

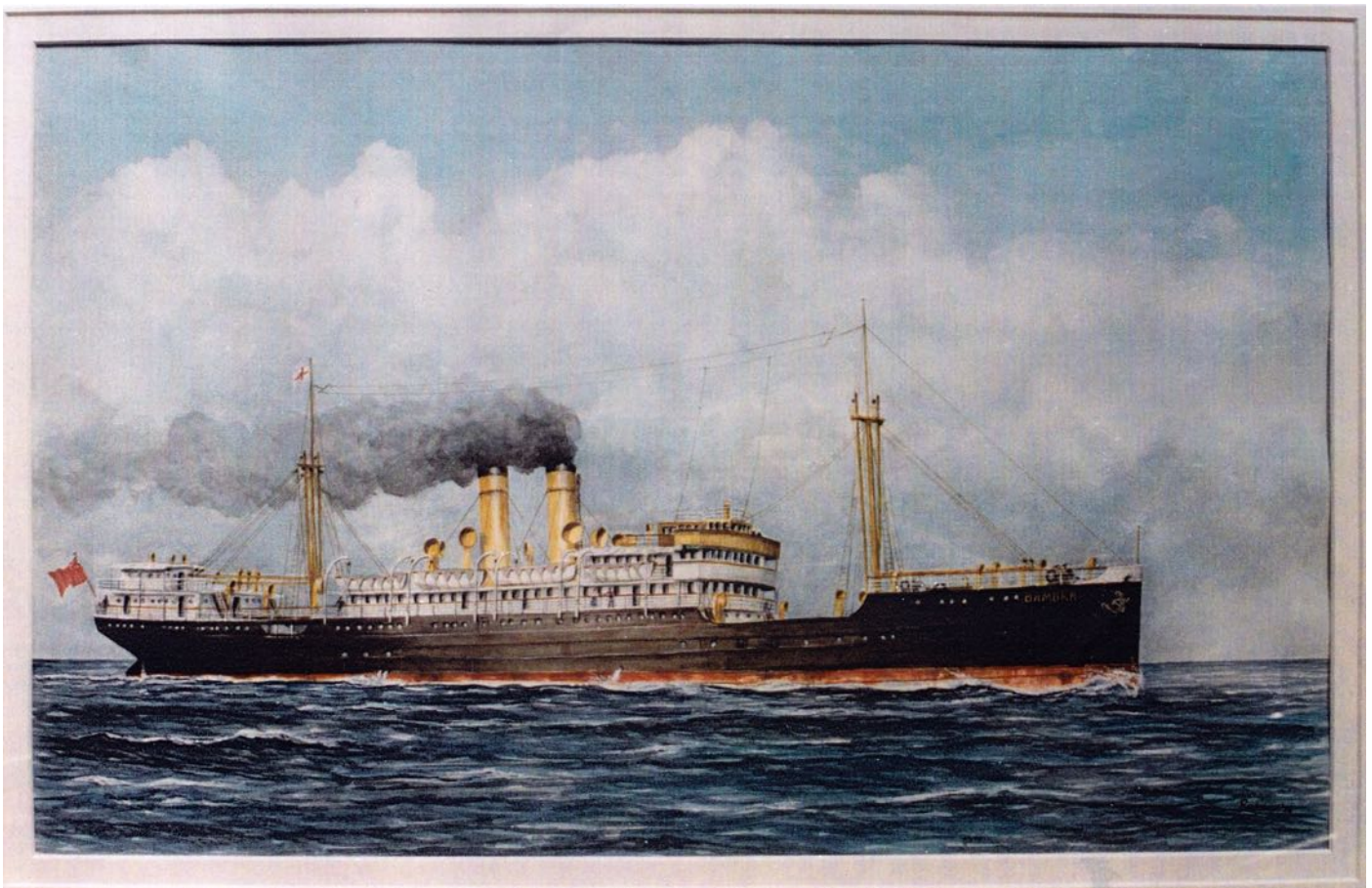


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Painting of the State Ship *Bambra* by Pat Rodriguez

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- * 30 Years of Shipwrecks





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EDITORIAL

The replica of the Dutch jacht *Duyfken* built in Fremantle and launched in January 1999 has been moved to the Australian National Maritime Museum, Sydney. The move was necessitated by the Western Australian State Government's inability to assist with the nearly half a million dollars per year running and maintenance costs.

In 1606 the *Duyfken* was the first known European vessel to reach Australia. It sailed from Banda in Indonesia to search for the land known as *Terra Australis Incognita* and made landfall on the western shores of Cape York.

To retain the skills and expertise of the shipwrights and tradesmen who had built the replica of the *Endeavour* launched in 1993, a committee was formed by Michael Young to plan the construction of a replica of the *Duyfken*. Michael Kailis chaired a charitable foundation, The Duyfken Replica Foundation, and on 19 January 1997 Prince Willem-Alexander of the Netherlands symbolically laid the keel.

As most Western Australians would know, the

Duyfken replica was built in the front courtyard of the Western Australian Museum in Fremantle. The construction team included both paid and volunteer staff led by master shipwright and MHA member Bill Leonard. Four apprentice shipwrights were employed, and the whole project was supervised by Noel Robins. Extremely thorough research was carried out by Nick Burningham (also an MHA member, and current President) and Adrian de Jong resulting in the most accurate reproduction of a Dutch jacht of that period ever built.

Construction methods followed traditional Dutch practice with planks being shaped over an open fire and the floors and futtocks installed later. Oak was sourced from Latvia and was used for the major components of the vessel, with the offcuts being made into blocks. Rigging was by master rigger Igor Bjorksten using tarred hemp rope, and the sails were hand made from hemp and flax canvas.

Western Australians should be proud of the two replica ships built in this State. It is a pity that they could not be kept here.

Did You Know?

Over the years since 1851 there have been many yachts vying for the Americas Cup. Most until recently, when multi-hulls and now hydrofoils became popular, had very deep keels. However, there have been seven with centreboards—*Magic* 1870, *Columbia* 1871, *Mischief* 1881, *Puritan* 1885, *Mayflower* 1886, *Vigilant* 1893 and *Volunteer* 1887.

If you are interested in the latest designs for Americas Cup yachts, this video is well worth watching:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VQU1_hf6yo8



Bambra

State Shipping Service 1915–1927

An article by Pat Rodriguez to accompany his painting of this vessel shown on the front cover

Bambra

Built: 1903, A.G. Weser, Bremen
Tonnage: 3,302 gross/1,844 net
Dimensions: 327 x 42 ft/99.6 x 12.8 m.
Service speed: 14 knots.
Engines: Triple expansion.
Propulsion: Twin screws.

In 1912 the Government of Western Australia formed their own shipping company, the State Shipping Service, to operate from Fremantle to ports along both the western and southern coastlines of the state. They began operations with a tiny vessel named *Una* then bought three second-hand ships, and in 1915 took on charter one of the German ships that had been seized when war broke out, and later named her *Bambra*. This vessel had been built for the well-known German shipping company, North German Lloyd, and was named *Prinz Sigismund*. She had been built, with a sister ship *Prinz Waldemar*, for a service from Singapore to Australia, being completed in August 1903 and despatched to Singapore to begin operations. On 24 October 1903 *Prinz Sigismund* left there on her first voyage to Australia, arriving in Brisbane on 23 November and Sydney on 25 November, then continuing to Melbourne where she berthed on 28 November. For the next ten years the vessel operated out of these ports, calling en route in New Britain, New Guinea, Macassar and Batavia, becoming a familiar sight in Australia.

