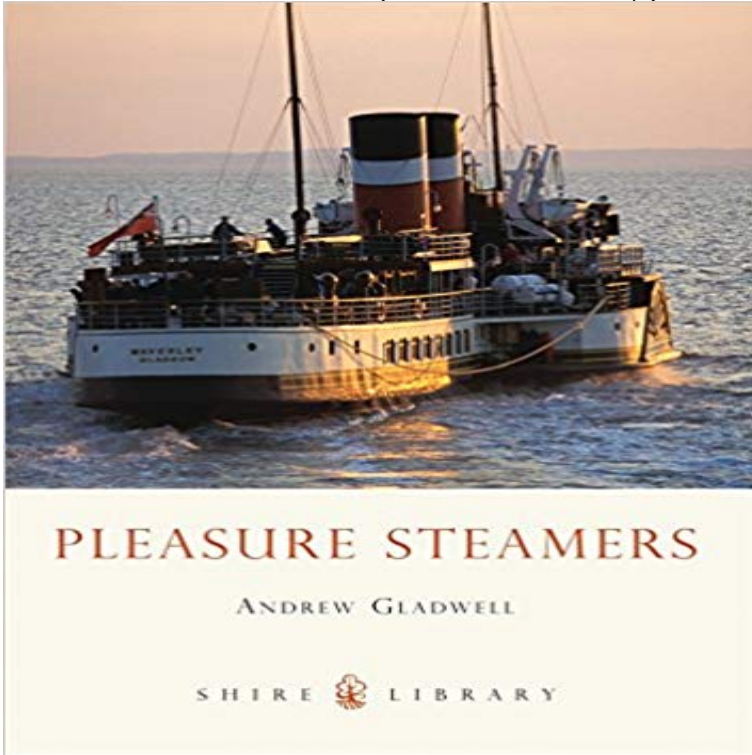


Pleasure Steamers (Shire Library)



The pleasure steamer reached its heyday in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries: hundreds of vessels, most of them paddle-powered, plied the lakes, waterways and coast of Britain, most often ferrying daytrippers from urban areas to the coast. Presenting a serene alternative to rail travel, they had the added advantage of dropping passengers off directly at the main attraction of any resort, the pier, which owed its very existence to the steamers, which needed somewhere to dock offshore. Andrew Gladwell here explores the rise and fall of these attractive ships, the companies that ran them, the experiences of their passengers and crew, and the restoration and conservation of the few remaining pleasure steamers, such as Waverley, Kingswear Castle and The Medway Queen.

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