

The Ellan Vannin Tragedy

1. Snaefell, Tynwald, Ben My Chree
Fourteen ships had sailed the sea
Proudly bearing a Manx name,
But there's one will never again -

**Oh Ellan Vannin of the Isle of Man
Company,
Oh Ellan Vannin, lost in the Irish Sea.**

2. At one a.m. in Ramsey bay
Captain Teare was heard to say:
"Our contract said deliver the mail,
in this rough weather we must not fail".

**Oh Ellan Vannin of the Isle of Man
Company,
Oh Ellan Vannin, lost in the Irish Sea.**

3. Ocean liners sheltered from the storm,
Ellan Vannin on the wave was borne.
Her hold was full and battened down
As she sailed towards far Liverpool Town.

**Oh Ellan Vannin of the Isle of Man
Company,
Oh Ellan Vannin, lost in the Irish Sea.**

4. With a crew of twenty-one Manxmen
Her passengers Liverpool businessmen
Farewell Mona's Isle farewell
This little ship was bound for hell

**Oh Ellan Vannin of the Isle of Man
Company,
Oh Ellan Vannin, lost in the Irish Sea.**

5. Less than a mile from the Bar lightship
By a mighty wave Ellan Vannin was hit.
She sank in the waters of Liverpool Bay
There she lies until this day.

**Oh Ellan Vannin of the Isle of Man
Company,
Oh Ellan Vannin, lost in the Irish Sea.**

6. Few Manxmen now remember
The third day of the month December -
The terrible storm in Nineteen-nine:
Ellan Vannin sailed for the very last time

**Oh Ellan Vannin of the Isle of Man
Company,
Oh Ellan Vannin, lost in the Irish Sea.**

Lyrics and Music by Hugh E. **Jones** - Wee Huge
Publications. Listen at youtu.be/qUvX3JIzT2A.



SS Ellan Vannin entering Ramsey Harbour
from Wikimedia Commons

The Ellan Vannin Tragedy

Notes:

Song by Jones, Hugh E, 1960's, when one of **The Spinners**.

Hear Hughie singing it at youtu.be/qUvX3JIzT2A.

Although this song is believed by many to be a traditional song from the Isle of Man, it was in fact composed by Hughie Jones, and first performed by his group "The Spinners" from Liverpool. The Spinners enjoyed considerable success during the 1960's and 70's but are now disbanded. Hughie Jones is still performing though and has several CD's available.

About the incident

[from [themanxman.ch](#), now expired] For more detail, visit freaquewaves.blogspot.com/2009/12/ellan-vannin-tragedy.html

On the morning of 3rd December 1909, the SS Ellan Vannin of the Isle of Man Steam Packet Co. left the Isle of Man at 01.13 bound for Liverpool. She was carrying 15 passengers, 21 crew plus mail and 60 tons of cargo. In command was Captain James Teare of Douglas with 18 years of experience.



At departure the weather was not particularly rough, and though the barometric pressure was falling, the captain did not expect any trouble. As the passage progressed the weather rapidly deteriorated and by 06.35 when she arrived at the Mersey Bar the wind had increased to storm

force 11 with 20 foot waves.

She foundered between the Mersey Bar and the Q1 buoy on the Mersey approach channel. She filled with water and sank by the stern. All passengers and crew were lost.

Notes on the names

Snaelegg, Tynwald, Ben My Cree - other ships of the Isle of Man Company

Ellan Vannin - in Manx this means Isle of Man

Mona's Isle - Anglesey. the original name of this ship.

The ship was constructed in 1860 as an iron paddle steamer named Mona's Isle. In 1883 her name changed to Ellan Vannin, (the second of that name) following a re-build and conversion to be propeller-driven.



Liverpool's modern Mersey Bar Light Float

The Bar Lightship - the light vessel on the Mersey Bar, marking the entrance to Liverpool from the Irish Sea; this is the point where pilots embark ships entering Liverpool Docks

Light floats are often used in waters where strong streams or currents are experienced, or if greater elevation of the light source is required to aid visibility for mariners.