

## THAMES BARGES SAIL LAST RACE

Off Gravesend 13 Thames barges prepared for a 46-mile race, out to the North Oaze buoy and back, ~~Unfortunately~~ <sup>(try)</sup> ~~there was~~ hardly a breath of wind when the starter-gun fired.

For 200 years the red sails of the barges have been a familiar sight in the estuary, sailing round the coast, over to Holland and as far west as the Isle-of-Wight. <sup>day is nearly</sup>

But their ~~menamismmmmm~~ <sup>canvas</sup> done. However, Sara and her <sup>rivals</sup> ~~competitors~~ spread ~~their sails~~ as a slight breeze came up.

30

Your Thames barge can keep going in anything but a dead calm.

Off Southend they decided to round the motorship Royal

<sup>nearly</sup> Sovereign, cutting the race by/half or, in this weather, they'd never have got ~~home~~ <sup>back</sup>. Sara led by best part of a mile by

50

<sup>the</sup> the time other competitors were heading home.

74

(GV) The 51-year-old Sara won the race for the 15th time, completing the 26-miles in just under seven-hours. Aboard Royal Sovereign, which followed them up the river, Captain Jimmy Uglow received the trophy. To Thames barges, it will soon be farewell.