

Full & By
The crew journal of the
barque *James Craig*.

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Web site: www.shf.org.au/JCraig/JCraig.html

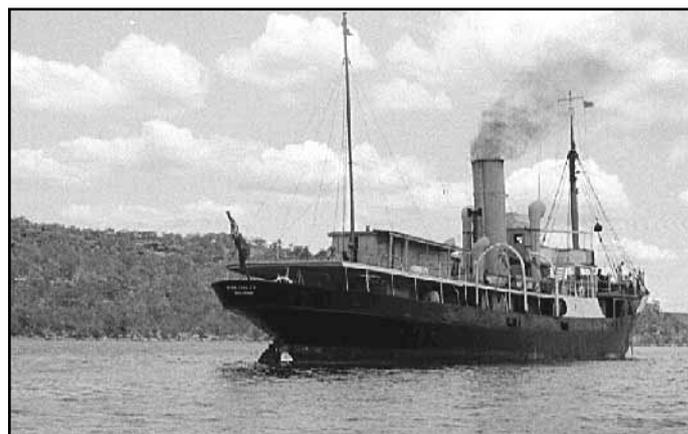
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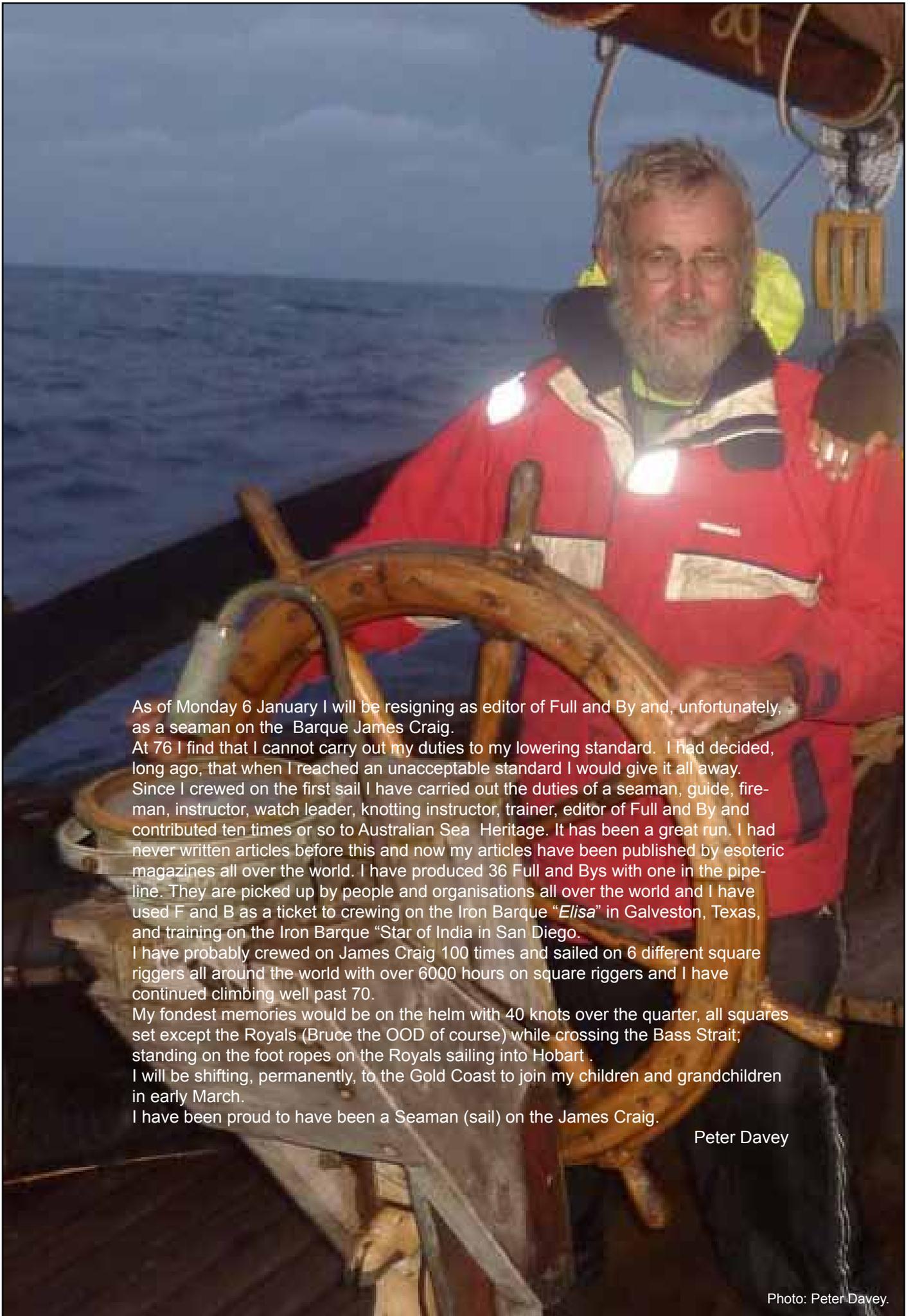
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Cover photo: Boxing Day 2013 Ewa Korczynski.

The opinions expressed in this journal may not necessarily be the viewpoint of the Sydney Maritime Museum, the Sydney Heritage Fleet or the crew of the James Craig or its officers.





As of Monday 6 January I will be resigning as editor of Full and By and, unfortunately, as a seaman on the Barque James Craig. At 76 I find that I cannot carry out my duties to my lowering standard. I had decided, long ago, that when I reached an unacceptable standard I would give it all away. Since I crewed on the first sail I have carried out the duties of a seaman, guide, fireman, instructor, watch leader, knotting instructor, trainer, editor of Full and By and contributed ten times or so to Australian Sea Heritage. It has been a great run. I had never written articles before this and now my articles have been published by esoteric magazines all over the world. I have produced 36 Full and Bys with one in the pipeline. They are picked up by people and organisations all over the world and I have used F and B as a ticket to crewing on the Iron Barque "Elisa" in Galveston, Texas, and training on the Iron Barque "Star of India" in San Diego. I have probably crewed on James Craig 100 times and sailed on 6 different square riggers all around the world with over 6000 hours on square riggers and I have continued climbing well past 70. My fondest memories would be on the helm with 40 knots over the quarter, all squares set except the Royals (Bruce the OOD of course) while crossing the Bass Strait; standing on the foot ropes on the Royals sailing into Hobart. I will be shifting, permanently, to the Gold Coast to join my children and grandchildren in early March. I have been proud to have been a Seaman (sail) on the James Craig.

Peter Davey

Photo: Peter Davey.

Log of the top mast schooner *Alvei* Nelson, NZ, for Pago Pago, American Samoa. Commenced 3/05/2009 - 42 days.

We finally got underway from Nelson after a delay of nearly a month owing to steering problems and, then, strong wind and rough seas in the Cook Strait. The Strait is renown for this as a result of the funneling effect of the winds between North and South Islands.

