

# MARITIME HERITAGE ASSOCIATION JOURNAL

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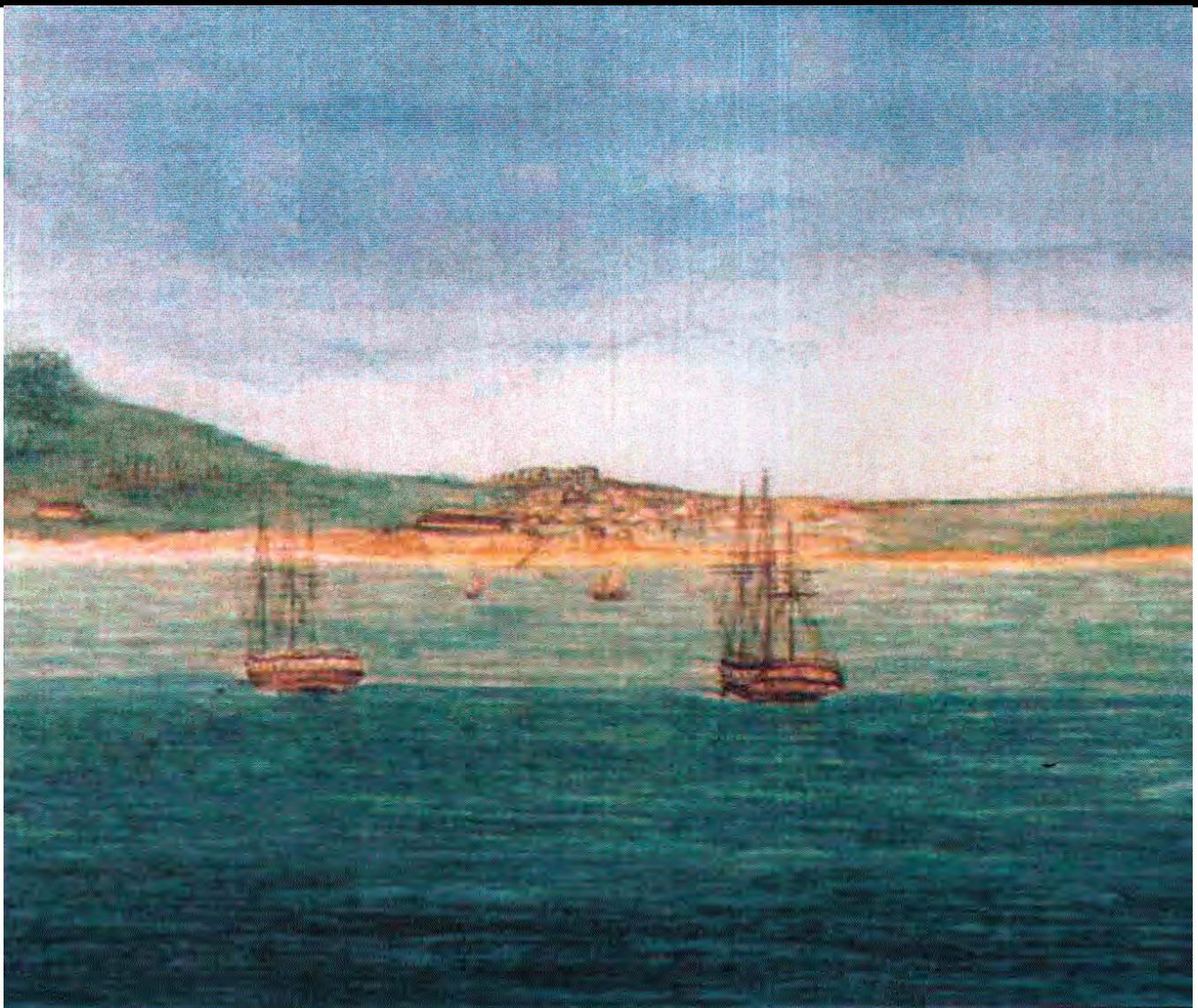
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*A quarterly publication of the  
Maritime Heritage Association, Inc.*

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*The Hooghly and the Gilmore off Clarence Town.* Watercolour by G. Bayly, 1830. (courtesy of Hocken Library)

See p. 12 for Part 1 of *Clarence—a report on the Site of Clarence Town, 1830*



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(If you have an unwanted collection of magazines of a maritime nature, then perhaps its time to let others enjoy reading it. Contact the Association; we may be interested in archiving the collection.)

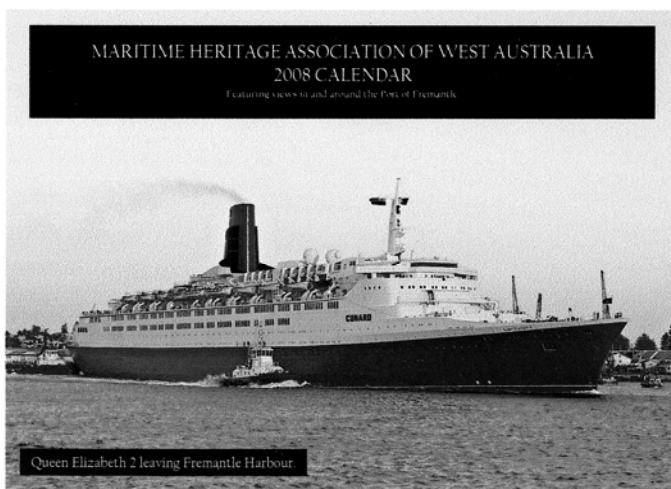
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A Merry Christmas and  
A Happy New Year to all members

MHA 2008 CALENDAR

The first MHA calendar will be available in November 2007. The format is a month per opening with a full page colour photograph of a Port of Fremantle activity taken by David Nicolson



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## Things They Would Have Rather Not Said

We may have the luck to try our mettle against the old Japanese battleship *Kongo* or against some Japanese cruisers and destroyers... Whatever we meet I want to finish quickly and so get well to the eastward before the Japanese can mass too formidable a scale of attack against us, so shoot to sink.

**Admiral Sir Tom Phillips, 1941**

Phillips (a firm believer in the power of naval anti-aircraft gunnery) was the commander of Force Z consisting of the battleship *Prince of Wales* and the battle-cruiser *Repulse* escorted by just a few destroyers which, shortly after the above statement, on 10 December 1941 was attacked by Japanese bombers and torpedo-planes. The *Prince of Wales* and the *Repulse* were sunk, with the loss of hundreds of men.



# The Ditty Bag

**An occasional collection of nautical trivia to inform, astound, amuse and inspire.**

*(The inspiration could take the form of contributions to this page!)*



The distance (in nautical miles) of an observer from the horizon he can see is given by the formula  $d=1.144\sqrt{h}$ , where  $h$  is the height of the observer's eye above sea level (in feet). Therefore an observer whose eye is 25 feet above sea level has a visible horizon of  $1.144 \times 5$ , or 5.72 nautical miles. The horizon that can be seen standing on a beach with the observer's eye only 6 feet above sea level is only 2.8 nautical miles (3.24 statute miles).

*A few days ago a large cask of biscuit was opened, and a living mouse discovered therein! It was small but mature in years. The cask, a strong water-tight one, was packed on shore at Aberdeen in June, 1857, and remained ever afterwards unopened; there was no hole by which the mouse could have got in or out, besides it is the only one ever seen on board. Ships' biscuit is certainly dry feeding, but who dares assert, after the experience of our mouse, that it is not wonderfully nutritious?*

Captain Francis Leopold McClintock,  
yacht *Fox*, 12 September 1858.

The liner *Queen Mary* had two four-bladed propellers; each propeller weighed 53 tons on casting, and had 18 tons cut and machined from it to finish at a final weight of 35 tons each.

The Royal Navy's fast patrol boat *Brave Borderer*, launched in 1958, was one of the earlier Royal Navy vessels to be powered by a gas turbine engine. In fact she was powered by three Bristol Proteus gas turbines producing a combined SHP of 10,500. The 98' 10" long vessel, which had a displacement of 114 tons fully loaded, could accelerate from rest, with engines idling and in neutral, to 50 knots in only 30 seconds, making her at that time the Royal Navy's fastest vessel. Even the two small engines for driving the generators for providing

electrical power were gas turbines; in this case made by Rover. All the turbines ran on diesel.

The first boat in the world to attain a speed of 50 knots was *Maple Leaf IV* when she achieved 55 knots in 1912. The boat was 40' long, 8' 5" beam and displaced 5.25 tons. She had two petrol engines of 400 hp each, and was built of Honduras mahogany.

The first Oxford-Cambridge rowing race was held on 10 June 1829, and was won by Oxford. The rowing eight used in that race had a length of 45' and a beam of 4' 3"; a far cry from the present eights which have a length around 60' and a beam of 2'.

The battleships *Devastation* (1871) and her sister-ship *Thunderer* (1872) were Britain's first sea-going battleships to be built without any rigging for sails. They were powered by two sets of triple expansion steam engines which drove the 9,330 ton vessels at a maximum speed of 13.8 knots. They were armed with four 12-inch guns in twin turrets.

The first ocean-going motorship was the *Selandia* (7,400 deadweight tons), built in Copenhagen in 1911 and fitted with two 8-cylinder diesel engines.

HMS *Hermes*, which entered service with the Royal Navy in 1924, was the first aircraft carrier designed and built as such from the keel up. She was sunk, along with HMAS *Vampire*, off the east coast of Sri Lanka by Japanese bombers on 9 April 1942.

The first recorded death among the new settlers in Perth was that of seaman John Parsons from HMS *Challenger*. His death on Garden Island in June 1829 is recorded as being caused by "the falling of a tree".



# Ships of the State Shipping Service

The twelfth in the series by Jeff Thompson of the Fremantle Branch of the World Ship Society.

**No. 12 *Van Spilbergen* Official No. Not Known**

With the Japanese threat to Australia reducing and World War II coming to a close, and with shipping needs to the North West becoming normalised, there was a requirement for additional shipping services. To meet these needs, ships were chartered as required and as available. One such charter was the Dutch owned *Van Spilbergen*, chartered from May to September 1945 to carry cattle from Derby and Broome to Fremantle as two of the usual vessels, *Charon* and *Gorgon* in this trade were not available. This vessel was on sub-charter from the British Ministry of War Transport to the Australian Shipping Control Board and operated by the State Shipping Service on an agency basis. The *Van Spilbergen* had been on previous voyages to Fremantle during the late 1920's and early 1930's.

