

'KEILA'

Some Comments about the 'Keila' becoming a prize.

At the outbreak of WW.2, Estonia was a neutral country and the 'Keila' was able to trade normally (apart from War Risks)

This changed on the 8th April 1940 when the Soviet Union occupied Estonia and the country was no longer in existence.

The British Government did NOT recognise this take-over and this left the problem of what to do with Estonian ships in the same position as the 'Keila'. The short problem was dealt with by taking them a prizes and placing them on them on the British Registry.

The same thing occurred with Danish Ships. After the occupation of Denmark, there was no Danish Government in Exile and as a result all Danish ships which the British Government controlled were 'Taken in Prize' and then returned to the Danish Flag after the end of World War 2. As far as I can tell, they retained their Danish crews during the war.

At the end of the war the problem was 'What to do with the ex-Estonian Ships?' The Soviet Government, I believe, tried to get their hands on them but as the British Government did not recognise the occupation, they had no luck. There were then problems as to who were the rightful owners and financial compensation for their use during WW.2 ~ Hence, the various post World War 2 entries in the National Archives. It appears that it was all dealt with by 1951 when the 'Keila' was renamed and transferred to the Panamanian Flag.

The British Government continued to grant the Estonian Embassy full diplomatic rights the whole time Estonia was part of the Soviet Union.

Neil & Hannah Ltd.

I have not been able to find out much about this firm. I am unable to find any details of ships which they owned in their own right.

I suspect that they were Ship's Agents in Leith who had worked for the 'Keila's' Estonian owner. When she was taken in prize, her management was handed over to this firm as they knew the ship.

As far as I can tell, they retained management until she was finally scrapped.

All the above is mostly best guesses.

David Tranter