We have a ships company of 8; the Captain and the mate working 2 watches (4-on and 4-off) and three watches of two crew each (working 4-on and 8-off). If we could have found another crew member I would be working as Sec-

ond Mate (curses). This makes 3 to a watch, with most sail changes being carried out at the change of watch or with the calling out of all hands. We have three females, a Yank, a German and Spanish/Australian lass (19, 25, 26), two Swede backpackers with muscles in their eyebrows and myself. I am on watch with the Spanish girl.

We were all Nelsoned out by the time we got underway. We will miss the unlimited hot, soft, fresh water showers and stand-up heads. The temperature was down to 2°C when we left. No one can live in such a climate.

We warmed up occasionally playing "Knot and Shot". You have a large shot of rum; tie a bowline knot (Loop) in a rope; lasso a bollard; run 100 yards and then drink a pint of beer. A few of these and you warm up.

We had to run our two-cylinders slow-revving diesel motor for an hour before we left (to remove any air from fuel lines) and it was beating out Pago Pago to me. We will be motoring for two days (unless we get the right wind) to get us clear of the Cook Strait and well south for sea room. If the weather turns we do not want to be heaving to near a lee shore. We heave to with the Inner Jib, Mizzen Fore Stay and two reefs on the Main. (From my experience onboard last year)

We motored out into perfect weather (for NZ in May) we anchored just inside what is known as The French Pass. (Named after the French explorer D'Urville who discovered it in the 1820s) This saves a long trip around many islands to get into the Strait. We left at 0500hrs (after a fish meal of some local fish we had trolled en-route) to avoid problems with rips, tides etc. It was a perfect morning, sailing into the

rising sun, set off by the constantly changing patterns of the shadows on the nearby hills and with dolphin pods escorting us. French Pass is only 60 meters wide and many vessels have come to grief by arriving on the wrong tide. Even though we arrived at the pass at the right time it was still messy, at one stage we had 30 degrees of rudder on to maintain a constant heading. We are now heading for the Cook Strait proper and should be in the roaring forties/ screaming fifties latitudes later on today.

Day 3. We had a minor brush with the roaring forties when we had to heave to owing to the adverse winds. I was on the wheel as we went hard aport to turn into the wind and heave to. We were over about 40 degrees and I had to wrap my hands behind the wheel to hang on - a very uncomfortable night.

Day 4. Whilst I was on the wheel during the 8 to 12am watch, wearing a normal set of underwear; complete thermals; thick track pants (picked up at the Salvos); a shirt; another set of thermals; a woollen jumper; a Burke waterproof jacket and pants; a thermal beanie and woolen gloves, one of the Swedish Vikings came on deck wearing just his swimmers and proceeded to throw a bucket overboard and then pour the water over himself to wash down. Tania (Spanish/Australian girl) and I gave a yell of anguish. I should have purchased waterproof gloves. Wool gloves when wet, in a 30 knot wind, are only slightly better than no gloves at all. We have no showers; wash basins or fresh water for washing ourselves or clothes. We use salt water for everything.

Day 6. We passed the International Date Line and caught 5-foot shark. I am duty Cook!!! I made four loaves of bread - did not rise very well and fitted into two trays. My first time with the Kero-Primus burner and I underestimated the amount of time needed to boil my bully beef stew (We have no refrigeration for meat or perishables). I had to add some hot water from the thermoses, which are always kept full, but I picked up the wrong thermos and added a litre of tea and two tea bags - re-

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Photo: Peter Davey.



Photo: Peter Davey.

moved bags and carried on - no one seemed to notice.

Day 7. Forecast for a number of fronts and a low to pass to the south of us, a low of 980 hectopascals. During my 8 to 12am watch the wind gradually increased to 40 knots on the quarter. We were making good time with the wind but had to take the Port and Starboard Man Overboard buoys below because they were in danger of being washed away.

Seas breaking over Port and Starboard bulwarks. At 1030 total steering failure, the rudder swung to amidships, Alvei gradually rounded up with the wind just forward of the beam, seas breaking over Starboard side and the freeing ports working overtime.

Freeing ports are doors, which open up in the bulwarks (ship's side above the deck) and allow the water on the deck to discharge over the side. They can be seen in photos of Alvei and appear as gun ports.

Not a good time for "Man Overboard" with no rudder and impossible to steer a real course with emergency rudder, too much sail up, no buoys (stowed below) and an engine that takes some time to start. All hands on deck, rigged emergency steering and then hard aport to bring her up into the wind and heaving to.

The emergency steering is a tiller bolted to the top of the rudder, which sticks out on the deck forward of the compass, with two tackles to steer to Port or Starboard. It took about 15 minutes to retrieve the tiller from the forepeak and attach (thank God for the Vikings).

It was impossible to reef or lower the sails until we hove to, and then we furled main fore and aft and the two jibs. All this took about 90 minutes and whilst it was going

on we had seas breaking over us from the side that was practically abeam the seas. The crew working on the leeward side ended up with full sea boots.

We hove to for a very uncomfortable and noisy 24 hours making two knots sideways towards the South Pole. So that is what the roaring forties can do.

Day 8. Wind and seas abated with a largish swell with a long fetch. Steering now OK after replacing a hydraulic hose.

Day 10. Dead calm, drifting South. Temperature 7°C.



Photo: Peter Davey.



Photo: Peter Davey.

Wandering, wandering albatrosses.

Day 14. Whilst aloft, putting in a short splice into a frayed reefing line, I realized that my hands for the first time were OK without gloves. Still very cold at night.

Day 15. Weather improving – caught a large tuna. It will be eaten tonight

Day 17. If we experience the right conditions we could be in the tropics in two weeks and Pago Pago in three.

Day 18. Position 36S 170W. Becalmed. Pago Pago is 14S 171W. When we get going again we will need to go further East than 171 W so as to approach from the East on the trade winds. We expect to spend three days motor-

ing to get through the Horse Latitudes.

Day 21. We have been in a LOL (meteorological term for a position between two highs which has stable conditions and no wind) for three days and going nowhere.

Day 23. We get a little further North each day. Running before the wind (wind Beaufort force 6 to 7, on point abaft the Port beam. We were experiencing force 8 to 9 in the roaring forties). Making up to 7 knots on a course of 025 true, under outer and inner Jibs, square single Topsail and mizzen fore and aft (We are running some easterly down as well). About abeam of Sydney but still cold. Wearing one set of thermals instead of two. I had hoped it would be warming up by three weeks out of Nelson.

Shooting shooting stars.

Day 25. Weather warming up. We have been overtaken by a warm front. It was almost a pleasure to do one's trick on the wheel in continuous rain without wearing thermal gear.

Day 26. A large petrel (large sea bird over 10 kg) crashed landed next to us last night – after spending 6 hours he (or she) flew off with a little help to get over the bulwarks. Out of the thermals, I never intend wearing them again.

Day 28. Making slow progress. Passed latitude 28S. Sighted an aircraft, the first sighting of anything for 24 days. In keeping with the tradition of square-rig sailing we listen to no news

bulletins en-route. During my two months onboard last year we heard nothing about the Olympics - a bonus.

National Maritime Museum secures one of the most celebrated collections of shipwreck images in the world.