On 4 August 1914 *Prinz Sigismund* arrived in Brisbane from Singapore, and only a matter of hours later that same day Britain and Germany declared war. The ship was immediately seized by the Australian Government on behalf of the British Govern-

ment, and remained in Brisbane for many months while court action was completed to decide the fate of German ships in Australian waters. In the meantime the ship was renamed *N2* by the Australians, and in May 1915 it was decided that she be chartered to the Government of Western Australia for use on their coastal service. Still named *N2*, the vessel left Brisbane on 24 May for Sydney, arriving three days later and being drydocked to have her bottom cleaned. On 31 May the vessel left calling first at Melbourne before proceeding to Fremantle, where she arrived on 12 June.

Over the next ten days the ship was prepared for her new service, and sailed on 23 June on her first voyage to ports in the north west of the state. She was known as *N2* for some time after entering service, but eventually in 1916 was given the name *Bambra*. Although the ship could carry a good number of passengers and large amounts of cargo, she was not a success, being too large and deep for the west coast, and proved very difficult to berth in some of the ports of call. All the men who served as captain on her hated the ship.

On 8 August 1916 *Bambra* went aground between Derby and Wyndham, and on being refloated next day had to be beached in Cambridge Gulf while temporary repairs were effected. Once the vessel was seaworthy again she sailed directly to Singapore, which was the nearest port with a drydock large enough to take her, where repairs were completed, and she then returned to service. Despite all her drawbacks, *Bambra* continued to operate on the Western Australia coast for over ten years, mainly because no other more suitable ship could be found.



After the war ended *Bambra* was listed as being owned by the Commonwealth Government Line of Steamers but remained on charter to the State Shipping Service. It was not until new ships were designed and built for the service that *Bambra* was no longer required, and the arrival of the new vessel *Koolinda* in late January 1927 brought an end to the service of *Bambra* in Australian waters. The Australian Government had no use for the ship, and they handed her over to the British Government. On 28 February 1927 *Bambra* left

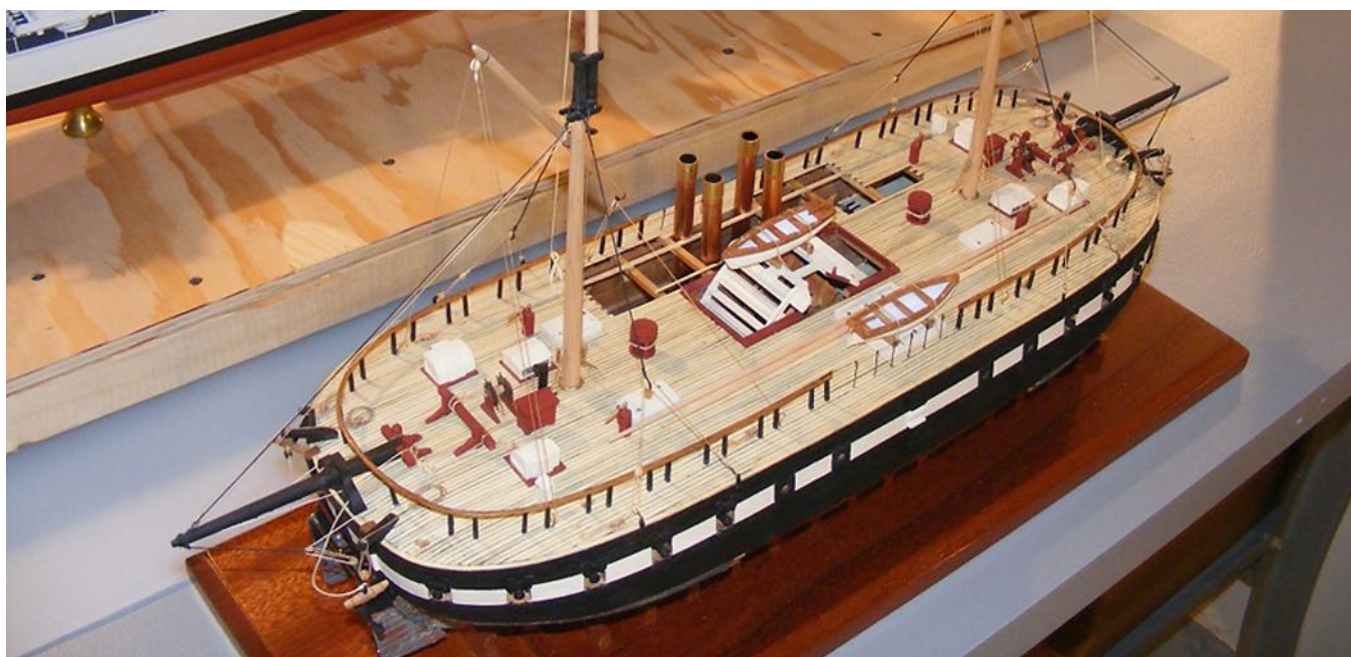
Fremantle for the last time, heading across the Indian Ocean to Colombo, thence to Suez and through the Canal, eventually arriving at Harwich on the east coast of England on 15 May. The ship was registered in the ownership of the British Board of Trade, but it seems she could not be put to any worthwhile use by the British, and within a couple of years the vessel was sold to shipbreakers.



Demologos – the first steam warship

The first warship to be designed to be powered by steam was the *Demologos*. Designed by Robert Fulton in 1814 for use against the British, the vessel never participated in any war. In appearance the ship was identical at both ends, 140 feet long with a beam of 42 feet and draught of 9 feet. The boiler was on one side with the 120-horsepower steam engine on the other. The paddlewheel was centrally placed so that

it was better protected from enemy fire and could, presumably, run equally well astern or forward, although how you would differentiate would be difficult. The gun deck had twenty 32 pounder cannons, eight on each side and two each at bow and stern. Protection of this deck was by a timber thickness of the hull of 58", tapering to less below the waterline. The *Demologos* was destroyed by an explosion in the Brooklyn Navy Yard in 1829.



A view of the deck on a model of *Demologos*

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 three Daring-class destroyers, *Voyager*, *Vendetta* and *Vampire*, were the first all-welded warships to be built in Australia.

Although scrimshaw work pre-dates 1800, the earliest known reference to the art appeared in the log of the United States brig *By Chance* dated 20 May 1826:

All these 24 hours small breezes and thick foggy weather, made no sale [sic]. So ends this day, all hands employed Scrimshanting.

Since at least the early 1800s the size of ship's bells in the Royal Navy was dictated by the rate of the ship. By 1914 there were five sizes, the smallest being 9 inch diameter for torpedo boats and the largest 17 inch for battleships and large cruisers.

The first jetty at Rockingham was completed in 1872, the second in 1882.

The sailing ship record for the London–Melbourne run is held by the *Thermopylae*. It took only 60 days in both 1868–69 and 1870–71. On 13 December 1868 the day's run was 324 nautical miles, marking the highlight of a total of 3,051 miles in eleven days commencing on 11 December.

Phillip Parker King was born on Norfolk Island on 13 December 1791. Although the first child born to Philip Gidley King and his wife Anna Josepha Coombe, he was the third son of Philip Gidley King. His father had two sons, Norfolk and Sydney King, by his mistress the convict Ann Inett.

In the Royal Navy copper sheathing was first tried in 1761 on the frigate *Alarm*. It was not generally used, however, until 1783 when the problem of galvanic action between the copper sheathing and iron bolts used in fastening the planks was solved by using copper bolts.

Gerardus Mercator was Flemish. His real name was Gerhard Kremer, but he used the Latin form of his name for his geographical works.

The letters S.M.S. was applied to ships in the German Navy prior to 1918 and stand for *Seiner Majestät Schiff*, the equivalent of the British H.M.S.

Among the many vessels that transited the Panama

Canal during January 1980 were the 36ft yacht *Swan* and the *Queen Elizabeth II*. The yacht's canal toll was US\$17.29, the toll for the liner was US\$89,154.62.

Piggin: A little pail having a long stave for a handle; used to bale water out of a boat.

