

Captain C W Scott and the Aphrodite

Captain Charles W Scott was born in England in 1859 and came to the USA in 1869, according to the census records we found. He was one of a small corps whom Oliver H Payne trusted greatly; Oliver's estimate of Scott was displayed in the Payne will, in which he willed Scott \$25,000. This amount was second only to the \$50,000 willed to Emma C Larson, his confidante, and far exceeded any amount willed to other employees.

I was unable to discover any of Scott's early history and how he became a ship captain.

The first record I found for Capt C W Scott was in the New York Times, February 15, 1893. The article indicated that a Mr. Edwin Scott of Philadelphia (no relation to C W) purchased the steam yacht Sagamore and would be leaving soon for a trip to the West Indies. The new owner intended to take a two year trip around the world. Capt C W Scott was to be the ship master for both cruises. No information whether the two-year cruise ever happened.

Captain C(harles) W Scott served as captain for the Endeavor, a yacht Payne leased for several years before commissioning the construction of the Aphrodite. The steam yacht was built by the Bath Iron Works in Maine. Oliver made several trips to Europe on the Endeavor, with Capt C V Scott as the captain. When Payne decided to commission a new yacht, he engaged C V Scott to assist in the design, which followed the lines of the Endeavor, but larger and with more modern fittings.

The new vessel, named Aphrodite, was launched 1 December 1898. Oliver H Payne was unable to attend; Scott's daughter Vivie (or Vivian) had the honors of launching the ship. From the census records, Vivie was about 14 years old at the time of the launch. The yacht slid easily into the waters of the Kennebec River; a tug then towed the yacht back to the shipyard.

The New York Times archives show that Payne sailed the Aphrodite the years between 1900 and 1914, usually to Europe, especially the Mediterranean and Baltic Seas, with frequent stops in England, and coaling stops in the Azores. Payne's nephew, Payne Whitney, who lived with Payne until his marriage to Helen Hay, accompanied him on several of these trips. Another passenger was G. T Schley of the brokerage firm of Moore & Schley, Payne's favorite brokerage, and one which figured prominently in the merger of Tennessee Coal & Iron with United States Steel.

The Aphrodite was called a steam yacht because it could navigate under steam, but also could navigate using sails; the vessel carried 17,000 square feet of sail that were often used in seasonable weather. It attained a speed of 17 knots during its maiden voyage from Bath, Maine to New York City, two knots more than that specified in the contract. On one of its first voyages to Europe, it encountered a hurricane after leaving the Azores for New York City, but weathered it well with very little damage.

The yacht often visited Esopus, mooring in the river so that it might be visible from the main house. The New York Times carried the story of an incident in 1913. A steamer headed from Newburgh to Albany struck a submerged rock near Esopus Island, north of the Payne Estate. The captain realized that would not make any port safely, and let it drift down the river until the engines became flooded. He then pointed it into the eastern shore.

Captain Scott noticed the event, and sent his tenders over to help out. The crew of the Aphrodite loaded the passengers on their tenders and brought them to the wharf at West Park (the current dock and boathouse had not been built in 1913). Several of the ladies had fainted from the excitement and danger. The officers of the Aphrodite treated the passengers to lunch, and waited for the next Newburgh-to-Albany boat to get the passengers on their way.

Colonel Payne met with Julian Burroughs, who by now was manager of the Esopus estate and was directing several construction projects. He asked him to build a dock and boathouse. When Julian indicated he had no experience of these items, Payne instructed him to take direction from Captain Scott. It is clear that Scott did the basic design. Payne instructed Burroughs to show the plans to Thomas Hastings, the surviving principal of Carrère & Hastings architects. Hastings refused to look at the plans, expressing surprise that Colonel Payne would entrust such a project to such "hicks" (this last word used by Julian in his diaries).

Payne restricted his sailing to North America after the beginning of World War I. He loaned the Aphrodite to the U S Navy for patrol work. The vessel was stripped of its ornate furnishings and any art work and equipped for patrol duty, working mostly in the North and Baltic Seas. Scott did not command the Aphrodite when it was in war service. Payne then kept Scott in his employ until Payne died in June 1917.

Not much information is available in the census records for Captain Charles W Scott. The 1900 record gives us the most information. C W Scott is a sea captain born October 1859 living on west 88th Street in Manhattan. His wife is Emma, born December 1866. They have two children: Vivian, born November 1886 and Eleanor, born May 1891. The Scotts have been married 16 years. I was unable to locate a 1910 census record for C W Scott. By 1920 he is living in Brooklyn with Roland and Florence Weymouth and their daughter Scott, age 5. Charles W Scott is listed as age 63, a shipping captain, who came to the US in 1875. Scott is characterized as 'uncle' but not clear if uncle of Roland or Florence.

The 1900 census for Kennebec Maine places Roland and Florence, married two years, as lodgers. Roland was born in Maine July 1874 and Florence was born in Massachusetts born Jan 1877. both Roland and Florence are listed as salesman and saleslady for dry goods. The 1880 census for Wales Maine

shows the family of James C and Anella Weymouth with six children. Roland is the fourth in line. James works on the railroad.

The 1930 census places Charles W Scott in New Rochelle, Westchester County, again living with Roland and Florence and Scotta. Scott is listed as a merchant mariner in shipping, and indicates he came to the US in 1871.

Census records:

1880_ME_androscoggin_wales_dist 21_James Weymouth family

1900_ME_kennebec_gardiner_Weymouth

1900_NY_manhattan_dist 518__Scott C W

1920_NY_kings_brooklyn_Weymouth & Scott

1930_NY_westchester_new rochelle_Weymouth & Scott

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