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# MARITIME HERITAGE ASSOCIATION JOURNAL



*Oil painting by Clifford Warren Ashley*

*See article page 5*

- \* Gage Roads Leading Lights
- \* *Glenbank*
- \* Clifford Warren Ashley



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# **MHA End of Year Wind Up**

**When: 10:00am, 20 November 2022**

**Where: 33 Gosnells Road East  
Orange Grove**

**It would be appreciated if you would bring a plate of nibbles  
or finger food to share**

**Robin and Pam will be supplying tea and coffee**

**If you have any books and magazines of a nautical nature to  
sell, please bring them along (proceeds to MHA)**

**There will be another quilt raffle—this time a very special  
one featuring a print of Ross Shardlow's beautiful painting  
of the historically important vessel *Georgette***







## An Inglorious End

As soon as the albatross is landed on deck it becomes quite helpless and rolls and flaps about, looking very ruffled and ridiculous. It is usually seasick and disgorges a lot of undigested fish over the decks. A blow on the head kills it, and its humiliated body is put to many different uses. Sometimes the head, breast and wings are cured and mounted in one piece, making a very handsome decoration. More often the bird is dismembered and its thick plumage and soft down plucked to make a luxurious pillow. The head is scraped and cleaned and turned into a letter-holder. The bones in the upper part of the wing are carved into paper-cutters; those in the lower into pipe stems; and the broad webbed feet have the bones removed and make handy tobacco pouches. Finally, if the bird be a young one, fillets are cut from the breast and make a second appearance in the wet-hash at supper time.

Clements, R., 1951 (1924), *A Gypsy of the Horn: The Narrative of a Voyage Round the World in a Windjammer*. Rupert Hart-Davis, London.



Photo: Peter Worsley



## Nautical Treasures

**This new section of your journal is where you are invited to write an article on one of your nautical treasures. This could be anything from an anchor to a yacht, with all the alphabet of items in between.**

**As well as a short description of your treasure, a photograph is desirable. One item will be published in each journal—so choose your treasure to be featured in a future edition !**



Some years ago the late Jack Gardiner made two replica backstuffs. One he presented to the *Duyfken* and the other he gave to me.

The backstaff, also called the English quadrant, was invented in 1594 by John Davis and was used in navigation prior to the invention of the sextant. It measured the altitude of the sun by the projection of a shadow. In use the navigator stood with his back to the sun and adjusted the swinging arm to view a shadow caused by the sun. The angle of the sun could then be read on the appropriate scales. P.W.

Mural illustration:  
Tasmanian Maritime  
Museum





# 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!)



In March 1862 Western Australian Governor John Hampton proclaimed that the duration of coastal voyages between Fremantle and some of the WA ports in number of days would be:

	Summer	Winter
Fremantle-Champion Bay	10	14
Fremantle-Bunbury	7	7
Fremantle-Vasse	8	8
Fremantle-King George Sound	21	14

After the Battle of Trafalgar, Nelson's body was placed in a cask of brandy for preservation. It was taken to Gibraltar, remaining there only long enough to have the brandy replaced by spirits of wine. This was considered a better preservative than the brandy. The question is—what happened to the brandy?

The word *gallant* as used in describing sails (i.e. the top-gallant sail) comes from the word garland. A garland in ancient days was a rope used in hoisting the topmasts. Hence, when a mast was added to a ship above the topmasts, it was called a garland mast.

**Rogue's yarn.** In rope manufactured for the Royal services, it is the practice to interweave one yarn of a colour different from the rest. This is called the rogue's yarn, because it can be identified if stolen. And, moreover, since each dockyard may have its distinguishing colour, a rope may be traced back to the place at which it was made, which is a wholesome check upon defective manufacture. (Ansted, A. 1897. *A Dictionary of Sea Terms*)

The first warship lost by the Royal Navy during WW II was the submarine *Oxley*, sunk on 10 September 1939 off the coast of Norway. However she was not sunk by enemy action, but torpedoed by another Royal Navy submarine, HMS *Triton*, after failing to answer recognition signals. The *Oxley* therefore also became the first warship to be sunk by the Royal Navy in the war.

The distance from Fremantle (32°03'S, 115°44'20"E) to the Cape of Good Hope (34°22'S, 18°23'E) is 4,755 nautical miles.

At 744.6ft (22.9m) the deepest part of Loch Ness is greater than the deepest part of the North Sea

between Edinburgh and Denmark. While Loch Ness is not the deepest lake in the UK (Loch Morar has a greatest depth of 1,017ft) it has the greatest average depth of 433ft (132m) and the greatest volume.

One of the four French ships to survive the Battle of Trafalgar was the *Duguay-Trouin*. It was shortly afterwards captured by the Royal Navy at the Battle of Ortelgal, and re-named HMS *Implacable*, a 74-gun ship of the line. In 1865 *Implacable* became a boys' training ship. It was finally scuttled on 2 December 1949, and was at that time the second oldest ship in the RN after *Victory*. The figurehead and galleries were saved and are on display at the National Maritime Museum, Greenwich.