In 1932 Second Lieutenants (the lowliest officer rank) in the Royal Marines received pay of 7/6 per day. From this there was a compulsory messing fee of 3/6 and an additional 1/- for breakfast. From the remaining 3/- per day they had to buy their uniforms, and were still expected to buy drinks at formal dinners, which were on most evenings.

The first completely open boat to circumnavigate the world was the *Saga Siglar* in 1985–86. It was one of the replica Viking ships built at Roskilde in Denmark. The skipper was Ragnar Thorseth. The vessel was 52ft long and built of oak with pine planking.

The first conventional 4-masted barque was the 244.4ft, 1,403-ton *Tweeddale* built in 1875. The first American 4-masted barque was the 300ft, 3,154-ton *Shenandoah* built in 1890.

The first Allied naval bombardment of Japanese forces in New Guinea during WW II occurred on 22 August 1943 when four Australian destroyers fired 540 rounds of 5in shells at Finschhafen.

Canvas: A cloth properly woven from hemp, but now usually of cotton. [Greek: *Kannabis*–hemp].

Fremantle boat builder Alfred Edmund Brown (1842–1933) was born in New Zealand and came to Western Australia in 1886, sailing in his own 150-ton schooner *Sovereign of the Seas*.

The 1879 Admiralty Chart 1056 Cape Cuvier to Champion Bay shows seven little islets in Shark Bay with the notation 'guano'. Only one is named on the chart, Guano Islet. This is also known as Egg Islet.





The Bomerang* (Boomerang) Propeller and Sir Thomas Mitchell.

By Ron Forsyth

The nineteenth century saw a struggle between sail and steam for the dominance of sea transport. The improved design of clippers had left the early steamers in their wake. The first patent for a ship's screw propeller was taken out in 1836 by a Kentish farmer Francis. P. Smith.

Paddle propulsion was to be the loser in 1845 in a 'tug-of-war' between the propeller driven HMS *Rattler* and the paddle wheeler *Alecto*. It was, however, still very much an embryonic stage in the development of the propeller and the evolution of steam powered vessels. The development of an efficient screw propeller was vital to the success of steamers in their competition with the fast clippers of the era. Improved efficiency would not only increase speed but also reduce coal requirements. Many were the minds directed at its development. In his *A Treatise on the Screw Propeller* in 1855 John Bourne detailed over 120 examples of screw design.

Major Sir Thomas Livingstone Mitchell patented a propeller (1847 in Britain and 1853 in the U.S.A.) that was inspired by that most Australian of icons, the boomerang. As surveyor-general of New South Wales he was to lead several expeditions of discovery where he witnessed boomerangs in flight. One of his party was struck in the chest by one thrown by an aboriginal. With a considerable leap of the imagination he conceived the rotation of the boomerang around an imaginary centre as a means of propulsion.

Mitchell wrote: *The power and resistance of the air in the effect of wind on ships' sails and on windmills has long been obvious, but its remarkable sustaining power under the rotary motion imparted by the human arm to a small piece of hard and heavy wood, similar to that arm both in size and form develops a new principle for the application of machinery.*

It was trialed on Australia's first steam driven vessel, the S.S. *Keera* in Port Jackson in February 1852. Some compromise in the size of the bomerang was made in the adaption of it to fit the limited space provided in steamers of the day for a conventional screw in this and later trials in England.

*Mitchell and the newspapers of the day used the spelling bomerang.



S.S. Keera

Governor Fitzroy was sufficiently impressed with the performance to grant his Surveyor General a year's leave of absence. Mitchell took his invention to Britain and applied to the Steam Branch of the Admiralty to have it fitted to Her Majesty Queen Victoria's royal yacht HMY *Fairy*. The Lords Companions of the Admiralty twice refused. Undaunted, he applied directly to the monarchy and gained approval. Somewhat miffed by this their Lordships inquired of Mitchell '... that they would be glad to be informed by what Channel the permission of Her Majesty was signified to you.' Prince Albert, Queen Victoria's husband, took a lively interest in screw propulsion and matters nautical. Bourne in his above-mentioned treatise on screw propulsion, had dedicated it to him.



Mitchell had friends in high places. Before coming to Australia he had served under the Duke of



Sir Thomas Livingstone Mitchell.

Wellington in the Peninsular Wars against Napoleon. The Duke recognized his skill as a draftsman and commissioned him after the war to survey its chief battlefields. In 1839 he was knighted for his services to surveying. The *Sydney Gazette* noted he had ‘... in sunshine and in storm cut his way through the dense forests of Australia and discovered regions that are now covered with the herds and flocks of colonists.’ That same year he was awarded an Honorary Doctorate in Civil Law from Oxford University.

The Admiralty, ever keen to maintain their rule of the waves **was** interested, however, and he was granted permission to fit his propeller to HMS *Conflict* and had one cast in Liverpool. The Admiralty held their trials at the ‘measured mile’ in Stokes Bay, Portsmouth. The Admiralty was not sufficiently impressed with the propeller’s performance to

adopt it. Mitchell’s leave as Surveyor General was due to expire and the Admiralty would not endorse his application to Downing Street for an extension.

Mitchell did have an advocate in the Admiralty. Thomas Cochrane, the Earl Dundonald and Vice-Admiral of the Blue, favourably reviewed the propeller in August of 1853. Cochrane was one of Britain’s greatest naval heroes. Napoleon had called him ‘the sea wolf’ after the Battle of Basque Roads in 1809. Although Cochrane was the inspiration for Forester’s Horatio Hornblower and Patrick O’Brian’s Jack Aubrey, his influence within the Admiralty was constrained due to a colourful and controversial career.

That the invention was not widely adopted is a reasonable sign that it did not live up to its inventor’s claims and aspirations. He had effusively hoped his invention would ‘... beat the earth with steam, and make the wave as subservient as the rail, to the purposes of locomotion.’ With some vision he foresaw the day when vessels being propelled at the rate of 500 miles a day would make the voyage to and from England in a mere month.

Although the Bomerang propeller did not live up to expectations there is reference in 1878 to a 28-foot steam launch, *Singapore* which was fitted with ‘a four bladed bomerang fan.’



Australasian Pioneers’ Club collection

photo by David Miller



Amongst the collection of paintings and pioneer-related artifacts of the Australasian Pioneer's Club in Sydney there survives a model of the boomerang propeller which was bequeathed by the inventor's son Mr R.B. Mitchell.

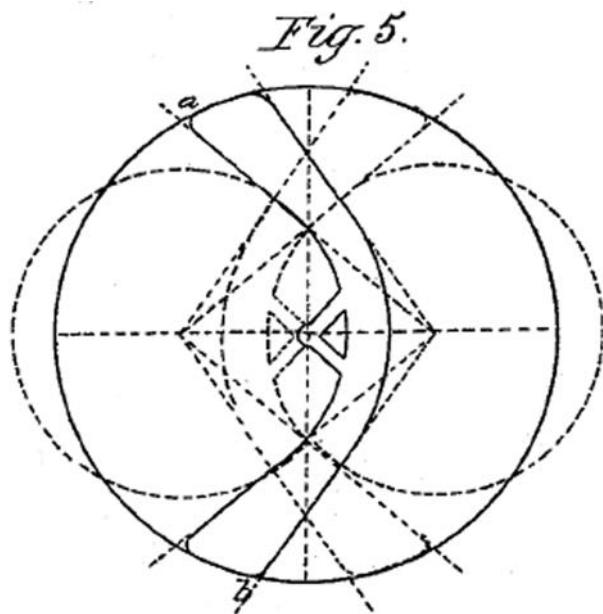
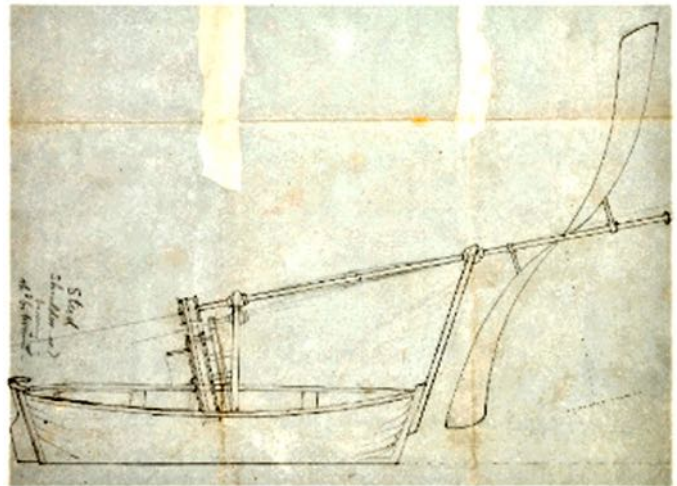


Diagram illustrating sweep of boomerang propeller taken from 1853 patent application.