12 November 2013

Royal Museums Greenwich (RMG) today acquired a world renowned and nationally significant collection of photographic and archive material. The Gibson archive presents one of the most graphic and emotive depictions of shipwrecks, lifesaving and its aftermath produced in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The material was acquired at Sotherby's Travel, Atlases, Maps and Natural History Sale. The archive of dramatic and often haunting images, assembled over 125 years (1872 to 1997) by four generations of the Gibson family, records over 200 wrecks – the ships, heroic rescues, survivors, burials and salvage scenes – off the treacherous coastline of Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly. The acquisition of this collection comprising of over 1360 glass and film negatives, complements the Museum's existing, extensive historic photography collection, and creates an unprecedented opportunity for the Museum to further examine and explore the story of life at sea and the dangers experienced by seafarers through research, education and display projects.

John Gibson (1827–1920) founded the family photographic business in the 1860s and took his first photograph of a wreck in 1869. He apprenticed his two sons Alexander (1857–1944) and Herbert (1861–1937), who perfected the art of photographing wrecks, creating perhaps some of the most remarkable and evocative images of misadventure at sea. Among the items included in the collection is the ledger the Gibson brothers kept when taking the photographs, which contains records of the telegraph messages sent from Scilly and is full of human stories of disaster, courage and survival.

Having secured the archive RMG will initially conserve, research



1912, The Mildred: Gurnards Head. From the Gibson archive of Scilly.



1874, Minnehaha: St Mary's, Isle of Scilly. Gibson archive.



1875, Aksai shipwreck: White Island, St Martin's, Isles of Scilly. Gibson archive.



1970, Poleire: Kettles, Isles of Scilly. Gibson archive.

and digitize the collection, leading to a number of exhibitions to tour regional museums and galleries, especially those in the South West of England.

Lord Sterling of Plaistow, Chairman of the Royal Museums Greenwich, said: "The acquisition of this remarkable archive will enable us to create a series of exhibitions that will travel across the country, starting with the South West. I am very pleased that the National Maritime Museum has been able to secure this wonderful collection for the nation, and I know that the Gibson family are delighted that their family archive will remain and be displayed in this country".

The newly acquired material was purchased by the Museum for £122,500 (the estimated sale price was £100,000–£150,000).

Items acquired today at auction:

- 585 Glass plate negatives (214: 12 x 10in: 8 x 6in) housed in 16 original wooden boxes and one cardboard box.
- 407 Glass plate copy negatives (6½ x 4¾ in) in 4 cardboard boxes.
- 179 Glass plate negatives (4¼ x 3¼in).
- 198 film negatives (5 x 4in) in three boxes.
- 335 cut film negatives (various sizes) and 39 (35mm) film negatives.
- 97 original photographs of shipwrecks (silver prints, 12 x 10in)
- Manuscript ledger by Alexander and Herbert Gibson on the shipwrecks of Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly.
- A collection of books by John Fowles, John Arlott, John Le Carré, and Rex Cowan on the Gibsons of Scilly, together with news paper and magazine articles

For more information visit:

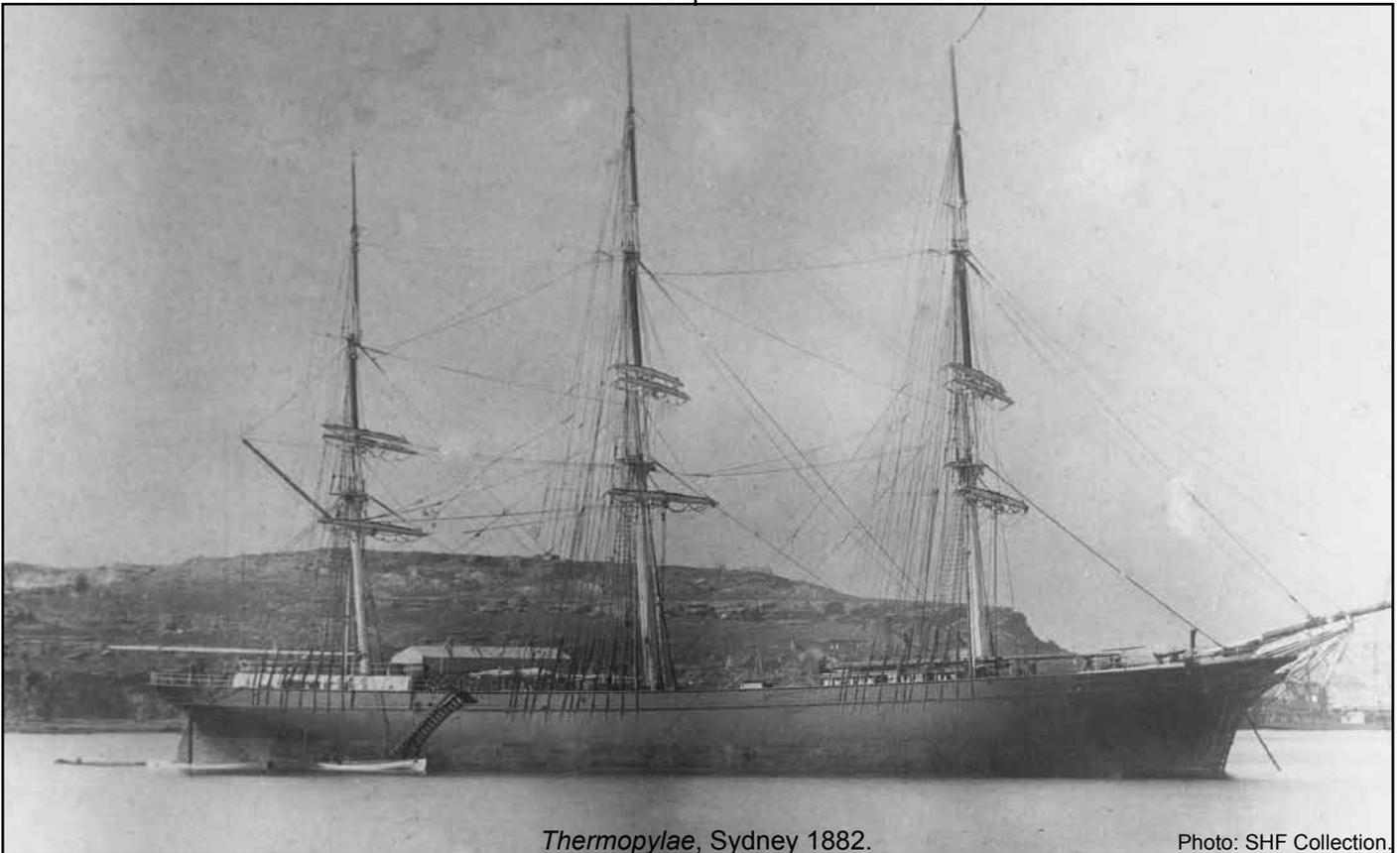
www.rm.g.co.uk

THE *THERMOPYLAE* AND THE *CUTTY SARK*.

Two rival racing clippers that thrilled the world
and brought fame to their masters
on epoch-making voyages across the oceans.

