

= SS Batavier II (1897) =

SS Batavier II was a steam packet for the Batavier Line that sailed between Rotterdam and London for most of her career . The ship was built in 1897 by the Gourlay Brothers of Dundee . The Dutch ship could carry a limited amount of freight and up to 321 passengers . She was rebuilt in 1909 which increased her length by over 5 metres (16 ft) .

During World War I , the Batavier Line attempted to maintain service , but in September 1916 , Batavier II was seized as a prize by German submarine UB @-@ 6 and sailed into Zeebrugge and retained . Ten months later , Batavier II was shelled by British submarine E55 and sank near Texel .

= = Career = =

Batavier II and her sister ship Batavier III were built for William Müller and Company by the Gourlay Brothers of Dundee , Scotland . The ship was launched on 17 August 1897 . As built , she was 74 @.@ 4 metres (244 ft 1 in) long (between perpendiculars) and 10 @.@ 2 metres (33 ft 6 in) abeam . Batavier II was powered by a single 4 @-@ cylinder , triple @-@ expansion steam engine of 2 @,@ 000 indicated horsepower (1 @,@ 500 kW) that moved her up to 14 knots (26 km / h) . She could carry up to 321 passengers : 44 in first class , 27 in second class , and up to 250 in steerage . She was listed at 1 @,@ 136 gross register tons (GRT) .

Upon completion in October 1897 , she joined the 683 @-@ ton Batavier I in packet service between Rotterdam and London . The pair were joined by Batavier III after her completion in November . In Rotterdam , the ships docked at the Willemsplein ; in London , the ships originally docked near London Bridge , but in 1899 switched to the Customs House and Wool Quays near the Tower Bridge . Also beginning in 1899 , Batavier Line service between Rotterdam and London was offered daily except Sundays ; each of the ships made three round trips per week . In addition to passengers , Batavier II could also carry a limited quantity of freight . One example that may be typical was a load of 1 long ton (1 @.@ 1 short tons) of dry chemical wood pulp in 5 bales carried to London in March 1907 . In 1909 , Batavier II was rebuilt to 1 @,@ 335 GRT and lengthened by 5 @.@ 3 metres (17 ft 5 in) to 79 @.@ 7 metres (261 ft 6 in) .

After the outbreak of World War I in August 1914 , the Batavier Line continued service on the Rotterdam ? London route . In December 1914 , Batavier II made news when porters handling what was identified as a 750 @-@ pound (340 kg) crate of Swedish matches discovered an escaped German Army officer inside . The plan , apparently , was for him to be shipped from London to Rotterdam via Batavier II . The plot unraveled when the porters could only move the heavy crate by rolling it , which knocked the man unconscious ; the officer was returned to the custody of British military officials .

In June 1915 , passengers on Batavier II witnessed an attack by two German airplanes against a British steamship between the Galloper and the North Hinder Lightships . The attack was broken off when two British airplanes arrived over the ship to engage the German aircraft ; none of the airplanes were destroyed , and the ship was unscathed .

On 24 September 1916 , after Batavier II had departed from Rotterdam , the ship was stopped by the German submarine UB @-@ 6 . She was seized as prize and sailed into German @-@ held Zeebrugge . There , Batavier II 's Dutch crew and women and children passengers were released and sent via train to Rotterdam . The Germans confiscated the ship 's cargo of food . Also on board Batavier II were four escaped Russian prisoners of war and Richard Hansemann , a German @-@ born New York businessman . American newspapers carried reports of Hansemann 's plight , reporting by 1 October that he would likely be impressed into the German Army .

Batavier II 's whereabouts and activities over the next ten months are uncertain . She remained under German control for a time , but how long is not clear from sources . Batavier II was back under Dutch control by late July 1917 .

On 27 July 1917 , Batavier II was shelled by British submarine E55 just outside Dutch territorial waters . Damaged by E55 's gunfire , Batavier II 's crew steered her back into Dutch territorial waters . E55 then sent a prize crew on board Batavier II and sailed her back outside Dutch waters . By the

time a Dutch torpedo boat arrived on the scene , Batavier II was taking on water and had drifted back into Dutch territory . The torpedo boat sent the message " respect neutrality " to E55 which retrieved her prize crew and departed . Despite efforts to stem the flow of water , Batavier II sank 1 nautical mile (1 @. @ 9 km) from the Molengat North Buoy , off Texel .