Amongst Mitchell's papers there is the sketch of a fanciful if unsuccessful antecedent to aircraft propulsion which he trialed.



'... an experiment with a boomerang of twelve feet diameter intended to act on air. The smallness of my boat alone, has hitherto prevented the realization of that novel mode of sailing.' (*Sydney Morning Herald*, 11 Jan 1851: 2.)

Sources:

Sir Thomas Livingstone Mitchell Papers, 1848–1854, State Library of NSW.

Trove newspapers.



In Charge of the 'Eight to Twelve'

It's nearly twelve, and the Chief's not down,
For he left the watch to me;
To drive a ship of eight thousand tons,
O'er sixty miles of sea.

I hold the reins of ten thousand horses
In yonder expansion gear;
And in my reach the expansion link,
The whip of the engineer.

I feel the pride such power begets,
Such pride is felt by gods;
As massive cranks are swinging by
Reciprocating rods.

A king am I—for in my grip
Ten thousand horse-power drives;
I hold the cargo and the ship,
And twice one hundred lives.

The thoughts that riot within my brain
Are absolutely thrilling,
Until I think that my work per hour
Is valued at one shilling.

—Fourth Engineer



Ships of the State Shipping Service

By Jeff Thomson

GORDON REID IMO Number: 8820949

The last of the three locally built ships from Australian Shipbuilding industries, Jervoise Bay was the *Gordon Reid* (Yard No. 293), built for the Westpac Banking Corporation especially for charter to the State Shipping Service.

As built the *Gordon Reid* was 1,571 gross registered tons, 3,454 deadweight tons, 92.7 metres overall, 83.9 metres between perpendiculars, 15.1 metres breadth, 5.6 metres draft. One MAN. B&W Alpha 6S26MC 6 cylinder diesel of 1,903 bhp gave a service speed of 13 knots with a controllable pitch propeller.

In the morning of 13th March 1991 the vessel was named by Mrs Ruth Reid but launched later that evening. On the 13th April 1991 she left Fremantle on her maiden voyage to Darwin and Cocos Islands. In August 1995 she was returned to her

owners and later sold to Briesse Schiff GmbH and renamed *Bremer Maklur*. In 1996 renamed *Industrial Beacon* and in 1999 was renamed *Dora Maar* and later that year *Industrial Beacon* by Alnwick Castle Shipping, Antigua & Barbados.

During 2003 was renamed *Beacon Strait* by M. S. Industrial Beacon Schiffahrt GmbH. In May 2004 was sold to Neptune Shipping Lines, Vanuatu and renamed *Capitaine Fearn*, Pacific Island services. Laid up in White Bay, Sydney, from 2 October 2004 until 4th November 2004. In 2005 was chartered for service New Zealand to Cook Island by Reef Shipping. On 16th November 2005 renamed *Island Express* at Fremantle. By Northwest Express Line for service Fremantle to Cocos and Christmas Islands, and South East Asia.

In 2017 it was named *Serenty 09* and registered in Indonesia.





The Story of the *City of York* Wreck

The text of this article on the well-known wreck at Rottnest Island is courtesy of the Maritime Archaeological Association of Western Australia.



The steel ship *City of York*

Photo: State Library of South Australia

The *City of York* was a 1,194 ton iron ship which sank after hitting a reef off Rottnest Island in the last few kilometres of its voyage from San Francisco to Fremantle, Western Australia in 1899.

The three masted, 68 metre (223 feet) long, iron hulled ship was built in 1869 by Glasgow ship-builders J. Elder and Company. The British owners were the 'Ship City of York Company'. It had only just been beaten by the famous *Cutty Sark* in the 1885 *Great Race*, a race from China to London in which large profits were earned by the ship to arrive with the first tea of the year.

The vessel departed San Francisco on 13 April 1899 under Captain Phillip Jones with a cargo of 743,444 feet of Oregon timber and 3,638 doors. After making a record passage to Western Australia in just 90 days, she approached Rottnest from the north on the afternoon of 12 July 1899 in stormy weather including blinding rain and heavy

seas. At that time, Wadjemup Lighthouse at the centre of the island was the single lighthouse on Rottnest. The ship was seen by the lighthouse keeper at 4:30 p.m. on a north-westerly bearing about 29 km (18 = mi) off the coast of the island, heading north-east.

The keeper telephoned the news of the sighting to the head pilot who was on duty in the main island settlement at Thompson Bay who readied himself and his pilot boat to go to the assistance of the ship once it signalled for a pilot.

At 6:45, the ship had still not signalled for a pilot and the assistant lighthouse keeper challenged the ship by lighting a flare at the base of the lighthouse, meaning for the ship to stand off until the pilot had arrived.

The captain however mistook the signal for the international code as being from a pilot boat itself and that the ship should continue towards it (the



Western Australia Museum divers examine the wreck of the *City of York*

Photo: Western Australian Museum

pilot boat). The ship was now unwittingly sailing straight towards the shallow reefs which surround the island.

Lead was cast three times over 15 minutes to gauge the depth, and readings of 15, 9 and 5 fathoms were taken respectively. Shortly after the last cast, breakers were sighted. The captain gave immediate orders to turn the ship but was unsuccessful and she struck remaining high on the reef 200 metres offshore from what is today the City of York bay, midway along the north side of the island.

Captain Jones ordered the 26 crew into the two lifeboats. Six men including First Mate William Pape managed to get in the first lifeboat before its holding rope broke and it drifted free from the stricken vessel. The remaining 20 men managed to get into the remaining lifeboat and stood a short distance off for an hour or so while Captain Jones considered his options. As the ship appeared to be holding steady on the reef, Jones ordered the lifeboat to return to the ship, but while

doing so, the small boat was hit by a large wave and overturned, tipping all of the men into the heavy seas.

Eight men managed to re-board the *City of York* and one man was picked up by the first mate's boat. Eleven others including Captain Jones were drowned. After several hours battling the seas, the seven men in the remaining lifeboat managed to get to shore and some of the exhausted men walked several kilometres through the bush to the lighthouse to raise the alarm. The remaining men onshore were recovered shortly afterwards and the following morning, the master and owner of the steam tug *Dunskey*, Captain William Douglas, rowed his vessel's 4.5 metre dinghy to the wreck from seaward and was able to rescue the remaining eight men on the ship.

An inquiry was held a week later which found that the wreck was caused by the 'gross carelessness and want of judgement shown by the master, Phillip H. Jones'. The finding was based on Admiralty Sailing Directions which direct that a ship



must not approach Rottnest on its west or north-west side to a depth of less than 30 fathoms.

The ship's owners challenged the finding, arguing that the international code of practice said that flare-ups were used as a signal from a pilot boat to show that the boat was in safe water. As was the practice, Captain Jones had replied with blue lights to signal his acknowledgement of the safe water flare-up signal. By implication, the assistant lighthouse keeper had been negligent in using an incorrect signal.