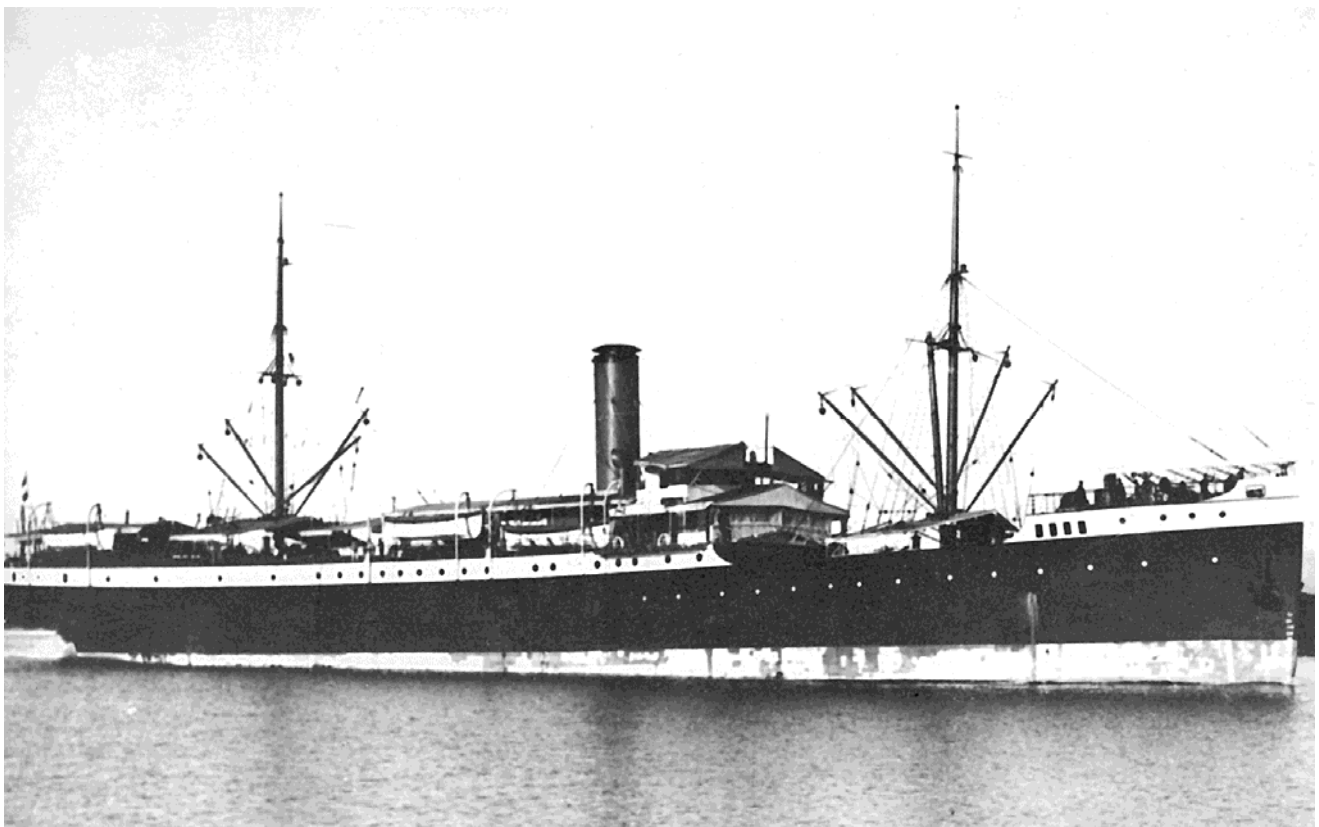
The *Van Spilbergen* was built by Maats Fyne-noord, Rotterdam, Holland in 1908 for Koninklijke Paketvaart Maatschappij (K.P.M.) of Batavia for their South East Asia services. She was 3,234 Gross registered tons, 2,518 deadweight

tons with a length of 99.28 metres overall, 13.6 m breadth. A coal fired triple expansion engine gave a speed of 10 knots on a single screw. A small number of passengers could be carried.

On the 8<sup>th</sup> March 1942 the *Van Spilbergen* arrived at Geraldton, Western Australia with refugees fleeing the Dutch East Indies. On board were also crew from the torpedoed Dutch vessel *Sintar* picked up about 300 miles from Geraldton. The *Van Spilbergen* then departed Geraldton on the 14th March 1942 for an unknown destination. During the remainder of the war the vessel was used as a transport ship by the Australian Shipping Control Board.

In September 1945 with the State Shipping Service sub charter terminating, the *Van Spilbergen* was returned to the Australian Shipping Control Board and then later to her Dutch owners.

From the 1950/51 edition of Lloyds Register there is no further entry regarding this vessel and further information regarding its post war service would be appreciated.





# Manning the Ship

By Geoff Vickridge.

The *quartermaster* was an inferior officer who helped the mates (navigating lieutenants) in their duties such as stowing the hold, coiling cables, attending to the steering and keeping the time by the watch glasses. A *timoneer* from the French *timonier*, was the helmsman or person who manages the helm to direct the ship's course. In a ship of war the quartermasters and timoneers were usually chosen by the master, to cun and steer the ship and also to stow the provisions in the hold, coil the cables and regulate the watch.

The *able seaman* was one who could not only furl and reef sails and steer the ship but who was master of all work required in the fitting and repairing of rigging such as knotting, splicing, serving, pointing ropes and mat-making.

*Waisters* were men, usually the strongest landsmen, employed on the waist-deck in working ship, having little else to do but pull and haul ropes.

An *idler* on the other hand was anyone onboard a man-of-war who, being at work all day, did not keep night watches. Nonetheless, he was ex-

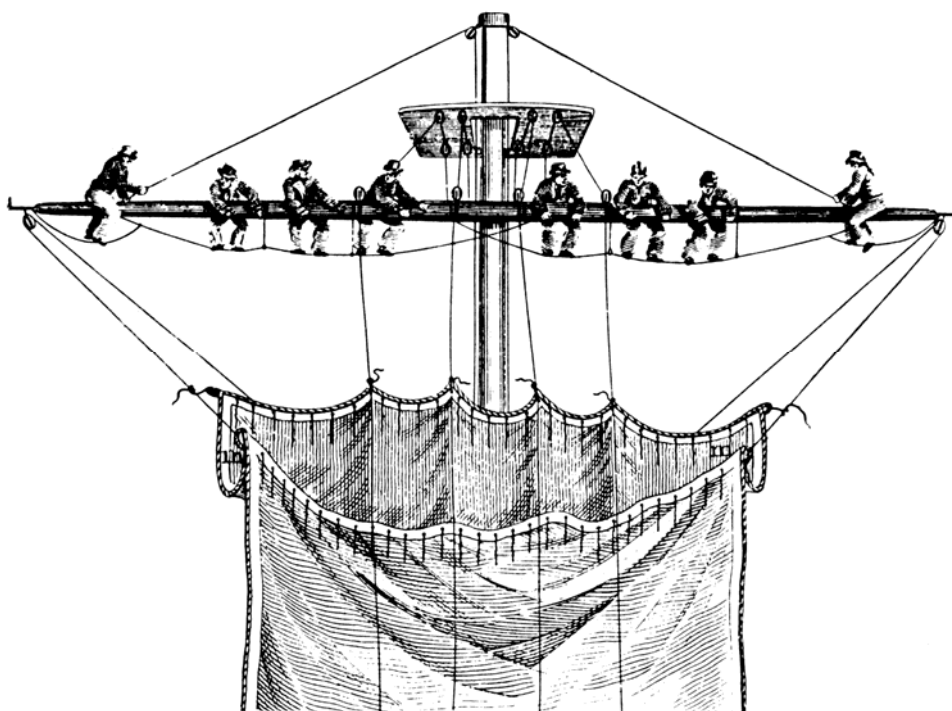
pected to come on deck at any time when "all hands" was piped. In the navy of today, he is known as a dayman.

The purser's assistant or steward was known as *Jack in the bread-room*. The man who attended the surgeon and his mates to call the sick was known as a *Loblolly-boy*. The term was also applied to the seafaring dish of porridge, sometimes called *burgoo*.

*Swabbers* were men appointed to dry the decks with swabs. There were also men called swabwingers or swabber's mates. William Shakespeare wrote of "The master, the swabber, the boatswain and I" in 'Tempest'.

*Nippers* were boys of a certain age; the same word was also applied to pieces of rope, five or six of which were used at once to connect the cable with the messenger or voya, as it was hove in by the capstan. They had to be constantly shifted as the cable came aft, and carried forward again by nippers.

*Larbowlines* were the men of the larboard or port watch.

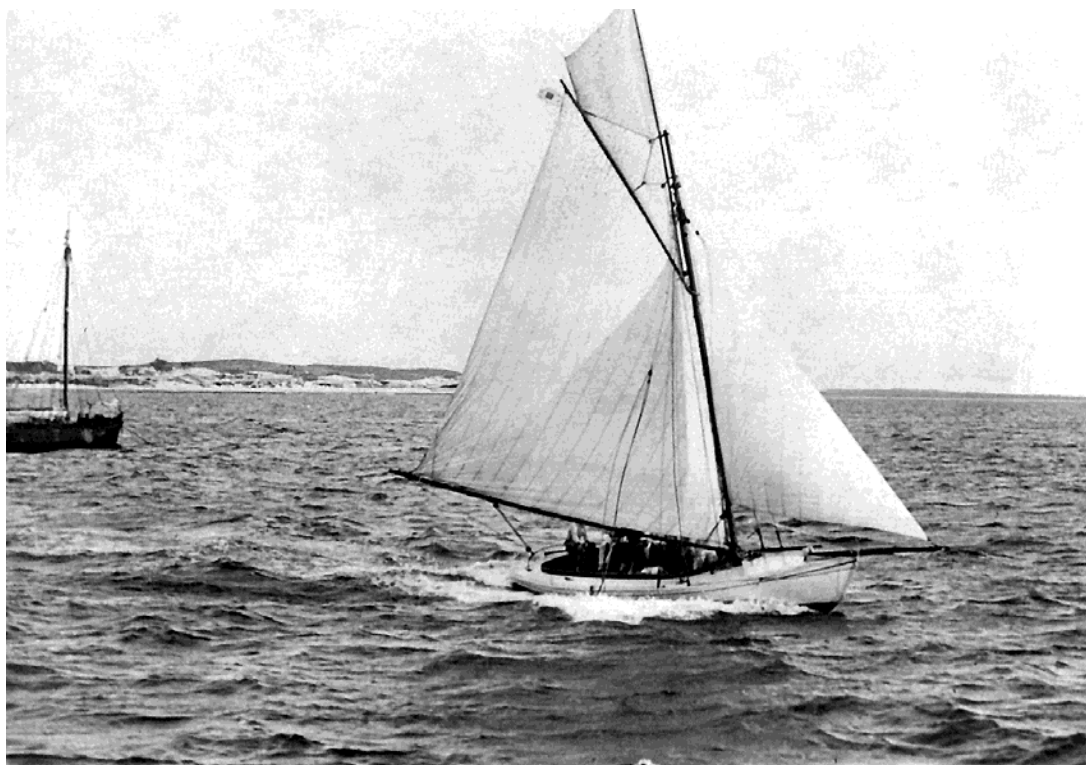


*Sailors bending a sail to a spar*



# Early Swan River yachts

*May*



*Off for the day*

*[no name for this yacht. Can anyone recognise her?]*



## SIOLA TAU, 1977

### More Messing about in Other People's Boats, part five of Nick Burningham's times under sail

I soon left SRI ULU and went to doss in a very disreputable house in the middle of Darwin. A house where people came and went at all hours of the day and night with small packages of stuff. I had given up puffing funny cigarettes myself, not for puritanical reasons, but because I'd decided it was a very tedious recreation. It tended to suppress conversation so the stoned just sat around with incoherent thoughts going round and round and around with incoherent thoughts going round and round and round in their what-was-I-talking-about — or that's what happened to me anyway.

Another Indonesian built vessel had come to Darwin just before Christmas of 1976. She already had quite a history. She had been beaten up and lost her rudder in Lombok Strait the previous year, more or less the same time as ANTARTIKA was pirouetting in the whirlpools there. Without her rudder she had been sailed slowly and painfully by a crew suffering from hepatitis, looking for a haven she could enter. They sailed along the rugged southern coasts of Lombok and Sumbawa, to Ende on the south coast of Flores. Then in the dry season of '76, with a recuperated crew, she'd been sailed down to Rote and prepared for an early wet season voyage to Darwin.

SIOLA TAU was lightly framed and inadequately fastened. She'd been built for Bob Hobman and his several financial contributors (or "troops" as he liked to call them) on Pagerungan Besar, a small island to the east of the Kangean islands. Her name meant "Accompany us" in the Mandar language spoken by the islanders. The Pagerungan shipwrights have a very good reputation — their work is neat, fast and well engineered. Back in the 1970s they used good quality teak from neighbouring islands. But the construction of SIOLA TAU had never been adequately funded and the project, according to some of the troops, had developed into a conflict between Bob and the builders. The hull often leaked and the decks always leaked. By the time SIOLA TAU got to Darwin everyone was exhausted by her. They anchored in Fanny Bay which is not a wet season anchorage, and in the first northwesterly blow of the season she dragged onto the beach where she was pounded by breakers until she broke up. She pretty much broke in half down the middle with the mast still standing.

At that stage an enterprising New Zealander named David negotiated her purchase for one dollar. He used his four-wheel drive to tow the two halves further up the beach and put them back together using lots of galvanised bolts.

