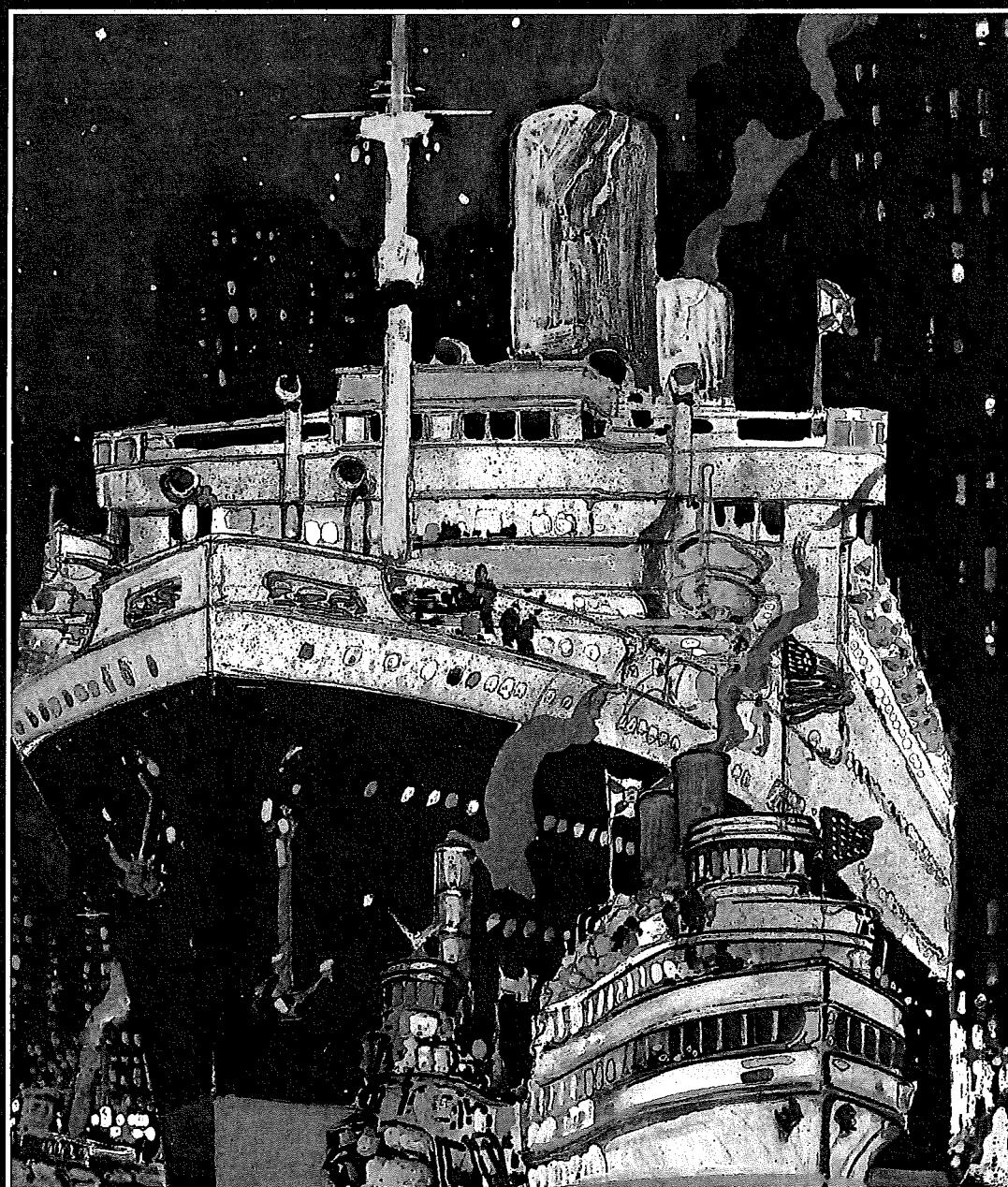


SHIPBUILDERS TO THE WORLD

125 years of Harland and Wolff, Belfast
1861-1986



Michael Moss and John R. Hume



in the shipyard had become more 'urbanised' as rural roots were severed by generations of town life. Everywhere conditions in the home improved – the greatest single benefit was electricity which gradually transformed the lives of shipyard wives. By the end of the 1950s the affluent society was emerging, in the guise of Continental holidays and family motor cars – and, in the 1960s, traffic jams were to replace the torrent of bicycles that had poured from Queen's Island into the city centre at the end of each working day.

Despite all this, older ways persisted. The 'grannyarchy', for instance, survived. In its heyday it had depended on closely-built terraces where branches of families lived within a short distance of one another; in the 1960s it expressed itself in two-way traffic between young couples in the suburbs and their older relatives in the Victorian streets.⁴⁸

The hierarchical structure of Harland & Wolff until the 1960s was typical of a period symbolised by bowler-hatted directors, management and foremen. The day-to-day running of the Company was in the hands of a key group of middle managers on whose organisational ability its reputation depended. They had a power over the shop-floor worker which is today inconceivable, and wielded it to build good ships, engines and structural steel quickly and effectively. Sir Frederick's success was due in large measure to his ability to recognise managerial talent at Belfast and to reward it with responsibility, in stark contrast to his attitude to the appointment of directors.

Rush-hour traffic leaving Queen's Island along Hamilton Road in 1954. The ships, *Raeburn* and *Pontia*, are in the Musgrave channel – now the site of the building dock.