Whenever racing clippers in their prime are considered it is difficult to keep the mind off the *Thermopylae* and the *Cutty Sark*. Their design was the high-water mark of the type. It is difficult to decide which deserves the title of the finest clipper built. They were designed as rivals, and there is little material on which to base an accurate estimate of comparative value; yet they were both wonderful ships and their very names carry their own romance. The pity is that they were built at the end of the true clipper era, when the opening of the Suez Canal was about to ruin the China tea clipper business for which they were primarily designed. The *Thermopylae* was built first, in 1868, the *Cutty Sark* being designed in the following year expressly to beat

The fact that the second ship was built when the features of the first were known will account for the similarity of their external design. Both were composite full-rigged ships – that is, they had iron frames planked over with wood – and both had a displacement of 1,970 tons at load draught. The dimensions of the *Thermopylae*, according to Lloyd's Register, were 212 feet between perpendiculars, 36 feet beam by 21 feet depth of hold; those of the *Cutty Sark* were the same, but with 6 in. more length. But the tonnage of the *Thermopylae* was 991 gross and 948 net, while that of her rival was 963 and 921. The *Thermopylae* was more lightly built; the *Cutty Sark* had more elaborate fittings, including a teak deck instead of yellow pine. Perhaps because



Thermopylae, Sydney 1882.

Photo: SHF Collection.

her. The former would seem to have had the initial advantage. She was built to the designs of Bernard Waymouth, a brilliant naval architect of his day, by Walter Hood of Aberdeen, for George Thomson's Aberdeen Line; both builder and owner had a high reputation and an association of many years' standing. The *Cutty Sark*, on the other hand, was built by Scott & Linton, an unknown Dumbarton firm, to the designs of Mr. Hercules Linton, who still had his name to make. Her owner, Captain John Willis, familiarly "Old White Hat," was a master mariner with a sound knowledge of ships and their running, but his thrifty methods frequently had unsatisfactory results.

of this the *Thermopylae* has often been regarded as the faster ship in lighter winds, but the *Cutty Sark* was superior when the wind had any force.

The *Thermopylae* was ready for sea at the end of 1868, and on November 7 left Gravesend, Kent, on her maiden voyage for Melbourne under the command of Captain R. Kemball. Not a regular master in the Aberdeen Line, Kemball had been chosen for the reputation he had made while in command of the *Yangtse*, normally a slow ship, but one in which he had beaten crack vessels. The *Thermopylae* passed the Lizard 33 hours from Gravesend; 21 days out saw her crossing the Equator that day she sailed 288 miles. Finally, she anchored at Melbourne 62 days from the Lizard, a

record; and, having discharged her outward cargo, went on to Newcastle, New South Wales, to load a cargo of coal for Shanghai. This passage she did in 28 days, pilot to pilot, which was another record. Having loaded tea, she left the Pagoda Anchorage in early July and made a passage of 91 days home against the monsoon. This was a third record, but twelve days later Sir Lancelot, under Captain Robinson, arrived in the Thames, having done the passage in 89 days, which is still the record for a sailing ship from China against the monsoon.

The *Thermopylae* had made her reputation for speed, and Willis was determined that his new ship the *Cutty Sark* should beat her in the 1870 season. On her second voyage the *Thermopylae* ran from Gravesend to Melbourne in 71 days and homeward from Foochow to London in 105 days. She was away before the *Cutty Sark* was launched, the latter ship not being completed for sea until January 13, 1870. It has been mentioned that her builders were young and inexperienced, and shrewd John Willis had insisted on a guarantee being given by a responsible party. Old Peter Denny, of the

historic and rival shipbuilding firm in Dumbarton, generously lent the weight of his name. It was necessary; before the ship was launched the company's money had run out and work had to be suspended, but at a meeting of creditors it was decided to complete the work under Denny's supervision. This delayed the launch. There were unfounded rumours that this change resulted in work aloft being scamped, but the *Cutty Sark* was finished with the pride that has always distinguished Clydeside labour.

There is little doubt, however, that she had not been designed aloft with the same skill as had been shown in the lines of the hull. Her maiden voyage from London to Shanghai, which must inevitably have been a poor one owing to the remarkably light winds that

handicapped her the whole way, was made worse by repeated failures of the ironwork aloft. But the *Cutty Sark* did the passage in 104 days, not a record voyage but by no means a poor trip. She sailed from Shanghai about a month before the *Thermopylae* left Foochow carrying a cargo smaller by about 10,000 lb., and made the homeward passage in 110 days against the other's 105. But Captain Moodie's propensity for cracking on sail had

shown many more weak spots aloft which had to be repaired at sea.

In 1870 the *Thermopylae* had a keen race outwards against the beautiful *Norman Court* until their tracks divided, and she finished with a passage of 66 days to Melbourne. The *Cutty Sark* went from London to Shanghai in 101 days and found herself with time for a ballast trip to Bangkok and back to China with a cargo of rice before she was due to load tea. But the Suez Canal was now open and the steamers were beginning to capture the tea trade to an extent which was to eliminate the clipper altogether.

Thermopylae was content with a low freight and, sailing from Shanghai in June, made a

homeward passage of 106 days; the agents of the *Cutty Sark* at first scorned to cut freights, but eventually she sailed in September at the lower rate and made a passage of 108 days. The chance of a direct race between the two ships, which were regarded as great rivals on the trade, had been missed. But it came on the next voyage after the *Thermopylae* had made an outward passage of 67 days from London to Melbourne, two of her days' runs being over 330 nautical miles, and after *Cutty Sark* had raced out to China against *Sir Lancelot*, beating her by five days with a passage of 108 days, which was not the best of the year.

With the tea clippers still in their old place in public and professional estimation despite the fact that they were doomed by the steamer, this straight race



Cutty Sark off Point Piper, Sydney. Photo: SHF Collection.

attracted intense excitement. Both Captain Kemball and Captain Moodie were front-rank master mariners and had several years' valuable experience of their ships. Both were willing to sacrifice some freight so as to trim their ships to a nicety and to heed neither cost nor effort to get away first. The *Cutty Sark* was successful; but, since fog delayed both ships for some days, they eventually started level. Off Hong Kong the *Thermopylae* passed her rival; four days later the position was reversed. From time to time they sighted one another, and the excitement was intense, but the Willis clipper was out of luck. Her sails were frequently damaged, waterspouts forced her off her course and compelled her to take in sail; but at Anjer Point, Java, there was little more than two hours' difference in their times and they were through the waters in which the *Thermopylae* had the advantage of Captain Kemball's knowledge of the China Seas.

In the Indian Ocean strong winds gave the *Cutty Sark* her chance, but she lost more canvas, and at the end of the gale a heavy sea tore the pintles out of the rudder, which had immediately washed away and left her helpless. The expedient of towing a spar over the stern to steer the ship proved useless; but Moodie refused to admit defeat and put into a South African port. He cut a spare spar into three pieces, with which he made a remarkably serviceable jury rudder. This was secured to the stern post, but it could not, of course, be controlled by the wheel in the ordinary way. The ship had to be hove-to while the work was in progress and the *Thermopylae* made the most of her chance, although unaware of the misfortunes of her rival.