By the time I met David and his partner Alison, SIOLA TAU was looking fairly intact and David was busy gumming up the seams with a bituminous gunk called *Hydroseal*. It was cheap and was used by several impecunious wooden boat owners in the erroneous belief that you can caulk with gunk. We came to know it as "Hippyseal". (Technically, the application of gunk, or caulking compound, to the seams of a wooden hull is not caulking but "paying". Caulking is the hammering of strands of fibre, such as cotton, sisal, hemp, the bark of the paperbark tree, spagnum moss, into the seams before the seams are paid. Caulking compound is a confusing misnomer.)

I offered to help with making sails and getting SIOLA TAU sailing again. David intended to sail to Indonesia in the dry season and I thought I might like to go along.

SIOLA TAU was got off the beach in the early dry season and sat at anchor for some time in Fanny Bay without anti fouling paint or ballast. She became very foul with long tendrils of weed growing thickly from her bottom. When David wanted to beach her for anti-fouling I volunteered to help sail her into the beach which at that time of year would mean sailing a short distance into the southeast trade wind. We weren't sure how she'd go without ballast but we were assured by people who'd sailed on her with Bob Hobman that she could be sailed without ballast. Anyway, there was a moderate breeze when we hoisted the sails and weighed anchor. SIOLA TAU laid over about 35° and went sliding sideways across Fanny Bay: There was certainly no chance of tacking her and we eventually reached the beach about half a mile downwind from where we'd intended to be.

Once she was anti fouled we were ready to ballast. We sailed her round to the old iron ore wharf with a light following breeze and the next day set to filling her to the cabin sole with iron ore, which is pretty heavy stuff. In retrospect we over-ballasted her and that was my fault. She was wonderfully stiff and came about with plenty of momentum but the heavy ballast strained her hull.

David, Alison and I took her for a short sail round the coast from Darwin and anchored over night in Tapa Bay. Early the next day we set out to sail back to Darwin. The southeast trades were blowing strong that morning. After getting the anchor up with some difficulty we reached along in the lee of the land going at impressive speed, then as we came out of the lee of the Cox Peninsula and had to sheet in, the wind really piped up and we met the swell which had the full fifteen mile fetch of Darwin's outer harbour piling up over the flood tide. Heavily ballasted and with her old



baggy sails chock full of wind, SIOLA TAU headreached at six or seven knots into the seas, going like a bulldozer. She didn't pitch much and pushing through the seas didn't slow her much, but it certainly put a strain on the patched-up hull each time we buffeted into a sea. After about quarter of an hour of exhilaration Alison, who was feeling seasick, checked the bilge. There was lots of water slopping round through the iron ore. We got the staysail down, eased the main sheets a bit, and took it in turns to pump for the next forty minutes. Later in the day we were able to run back up the harbour with an afternoon sea breeze. We probably should have thrown half the ballast out then, but we didn't.



*Siola Tau*

We made new sails from cheap Indian cotton duck and got ready for a voyage to Indonesia. Two friends of David and Alison joined us, they might have been called Tracy and Clive. At one stage I had a girlfriend who thought she wanted to sail with us, but after a day-sail she changed her mind.

David had agreed, as part of the one-dollar purchase contract, that if he got SIOLA TAU sailing again he would take food and clothes to the Catholic Mission on the island of Rote. The Mission, in the form of a wonderful man, Pastor Franz Lackner, had been very helpful to Bob Hobman and the rest of the SIOLA TAU troops. The food and clothes we were to carry were arranged through the St Vincent de Paul Society and Tina Hawks, the honorary Indonesian Consul in Darwin who was of aristocratic Rotinese descent. We went alongside a small wharf to load the stuff because we had been told there was quite a lot of it. There turned out to be literally tons of tinned food and other stuff. We loaded until the cabin was full up to the level of the bunks and all other space was filled, then we said "Enough".

We sailed the next day for Indonesia. I was the only one who had been to sea before, and as it turned out I was the only one who wasn't acutely seasick. We

had the southeast trades blowing pleasantly from dead astern which created problems. SIOLA TAU rolled heavily and it was a rather fast roll with all that ballast. With a gunter cutter rig and the mast stepped well forward she had (like all single-masted perahu lambo) a very long boom on her mainsail which should not be accidentally gybed because in a stiff breeze it would crash into the running backstay and either carry away the boom or the stay. Our sea sick crew were inattentive helms-persons and I made myself unpopular by criticising whenever I felt the vessel wandering off course towards a gybe.

I couldn't keep watch the whole time myself. There was a fair bit of leakage and I had to do a lot of the pumping. When SIOLA TAU rolled heavily I noticed that the deck beams in the stern moved thwartships relatively to water barrels stowed under them — the whole vessel was distorting in cross-section as she rolled. As the wind increased in strength we gave up trying to run square downwind and tacked downwind. By the fourth day out it was blowing hard and we were leaking to the extent that SIOLA TAU needed pumping with the Whale-gusher for fifteen minutes in every hour. By then nearly all the pumping fell to me although the palms of my hands had each become a big round blister. On the fourth night out, I let SIOLA TAU run with just the jib set. I was very glad and relieved the following day when we ran through Rote Strait and got the lee of Rote.

We should have gone up Semau Strait to Kupang which is an official port of entry. I don't know what Customs would have made of the tons of tinned food we had on board. But we didn't go to Kupang, we sailed down the coast of Rote to the main village of Baa where we met Pastor Franz and unloaded as quickly as possible. Probably the off-loading should have been done more surreptitiously.

Franz did everything he could to help us and when we beached SIOLA TAU to do some caulking he asked Fritz Matita, a groovy Moluccan who was trying to get into Franz's employ, to help us with the caulking. Everyone except me really just wanted to lie in the shade of tree and forget the voyage. Fritz and I did a bit of caulking each morning while the tide was out and spent most of the rest of the day drinking *laru*, a potent fermentation of the excellent Rotenese palm sugar. Caulking took too long. We stayed at Baa much too long. The local military knew we weren't supposed to be there and became more and more agitated. Eventually we got the message that one of us would be arrested and taken to Kupang to face the authorities. Since I was the only Indonesian speaker, it was me who flew to Kupang with the local military Commandant as an armed escort.

The authorities in Kupang were very decent about it. They gave me a scolding, took the details of our passports and stamped in the visas, then told me to go back to Baa. The Commandant asked me to buy him





an air ticket back to Baa, but I refused and myself took passage down to Baa on an auxiliary perahu called BUNGA ASIA whose crew had never been to Rote before. They sailed down the wrong side of Semau Strait and BUNGA ASIA got knocked around in the “Lolok” at the confluence of Semau and Rote strait. While she was struggling out of the tide race, a Rotenese sailor taking passage on board quietly explained the mistake — it would have been better to hug the Timor shore. And it would have been better if he had volunteered his expertise before we got to be where no boat should go. Rote Strait is known as “the graveyard of the Rotenese” and in recent years has eaten a relatively large and modern passenger ferry.

When the caulking was deemed finished, we sailed SIOLA TAU from Rote direct to Benoa, Bali. It was an easy run with a moderate following breeze. Only half the crew were incapacitated by sea sickness on that leg. I took with me a homebrew laru kit. Laru is very easy to make: you mix four parts water with one part palm sugar and then put it into the hollowed-out dried gourd that contains a certain type of root. The root provides the yeast. The problem with making laru is that it takes only eight hours to brew and the kit is turned into a vinegar kit if you don't tap off the brewed stuff every eight hours. I was fine with a mid-morning brew, and enjoyed another one at dinner time, but the 2:00 a.m. brew was difficult to drink and left me very seedy for the next watch.

In Bali everyone got off and ran away to Kuta as soon as possibly, leaving me to live on board and look after the boat, which was fine by me.

We discussed the leaks, which were still fairly bad, with my friend Wayan Kerig. I'd discovered that the leaks from the sternpost rabbet were more or less unstoppable because of scruffy construction. Kerig recommended that we throw out half the ballast, add some extra stringers so that no ballast could sit on the hull planking between frames, and get some Balinese sailors to do some recaulking. While that was being done I went jukung sailing to Nusa Lambongan and up the Bali coast. Every time I sailed across Badung strait to Lambongan I got a fright because of the overfalls that you have to find your way around and I always decided I would never do it again. I remember on my way back down to Benoa from Lambongan, I saw a double-ended yacht going through the overfalls a few hundred yards away. She was standing on her bowsprit and rudder alternately, and though the sails were full she didn't seem to be making any way through the water.

When SIOLA TAU was ready for sea again, and Alison and David's holiday in Bali was over, a new crew signed on, two of them to sail only as far as Sumbawa. We had some difficulties and a bit of

going backwards in trying to get clear of Lombok Strait. It must have been late September or early October and the south going current was still fairly strong. We left on the same tide as a Butonese lambo and kept company with her most of the way up the strait. Our passengers for Sumbawa were an American couple. He was tremendously clumsy and flat-footed, and seemed in constant danger of toppling overboard. His hopeless balance was compounded by his refusal to ever take off his huge flopping sandals. But he survived the voyage round to Sumbawa. We ran into the bay of Sumbawa Besar on a sunny afternoon, just ahead of us an old-fashioned perahu djengki with high-stern and a big gaff topsail set from aloft was coming up to anchor. Though sailing perahus continued to operate for another couple of decades, that was the last time I saw such an exotic old Sulawesi perahu under sail.

After stopping at Sumbawa there were six of us on board. David and Alison, an Australian surfer called Geoff (or something else) and two Aussie girls who could have been called Sally and Kate or anything else. We had a fairly slow and hot voyage along the north of the islands, as one would expect at that time of year. For the first time I saw lambo with plastic sails. Fairly good quality polyweave was being produced for making perahu sails. It was light, strong, didn't rot, and it was cheaper than the cotton duck that had none of those advantages.

We had a Seagull outboard on SIOLA TAU which could be put on a bracket on the stern to propel us at a knot or two in perfectly flat water. I think we used it going through Larentuka Narrows at the eastern end of Flores. From there we went across the Sabu Sea to Kupang where we could get sailing clearance for Australia. In the approaches to Larentuka Narrows we had met a rather scruffy lambo pinis tacking away from the Narrows in light conditions. Two young men from her crew launched their dugout canoe and came to talk to us. We learned that they had a very slow crossing of the Sabu Sea — fifteen





days, to make little more than 100 miles, mostly becalmed. Our crossing of the Sabu Sea took four or five days. We were not keen to try crossing the Timor Sea from Kupang to Darwin (about five hundred miles) in that windless season. So, we decided to go north around Timor. Indonesian sailors warned that we would meet a strong southwesterly current from Ombai Strait.

For a day or three we ghosted slowly up the Timor coast keeping fairly close inshore to avoid the current. As we approached the northwest tip of the island, Tanjung Parambala, which is in East Timor, the head current got stronger, and, as we were completely becalmed, we fired up the Seagull. We crept around the rugged, steep-to coast very close to the beaches and headlands. Whenever we had to round a headland we met a current that we could only stem by creeping along a few metres from shore. Since it was flat calm and we were making only a knot or two there was no great danger in doing that. During the afternoon we became aware of a couple of young men who were shadowing us on the shore. It looked as if they were carrying rifles. As sunset approached we looked for somewhere to anchor since we couldn't continue creeping along a sponge throw from the beach in the dark—moonrise wasn't till about 2:00 a.m.

We tucked into a tiny bay, surrounded by towering precipitous slopes of dark grey rock, and lowered the anchor into about sixty feet of dark water. We dropped the jib and staysail, and I was just about to lower the mainsail when I became aware that someone was shooting at us. I was standing on the coach roof next to a hatch so I very quickly dropped through the hatch and lay flat on the cabin sole. No one else reacted with the same speed, but one after another they came tumbling down the companion way and joined me lying flat and breathing hard on the cabin sole.