The last known survivor of the Ballarat *Eureka Stockade* was William Atherden who spent his final 14 years in Osborne Park. He died in 1934, aged 96 years. (Not nautical, but interesting).

Sir Francis Chichester's yacht *Gypsy Moth V* was chartered for an around the world race. On 19 December 1982 her steering gear failed, and the yacht was wrecked on Gabo Island, Victoria.

The Grand Banks fishing schooners of Canada reached the peak of efficiency during the early 1920s. The schooners were at sea for weeks at a time, depending on the luck of finding fish. As with most ships of that time there were two watches on board, port and starboard. The method of picking who was in what watch was probably unique. It was called 'thumbing the hat'.

*All hands are called aft where they form a circle around an inverted hat, thumbs on top of the rim. The skipper then turns his head away, reaches over, touches one of the thumbs, and counts around from left to right any number previously determined. The first one which this count reaches takes the first watch, the rest follow in the order of rotation* (Magoun, F.A., 1928).

As part of the Tasmanian contribution to The Great Exhibition held in the Crystal Palace London in 1851, was a single plank of Tasmanian blue gum 140ft long, 20 inches wide and 6 inches thick.





# Clifford Warren Ashley

Many of you will be familiar with *The Ashley Book of Knots*, the all-encompassing reference book of knots, sennits, braids and plaits first published 1944.

But do you know that the author was also an artist and a photographer of note.

Clifford Warren Ashley was born in New Bedford, Massachusetts, on 18 December 1881. At high school he had an interest in art, and after he finished school he attended an art school in Boston. He also undertook further art studies. Being from a famous whaling town he had an abiding interest in that trade, and was very knowledgeable about it. In 1904 he was commissioned by *Harper's Monthly Magazine* to write and illustrate a two-part article on whaling. To enable him to become even more familiar with the subject he signed on to the 255-ton whaling barque *Sunbeam* for a six-week voyage. The voyage commenced in August 1904, and during that time he photographed almost every aspect of the trade, taking over 300 photographs. His regret was that he could not go out in a whaleboat to witness the actual harpooning and capture of a whale. The whale boats were not capable of operating successfully and safely with a 'passenger' on board. The articles were published, and the master of the *Sunbeam*, Captain Benjamin Higgins, wrote:

*I think it is the best whale story I have ever read & that picture of lowering the boats cannot be bettered...The illustrations are so true to life even the Old Barnacle here cannot find fault with them.*

In 1982 the New Bedford Whaling Museum and the Old Dartmouth Historical Society jointly published a collection of some of these photographs titled *Sperm Whaling from New Bedford*, along with a short explanation about each photograph. The photographs are preceded by the 27 pages of *The Blubber Hunters*, the title of the two articles written for the *Harper's Monthly Magazine*.

Other publications by Ashley were *The Yankee Whaler* in 1926 and *The Whaleships of New Bedford* in 1929. However his best known *Book of Knots* started out as a series in 1925 in a magazine called *Sea Stories Magazine*. Prior to this in 1922 he had patented a sennit (Patent USUS1433868A) - 'A novel method whereby sennits of any desired cross-sectional shape may be plaited without the necessity of a core.') It took him 11 years to write and illustrate the book, which has since been re-

published (123<sup>rd</sup> edition in 2019) and in six languages.

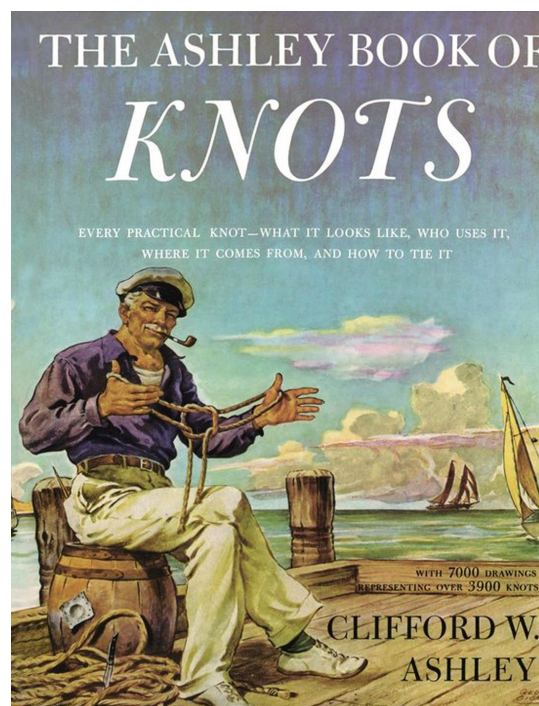
His paintings and illustrations, apart from those in his knot book, are less well known, certainly in Australia, but are eagerly sought after in his home country.