Concern about the signalling procedures grew and a Joint Select Committee of both Houses of Parliament was established to investigate the harbour and pilot services of the colony. The committee overturned the findings of the initial inquiry and exonerated Captain Jones.

The owners instituted a claim for damages of £7,000 from the Government of Western Australia on the basis that the ship was lost due to misleading signals and that the government, as operators of the lighthouse was responsible. The case was pursued as far as the Privy Council in London in October 1902. The Privy Council case

was not heard however, as the respondents allowed the appeal to lapse. A settlement of £3,000 was negotiated in early 1903.

The *City of York* was abandoned with general agreement of there being no likelihood of the hull being salvaged. Much of the timber cargo was salvageable however and was bought for £323/5/- by a Perth syndicate who also bought the cargo from the *Carlisle Castle*.

The wreck is located at 31°59.72'S 115°29.25'E, lying in seven metres of water on a reef bottom with the bow facing to shore. It appears the vessel may have broken in two amidships with two sections of deck framing off centre. Several sections stand proud of the sea-bed. The hull has largely disintegrated with only the vessel's floors and the stern section recognisable. Plating, frames and stringers are strewn throughout the wreckage with one deck winch and sections of windlass the only machinery apparent.

The anchor from the ship has been retrieved from the wreck site and currently stands prominently outside the accommodation office on the Island.

Advertisement

Sailor Soldier Surgeon: The Life of George W. Barber

This recent book by Simon Doyle published by Hesperian Press would be of relevance to those interested in maritime, military and medical history in the early 20th century.

George Barber was a prominent West Australian who played a significant role with the Australian Corps during World War 1.

He had an itinerant and interesting life. As a teenager he worked as a merchant marine sailing on clippers between England and Australia. He worked on many ships (including the *Star of Russia*, *Conway*, *Kyarra*, *Aquitania*, *Hindoo*). He went on to study medicine in Middlesex Hospital and after graduating became a P&O ship doctor sailing the England-India-China route. He met his wife Jess on his final voyage, they moved to Kalgoorlie at the commencement of the goldrush. Barber was a pioneering doctor in Kalgoorlie during the 1890s where he endured numerous political and professional controversies and regular outbreaks of typhoid and bubonic plague. He volunteered in the Civilian Militia Force and at outbreak of WW1 examined the fitness of Western Australian recruits. He became Assistant Director Medical Services, 4th Australian Division and Deputy Director Medical Services (DDMS), Australian Corps. He ran a venereal disease hospital in Egypt and served on a number of gruesome hospital ships during the Gallipoli

campaign. He was in charge of Stationary Hospitals based in Lemnos (Greece), Tel-el-Kebir, Mena and Serapeum (Egypt). As DDMS he was in charge of medical administration for the Australian troops in France and oversaw medical arrangements for the battles in France/Belgium in 1918. Through his Standing Orders he enacted a number of significant innovations which reflected the shift towards mobile warfare. He also conducted the autopsy on the Red Baron which proved he was shot by an Australian on the ground. He then went on to become Director General Medical Services in Australia after the war (1925–1934).

The book also includes an unpublished poem by Banjo Paterson 'The wail of the horse poet' which he personally wrote in the diary of Jess Salmond (who was to soon after marry George Barber).

The book, published by Hesperian Press, has 240 pages, 42 images, a soft cover (French flap) and is available through: simondoyl123@yahoo.com at a cost of \$40.



Old Time Memories—Our Pioneer Shipbuilders

The text is from a local newspaper that probably dates from about the end of WW I, by a writer who used the pseudonym Hugh Kalyptus.

At last week's meeting of the Fremantle Municipal Council, as reported in Thursday's *West Australian*, Mayor Wray struck a familiarly interesting chord when he referred to the days when shipbuilding was done, upon a large scale, on the south beach, between Tom Cook's smithy, in the Terrace, and old Jimmy Read's residence in Russell Street. 'General' Jackson, Jim Storey and, later, 'Spinaway' Howson who now resides in Goldsworthy-road, Claremont, were our old-time shipbuilding giants each of whom had the strong backing of John and Walter Bateman, who, practically, controlled the State's shipping of the fifties, the sixties, and the seventies. Besides numerous schooners, brigs, and brigantines, quite a large fleet of cutters were built of our locally-grown jarrah, not only at Fremantle, but by the Mews and Lawrence families,



John and Walter Bateman

of Perth, as well as by the lightning builder of boats, of every conceivable shape and size, Charlie Watson whose creations were victorious in so many events at our Foundation Day regattas.

Charlie's last building achievement, under that heading, was his eight-oared gig *Sarah* which, by working night and day in his yard under the willows fronting Mount's Bay-road, the veteran threw together in ninety-six hours, and the *Sarah* won against all comers.

Old Charlie was the builder of the State's first revenue schooner, which was a jarrah vessel of about a hundred and twenty tons register, and which he constructed in Bazaar-terrace, near the river frontage of what are now the grounds of the Technical School. This vessel was known by the sobriquet of Noah's Ark, owing to the number of years that her builder had its frame on the stocks. A member of the Brockman family was the first skipper of the State's first revenue vessel, in which position he was succeeded by Captain Pemberton Walcott, who was quite the navigating genius of his time.

Among our earliest locally-built schooners were the *Flying Foam*, the *Wild Wave*, and the *Sea Spray*, which were closely followed by Ross Hunt and William Johnson's cutters *Mazeppa* and *Twilight*, the ribs of the latter boat being still visible at Twilight Cove, between Eyre's Sandpatch and Eucla where, the *Twilight* foundered while engaged in landing telegraph material, during the middle seventies. Tapper's old cutter *Two Sons* was also among the early pioneers, and for many years did the Government contract work between Fremantle and Rottnest. Alex. Manning's handsome schooner, *Azelia*, the vessel that, under the command of John Anderson Christie, turned up at Fremantle one fine morning after being 104 days out from Cossack, was built in the yard adjoining the flat-roofed house which stands to-day on South-terrace. Although many fine vessels, such as the *Iris*, *Planet*, *Janet*, *Hope*, *Ione*, and *Pet*, glided into the pacific waters of the Indian Ocean from their stocks along the Port's southern fore-shore, the most popular of them all, among the travelling public, was the *Laughing Wave*, which, like the record-breaker, *Iris*, was for many years commanded by Captain Thomas E. Shaw. The *Laughing Wave* was a veritable gold mine for her owners, the Messrs. Bateman, before foundering during a gale at Bunbury, where her jarrah timbers are a standing monument of the lasting powers of that prince of woods for shipbuilding purposes. The knees and other small timber that



were used in the construction of these grey hounds of our old-time shipping were obtained from the lake country between Spearwood, Clarence and Rockingham, where the Armstrong clan, assisted by the Chesters, the Thorps, the Bells, and old John Robb (after whom Robb's jetty is called) superintended the cutting and carting operations. Around the lakes of Mondogalup, The Spectacles, Coogee, and Banjup, to-day, there are extensive quantities of knees and other light timbers which are largely used for shipbuilding purposes - an industry which could be resurrected and afford constant employment for hundreds of our returned soldiers who would soon become expert boat builders.

Mayor Wray's reference to the English built barque *Amur* whose hull is still visible on the beach between Clarence and Rockingham, revives memories of her ill-starred owner Captain Watson, who, after safely anchoring his vessel in Gage's Road from London, sold her to the late W. E. Marmion for £2,000. A few days after completing the sale, Captain Watson took his passage in Chipper's red-and-yellow mail van for Albany, en route to London, and on nearing the Williams River he left the vehicle, in order to stretch his legs. As Captain Watson, nor any trace, of him, was ever afterwards seen, it was believed that he wandered into the bush and got lost, his death being one of the many unexplained tragedies associated with the wilds of Western Australia.