We got a white pillow slip, tied it to an oar and poked it up through the hatch to signal that we weren't there for a fight. The response was several rounds of gunfire. We tried it again half an hour later, shining a torch on the white flag and got the same response. Every half hour or so they fired another round or two. We later learned that it was high velocity fire. At one stage a bullet came obliquely through the planking sending splinters flying. It lodged in a frame from where David excavated it in Darwin and had it identified as an AK47 bullet. We lay there in the bottom of the cabin, in darkness, for hours. Geoff proposed drinking lots of whisky. David and I vetoed that. Everyone except Geoff and I thought that praying would help. Perhaps it did.

As long as it was dark we were, we felt, probably safe lying there in the bilge. But we feared that once the moon rose our attackers were likely to come out in a canoe and fire down through the companion way killing us all. We decided that we had to leave before

the moon came up. It would not be too difficult for one of us lying on the foredeck to cut the anchor cable because our anchors had short lengths of chain and the rest of the anchor cable was rope. The problem was that if we cut the anchor cable, with the mainsail set but no headsails SIOLA TAU might not turn downwind before she hit the beach — a light breeze was wafting from the land. No one was willing to go out on the bowsprit to unfurl the jib and then haul it up. You'd have to do it exposed on deck and in hoisting the jib you'd be hoisting the signal "shoot me, shoot me".

David and I decided to try sailing out without the jib. I would lie on the aft deck and feed all the main sheet out through its noisy blocks while David cut the anchor cable. From the aft deck I heard the cut end of the cable plop into the water. I lay under the tiller to steer. At first I tried to use reverse helm to keep SIOLA TAU head-to-wind and hoped she would quietly make sternway till we were clear of the bay, but the breeze veered and she started to fall off on starboard tack. Because of the rake of the mast and the light wind, the boom would not swing all the way out and SIOLA TAU started to make a little headway. I put the helm hard up but she would not turn away from the land. There was just the very slightest breeze and she was scarcely moving but she was headed for the beach. We had a plan for this expected problem. I tied the helm hard over, then David and I put flippers on. We slipped over the side and tried pushing the stern up into the wind. As we did it a little puff of breeze started SIOLA TAU moving a little faster. Still she wouldn't turn downwind, and we couldn't push the stern in the way we intended because she was moving ahead. We swam round to the bow and tried pushing the bow away from the shore. SIOLA TAU was gathering way, making what we were trying to do more difficult. Finally we "stood" with our feet on the stem hanging under the bobstay pointing our bodies off to leeward like a bow rudder, David holding his breath below me. I don't know whether that really worked or whether the breeze had eased letting the rudder get control, but SIOLA TAU turned downwind and we scrambled up the bobstay to get to the helm before she gybed and went sailing off towards the other side of the cove. All this time not a shot was fired. Perhaps the Timorese resistance fighters or Indonesian militia — whoever was firing at us — were nearly as pleased to see us go as we were to be gone. We stood out to sea for two or three miles before turning south for Kupang.

There was no way of going north about Timor if we couldn't avoid the current by sneaking around Tanjung Parambala close inshore. With the current behind us, we got back to Kupang in a day or two and took on water there, then we continued down Semau Strait and out into the Timor Sea. Though we met a stiff headwind in Semau Strait and carried away the jib sheet, it was early December and out on the Timor



Sea there was no wind except for the lightest east southeasterly which usually came in the afternoons and that was a breeze from dead ahead. It was several days before we lost sight of Timor's mountains.

On the voyage out we had carried enough water for a couple of months: we had several forty-four gallon drums of the stuff. But in Benoa, in the lightening and cleaning out, most of our water containers had been given away. We hardly had enough water for a month in that hot windless season. We started rationing water after only a few days out. It is a very unpleasant thing being thirsty all the time when conditions are hot and windless and there is nothing to do. For days we tried to take advantage of whatever breeze we got. It was nearly always very light and from ahead. We averaged about fifteen miles progress per day. It did give us plenty of opportunity to practice celestial navigation. David had equipped SIOLA TAU with a quartz mechanism yacht chronometer which was new technology then.

We were still more than one-hundred and fifty miles from Darwin when we got down to two weeks water supply left. We knew we were crossing a shipping lane and were very pleased to see a large ship come up over the horizon. We signaled "We wish to communicate" and much to our surprise the great big ship, a Taiwanese bulk ore-carrier loaded with bauxite, turned round and came back to us. We used the Seagull to go alongside and explained that we were getting short of water, had no engine, and were becalmed. They sent a hose down to us from which we filled the water containers and every other container we could find. They asked if we needed anything else. No, we said, just water. How about cigarettes? A few ciggies would be nice we agreed. Then they sent down half a dozen frozen chickens (they must have assumed we had a freezer) several industrial size loaves of bread, and, most wonderfully, a few bottles of cold beer.

We gorged on chicken and water till we felt sick. That evening the first of the wet season's northwesterlies started and we were safely in Darwin a couple of days later.

David quickly sold SIOLA TAU. I kept a rather clumsy dugout canoe that we had bought in Kupang. I made a cotton sail and went sailing in that canoe on Darwin harbour. I called it SRI FLAMBOYAN after a similarly shabby Rotenese perahu with that improbable name.

SIOLA TAU was bought by another New Zealander, Alistair, who had no more sailing experience than David had when he'd bought SIOLA TAU. David left SIOLA TAU anchored off Lameroo beach which was safer than Fanny Bay where she'd been wrecked the year before, but not much safer.

It was Christmas afternoon when Alistair came round to the house where I was living, to say that he was concerned that SIOLA TAU was dragging anchor towards the iron ore wharf. Would we help him move

her? "We" were Jamie Munro (who I had sailed with on SRI ULU), Dan Dwyer (who I would later sail with), me, and a couple of other drunken ruffians. We were a rollicking bunch of yo ho hos that piled into the back of Alistair's ute to go sailing on a windy, rainy, Christmas afternoon. SIOLA TAU was in a nasty situation, both wind and tide dragging her towards a massive iron jetty, and there was a swell running. We swarmed aboard and reckoned we could get her out if everything went just right. It was definitely too windy to try towing her with the dinghy and outboard. She was pretty sure to get smashed up if we didn't move her and was certain to get smashed up if we couldn't go clear of the jetty at first attempt. Putting out extra anchors probably wouldn't have helped much in the soft silt off Lameroo beach.

We got the mainsail up, ripping it slightly in the process, and then all tailed on the anchor cable ready for a hard fast haul. We needed to pull up the anchor really fast but smoothly, getting as much headway as possible so that we could sheer SIOLA TAU onto starboard tack heading away from the beach and out to the fairway before she was swept under the wharf. Although the anchor wasn't holding well, and "came home" rather too soon, the manoeuvre worked. As the anchor came up, the jib and staysail were smartly hoisted and sheeted, and we cleared the end of the jetty with hearts pumping and dry mouths. Luckily we had brought a couple of slabs of beers with us.

Later in the wet season Dan Dwyer and I went sailing with Alistair again. I was troubled to see that the cotton sails had been left bent during the wet season and were rather mildewed. We sailed out of the harbour a mile or two and then a light squall came down on us. You could see right through the squall, it obviously wasn't anything very serious, so we figured we could luff through it. Unfortunately, when it started to rain and blow, the sodden sail tore from near the hounds, where we'd put a rip in it at Christmas, right down the panel to the foot (it was a traditional leach cut sail). Then it tore square across to the leech rope from near the hounds, and also tore along the foot. For a few moments a large part of the sail flapped from the leech rope like a big flag before detaching itself and landing sodden in the sea a few metres downwind. We were left with two rather small triangles of mainsail one above the other.

Then the wind went very light and we were left wallowing. Eventually Dan and I dug an old mainsail out of the fore peak. It was just as mildewed but it got us back to the anchorage. We were never invited to go sailing on SIOLA TAU again.

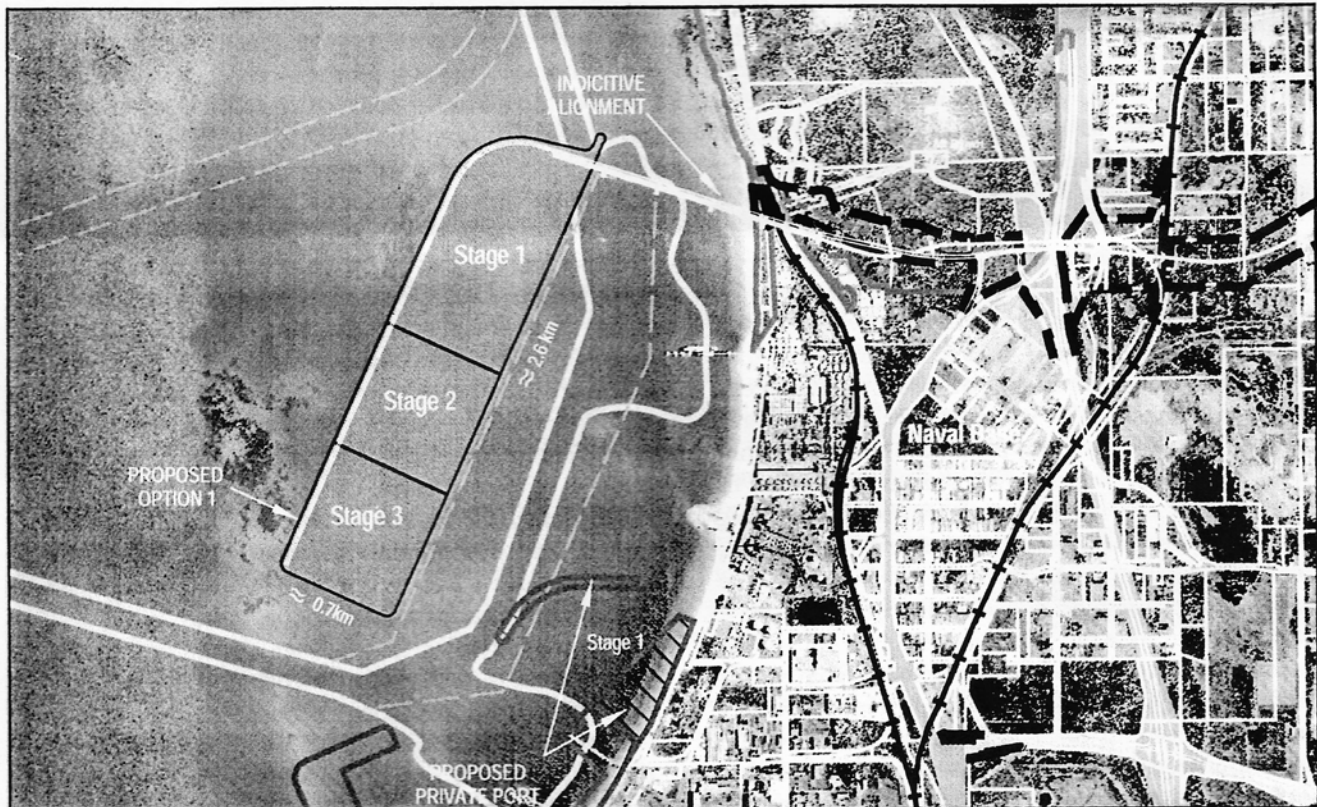
Alistair became quite proficient at sailing her, even single handed, but he anchored her right over a needle of rock one day and that was the end of SIOLA TAU.



# CLARENCE - A Report on the Site of Clarence Town, 1830

by Ross and Barbara Shardlow

In March 2006, Fremantle Ports, in delivering an update for the proposed Outer Harbour Port Project, disclosed that the Rowley Road Corridor Access Plan had advantages over other options. When the Maritime Heritage Association advised that the abandoned town of Clarence might lie within the proposed access plan, Fremantle Ports asked Ross Shardlow to prepare a *Report on the Site of Clarence Town*.



The proposed Outer Harbour Project with the Rowley Road Corridor Access Plan

CLARENCE WAS A TOWN of over 400 people established late in December 1829 for Thomas Peel's Land Settlement Scheme (Peel and Company); it was the quintessential 'piano on the beach' pioneer settlement.