A stowaway, who had been brought up in a Scottish smithy, was discovered, and he did the necessary blacksmith's work. Captain Moodie, however, was the moving spirit, and it was his skill which permitted the makeshift to be shipped in a heavy sea. Had he no other feat to his credit this piece of "sailorizing" would have given him a permanent reputation among seamen. But he could no longer force the ship, even with the knowledge that the *Thermopylae* would be steadily increasing her lead. The bad luck of the *Cutty Sark* continued. As she rolled in the doldrums the fastenings of the jury rudder gave way and it had to be taken inboard and fixed afresh. Yet, despite these set-backs, she finished her passage 119 days from dropping her pilot and 122 days from Shanghai, while the *Thermopylae's* passage was 115 days. Considering the handicap under which the *Cutty Sark* ran, she won a moral victory, and her captain became a national hero. But, during the voyage, Moodie had quarrelled with his owner's brother, who was a passenger, and insisted on resigning his command and taking over a steam liner in a company whose subsequent bankruptcy almost ruined him.

After that mighty race, the best passages on the China tea trade appeared an anti-climax, especially as the business was obviously ruined. The two vessels, however, remained on it for some time. In 1875-6 the two ships arranged an outward race, the *Cutty Sark* leaving London for Sydney nine days before the *Thermopylae* sailed for Melbourne. But a collision at the beginning of the voyage which cut down the *Cutty Sark's* sail area, and a captain who could not crack on sail in the manner of the old-timers, resulted in her

passage being 75 days against the *Thermopylae's* 68. Home with tea, the *Cutty Sark* made a passage of 108 days and the *Thermopylae* one of 125, but the crack Glen Line steamer on the service did it in 42 by way of the Suez Canal. In 1877 the position was reversed, the *Thermopylae* doing the passage from Shanghai in 102 days against the *Cutty Sark's* 127. Outward bound later in the year, the *Cutty Sark* was damaged in collision in a gale, but her second sailing was sufficiently close to that of the *Thermopylae* to make a race of it; she took 72 days to Sydney against the other's 74 to Melbourne. The two ships were then again in rivalry from Sydney to Shanghai with coal, the *Cutty Sark* doing the passage in 40 days and the *Thermopylae*, sailing nearly a month later, in 48. The two rivals were then parted for a time, the *Thermopylae* running straight home to London from Sydney, while the *Cutty Sark* went tramping, finishing with a fine run of 19 days from New York to the Downs.

LAST ADVENTURES.

Captain Willis transferred the *Cutty Sark* to the Australian run in the face of contrary advice and despite his own doubts as to how his little ship, with her fine lines, would fare on the wool trade. For this she was drastically cut down aloft in the spring of 1880, her skysail being suppressed and both masts and yards shortened. When she had a strong breeze this affected her little, but in the light airs she was ruined. That largely explains the number of ships which can justly claim to have beaten the famous *Cutty Sark*.

Captain Moore, and Captain Woodget who followed him, restored the ship to her old position. They were both firstclass sailors who had learned their craft in the north-east coast coal trade and were "characters" in their way. The two ships were again in rivalry on the Australian wool trade in the 'eighties - the *Cutty Sark* beat the *Thermopylae* by seven days in 1884-5 - but in 1889 the *Thermopylae* was sold to W. H. Ross and Company, of London, and resold to a Canadian company. She had already had her sail area reduced twice as a ship, but now she was cut down to a barque, her owner maintaining that little difference was made to her speed. But her days were numbered, and in 1895 she was sold to the Portuguese Navy to be converted into the training ship *Pedro Nunes*, and she seldom left the Tagus. She was made a target for torpedo practice in October 1907, and sunk off the river mouth.

The *Cutty Sark* continued to carry the Red Ensign with the greatest credit under Captain Woodget until the summer of 1893, when she also was transferred to the Portuguese flag. Narrowly escaping destruction in a hurricane in the West Indies, she was salvaged and continued tramping, visiting Britain several times in the early days of the war. In 1916 she was towed into Cape Town, dismasted, and re-rigged as a barquentine. When she visited London in 1922 her arrival caused considerable interest. Captain Wilfred Dowman, a sailing-ship man of great experience, and his equally enthusiastic wife, bought the vessel and restored her to her old ship rig. She is preserved in Falmouth Harbour, in Cornwall.

Text: Shipping Wonders of the World Volume One.
Editor Clarence Winchester
The Waverley Book Company Ltd .

John Oxley and the war risk bonus.

In December 1938 the Norwegian crew on the chartered freighter *Horda* were paid off in Singapore because they had refused to proceed to Japanese territory without the payment of a "war risk" bonus. On a previous trip from Honolulu to Wakamatsu, Japan, they had been paid \$(US)75. The *Horda* was one of a number of vessels that had been chartered by Japan to carry war materials.



The claims for a "war risk" bonus escalated in Australia in early September 1939 when the crew of the Swedish freighter *Anten*, loading sugar at Townsville, demanded a war bonus. The demand was met a fortnight later with an agreement that each man would receive a £50 sterling bonus on their discharge at any port in the United Kingdom. The master also agreed to pay the board and lodging of the crew whilst they were in Townsville with the amount being deducted from the men's pay.

At the end of September the demand for a "war risk" bonus by Lascar crewmembers of the British freighter *Nairnbank*, loading sugar in Cairns, was settled amicably after a conference between the superintendent of the Mercantile Marine in Cairns, the captain and representatives of the Lascars. The crew, who were on Singapore and Calcutta articles, had sought double wages.

Then on Monday 25 September, an hour before she was due to sail, 46 crewmen walked off a British ship berthed at the Dalgety Wharf in Brisbane. The reason for the walk off was the captain's refusal to their demands for three additional engine-room hands (an extra man for each shift) and a "war risk" bonus of £50 being paid to each man. At a meeting held on the wharf the men decided to seek the aid of the Australian Seamen's Union

In the Police Court on Thursday 28 September, as Mr. T. C. O'Hagan (for the defence) insisted upon separate hearings for each of the 46 men charged with having been absent from the ship without leave, the case against the second steward, Rene Sewell was taken first.

Outlining the case, Mr. Mansfield (for the prosecution) said that the men had signed on to sail the ship from Glasgow, and it duly arrived at Brisbane. Shortly before

the ship was due to leave on Monday (25 September) the men had walked off, and told Captain Starr that they would not go back unless they were each given a bonus of £50 for the voyage and that three extra firemen were engaged. Captain Starr had told them that he would get in touch with the owners in London, if they would return to the ship, but they had declined. On the next day they made complaints about the ship's food and accommodation, and the need for additional washing facilities.

When giving evidence Captain Starr said that after the men had been arrested he saw them at the City Watch-house. He had read to them a cablegram, from the ship's owners in London, stating that the National Maritime Board had fixed substantial increases for war risks, but the men were not satisfied with this response. Rene Sewell, when giving his evidence, said that he had left the ship primarily because he wanted more money, as he thought that the crew were endangering their lives going through home waters during the war. He had gone out with the other men because of their complaints. Peter O'Brien, one of the ship's firemen, said that when the captain told the men that he had been instructed to take out warrants for their arrest they decided to stay out and let a court of law decide as to whether they were entitled to a war bonus and their other stated requirements.

