I never sailed with 3 leg Dox (only 5 cyl P type) but I did hear they were notorious for tricks during starting attempts. Apparently they would sometimes fail to start (Say Ahead) and the engineer would then have to give a kick astern; stop and try again. Of course every time this would happen the wrong way alarm would sound as it was the opposite movement from that requested by the telegraph. Then the phone would go with some irate Old Man asking questions. Doxfords were a handful on Stand Bye without having to chat on the phone about things which were beyond the scope of bridge comprehension in any event.
Derek  
PS Think there may be a wee bit of fall out on this subject ??

Derick  

During the Second World War the US Maritime Commission developed the "Donald McKay" type Motorship. These vessels were medium sized Cargo Liners being 459 feet long and having a service speed of 151/2 knots.  
Donald McKay type C-2's were powered by a 6000 BHP a 92 RPM Direct Coupled Sun-Doxford 58J4C low speed 4 cylinder diesel engine. The Sun Shipbuilding Corporation of Chester Pa, had the franchise to erect  
Doxford Engines in the USA. Twelve Tankers also operated by Sun were fitted with 5 Cylinder Sun Doxfoths. I served in a Junior's capacity on both types of vessels and must say I found the Doxford Engine to be Fascinating. The adjective Fascinating was used as an understatement during my three military tours in the Mekong Delta during the war in Southeast Asia when something was so horrifying that it virtually paralyzed one with fear it was the sporty thing to reply "That was Fascinating" after regaining your composure; and believe me when I say that it was fascinating at times to maneuver a Sun-Doxford.  
My experience with Sun-Doxfoths was in the early 1960's and if I
remember correctly all the engineers were missing a digit or two and most including the Chiefs had sunken eyes and small foreheads. In those days I so desperately wanted to fit in I was considering corrective surgery to have at least one finger removed so I'd be less conspicuous. I went in steamers thank Heavens before I succumbed to a surgical procedure. I noticed a wonderful Doxford Song (to be sung to the tune of McNamara's Band) in the Engineering Song section of the Ships Nostalgia thread. In was from a British India Line publication and I think I'll print, enlarge and frame it.

On the Cargo Liners 4 Cylinder Sun-Doxfords the scavenging system was supplied by two rotary blowers mounted behind the engine and driven by chains from the crankshaft, the blower speed being four times that of the crankshaft. Due to torsional vibration in the blower drives the system was re-configured and replaced by two independent, motor driven rotary blowers, this calling for additional generator capacity. When standing close to the Chain Drives one could determine the onset of the torsional vibration by the sudden contraction of his spincer muscle. Now that really was Fascinating..!!!!

Respectfully submitted;
Hugh Curran
The

Doxford Song

I obtained this from a link for the British India Steam Navigation Company Ltd. They used to run over 160 ships from Glasgow to India and points east.
I'm sure any one here who has worked on Doxford opposed piston diesels will intuitively get with the rhythm.

The American version of the Doxford was known as the Sun Doxford and was erected under contract to Sunderland Doxford by Sun Shipbuilding at Chester Pa. Most of the Maritime C2's with Diesel Power were fitted with Sun Doxfords as were all the war built Sun Oil Tankers.

Most engineers who sailed with Doxfords didn't have all their ten digits and a good portion had small foreheads and little beady eyes.

When I first sailed in a Sun Oil tanker as a kid I considered having corrective surgery at the Marine Hospital and have one or two fingers removed.

I desperately wanted to fit in and be accepted.
Fraternally Hugh Curran

PS: The last Doxford Engine was fitted at Sunderland in 1988. At one time seventy percent of British Tramps were powered by them.

The BI Liners had low paid Indian unlicensed gangs and they had multiple engines.
They would pull pistons and liners and such underway in the tropics.

**THE DOXFORD SONG**  
Sung to the tune of 'MacNamara's Band'  
**Instructions**  
In the chorus, place two clenched fists in front of the face, vertically one above the other, and at the words Chuff! Chuff! puff them apart to imitate an opposed piston action.

At a 'ships party' six females (or anyone) would be numbered 1 to 6 and during the chorus, with hands on heads with elbows sticking out (to imitate the Doxford piston's transverse beam), the "conductor" would get them to bob up and down in the firing order that he called, to replicate the action of the engine!

1. Oh my name is William Doxford and I come from Sunder-land  
They say my diesel engine is the finest in the land  
The pistons bang, the cranks go clang and the camshaft grinds away  
And it's the bestest engine you could hear about today  

Chorus Dah dah dah dah Chuff! Chuff! Dah dah dah dah Chuff!Chuff! Dah dah dah dah Chuff! Chuff! Dah dah dah dah. Dah dah dah dah Chuff! Chuff! Dah Dah Dah - Dah With action and reaction we'll go sailing on our way.
2. To see our engines functional we open up a door
We find more cranks and crossheads than we've ever seen before

And then we pull the pistons out to calibrate the bore
And here for us to work on there are piston rings galore

Chorus Dah dah dah Chuff! Chuff! Etc.

3. We calculate the horsepower by scientific means
With bits of string and paper wound on little round machines
We measure round the diagrams the power it should tell
The outcome's automatic but the engine's aw' ta hell

Chorus
Dah dah dah etc.
(When the song has finished the ladies, exhausted, fall giggling to the floor - and then it's every man for himself!) (Supplied by George Ball)
Spent my life in the US Military and in the Merchant Services of Norway, Denmark, Ireland, Great Britain, Panama, Liberia and the United States of America.

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