

Thalatta

An Introduction



Thalatta is a wooden sea-going Thames sailing barge, 27m (90 feet) long, and built in 1906. For sixty years her job was to carry cargo to British and Continental ports. Ships like *Thalatta* were designed to have good sea-going qualities with the ability to sail in the shallow and often confined waters of the Thames Estuary. As a fast and economical way of transporting goods, the Thames barge competed successfully with the steam powered ships during the early 20th Century, and at one time there were as many as 2000 barges trading in and around London. These ingenious ships were able to survive in trade for much longer than any other commercial sailing craft in Northern Europe!

Thalatta stopped carrying cargo in 1966 and the following year began a new role as a schoolship. Since then she has taken thousands of young people just like you on voyages around the east coast. While on board you will be a part of the crew, living and working on her in much the same ways as her first crews did over 100 years ago.

Length: 27m (90ft)

She is about the length of a blue whale (80-100ft)

Beam: 6m (20ft)

She is about the width of one and a half cars (14ft)

Draught: 0.6m (2ft)

*The draught is the depth of the hull below the waterline. It determines the minimum depth of water a ship can safely navigate. A 2ft draft means *Thalatta* can safely go into very shallow areas.*

Weight: 92 tons

She is just under the weight of a blue whale (the average male is 100 tons)

Cargo capacity: 150 tons

*When *Thalatta* was in trade she carried the same amount of cargo as the equivalent of three large lorries today. A ton is a unit of mass but its original use as a measurement of volume has continued in the capacity of cargo ships.*