The case against the fireman, James Summers, was heard next. In giving evidence on the charge against him, Summers told Mr. G. A. Cameron, the Police Magistrate, that he did not think the ship had any protection against enemy armed cruisers, submarines or mines, and consequently he thought that if he were to go to England in the ship he should be recompensed by a bonus of £50.



In addressing the request for three extra firemen, Summers said that he had a complaint against the conditions in the stokehold, as he had come off two watches in a distressed state, after having had to stoke five fires on one watch and four fires on the other. Peter O'Brien said that conditions in the ship were worse than any he had ever experienced. With Scottish coal they had been able to work the ship easily, but after

taking on Newcastle coal recently the work became too arduous. On the way from Newcastle to Brisbane he had finished his work fatigued.

Oliver Simpson Walker, chief engineer on the ship when cross-examined by Mr. T. C. O'Hagan (for the defence), said that the ship had 18 fires and that five firemen were on each watch. He had never seen any of the firemen on the voyage distressed at the end their work. He also said that Summers had never made any complaint to him about the conditions.

On completion of the evidence Mr Cameron P. M. reserved his decision until he had heard the cases against James Reynolds and Thomas Horrigan remanding them on their own bonds of £2. until the next day, Friday 27 September.

When giving their evidence both Reynolds and Horrigan said that if they took the ship back to England they would be in danger from enemy submarines, aircraft, and battleships. For running this risk they thought they were entitled to £50 apiece. They also said that they had demanded the employment of three extra firemen because under the present arrangement one man had to work five fires on each watch, and with the heavier work required since the ship had taken on Newcastle coal the men had left the stokehold exhausted. They also had complaints against the food and living conditions on the ship.

Captain Starr, when questioned by Mr O'Hagan, agreed that should the ship be sunk on the voyage to England the men would lose their wages from the time the ship sank and that it was reasonable for the men to receive something extra for this risk.

Mr. Cameron P. M. reserved his decision against Reynolds and Horrigan and heard the cases against Andrew Whelan and Michael Clark on Saturday morning, 28 September. The other men were remanded on their own bonds of £2 until Monday 2 October. During a discussion about bail for the men whose cases had not been heard, Mr. Mansfield (for the prosecution) said that the company was willing to take the men back and withdraw proceedings on the terms of a telegram received by the boatswain from Mr. Spence, of the National Union of Seamen. This telegram read: "*National Maritime Board last Friday granted war risk bonus £3 a month for all ratings, ordinary seamen 30/- a month, dated from September 15. Strongly advise you and crew to accept, as your action may cause conscription of merchant marine.*"

Mr. Cameron P.M. in his judgement on the case of the second steward, Rene Sewell, said; "*This is a case of wilful and deliberate breaching of the Act. His action may deprive his own folk overseas of essential food or some other necessary commodity. I find it difficult to conceive a more flagrant breach of the Act in the circumstances. One may have sympathy and one may have great admiration for the merchant service, but one has no admiration for men who would just walk off their ship without having made a request or complaint, and then point a gun at their employers and say "Do this, or we will walk out."* Sewell was sentenced to 10 weeks hard labour.

On Monday 2 October, evidence was completed in the cases against Michael Clark and Martin O'Toole with Mr. Cameron reserving his decision.

Whilst the court hearings were being held in Brisbane nine of the crew of a ship loading at Port Kembla refused to work. The previous week a number of Dutchmen walked off the same vessel in Sydney. The men demand a war risk bonus of £100, Australian rates and conditions, and the repatriation of Australian members of a crew when the ship reached England. The captain had cabled Glasgow asking for advice. The men had meeting in the Trades Hall during the afternoon and at the meeting they had reaffirmed their decision to demand a war risk bonus of £50 each, before going to sea. At the evening meeting of the Trades and Labour Council it was decided to;

- initiate a plan to bring before the public the position of the two crews which had walked off in Brisbane.
- initiate an appeal for their financial assistance.

Later in the meeting the disputes committee of the Council discussed the arrangements for housing the men and the provision of other facilities. Promises of cash were received from various unions and Unemployed organisations agreed to supply clothing.

In another Police Court on Thursday 28 September, under Mr A. H. O'Kelly, P.M., the forty-one members of the crew of the other British ship, who allegedly left it following a similar demand for a war risk bonus, were charged with having been absent without leave on Tuesday 26 September. Mr. R. B. Butler, (for the prosecution) said when requesting an early and joint hearing of the charges: "*It is a matter of national importance that the ships should be got away as soon as possible. The ship contained foodstuffs for the United Kingdom, and already has been held up for two days.* Mr. P. J. O'Sullivan (for the defence) said: "*The first consideration is that each man should have a fair trial. These men were arrested only this morning, and I am asking for a remand until Monday. In the other case the men were allowed bail in their own bonds of £2. There is no question of these men absenting themselves: They will be here.*"

Mr. O'Kelly granted a remand until Monday 2 October, and allowed each man bail in his own bond.

In giving his evidence, when the Court resumed on the Monday morning, Captain Fryer said that at 10 a.m. on 26 September, when his ship was at the Abattoir Wharf, James Watson and two other men, representing the seamen, told him that a meeting had been held to discuss whether or not the men would take the ship to sea without the payment of £50 danger money. Captain Fryer had responded to them by saying that, "*It is impossible to grant these terms, but if you will take the ship to sea to-day at 3 p.m. I will get the agents to cable my London office that you are taking the ship to, Sydney, but will refuse to take it from Sydney unless you get the £50.*" One of the three delegates answered the proposal by saying, "*That is fair enough.*"

In continuing his evidence Captain Fryer said that the ship was then moved to the Mercantile Wharf and, while there, he had told the three delegates that he had it on good authority that the Maritime Board in England had agreed to increase wages, but he could not say what they were. He had asked the delegates to pass the information on to the other seamen and find out whether they would take the ship to sea at 5 p.m. and cut out the £50 bonus. Later in the day James Watson,

claiming that he was speaking for the men, had told him that the men were willing to take the ship to sea under the Maritime Board's agreement. On receiving this information he had then left the ship, and on returning about 4.30 found that several men were missing. He had looked for them all that night and next day and on 28 September he had found them at the City Watch-house. Captain Fryer also stated that "As yet I do not, consider Australian waters dangerous."

Conferences between both parties were also held on the Monday to discuss negotiations for a settlement, but it was not until the Tuesday morning, 3 October, that the counsel announced to the courts on they had not been successful. The evidence was completed against two of the seamen in the morning, and the courts resumed at 2.30 p.m. only to be adjourned until 4 p.m. so that the men could attend another meeting to discuss further negotiations for a settlement. When the hearing resumed the Court was informed that the meeting was still in progress and Messrs. T. C. O'Hagan and F. J. O'Sullivan asked for a further adjournment until the next day. The adjournment was objected to by Messrs. Butler and J. G. Garland but Mr. Cameron overruled the objections saying: "I am going to give them every opportunity to come to a decision, so will adjourn the Court until 11 tomorrow morning."

Wednesday morning, 4 October, the dispute over the demand for £50 war risk bonus by seamen of the two British ships was settled, and the proceedings against the men were withdrawn. An order was given for the release of the Steward Rene Sewell from his gaol sentence of 10 weeks.