The *Amur* was a small barque of very symmetrical lines and build. Under the command of Captain Henry O'Grady, she conveyed the brothers John and Alex. Forrest and party to Wyndham, whither they were despatched by the Government to conduct the original surveys of that portion of the State. Though the *Amur* was built at Sunderland, as was also Messrs J. and W. Bateman's clipper barque *Spinaway*, the schooner *Mary Herbert* (Captain McKenzie) and the schooner *Ariel* (Captain Leidicke) were both local productions. The *Mary Herbert*, after carrying Lady Weld and family to Tasmania, to which Governorship Sir Frederick was appointed after his six years term in Western Australia, called at Albany on her return, with her owner, Mr. James Herbert, senr., on board, and, after leaving that port was caught in a hurricane and foundered off Cape Leeuwin, where a quantity of her wrecked hull was picked up near where the steamer *Pericles* came to grief, a few years ago. The *Ariel* foundered in a willy-willy near Cossack, during the middle seventies as did also the locally-built schooner *Nautilus* (Captain John Tapper) and the *Rosette* (Captain Jack Vincent,) which was one of Jim Storey's boats. The

schooner *Pet* (Captain Peter Littlejohn, formerly of the *Annie Beaton*) foundered off the Leeuwin owing to having struck a sleeping whale that was basking in the sunshine one calm morning during the late seventies. Of those on board, only Captain Littlejohn lost his life, owing to going into his cabin for his sextant. The *Pet's* chief officer, William Henretty, who with the other members of the crew, landed at the Leeuwin and walked to



Boatbuilder James Storey and his wife Elizabeth

Busselton, is to-day a resident of Fremantle. The schooner *Hope* (Captain Joe Taguer), another local production, foundered in 1878, during a voyage between Esperance and Fremantle, with a large number of half-caste children on board for the Anglican native mission, and a number of sheep belonging to Dempster Bros. As the sheep were loose on the deck of the *Hope*, it was surmised that the vessel was caught in a gale and that the sheep, rushing to one side, caused her to capsize.

These particulars of the State's boat-building enterprises go to demonstrate that, under the primitive conditions prevailing in Western Australia of those days, our people were a self-contained and industrious community. Long after that time, too, Alex Chamberlain, the Lawrence Bros., and the Browns despatched to the Nor'-West pearling grounds fleet upon fleet of luggers, whose dura-



bility and sailing powers were the admiration of all who travelled by them. Captain Charles Henry Watson, now of Fremantle, piloted many of that description of craft to their destination, and as he is a master mariner, with a certificate from the London Board of Trade, his opinion of what our locally built craft are capable of achieving is well worthy of respect, and could be obtained for the mere asking.

Solomon Cook, William Green, and George Randall had numerous 'puffing billys,' as well as other serviceable craft and steamers, built on the banks of the Swan ; among these being the passenger steamers *Friends* and *Enchantress*, and that useful old cargo steamer, from Lawrence's yards, the *Lady Ord*. William Green, who, during the early eighties, was drowned off Point Resolution, owing to the capsizing of his brother Levi's yacht, *Eva*, had just completed the largest river steamer launched in the days when all the goods traffic between Fremantle and Guildford was conveyed by river - the days when such navigators as George Moss, Fred. Caporn, Tommy Poland and Bob Mansfield were the Captain Cooks of the Swan. The fine schooner *Adur*, which, under Captain Waugh, tended the brothers John and Alex Forrest upon their first expedition to Adelaide, was built in Bazaar-terrace, in Watson's yard, now owned by Foy and Gibson, her builder, Gabriel Adams, subsequently marrying a member of the Watson clan, who, with her daughter, Mrs. Creagh, is now farming north of Merredin. The *Adur's* arrival at Esperance, with supplies for the Forrest party, was first sighted by Tommy Windich, from the top of Observatory Hill, at the base of which the remains of that useful old native, who was Sir John's guide, philosopher and friend upon all his expeditions, are covered by a monument, upon which his many valiant deeds have been chronicled and inscribed by his old master, now full of years and honours. Tommy originally hailed from the Mount Stirling country, east of York. He was a typical aboriginal buck, of magnificent physique, and interesting conversational powers - in appearance, Tommy was a twin brother of the famous Dugald, who so materially assisted Maitland Brown in discovering the remains of Panter, Harding and Goldwyer after they were killed, in their sleep, by Nor'-West natives.

In those days, Western Australia was a producer of everything essential to her well-being and development. We produced not only our own explorers but our own brumbies to carry them over our State's terra incognita, as well as built boats to tend them en route, and, though only a small

community, we provided our own money, without borrowing from abroad. We had, then, only four timber mills - Harry Yelverton's and George Simpson's (the Ballarat Company), near Busselton; Wanliss's, at Jarrahdale, and Ben Mason's, at the Canning. These mills absorbed all of our surplus labour, with profit to themselves and contentment to the community. To-day we have huge timber mills, furnished with the best machinery in the world, lying idle in all portions of the State, with a greater demand than ever for ships, within and without our borders, to convey our produce beyond seas, where our people are in sore need of it. Yes, we have every element for unbounded prosperity, except a Solomon Cook, a



Henry Yelverton, timber mill owner

William Green, or a George Randell, to employ people to build vessels, many of which took sandalwood and dried fish to China, and came back laden with rattan and sugar from Mauritius. Yet we have brave fellows coming back from the front who have to idle away their life upon the kerbs of street corners, in the hope that a Moses may some day arise who will instruct them in the art of profitably producing eggs at 9d per dozen from weevilly wheat at four shillings per bushel. With our illimitable jarrah and karri forests, fringed as they are by up to-date sawmills, which are rusting out, for the want of being worked, one wonders why our timber companies have not, long ago, built vessels at Bunbury, Fremantle, and Geraldton, as was done by Western Australia's enterprising pioneers, if only from the standpoint of making themselves independent of vessels which, in coming to our ports, have to run the gauntlet with the machinations of the unspeakable Hun.



QUIZ


Answers to September

1. The clew of a sail is the lower after corner of a sail.
2. Eight bells are struck at the end of each watch.
3. The *Carlisle Castle* was wrecked in 1899. It was wrecked in the same storm that wrecked the *City of York* at Rottneest.

Quiz


1. In ship construction what is the difference between a hanging knee and a lodging knee?
2. In what year was the 6,077-ton steamer *Orizaba* wrecked on Five Fathom Bank?
3. Most people know that the skipper of the *Batavia* was Ariaen Jacobsz, but who was in command of the *Zeewijk* when it was wrecked at the Abrolhos Islands?

TRUSCOTT BOAT MFG. CO.




\$35.00 Outfit

SAME general style and finish as the \$35.00 outfit, only that this boat is fifteen feet long, forty-two inches beam; has two sets row locks and ash oars; specially adapted for boat delivery service (as boat has a wide and long bottom which makes it steady) on any water, the good about making it a thorough sea boat. Are built like the higher priced boats, with oak keel running full length instead of the wide bottom board of soft wood, as built by others when selling low priced boats. *The boat value over offered to boating people. Strictly profitable.*




\$45.00 Outfit

AFIFTEEN foot boat like car shown, being pointed at both ends; is a fine sea boat, steady and a very light tower; well painted inside and out, with seats, gunwales, oars, etc.; finished on the natural wood with varnish; a complete set of canvas cushions, rudder and ribs, the Truscott anchor, two sets Truscott patent foot braces and combination rowlocks, and two pair spruce straight blade oars, anchor and painter lines. Name painted on both sides of the boat if desired. There is not a boat built anywhere in the world that has as many good points for its price.