In co-partnership with Sydney entrepreneur Solomon Levey, Thomas Peel planned to bring 10,000 people to Western Australia for which he would receive a land grant of *one million acres*. To secure the agreement, and to gain an initial parcel of 250,000 acres, Peel had to land the first of 400 settlers by 1 November 1829.

The *Gilmore*, Captain Geary, the first of three ships employed to deliver the settlers, arrived 15 December – six weeks too late for Peel to receive the land grant. By way of compensation, Lieutenant-Governor Stirling offered Peel a second parcel of land, also of 250,000 acres, but the allocation was further south and offered on terms that reduced Peel "to the capacity of a common settler". After some deliberation, Peel reluctantly agreed to the new proposal, accepting in the meantime, a site in Cockburn Sound recommended to him by Stirling as a place suitable for the landing of stores and the establishment of a town that could service the new Peel Estate. Peel named the landing site 'Clarence' in honour of the Duke of Clarence, heir apparent and soon to be

King William IV. Peel's second ship, the *Hooghly*, arrived 12 February 1830 followed by the *Rockingham* 14 May 1830.

Forfeiting the land grant of first choice was only the beginning of Peel's troubles. Clarence proved to be a poorly chosen site, even as a landing stage for the hinterland. The town was isolated and exposed with poor sandy soil and limited fresh water. The *Sydney Gazette* emphasised the deficiency when they published an extract from a letter addressed, 'Swan River, 6 February' (1830):

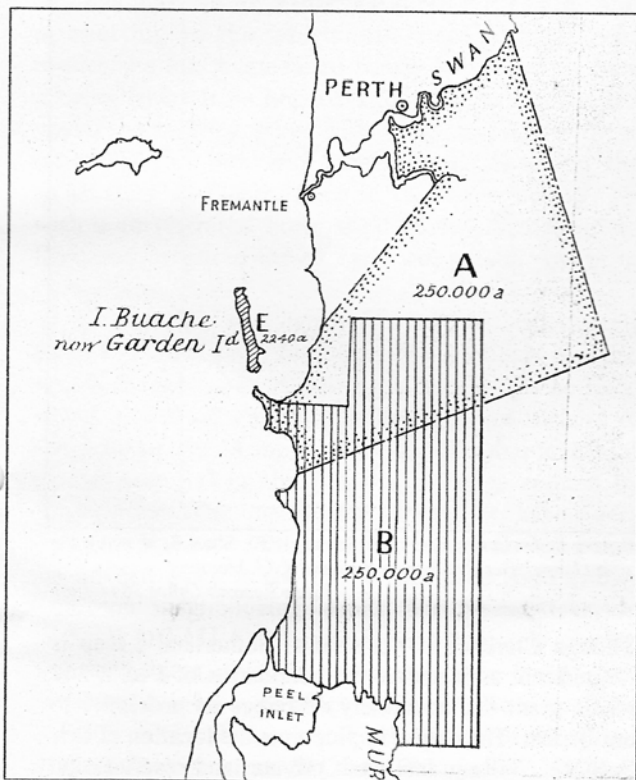
Many settlers have arrived, and a great proportion have settled with Mr Peel on the east side of the Sound. All are most dismal, arid, sandy places. This part of Australia was made late on the last day of the Creation, for I firmly believe such another spot does not exist on the Globe.

Allotments could not be issued on unsurveyed land; there was no infrastructure in place to support the fledgling settlement, and a scheduled supply vessel failed to arrive with much needed stores. Peel was unable to adjust quickly to the ever-changing and unplanned circumstances; he was not a leader of men, he failed to issue orders and failed to delegate the responsibility to those who could.

Setting the blame for his late arrival squarely on Captain Geary of the *Gilmore*, the ensuing unyielding quarrel culminated in a duel that nearly cost Peel his life. Euphemistically described as a 'shooting accident', Peel had part of his right hand blown away, and according to John Morgan, Government Storekeeper on Garden Island, "nothing but the very excellent medical attendance he received from the King's ship saved his arm from amputation." The *South African Commercial Advertiser* published on 1 May 1830:

Mr P- is at present very ill, with a party under him badly managed and very discontented. All the settlers have been very indolent: they have not made the progress they ought in erecting their winter habitations. I fear there will be yet great distress.

Peel was still recovering from his wounds and humiliation when, on the 14 May 1830, the *Rockingham* arrived with the last of the indentured farm labourers. Before her cargo and passengers were unloaded, a northwest gale drove *Rockingham* onto the beach near Clarence Town.



Map compiled by the Department of Lands and Surveys in 1921, showing Peel's Priority Grant (A) and the alternative offer (B). (Battye Library 33/241C)

Bitter and disillusioned, Peel spiralled into a well of despair. Incapable of facing his responsibilities and obligations he retired 'a ruined man', virtually abandoning his people at Clarence, leaving them without leadership, instruction, wages – or even sufficient food from his storehouse to sustain them. The situation at Clarence Town became grim, anarchy broke out – and people started dying. The *Hobart Colonial Times* published a letter to the editor from 'A Late Settler' dated 24 October 1831. It confirmed that:

Mr Peel's indentured servants arrived too fast for his provisions, which compelled him to put them six upon four; this caused a disturbance among them. Mr Peel was obliged to seek shelter at Garden Island, under Captain Dance's protection in August 1830, until such time as he could drill some of his starving servants; he returned to his abode in October 1830, and the moment it was known, the remainder again threatened his life; he was then under the painful necessity of applying to the Governor for his protection...

#### THE COLLAPSE OF CLARENCE

ON RECEIVING REPORTS on the pitiful situation at Clarence, Lieutenant-Governor Stirling sent Dr Alexander Collie, assistant surgeon of the 63<sup>rd</sup> Regiment attached to HMS *Sulphur* at Garden Island, to "make enquirey into the causes of sickness ... at or in the neighbourhood of Clarence". Collie's report was filed 25 July 1830, just seven months after Clarence was established:

On my arrival at Clarence yesterday I was informed by Mr. Lyttleton who has medical charge of the Settlement and by Mr. Cook, Clerk of the Stores (no other leading person being there during the time, several hours, which I remained) that Mr. Peel's settlers at present at Clarence are about 400 persons ... that the number of deaths since the first arrivals are 28. This is exclusive of Mr. Larkin of Dunning's family and of Mr. McKenzie, killed by the natives.

Collie's report went on to state that, "The number of sick is still very great, Scurvy being the prevalent disease, Dysentery being less common". Governor Stirling took remedial action to relieve the suffering. Besides issuing provisions and exchanging equipment and land for supplies, Stirling decreed by law "to liberate all but a very limited number of his people from their indentures" – and they left in droves. Some moved to Perth and Fremantle, many settled in the Guildford area, several left the colony altogether. Peel, with a handful of loyal settlers, moved down to better land on the Murray where he built a cottage he named 'Mandurah House'. A letter (presumed to be written) by Dr Collie 13 October 1830, indicates that Clarence was winding down by that date:

Mr Peel, I understand, has decided on setting the greater part of his people at liberty, giving up the concern of Peel & Co., and becoming a settler on his own personal account alone. A great number of his men, indeed, left him some time ago.

Captain Richard Meares, who had the adjoining grant north of Clarence, addressed a letter to the Colonial Secretary from 'The Rocks, Near the Deserted Village'. Given that Meares's letter was dated November 1830, it also concludes that Clarence was all but finished within a year of its formation. Following his earlier report, Dr Collie wrote again on 5 January 1831:

Mr Peel's establishment is wholly broken up, and the recently populous town of Clarence now only musters two or three families. He is farming with some fifteen or twenty hands on the Murray, and the people whom he brought out have been distributed over the colony under the direction of Government.

The census for 1832 estimated the population of Clarence to be just five.

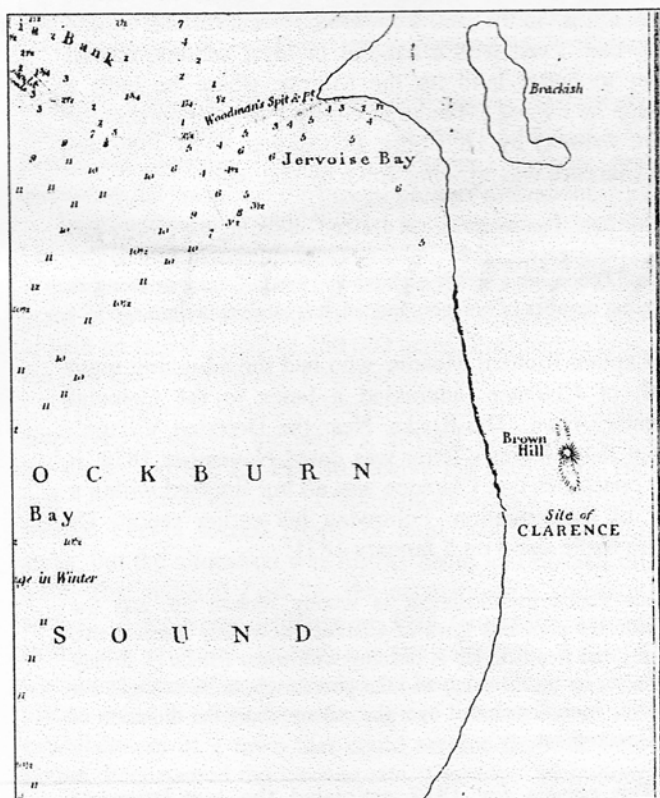


THE ACCEPTED academic view presumes Clarence to be at Woodman Point, five kilometres north of the proposed harbour development. It is hardly surprising; therefore, that the heritage survey conducted for Fremantle Ports' Integrated Strategic Assessment failed to disclose anything of historical significance in the proposed port development area. Consequently, this report focuses largely on the evidence to support the claim that Clarence may have been at Mt Brown, not Woodman Point as previously believed. The evidence to support the claim comes from a range of primary source materials including contemporary maps, charts, surveys, sketches, paintings, journals, diaries and letters.

**MAPS AND CHARTS**

**COCKBURN SOUND, by J. S. Roe Esq<sup>r</sup>.**

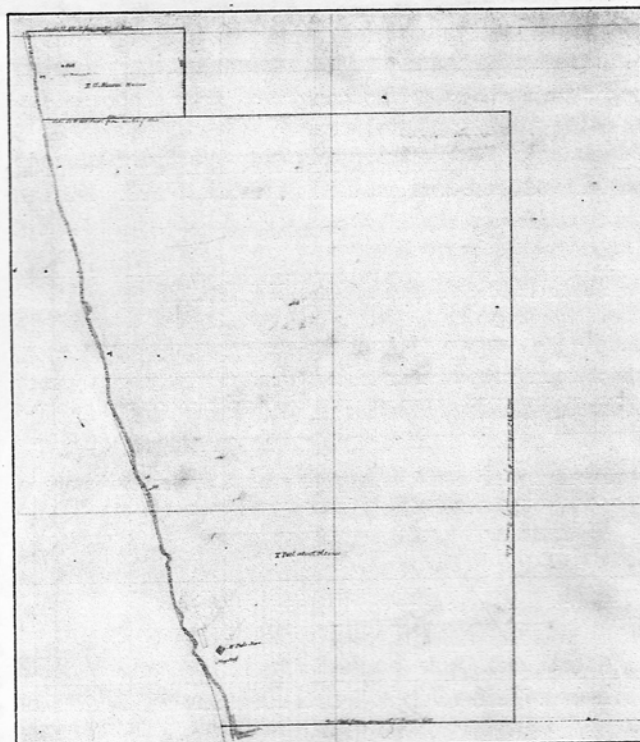
ON HIS ARRIVAL at Swan River 1 June 1829, Surveyor-General John Septimus Roe immediately commenced a survey of Cockburn Sound and the entrance to Swan River. The survey was completed early in 1830 and published by the Hydrographic Office 1 August 1831. Though Peel arrived before completion of Roe's survey, Clarence does not appear on the chart. However, a new edition published with 'Corrections to August 1832', includes a regional inset map with 'Clarence' marked as a shaded area along the coast between Woodman Point and Cape Peron. Another edition of the same chart titled *COCKBURN SOUND, by J. S. Roe Esq<sup>r</sup> Surv<sup>r</sup> Gen<sup>l</sup> of the Colony of Western Australia* (no publishing date), clearly records just south of Brown Hill, 'Site of CLARENCE'. The chart also includes the cliffs between Clarence and Woodman Point (see below).