The terms of the settlement for both ships include that;

- the men would be paid full wages since their absence from duty without loss of privileges.
- they would receive increases granted by the National Maritime Board for war risk of £3 a month for ratings, and 30/- ordinary seamen.
- they were entitled for themselves or their dependents to compensation for death or injury in accordance with the Royal Navy scale.
- there should be no victimisation of any kind whatever.
- three extra firemen would be taken on one ship, as asked by the men.

Claims for a war risk bonus were again raised on 7 November when 11 Norwegian seamen staged a sit-down strike in Mackay 3 days before the ship was due to leave. A week later there were allegations made at the Queensland Trades and Labour Council congress that the seamen had been shanghaied on board their ship at Mackay and, subsequently, had been gaoled and not given a trial. As a result the Trade Union Congress decided to protest to the Prime Minister (Mr Menzies) against what was alleged to be the arrest, detention, intimidation and shanghaiing, at Mackay, of members of the crew of a ship who had demanded a war risk bonus for the completion of the voyage to England.

The Premier of Queensland (Forgan Smith) in his statement to Parliament on 16 November said; "there had been some comment in the Press regarding the crew of the Norwegian ship which loaded sugar at Mackay harbor. Charges of shanghaiing the men had been made and other sinister suggestions bandied about."

Here are the facts;

- 'The ship was loaded at Mackay Harbor and cleared ready to go to sea, her destination being Great Britain. It was one of Australia's food ships. The men resorted to a sit-down strike and prevented the ship leaving, so it was moved to the anchorage at Flat Top. Action was taken under the Commonwealth law during the week-end, to arrest these men and place them aboard their own ship. The men concerned were aliens without landing permits, and therefore, came within the Immigration Act. Police, under a warrant from the Commonwealth authority, took the necessary action. Commonwealth law in these matters is supreme, but, apart from that, I approve of the action taken. I am informed from official sources that the crew of the ship referred to and of similar vessels, receive a substantial bonus on entering war zones. It must be recognised that Australia is at war against Germany To hold up Australian food ships in Australian waters would be just as effective as sinking them by German U-boats, and if a ship is held up at Australian ports by alien crews, the sales agreement in regard to products of Australia cannot be made effective.
- 'There is much subversive propaganda going on in Australia at the present time, particularly since Russia joined with Germany. This morning there was brought under my notice an example of this propaganda, in the form of a leaflet bearing the authorisation of the Queensland State Committee of the Communist Party of Australia. This leaflet contains the following statement: This war is a capitalist war, which will make the rich richer and the poor poorer. The restoration of peace in Eastern Europe, as the result of steps taken by the Soviet Union, has brought about a great change in the situation. To-day there is no justification for the continuation of the war, and the people of Australia must do everything in their power to restore peace. War will benefit the capitalists. Peace will be in the interests of the workers, farmers, and middle class—the vast majority of the people.
- 'Propaganda leaflets of this kind are widely distributed in Brisbane and presumably elsewhere. It is interesting to recall that these same people, before Russia lined up with Germany, were anxious to drag Britain and Australia in the war to destroy Fascism. I have deemed it necessary to make this statement so that the people of Queensland, through Parliament, may be advised of the facts.

The issue of war risk bonuses remained quiet until September 1940 when the Seamen's Union of Australasia made an application for a 25% war risk bonus to the Federal Arbitration Court. The grounds for the application were that the war had increased in the last few months.

At the same time as the application was being heard in the Arbitration Court the disputes over the hospital ship *Manunda* and food ship *Reynella* were being heard. The engineers of both vessels had put in a demand for payment in sterling. The demand for a higher pay resulted in the delay in the sailing of the vessels and prompted Mr Justice O'Mara (of the Arbitration Court) to remark: "It must be heartening news to the enemy that the *Manunda* and *Reynella* are being held up in Australia by a dispute."

The vessel's owners, The Adelaide Steamship Company and Macdonald, Hamilton and Company, had offered to substitute a 25% war bonus in lieu of the war risk bonus as prescribed by the late Chief Justice Dethridge in

1939, but the men had refused the offer.

The dispute on the *Manunda* was settled 13 October when the engineers on the *Manunda* waived their claims for the payment of award rates in sterling while the vessel was abroad and accepted the offer of Australian wages and conditions, with an additional 25% war bonus.

The dispute with the crew of the *Reynella*, who had also asked for payment in sterling, was not settled until 18 October when they accepted the payment, in Australian currency of a 33 $\frac{1}{3}$ % war risk bonus instead of the usual 25%.



HMAHS Manunda c1941. Photo: SHF Collection.

Following closely on the settlement of the engineers' disputes on the *Manunda* and the *Reynella*, employees in Australian ships trading in New Zealand and other overseas ports were granted a wage increase of 25% on 19 December. In his decision, Judge Beeby said; *the risks to shipping had increased considerably recently and shipping, on the Australian coast had been brought within the war cone several having been damaged or destroyed.*

As a result of this ruling Norman Hockney, President of the Seaman's Union (QLD Branch), drew attention to the dangers faced by the crew of the Brisbane pilot vessel, *Matthew Flinders*. He claimed that there was no provision made for the payment of a war danger allowance to pilot vessel in the recent State Award despite the fact that the pilot vessel is in more danger than the coastal vessels on the normal trading voyages round the Australian coast. He argued that since the recent legislation, which provided merchant crews' compensation and pensions for disablement or death, the Commonwealth Government had included the crews of pilot ships, whether owned and operated by the State Governments or the Commonwealth, the crew of the *Matthew Flinders* should be granted a war risk bonus without any approach to the Arbitration Court.

On 10 January, 1941, the crew of the *John Oxley*, due to take over from the *Matthew Flinders*, refused to take the vessel to sea unless they were given a war risk bonus. Consequently the crew was dismissed and plans were made to maintain the pilot services for the Port of Brisbane by flying pilots to the northern or southern ports where they could board the Brisbane-bound vessels. It was also proposed to transport of pilots to the pilot steamer anchorage by hired launches and to co-operate with the Navy in maintaining a joint inspection and pilot service similar to that in Sydney.

When defending the crew's refusal to take the vessel to sea, the Secretary of the Seaman's Union, Mr E. Elliott, pointed out that the union had submitted its request for a bonus to the Treasurer (Mr. Cooper) on October 9, 1940, but the only reply had been that the matter was receiving consideration. He also noted that;

- the anchorage for the pilot vessel was farther out to sea than before the war.
- the pilot vessel had to sail through waters in which mine-sweepers work.
- the Federal Government's Seamen's War Pensions and Allowances Act, which came into operation on September 21, prescribes that seamen employed on State pilot vessels come within its ambit. The Act was special War legislation to protect merchant seamen injured, killed, or captured by the enemy.
- an added danger incurred by the pilot vessel's crew was that their vessel was not 'blacked out' as were all other vessels.
- the Commonwealth Government had recognised the extreme danger to which State pilot vessel seamen were subjected by granting them pensions in the event of their being captured, wounded or killed by enemy action.
- the crew in any coastal vessel operating in the same area as the pilot ship, under Commonwealth awards, would receive 20%, above ordinary wages.
- Wages paid by the QLD State Government to seamen on the pilot vessel were lower than those paid anywhere else in Australia.