\$50.00 Outfit


FOURTEEN feet long, forty-one inches beam, fourteen and one-half inches deep, three seats with brown canvas covered cushions stuffed with cork; rudder with steering line; Truscott patent adjustable foot braces and combination rowlocks with two pairs of copper-tipped, varnished spruce oars; anchor with line; painted three coats; paint up to lower edge of sheer strake and inside under the ribs (notice how close they are); the sheer strake, wales, seats and ribs finished on the natural wood with spar varnish; name painted in a tasteful manner—no extra cost.



\$65.00 Outfit


THE boat is large, roomy, good depth and back support for stern seat; has set of well made and durable corduroy cushions, rudder, yoke and steering line; the Truscott anchor, painter for tying to docks, two sets Truscott patent adjustable foot braces and combination rowlocks, and two pair spruce spoon oars, making a complete outfit not surpassed for the purpose. This boat is well and durably finished throughout with three coats spar varnish on the natural wood, and is copper fastened; ribs but three inches apart, making a fine appearing, strong and serviceable boat, and is perfectly safe in any water for children to use, and row so easy that the smallest of them can row the boat. Name painted on boat in neat and tasteful style at no extra cost. Boat is fifteen feet long, forty-two inches beam, fourteen and one-half inches deep, square stern.

ST. JOSEPH, MICH. U.S.A.



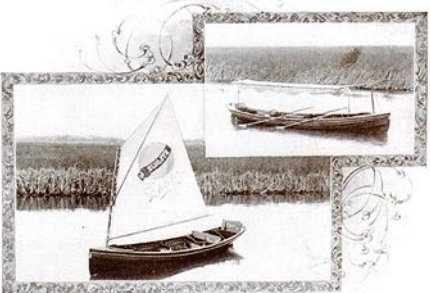
\$100.00 Outfit

WITH this we show a larger size and a more highly trimmed boat than our sixty-five dollar outfit. Sixteen feet long, forty-two inches beam, fifteen inches deep amidship, has four seats, full set of best quality corduroy cushions, canvas bottom for floor, two pair spruce spoon oars, rudder, anchor and lines. All metal work is made of polished brass and nickel plated. Well finished on the natural wood with four coats of spar varnish; name painted on both bows at no extra cost. Planking is of cedar or cypress, trimmings are of cherry or walnut, ribs but three inches apart and copper riveted on waders in planking. We are sure this will please you, as the difference in price is more than put in the extra finish, as it is indeed handsome.



\$125.00 Outfit

THIS boat is now built two feet longer and has many new and desirable features added, making it a boat, in our opinion, as fine as anyone could wish for, as it surely combines every desirable feature for comfort and ease that could possibly be attached to a row boat. Is seventeen feet long, forty-two inches beam, sixteen inches deep; copper riveted, planking of cedar or cypress, cherry carvings and trimmings. All seats covered (as shown where cushion is left off) also back rest, which is reversible, so that passengers in after seats may face each other. If desired, silk plush cushions for all seats. Awaiting so made that it may be put up and taken down in a few moments. Boat is fitted with Truscott patent adjustable foot braces and combination rowlocks and two pair spruce spoon oars copper tipped and varnished, rudder and line. All metal work is nickel plated on polished brass. Four finished throughout with four coats spar varnish and rubbed to a high gloss. The general elegance of the carvings, style and finish, will have to be seen to be appreciated. Name painted in gold leaf and shaded.



SHOWING two views of one of the boats which we furnished to the African agents of the Schlu Brewing Co., and which we shipped to Cape Town, South Africa.



To my way of thinking, I have never been able to conceive that there was justice or even fairness on the part of the European in seizing, in the name of their government, a land seen for the first time, when it is inhabited by men who have not always deserved the title of savages or cannibals that has been freely given them; whereas they were still only children of nature and just as little civilized as your Scotch Highlanders or our Breton peasants, who, if they don't eat their fellow men, are nevertheless just as objectionable.

Nicolas Baudin, said to Phillip Parker King in 1803.



Thirty Years of Fatal Shipwrecks

Thanks to Ron Forsyth for this article from an 1879 Perth newspaper.

The fear of a death by drowning must have been ever present for those travelling by sea in years gone by. An article entitled 'Thirty Years of Fatal Shipwrecks' from the London newspaper *Pall Mall Gazette* was republished in the West Australian press in 1879. For the legions of emigrants hoping for a better life in a new land the gamble was considerable. The article, reproduced below, details the loss of more than 7650 souls at sea from the wrecking of 26 vessels.

The annals of maritime disaster during the past thirty years fail to show any catastrophe entailing such a lamentable loss of life as that which has marked the sinking of the Princess Alice by the Bywell Castle. Setting aside the loss of the Grosser Kurfurst, the most fatal accident of a like character that has taken place in British waters daring the period in question, was the running down of the Northfleet emigrant ship while at anchor off Dungeness, on the night of the 22nd January, 1873, by the Spanish steamer Murillo, when 293 persons were drowned. A collision almost equally disastrous, and strongly recalling in some respects that which has just occurred on the Thames, took place on Lake Michigan on 7th September, 1863. The steamboat Lady Elgin, which had started from Chicago on a pleasure trip, with nearly 400 excursionists on board, was run into by a schooner, and sank within a quarter of an hour with 285 people, among them Mr. Herbert Ingram, the member for Boston. The year 1854 was marked by a series of fatal collisions. The Italian mail steamer Ercolano left Genoa on 24th April, with a number of passengers, including several English, French, and Italian families, and at midnight was cut down to the water's edge by the Sicilia. Only fourteen of the passengers escaped, amongst them being Sir Robert Peel, whose secretary and Mr. Charles Halsey, the member for Hertfordshire, were among the drowned. On 28th April the emigrant barque Favourite, from Bremen, was run into off the Start by the Hesper, and went down like a stone with 201 of her passengers and crew; six of the crew only saving themselves by clambering over the Hesper's bows. On the 27th September, the Arctic, a splendid ship of the Collins line, came into collision with the screw steamer Vesta in a fog off the banks of Newfoundland; and out of the 368

persons on board 323 perished, among them the Duc de Grammont and the Duc de Guynes. The same year was also rendered memorable in maritime disaster by the disappearance of the City of Glasgow screw steamer, which left the Mersey for Philadelphia on 1st March, with 480 persons on board, all told, and of the Lady Nugent, transport, which sailed from Madras on 10th May with reinforcements for the army of Rangoon, forming with her crew a total of some 400 persons. Neither of these vessels was ever heard of again — a fate shared by the Pacific, which left Liverpool on 23rd January, 1856, with 186, and the City of Boston, which sailed from Halifax on 28th January, 1870, with 191 persons on board.

The mail steamship Europa, on her way to England in July, 1849, ran down the emigrant barque Charles Bartlett, causing the deaths of 132 persons; and the Irish steamer Mangerton blundered into the New Zealand clipper Josephine Willis just off the South Foreland, and sent her and sixty-nine people, mostly passengers, to the bottom. The foundering of the Captain off Cape Finisterre on the night of 6th September, 1870, with Captain Burgoyne and 500 officers and seamen, remains the heaviest calamity that has befallen the navy during the latter half of the present century. The severest loss suffered at sea by the army was from the contingent furnished by the 12th Lancers, and 43rd and 92nd Foot, towards the 438 lives lost with the Birkenhead off the Cape of Good Hope, on 26th February, 1852. The American army sustained an almost equal loss, when about 300 of the troops on board the San Francisco were washed overboard, or died from exhaustion and exposure, during her passage from California in December, 1853.