Detail from the chart of COCKBURN SOUND, by J. S. Roe, showing Brown Hill and 'Site of CLARENCE'. (Battye Library 840C/46)

**COCKBURN SOUND, by H. C. Sutherland**

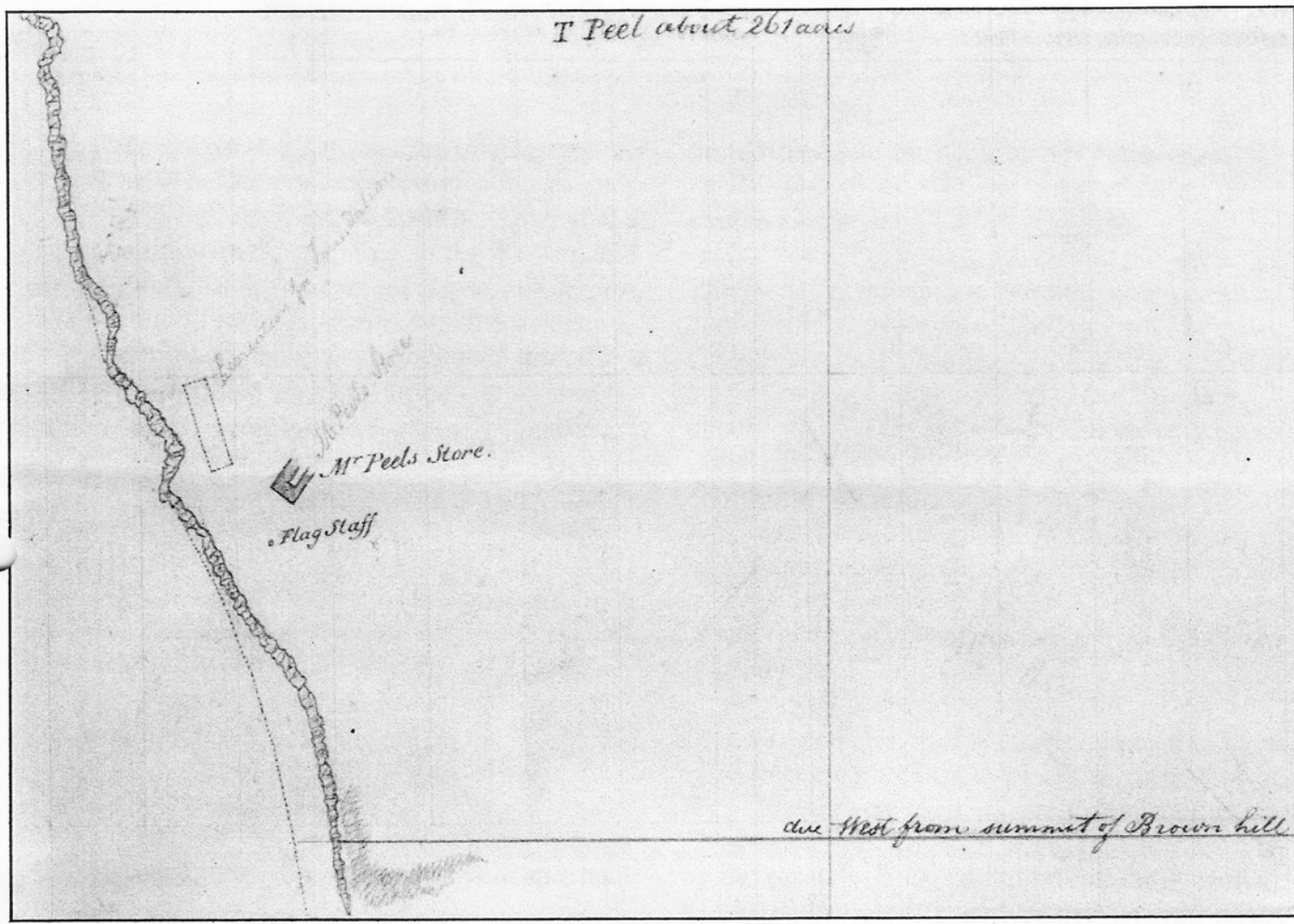
HENRY C. SUTHERLAND, with his wife Ann, came out to the colony on the *Parmelia* as Assistant Surveyor to John Septimus Roe. On 25 January 1830, Sutherland, with two soldiers to assist, proceeded to Clarence to undertake a survey of the area that lasted two weeks. In a letter addressed from the 'Encampment, Cockburn Sound, Jan. 31, 1830', an unnamed passenger from the *Gilmore* penned, "The spot we are on is marked by the Governor for a town; the surveyor is now laying it out". From the maps recovered so far, it is evident that Sutherland only laid out the boundaries for various land grants; if he did lay out a town, as the passenger's letter suggests, then we have not found that survey.



Detail from Sutherland's Cockburn Sound, 1830, Sheet 3, showing the villa grant boundaries for Thomas Peel and R. G. Meares. (State Records Office 3844-156)

Though Clarence is not shown, Sutherland's map is still significant as it shows the boundaries of Peel's 261 acre villa grant and accurately describes its proximity to Mount Brown. The map also pinpoints the location of 'Mr Peels Store'. Villa grants were private land reserves and did not form part of the townsite. Contemporary records, however, refer to Peel's private establishment and give clues to the proximity of the settlement to it. Adjoining Peel's land to the north is a smaller villa grant of 15 acres assigned to Captain Richard Goldsmith Meares. Though Meares came out with Peel on the *Gilmore*, he did so as an independent settler.

It seems the rigours and demands of the poorly staffed Survey Department took their toll on Henry who was, amongst other things, suffering poor eyesight. Adding a memo to his journal, Roe bemoaned, "One sickly Surveyor the total of my staff!" Sutherland was compelled to retire from the Survey Department later that year.

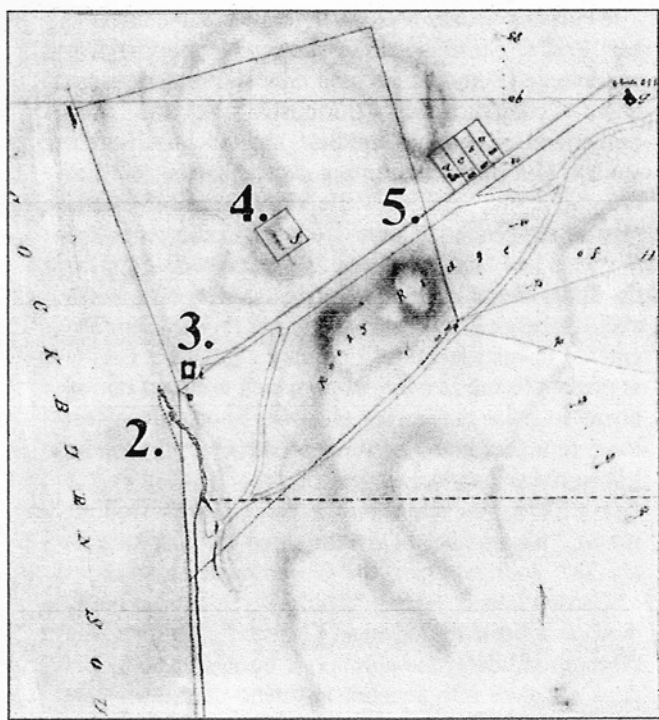


Detail from Sutherland's map showing 'Mr Peels Store', 'Flag Staff', 'Excavation for Foundation' and the rocky coastline where the Naval Base Caravan Park now stands. Wording on the southern boundary reads 'due West from summit of Brown hill'. (State Records Office 3844-156)

**PEEL'S GRANT NEAR CLARENCE, by George Smythe**

SOLOMON LEVEY engaged Benjamin Smythe as a private surveyor for Peel and Company. Adam Elmslie, Peel's manager, described Benjamin as "a gentleman of experience and talents who came out in the capacity of surveyor, bringing with him his wife and two sons and three daughters, one of whom was married with Captain Geary at the Cape". Peel blamed Captain Geary for the delay by which he forfeited his priority grant. Susan Smythe's marriage to Geary did not help matters and may have been the cause for Peel's acerbity towards her father Benjamin. Peel's displeasure eventually erupted with a warning, "that if Mr Smythe presumed to come near him or his premises he should give him in custody." Benjamin did not stay long at Clarence, he left the colony for Van Diemen's Land in February 1831, leaving behind his sons Henry and George and his daughter Ann (who later married Thomas Watson). It was Benjamin's son George, also an accomplished surveyor, who mapped Peel's grant.

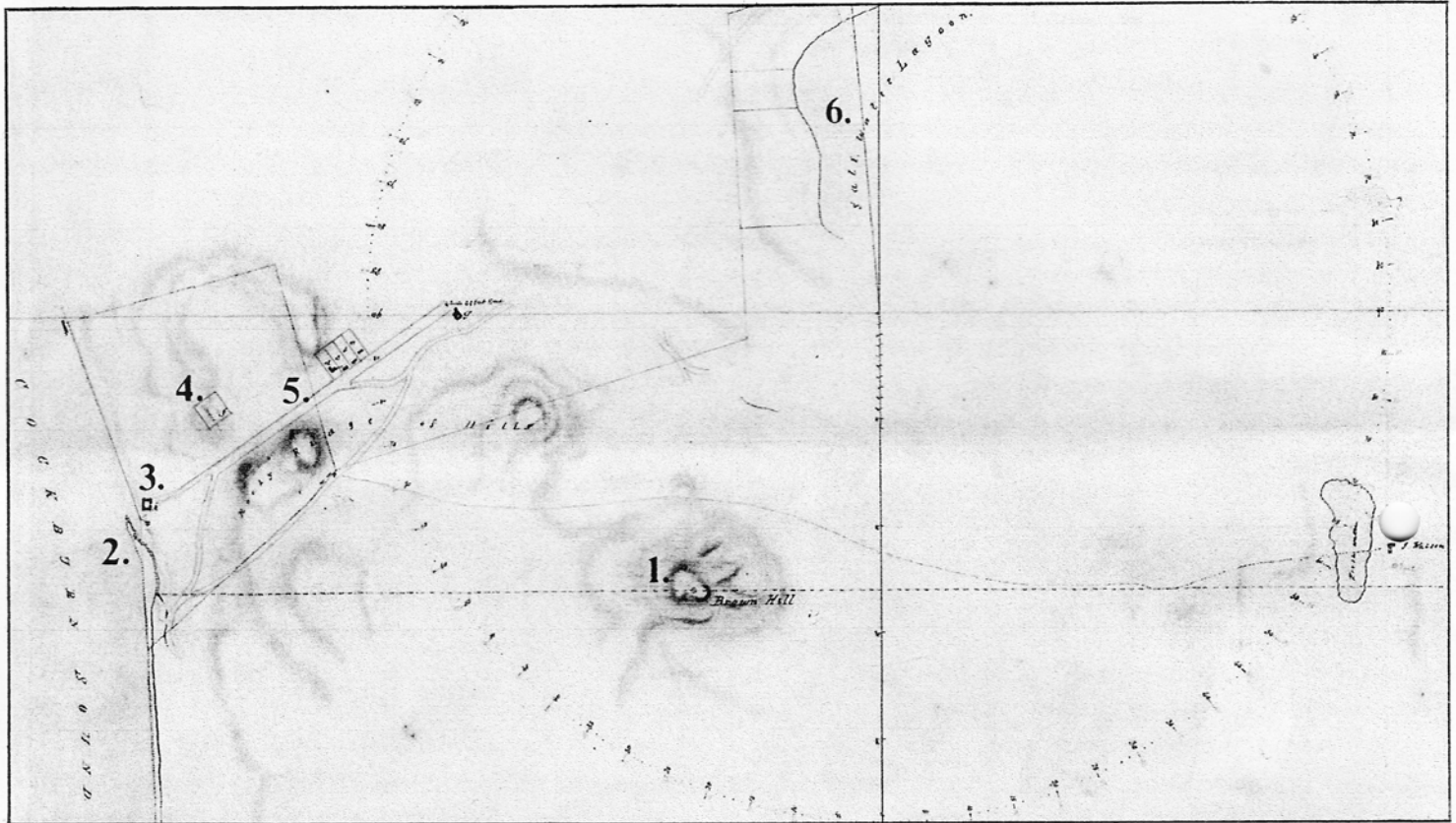
Smythe's map shows details mostly within Peel's villa grant but does not include Clarence Town itself; indeed, the map title states 'near' Clarence. Roe's chart, for instance, suggests that Clarence was on the south side of Peel's villa grant.



