

Ocean Joss

Ships in Focus

By Geoff Walker

The Genesis of Prosperity – “Golden Alpha”



(From a painting by the internationally renowned maritime artist Stephen J Card)

From small Acorns do mighty Oaks grow; so the saying goes, but nothing could be more true than with the case of the “**SS Golden Alpha**”, the initial vessel of the mega - Wah Kwong Shipping Group (Sir Y.K.Pao) The “**Golden Alpha**” was the name given to the first ship purchased by Y.K.Pao (better known to us as World-Wide shipping), a 27 year old coal burner bought in 1955. Built in 1927 as City Line's **City of Hereford** 5,101 GRT, by Barclay, Curle & Co Ltd., Glasgow. She was fitted with a triple expansion steam engine developing 523 NHP, giving a service speed of 12 knots.

In 1954 she was sold to Williamson & Co, Hong Kong and renamed **Inchona**, later sold to Wah Kwong becoming their first ship and rechristened “**Golden Alpha**” in 1956. It is believed that early Y.K.Pao ships were placed under time charter to major Japanese trading houses. The ship was finally sent for demolition at Osaka in 1959.

Seldom has a ship been more aptly named since some 25 years later, it had led to the company house flag seen flying on board nearly 200 vessels, the largest fleet ever achieved by a single private owner.

It is understood that Y.K.Pao’s shipping empire has now been rebranded the “BW Group” and is a leading player in the worldwide maritime industry, managing the world’s largest owned fleet across a wide sector of commercial shipping.

End.

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