

# Carrickfergus Steam Yacht - Hull for Sale - Mar 2009

27 March 2009

Last Updated 19 December 2009

## Steam Yacht, Romance

Built by Hilditch of Carrickfergus in 1897, originally 60 ft x 9ft 4 ins x 5 ft 6 ins. Designed by Dixon Kemp, for Charles Legg

She is said to have been owned in 1940/50's by Mr & Mrs Raiment and seen on the river near Henley-on-Thames. The skipper at this time was Mr Blackburn.

In the 1980's it was owned by Keith Kingdom and moored in The Hamble.

In 2006 it was moored near Sunbury on Thames.

It is currently for sale as a stripped hull. The selling agents have forwarded this information: She is built all in teak with yellow metal fastenings. Today all that remains is her hull. She was used as a houseboat for many years on the south coast of England and was transported by road three years ago to her present location on the Thames. She was then completely stripped out, nothing original remains. The hull is afloat awaiting a big plan, it has been ferro sheathed under the waterline. In Carrickfergus, she is a renowned vessel and there are photos of her in the public buildings.

To paraphrase the book *Cool Metal Clear Water*: "Is she too far gone to bring back? That's a matter of opinion, especially when one considers some of the rebuilding jobs that have taken place on other vessels over the past 20 years. All that is needed is a person of vision, with deep pockets and a determination to deliver her to her former glory."

Dixon Kemp (1839-1899) was a highly respected and influential person in the yachting world in Europe and North America. He was an associate of the Institution of Naval Architects; first secretary of the Yacht Racing Association in Britain in 1875, created to standardize rules and handicaps for regattas, known today as the Royal Yachting Association (RYA); a member of the Yacht Registration Society which created a formal process for submitting plans and carrying out inspections during construction, to encourage progress in yacht design. He eventually was successful in changing the way yachts were rated, by water-line length and sail area rather than by tonnage.

Kemp wrote several books, among them *Yacht Designing* (1876), *A Manual of Yacht and Boat Sailing* (1878), *Practical Boat Building and Sailing* (1881) and *Yacht Architecture* (1885). He designed a number of famous sailing and steam yachts, including *Beluga* in 1877, *Amazon* in 1885, *Firecrest* in 1892 and *Romance* in 1897.

Charles Legg (b.1860) is reputed to have run a fleet of coasters and was a coal importer. He donated Legg Park to the town of Carrickfergus, in memory of his son Charles Hugh who died in WWI aged 25.

Disclaimer: The HBA have no connection with either the seller of this vessel or their agent. We cannot vouch for the accuracy of the information gathered here; it has been gained from the selling agent and perusing other on-line sites.

But for anyone interested, Sunbury-on-Thames is a taxi ride from Heathrow.