Detail from Smythe's map showing features on Peel's villa grant. The numbers are not original and have been added to assist with the referencing - see over. (State Records Office 3844-142)



PORTION OF: SURVEY of the NORTHERN BOUNDARY of THOMAS Peel's Grant, NEAR CLARENCE.  
By George Smythe, 1830. Sheet 1.



The numbers are not original and have been added to assist with referencing the features shown on the map.

(State Records Office 3844-142)

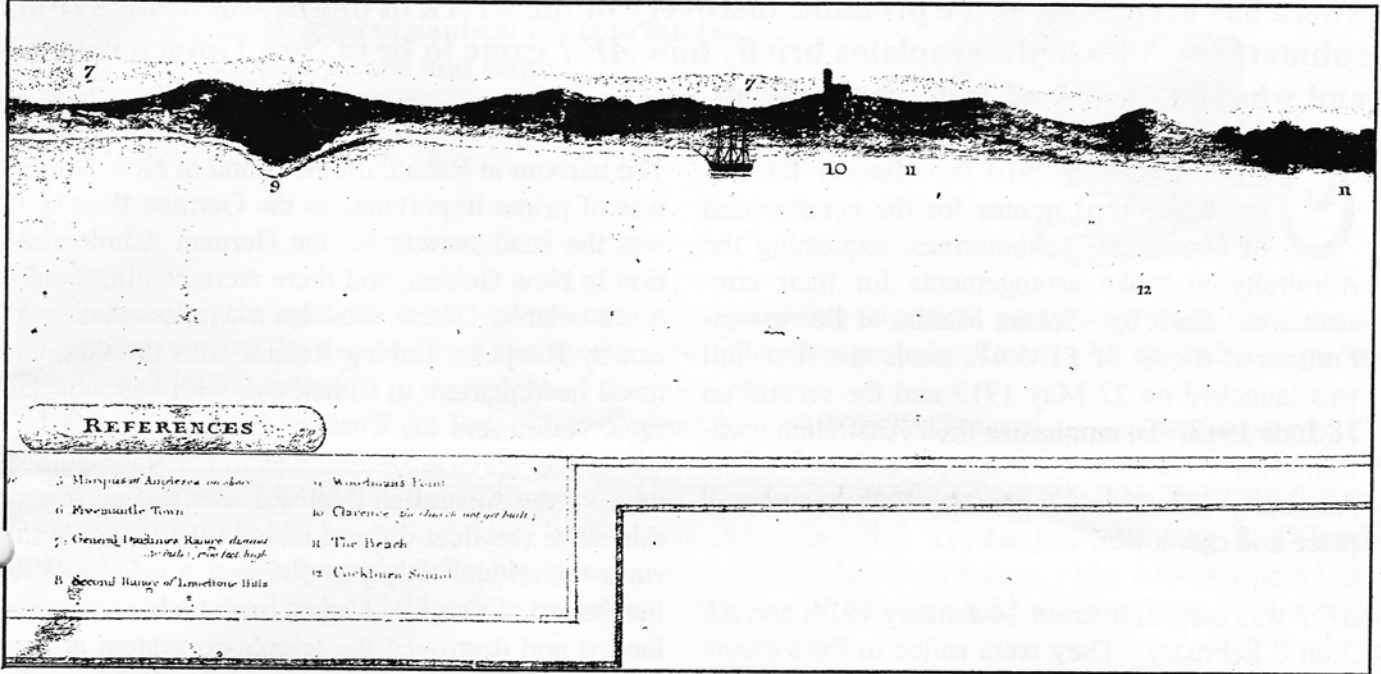
INTERPRETATION OF FEATURES ON SMYTH'S MAP

1. Brown Hill – named for the Colonial Secretary Peter Brown, it was later elevated to Mount Brown.
2. The Landing Place – where the cliffs meet the beach. The cliffs have only been partly drawn on the map.
3. Mr Peel's Store – now shown as a complete quadrangle (Sutherland's map only shows three sides under construction). Curiously, Smythe and Sutherland show the building aligned at different angles. The small structure, a short distance south of the Store, accords with the description of Peel's private residence. A letter from Dr Collie remarked that Peel had "not yet raised any grand edifice for his dwelling, being domiciled under canvas in a horse stall". George Bayly, second officer on the *Hooghly*, entered in his journal 17 February 1830, "Mr Peel is at present living in a large box which was sent out on board to hoist the horses out. It is about seven feet long, four feet high and three broad. Over the top he has an old sail spread by way of a roof."
4. Grave Yard – the site where, according to Dr Collie's report, "the number of deaths since the first arrivals are 28." John Morgan, the Government Storekeeper at Garden Island, added, "Thirty seven have actually died, and been buried near Clarence". To date, our research indicates the number of burials to be 32 but does not take into account any who died elsewhere but were buried at Clarence. The *Alma Street Cemetery Records* show many of the people who died at Clarence were later re-interred at Fremantle.
5. Main road and allotments – Peel allowed his managers and certain 'more favoured' members of the community to build their cottages on his villa grant. The references to 'Peel's Town' may have applied to this part of the establishment. The 'labourers class' were required to settle elsewhere and there were disputes when some attempted to build on Peel's land without his permission. The map reference attributes allotments to Mr A. Elmslie, Mr Oakley (whose wife Elizabeth died from 'water on the chest' 13 July 1830), Dr Littleton [Lyttleton], and Mr T. Bailey (Bailey's wife Anne died in childbirth 16 August 1830). There are also houses assigned to H. Crisp and another marked 'Barrows House'.
6. Salt-water lagoon – marked on current maps as Mount Brown Lake.
7. Mr T. Watson's House – Watson came out with Peel but as a free settler and had his own land grant east of Mount Brown. The diary of Mary Ann Friend records a bushfire that swept down on the settlement on 16 February 1830; "Mr Walcott returned from Peel's Town; the accounts are very bad. The natives had made a large fire to drive the kangaroos. It spread rapidly owing to the dry state of the grass and reached the encampment of Mr Watson which was entirely burnt. He lost everything I believe except his stock. A Mr Smith had his tent also burnt. The fire reached within a few yards of Mr Peel's stores where his Gunpowder was kept ..."





COASTLINE PROFILE (COCKBURN SOUND) 1831



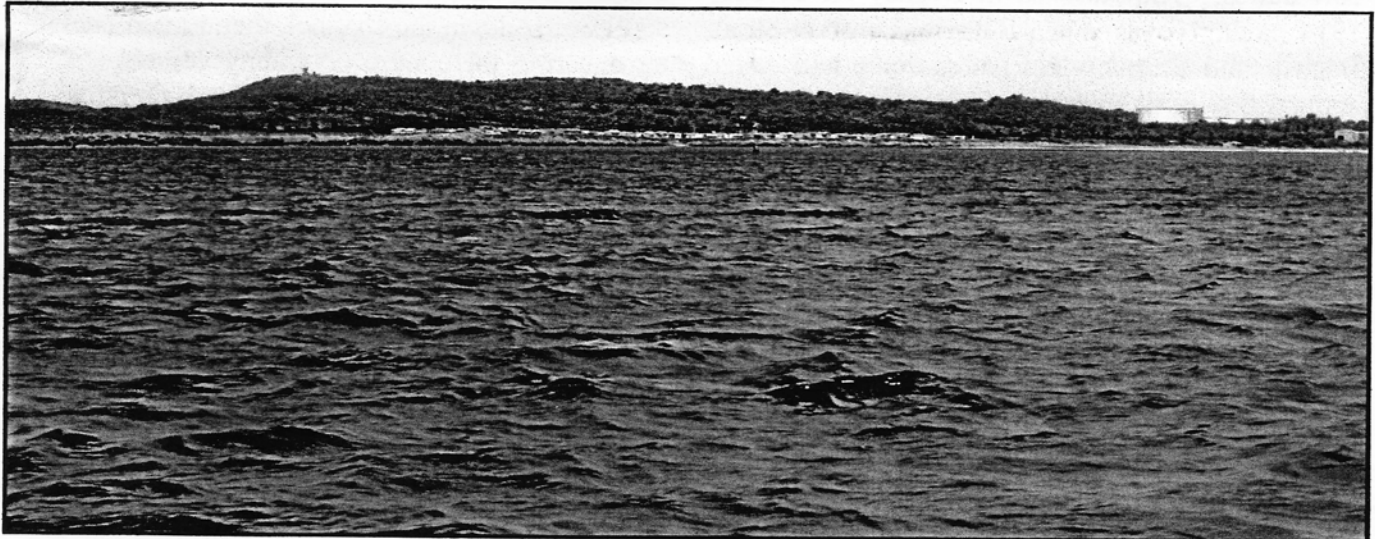
Public Records Office Kew, London 700 WA/2

A MAP PRODUCED by the Colonial Department and published in August 1831, includes a 'coastline profile' that covers an area in Cockburn Sound from Woodman Point to Mangles Bay. The 'References' panel on the map shows Clarence as Item 10, well south of Woodman Point (Item 9). Mount Brown is shown as the northern summit of a small range of hills above Clarence, and proclaims an edifice described in the references as 'the church not yet built'. Item 11 (shown twice to the south of Clarence) is described as 'The Beach', while the distant Item 7 is 'General Darling's Range'.

Also shown is a ship at anchor indicating the anchorage was a little north of the Clarence landing place. One of the *Gilmore's* passengers described it as a "good anchorage three quarters of a mile off the mainland in the Sound, east of the northern end of Garden Island."

IN 1836 the boundaries for the proposed townsite of Clarence were laid down around Woodman Point. Even then, it was only a reserve; no streets or town allotments were laid out. Whether the Woodman Point site was chosen as an alternative to Mt Brown, or whether it was the intended site all along, or whether it simply took its name from the nearby abandoned settlement, is uncertain; it is also academic, for the people of Clarence had long since gone.

The abundance of maps with 'CLARENCE' clearly scribed across Woodman Point, might understandably lead researchers to presume that Woodman Point was the site of first settlement. In the next issue we will expand on the reasoning to explain the confusion and will disclose further evidence to support the supposition that the original Clarence Town was at Mount Brown.



Photograph taken from Cockburn Sound looking back to the mainland showing the same small range of hills with Mt Brown at its northern end (left).  
(photo, Shardlow Marine Art)



## The Disappearance of *AE 1*

**There has been news of the probable discovery of the wreck of one of Australia's first submarines. This article explains briefly how *AE 1* came to be in New Guinea waters and what happened when it disappeared.**

On 13 December 1910 the Minister for Defence accepted quotes for the construction of two E class submarines, requesting the Admiralty to make arrangements for their construction. Built by Vickers Maxim at Barrow-in-Furness at a cost of £105,415 each, the first hull was launched on 22 May 1913 and the second on 18 June 1913. To emphasize their Australian ownership the Australian Government added A to the Admiralty identifying letter E. Fitting out took place and crews were trained.