When justifying the dismissal of the crew the QLD Government maintained that intra-State vessels and craft belonging to harbour authorities were exempt from the provisions of the Federal award for seamen, provided that their radius of action was not more than 15 miles from the home port. As the limit of the Port of Brisbane was a line from Cape Moreton to Caloundra, and as the pilot vessels did not operate more than



SS Remo renamed
SS Renella 1927 Photo: SHF Collection.

15 miles beyond that area the men concerned in the dispute were covered by the State, and not the Federal, award.

The dispute took a new turn 16 January when seamen on the steam launch *Champion* were dismissed for refusing to take the vessel out on her normal work of taking pilots from Brisbane to the pilot anchorage and back. The Secretary of the Seamen's Union (Mr. E. Elliott) said the *Champion* had never, in her long career, been used for pilot duty and the men had told him that

even had there been no dispute in progress they would have hesitated to take the *Champion* on pilot work as she was not fitted for duty outside the river. The crew of the *Matthew Flinders*, who up to that point had not been involved in the dispute, joined the crews of both the *John Oxley* and the *Champion* in their demand for a war risk bonus.

With all three pilot vessels idle the QLD State



PV John Oxley on the Brisbane River c1938
Photo: SHF Collection

Government maintained the Brisbane pilot service with the assistance of the Navy. The pilots of the Outward-bound ships, which did not call at any other Australian port, were picked up by a naval vessel. For the Inward-bound ships, pilots were flown to the northern and southern ports in the urgent cases and in the less urgent cases the pilots travelled to the ports by train.

In an effort to resolve the dispute the Seaman's Union, the Institute of Marine and Power Engineers, and the Merchant Service Guild lodged an application in the Industrial Court on 28 February 1941. The application sought a variation of the award covering pilot vessels to provide for a 25% war risk bonus for the duration of the war and thereafter until the clause was rescinded. The application covered all employees of the pilot vessel *Matthew Flinders* or of any vessel acting as pilot vessel. On the basis of the application, the crew of the *Matthew Flinders* returned to work 5 March and the crew of the *John Oxley* returned to work 8 March. The *Champion* did not return to service as it had been laid up and the new pilot vessel, *Captain Heath*, did not come into service until October 1941.

The Industrial Court dismissed the claims for a war risk bonus on 6 June. His Honour, Mr Justice Webb, in giving the decision, said that in view of the evidence submitted by the Crown (the official view being that the area in which the pilot vessel operated was not a danger zone and was safe from war risk), and particularly a letter from the District Naval Officer (Commander Rhodes), dated May 6, in which he said he considered that at present the area in question was not a danger zone and should not involve war risk, the Court had decided it had no alternative other than to dismiss the claims.

This dismissal was despite the submission by Mr. G. W. Ling (Australian Institute of Marine Engineers) that no other pilot vessel in Australia was exposed to the same degree of risks for so long a period as the pilot vessel of the Port of Brisbane. The pilot steamer in that

port was on station 22 days out of 28 and had to go beyond the limit of the port, as a vessel not exempt from pilotage could not enter any pilotage port in Queensland without a qualified pilot. The waters through which the pilot boat steamed should be deemed dangerous by the authorities as they had special vessels at work there for mine sweeping or trying to detect the presence of mines.

Mr. W. Bird, for the Seamen's Union, emphasised the risk which crews took on the Australian coast when he submitted that whilst he was travelling in a ship southward bound during Melbourne Cup week a ship with Japanese markings, which appeared to be suspicious, was sighted. The captain altered the course of the steamer and went away from the foreign vessel. He said that he had been told subsequently by a survivor of the *Rangitane* that German officers had boasted that their ship had laid mines as near as a mile off the Victorian coast.

Commenting on decisions of the Commonwealth Arbitration Court, the Public Service Commissioner (Mr. McCracken), said that although the war risk in respect of intra-State vessels had increased from 5% to 20%, the definition of intra-State vessels had not been altered. So far as Queensland was concerned the definition still referred only to vessels trading between ports on the Queensland coast beyond the 15-mile port limits. But even if the rates of employees on the pilot vessel were determined by the Commonwealth Court, a war risk bonus would not be payable. In a certain locality, a swept channel was maintained, but only occasionally did the pilot vessel proceed along the swept channel to embark and disembark pilots and then only for a comparatively short distance.

The dispute over war risk bonuses continued into 1942 when, in January, the Chinese crew of a number of British ships, which were being held up in Australia ports, demanded the Australian rates of pay as well as a war risk bonus.



SS Rangitane. Photo: SHF Collection.

In March 1942, the war risk bonuses for employees on inter-State and intra-State vessels, trading on the Australian coast, were gazetted as;

- a 20% increase on wage rates to be paid to men employed on ships south of and at Fremantle on the West coast, and south of and at Bundaberg on the East coast.
- men employed in ships north of these two ports

received a $33\frac{1}{3}\%$ increase. A similar increase was made in the wages of men on vessels under Australian Articles trading to New Zealand and other overseas ports.

- men on vessels carrying 10 or more tons of explosives received an additional 10%.
- the increased rates were not taken into account when calculating overtime when the vessels were in port or the men were ashore on annual leave in their home ports.
- the bonuses were to continue for the duration of the war.



SS John Oxley on Cowan Creek Oct. 1973.
Photo: SHF Collection

In June 1942 the Maritime Industry Commission decided that the war risk bonus for seamen would be 33% everywhere. Previously the bonus had ranged from 20% to 33% according to the parts of the Australian coast on which the seamen travelled. The Commission also ruled that no seaman would be permitted to give 24 hours' notice until he had been on a ship at least a month and unless a suitable substitute is available.

John Cowie.

In 1894 Courts defined a Seaworthy vessel – with her master and crew – as being fit to encounter the perils of the voyage that she is about to undertake. She must be tight, staunch and strong, and properly crewed, equipped and supplied.

According to the old sailor's superstition, certain persons (like clergymen, missionaries, freethinkers, advocates, criminals – and women) will bring bad luck for a ship; calms, foul winds and the slighter evils of all kind.

In the book "The Sailor and the Women" you can read "Where there is a woman, there must be mischief" or "Aprons bring along mischief", "Women skirt on board bring along brawl and murder" and as the German's so succinctly put it "Seemann, Tod und Teufel" (Sailor, Death and Devil).

In the 19th century there existed among British and American sailors the word "Hen Frigate". Meant in a pejorative way and used for ships on which the captain took along his wife for the long journeys, it was used to indicate that she was the dominant one onboard. On the other hand, a woman's presence used to lead to other kinds of behaviors with the seamen. They dressed less carelessly, their jokes were not as crude, and they sang only clean verses of certain shanties. It also happened that a good and understanding Captain's wife soon moved the sailors' hearts and she became a maternal symbol. Only from the 19th century on were women occasionally found as the cook and stewardess.

Peter Davey (seaman).

Boxing Day 2013.



Photo: Ewa Korczynski.



Photo: Ewa Korczynski.



Photo: Ewa Korczynski.



Photo: Ewa Korczynski.