

Anyone identified the two ships on this stamp?



CENTENARY OF THE ROSSLARE/FISHGUARD FERRY SERVICE

Towards the end of the 19th Century a ferry service linked New Milford, in the Milford Haven estuary, and Waterford. The engineer, Marc Brunel, envisaged a port on the west coast of Wales which could handle the transatlantic liners trade and which by definition would require a rail connection to serve London. The Fishguard and Rosslare Railways and Harbour Company, which was taken over jointly by the Great Western Railway and their Irish partners, the Great Southern and Western Railway of Ireland, undertook to build a railway from Waterford to Rosslare. Linking New Milford to the rail network presented major engineering difficulties so the alternative port of Fishguard was chosen. It was sheltered, had deep water and most importantly offered a shorter crossing to Ireland.

During the next few years no expense was spared in making Fishguard a major port for Irish traffic. Work began on the



development of Fishguard in 1899 and was completed in 1906. The service to Ireland was launched in 1906, and the first westbound sailing of the Saint David carried 231 passengers. The service has operated since then without interruption, even during the First and Second World Wars, carrying both passengers and mail between Ireland and Britain.

Among the liners that called to Fishguard were the Mauritania and Lusitania. The ferry service established a very strong connection between the communities in Fishguard and Rosslare which is maintained today. It continues to serve as a key element of the infrastructure linking Ireland and Britain for the purposes of trade and tourism.

Both ports are legally owned by Fishguard and Rosslare Railways and Harbours Company in which Stena Line and Irish Rail are shareholders.

(Centenary of Rosslare..., continued on page 2)