*AE 1* was handed over on 14 January 1914, and *AE 2* on 6 February. They were sailed to Portsmouth where they had gyrocompasses and wirelesses fitted, and were then commissioned into the Royal Australian Navy on 28 February 1914. The two submarines sailed for Australia on 2 March 1914, escorted by the cruiser HMS *Eclipse* under the command of Captain Frank Brandt, himself an ex-submariner. Sometimes under their own power and sometimes being towed by HMS *Eclipse*, the convoy arrived at Colombo in Ceylon (now Sri Lanka) on 9 April 1914. During the passage *AE 2* twice had a propeller blade break off, necessitating stops for repairs at Gibraltar and Aden. From Colombo the escort as far as Singapore was HMS *Yarmouth*. At Singapore HMAS *Sydney*, under the command of Captain J.C.T. Glossop, took over escort duties. They arrived in Sydney on 24 May 1914 having voyaged via Batavia, Lombok Strait, Darwin and Cairns. The submarines had sailed about 9,000 of the 13,000 miles from England under their own power; a world record at that time.

On 5 August 1914 news was received that there was a declaration of war between Great Britain and Germany. Australia immediately declared war on Germany. The German Pacific Fleet under Admiral von Spee was considered Australia's greatest threat. This fleet was thought to consist of the armoured cruisers *Gneisenau* and *Scharnhorst*, the light cruisers *Emden*, *Nurnberg*, *Leipzig* and *Geier*, and the survey vessel *Planet*. In fact the *Greir* was not part of the fleet, but had been mistaken for her sister-ship *Kormoran*.

The harbour at Rabaul on the island of New Britain was of prime importance to the German fleet as it was the headquarters for the German Administration in New Guinea, and there were coaling facilities available. There was also a wireless station at nearby Bitapaka, linking Rabaul with the German naval headquarters in China, and with bases at Samoa, Nauru and the Caroline Islands. It was believed that the *Scharnhorst* was in the New Guinea area, so the Australian fleet was sent to find it. At this stage the fleet did not include the two submarines which had only just finished a refit at Williamstown. On 12 August naval shore parties landed and destroyed the telephone system at Rabaul. The two submarines joined the fleet in early September. Another landing at Rabaul on 11 September was made without opposition. However the landing and attack on the wireless station at Bitapaka the same day resulted in the deaths of six Australian servicemen, the first casualties of World War I.

On 14 September 1914 *AE 1*, under the command of Lieutenant Commander Thomas F. Besant RN, with his crew of 34, was ordered to patrol east of Cape Gazelle in case of an attack from units of the German fleet. Accompanied by the destroyer HMAS *Parramatta*, *AE 1* departed Rabaul at 7.00am, having been given orders to return before dark. Off Cape Gazelle *Parramatta* steamed southwards down the channel, then turned back after ensuring there were no enemy vessels. *AE 1* headed north-east. At 2.30pm, near the Duke of York Islands, these two vessels had visual and radio contact. Visibility was worsening due to haze, and at 3.20pm *Parramatta* lost sight of the submarine. Presuming Besant had taken *AE 1* back to harbour, the destroyer did a patrol around the north of the islands and returned to harbour. Having found that the submarine was not back, doubts were raised as to her safety. Destroyers, including *Parramatta*, *Yarra*, *Warrego* and *Encounter*, were sent out that night to search. Boats were sent from these vessels to search the shoreline. No trace was found of *AE 1* or her thirty five crew.

What caused the loss of *AE 1*? It was not from en-



emy action, as there were no German units in the vicinity at the time. There is no evidence of collision with another vessel. This leaves a number of possibilities. There may have been an explosion on board, a battery fire, a failure of a hull fitting, or striking a reef or submerged rock which punctured the hull. The latter is probably the most likely, as there are many such rocks in the waters between New Britain and New Ireland. In fact *Yarra* damaged her propellers when she struck a coral pinnacle during the search for *AE 1*. Whether this occurred as the submarine sailed on the surface or during a dive may become apparent after the wreck, the position of which is being kept secret, is fully studied by divers in the months to come.

References:

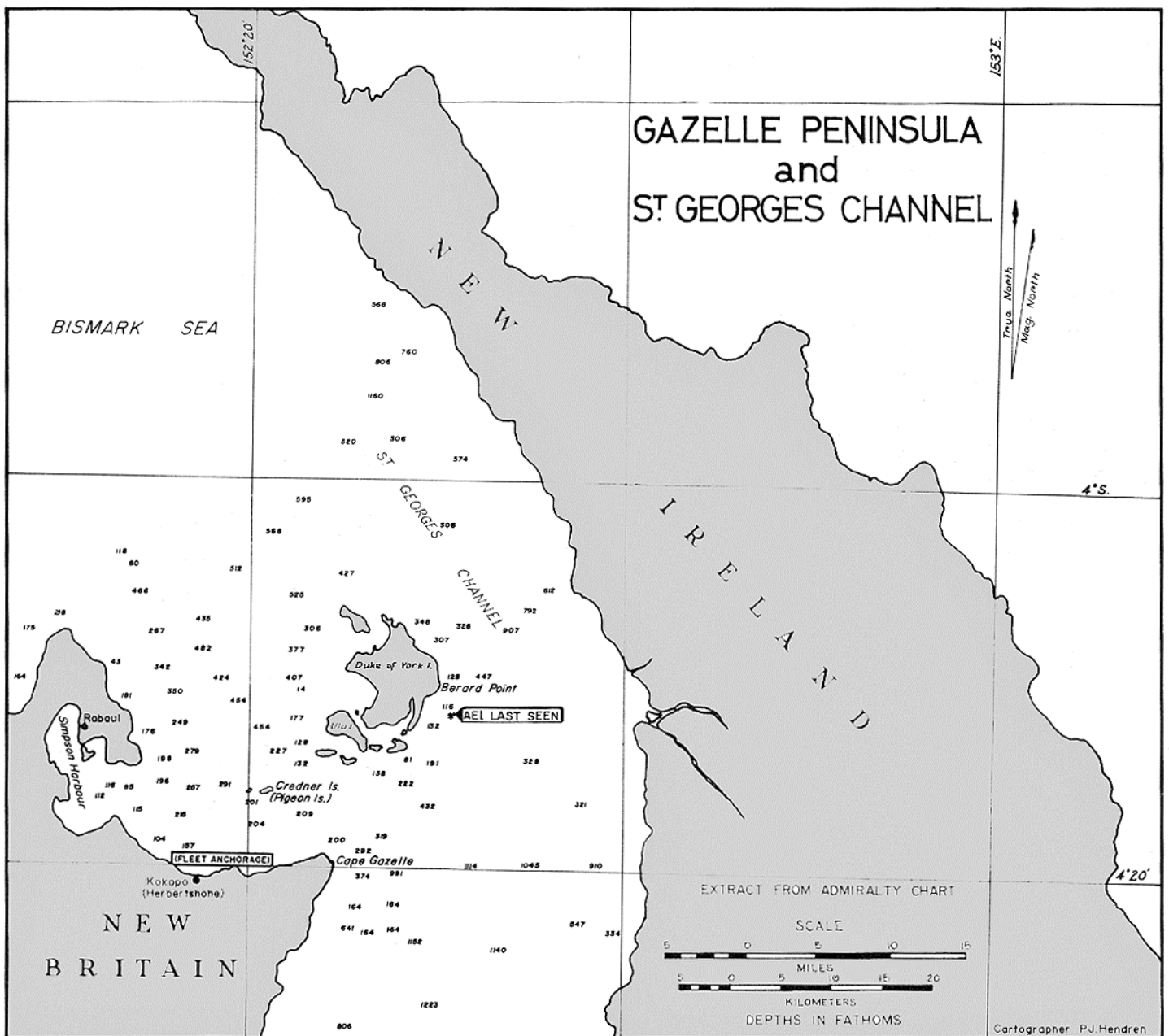
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Gash, N. & Whittaker, J., 1989, *A Pictorial History of New Guinea*. Robert Brown & Associates (Aust) Pty Ltd, Brisbane.

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Peter Worsley

(See page 20)





# QUIZ

## Answers to September

1. Careening Cove, on the eastern side of the south end of Garden Island, was also named Port Royal. The Admiralty Pilot (1972) and chart BA 1058 (Approaches to Fremantle) use both names, but the later Australian charts show only Careening Cove.
2. Rogues yarn is a coloured yarn of rope twisted into all Admiralty rope to prevent theft. Ropes made in Portsmouth had a blue strand, in Devonport red, and in Chatham yellow.
3. The variation of a compass is the difference in degrees between the bearing of the magnetic North pole and the geographic North pole. This varies from place to place around the world and is marked on all charts. It must be applied to the course steered, or a bearing taken, with a magnetic compass.

## Questions

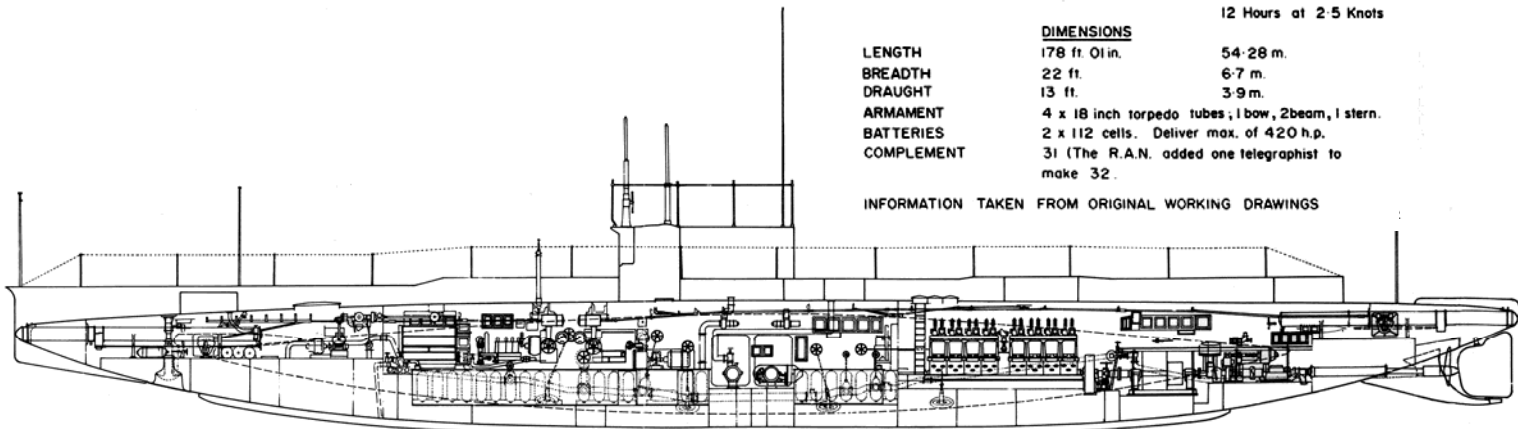
1. What are nettles or knittles?
2. After whom was Carnac Island named?
3. Earlier this year a serious fire severely damaged the *Cutty Sark*. Where and in what year was the *Cutty Sark* built.?

## AE 1

### SPECIFICATIONS

	<u>SURFACE</u>	<u>SUBMERGED</u>
DISPLACEMENT	665 Tons	796 Tons
HORSE POWER	800 h.p. at 380 r.p.m. 750 h.p. at 350 r.p.m. 2 x 8 Cylinder Vickers Diesels	120 h.p. 2 Vickers & Lawrence Scott Elec. Motors
MAX. SPEED	16 Knots	10 Knots
ENDURANCE (miles)	3225 Knots	1 Hour at 10 Knots 5 Hours at 5 Knots 12 Hours at 2.5 Knots
	<u>DIMENSIONS</u>	
LENGTH	178 ft 0 1/2 in.	54.28 m.
BREADTH	22 ft.	6.7 m.
DRAUGHT	13 ft.	3.9 m.
ARMAMENT	4 x 18 inch torpedo tubes; 1 bow, 2 beam, 1 stern.	
BATTERIES	2 x 112 cells. Deliver max. of 420 h.p.	
COMPLEMENT	31 (The R.A.N. added one telegraphist to make 32.	

INFORMATION TAKEN FROM ORIGINAL WORKING DRAWINGS



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