Cruiser paid a high tribute to the efficiency of the Chinese crew. That is the evidence given to me by Captain Davison.

Next is Captain S. Robinson, C.B.E. Captain Robinson who commanded the *Empress of Japan* after long service with the company.

Captain Robinson was in command of the *Empress of Asia* at Hong Kong when war broke out. The *Empress of Asia*, commissioned immediately war was declared and sailed under the White Ensign with a full volunteer Chinese crew supplemented by Garrison Artillery Gunners and 40 Pathan ammunition passers. The Chinese formed one 4.7 gun crew and their shooting was equal to the guns served by the British complement of the ship's company.

The sea service undertaken by the *Empress of Asia* was the same as that of the *Empress of Russia*, both in patrol work and trooping. Captain Robinson substantiates all that has been said about the *Empress of Russia*, adding that the efficiency of the Chinese crews was a revelation to the British Naval officers.

Captain Robinson was in command of the *Empress of Australia* at Yokohama during the Great Earthquake, September 23, 1923. In describing the work done by the Chinese crew during that appalling upheaval, and particularly in combating the fires, he states that they were marvelous and that their boat work was wonderful. There was never at any time anything in the nature of panic. The only feeling they displayed was what Captain Robinson describes as "mild curiosity."

There has perhaps never been a greater test of nerves than the trials of those who experienced the 1923 earthquake at Yokohama.

The next concerns Captain A. J. Hosken, R.N.R., who at the present time is in command of the *Empress of Canada*.

In 1915 Captain Hosken was Chief Officer of the *Monteagle* engaged in trooping. When berthed at the wharf at Vancouver a serious fire broke out said to have been caused by incendiary bombs secreted in cargo. Captain Hosken states that the Chinese crew showed remarkable courage and heroism in coping with the situation and actually saved the lives of 12 Vancouver firemen, who had been overcome with fumes and smoke, by penetrating the holds where white members of the crew found it impossible to go.

In April, 1921, Captain Hosken was in Command of the *Monteagle* when she rescued the crew of a French steamer the ss. *Sentinent* off the China coast. At the time it was blowing a gale of wind with a heavy sea running. The boats were manned by Chinese and European volunteers.

On March 21, 1934, when in command of the *Empress of Russia*, Captain Hosken rescued the crew of a sinking junk. Notwithstanding a strong wind and rough sea the ship's lifeboat manned by Chinese in charge of the 5th Officer effected a rescue and the whole evolution was completed in 36 minutes from the time of stopping the *Empress of Russia* to the time of proceeding on her voyage.

I mention the time because it shows the efficiency with which the boat was put out over the side and got on board again.

[Captain Edmund Aikman.]