The most disastrous conflagration in British waters was that which caused the deaths of 178 people on board the emigrant packet Ocean Monarch, in Abergele Bay, on the afternoon of 24th August, 1848. But its horrors were eclipsed by those attending the burning of the steamship Austria between Hamburg and New York on 13th September, 1858, when 461 out of the 528 persons on board were burned or drowned. A like fate overtook 204 of the 338 persons on board the Golden Gate on her pas-



sage from San Francisco to Panama, on the 27th of July, 1862; while the number who perished in a similar manner, with Eliot Warburton, on board the Amazon in the Bay of Biscay, on the 4th January, 1852, amounted to 102 out of 161 persons

The author of "The Crescent and the Cross" had written that "since the days of steam navigation the Bay of Biscay was no longer formidable;" yet the London steamship went down in it on her way to Australia on the 11th of January, 1866, carrying with her 239 out of her complement of 258, and among them G. V. Brooke, the actor. Two most disastrous shipwrecks of recent date were those of the Atlantic and the Royal Charter. The latter, a home-ward-bound Australian clipper, was crushed like an eggshell on the rocky coast of Anglesea just before daybreak on 26th October, 1859, and 459 men, women, and children were drowned, some forty or so managing to scramble ashore. The number of lives lost with the Atlantic, one of the White Star line, was even more appalling. She struck on a sunken rock off the coast of Nova Scotia, on 1st April, 1873, with 931 persons on board, and the breakers swept away 481 of them. The Anna Jane, of Liverpool, bound for Canada, with 453 emigrants and a crew of forty-five, was driven on shore on Barra Island, one of the Hebrides, on 29th September, 1853, and 393 persons perished. The Pomona, another emigrant ship from the same port, was suffered, through an error in her reckoning, to run on the Wexford coast during the night of 28th April, 1859, the result being

the loss of 385 lives. In 1854 the Tayleur, another Liverpool emigrant ship, ran on to Lambay Island, near Howth, on 21st January, when 290 lives were lost; and a similar fate overtook the Powhattar from Havre, on the coast of Barnegat, on 15th April, 1850. The Royal Adelaide steampacket, from Cork to London, went on to the Tongue Sands, near Margate, and of the 260 persons forming her passengers and crew, not one survived to give the details of her fate.

Among the ships lost during the storm of the 28th February, 1849, was the German emigrant barque Floridian, which was driven on



The wreck of the Birkenhead

Painting: Thomas Hemy, 1852–1937



the Long Sands, and went to pieces, 174 people perishing, and four being rescued by a revenue cutter. During the night of the 3rd of May, 1855, the emigrant ship John, proceeding down Channel, ran on the Manacle Rocks, and 170 of those on board were drowned. The island of Innistrathull on the north coast of Ireland, proved in like manner destructive to the magnificent new screw Cambria, on her return

from New York on 14th October, 1870, one seamen alone surviving to relate the fate of the 170 persons on board her. We close the list with the names of H.M.S. Eurydice and the steamer Pommerania, the accounts of whose loss are still fresh in remembrance. — Pall Mall Gazette.

Inquirer and Commercial News, 5 March 1879: 1.

Commemorating the Loss of HMAS *Perth* (I) in World War 2.

By David Nicolson, Publicity officer for the HMAS *Perth* (I) Memorial Foundation.

On the 1st of March 1942, HMAS *Perth* (I) and the USS *Huston* were sunk by an overwhelming superior Japanese force in the Sunda Strait off the coast of Indonesia. Of the 681 complement onboard the *Perth*, only 324 survived the engagement and these men subsequently became prisoners of the Japanese. Only 216 survived this ordeal to return to Australia and the United Kingdom after the war. Those on board the *Huston* suffered a similar fate with only 291 of the original crew of 1061 returning home.

To remember this tragic loss of life, the HMAS *Perth* (I) Memorial Foundation Inc. has been created following an initiative of the Navy League of Australia, (West Australian Division). The HMAS *Perth* (I) Memorial Foundation Inc. aims

to build a permanent memorial adjoining the HMAS *Perth* Memorial Hall on Riverside Road, East Fremantle. The memorial will feature a 'ship's prow' with two 10 metre long ceramic glass walls incorporating images of the *Perth* and members of the ship's company. This will be lit up at night and will provide a permanent reminder to all those lost on that fateful day. The memorial will have a granite wall of honour engraved with all the ship's company and include an area set aside for future commemorative services. The USS *Huston* will also be acknowledged at the site. The Foundation has engaged the Smith Sculptors who were responsible for the design and construction of the HMAS *Sydney* Memorial in Geraldton, an iconic and highly visited site.



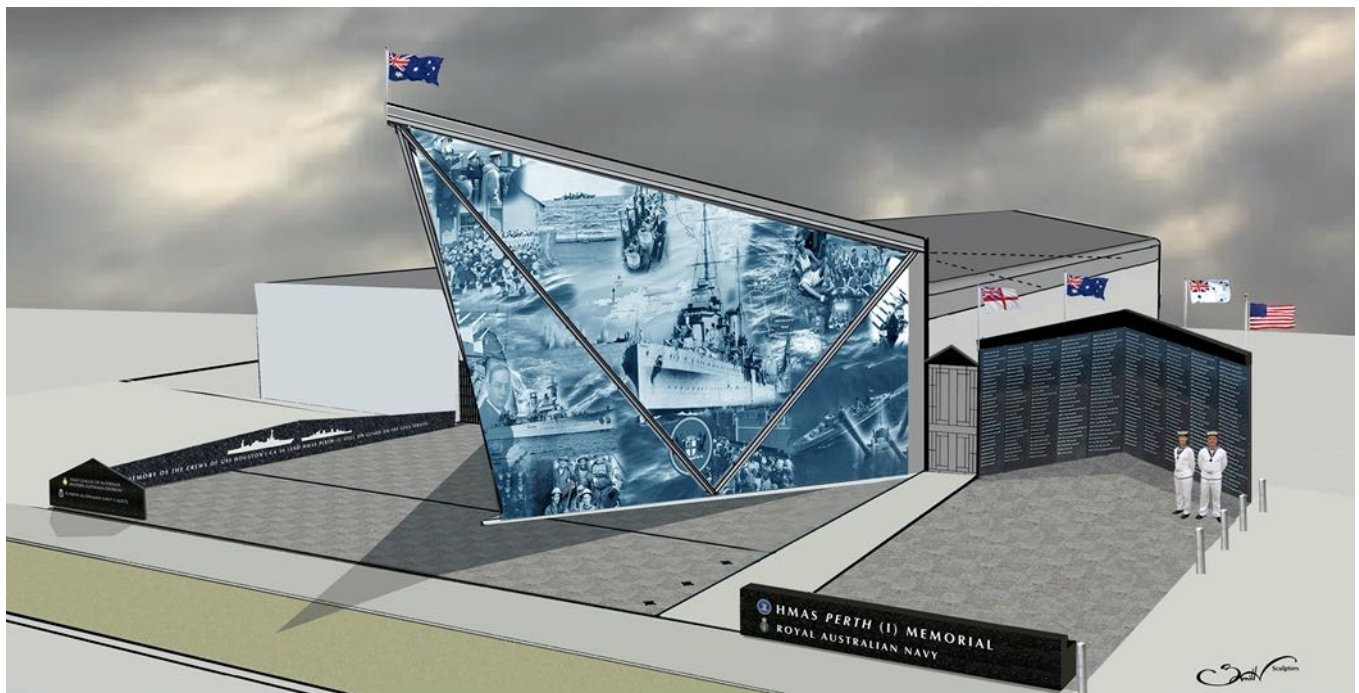
HMAS *Perth* (I)

Photo: Australian War Memorial



The Foundation has set up a website to publicise the project and to hopefully attract new members

to this most worthy cause. The address is www.HMASPerthImemorialfoundation.com.au.



Artist's proposal for the HMAS *Perth (I)* memorial

Illustration: Smiths Sculptures



HMAS *Perth (I)* under fire

Painting: City of Perth Collection