Clifford Warren Ashley married Sarah Scudder Clark in 1932. They had two daughters, and Clifford adopted the daughter of his wife's first marriage. He died on 18 September 1947 at Westport Point, Massachusetts.

Peter Worsley



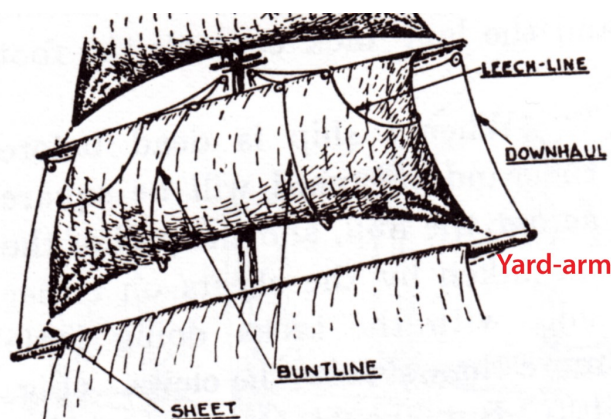
*Ashley's pencil portrait of an elderly shipwright*



## QUIZ

### Answers to September

1. Henry Reveley's position was Civil Engineer. Stirling had sailed from England without an engineer, and while at Cape Town he persuaded local civil engineer Henry Reveley to take the position in the colony he was about to set up.
2. The *Georgette* was wrecked in 1876.
3. A yard-arm is the extremity of a yard, the outside end of a yard. The whole yard is often mistakenly called the yard-arm.



### Quiz

1. Where in local waters are First Rock, Second Rock and Third Rock?
2. What was the name of the ship that first answered the *Titanic*'s distress call and rescued 705 of her passengers?
3. What is the name of the Inn mentioned on the first page of R.L. Stevenson's famous book *Treasure Island*?





# A Voyage to Western Australia by the *Grosvenor*

The barque *Grosvenor* sailed from Tilbury on the Thames on Christmas day in 1887. Sailing around the Cape of Good Hope she arrived at Fremantle on the 17<sup>th</sup> of April. After 109 days cooped up at sea, all on board were keen to test their land legs and re-provision.

At six o'clock on the evening of Thursday the 19<sup>th</sup> of April in 1888 Captain Phillip Balkley (sometimes spelt Buckley and Bulkeley) along with his wife, his wife's sister, the mate and four sailors left the jetty at Fremantle to return to the barque which lay offshore in Gage Roads. The breeze was a light southwester when they left the shore but 'the wind hauled off the land and blew freshly' (*Daily News*, 20 April 1888). The alarm was raised when the party did not arrive.

The next morning's papers reported:

*The lightkeeper at Rottnest signals that he has swept the coast with his telescope and can discern a boat anchored some distance from the beach off Black Head, about 7 or 8 miles north of Fremantle, not far from Trigg's Island. Her mast is standing, but the distance is too great for him to say whether the boat contains any people or not. [ibid.]*

Apparently:

*...their frail craft was blown to sea and they had to spend the night on the mighty deep, instead of in the comfortable cabins of a ship. The wind was blowing a perfect hurricane during the night and the small boat could make no headway, consequently it was allowed to drift down the coast about six miles, when it was anchored by means of a tin portmanteau, which was filled full of water and then attached to the boat by means of a rope. The inmates had a miserable time of it, especially the ladies, who were attired in thin dresses, and it was with the greatest difficulty that the men kept the boat afloat. The next morning a landing was effected and the Captain and the ladies made their way through the bush to Bullen's hotel, where refreshments were obtained for the exhausted sailors.*

*The s.s. Dolphin and harbour boat went off and brought the sailors away, but the Captain and the females stayed at the hotel until they had recovered from the effects of their 'night on the deep.' A similar occurrence took place on the*

*coast a few years ago (Southern Advertiser, Bunbury, 1 May 1888).*

Bullen's Hotel, (now the Albion) was situated at Cottesloe some few kilometres inland, so the castaways had suffered a considerable ordeal on both land and sea.

Still at anchor at Fremantle in mid-June, Balkley, as owner, called tenders for the advance of £600 Sterling upon Bottomry of his barque in the local papers. A cargo of timber had been had organised from the unsheltered Hamelin Bay jetty. The *Agincourt* and *Chaudiere* had been wrecked in recent years whilst loading timber there. Another four vessels were later wrecked there in a storm in 1900 – *Katinka*, *Norwester*, *Lovspring* and *Arca-dia*.

Another month passed before the *Grosvenor* set sail for Hamelin Bay to the south for her cargo of karri timber destined for Colombo. The winds were against the barque and eight uncomfortable days and nights were spent on the short journey of just some 160 nautical miles.

Another couple of months were spent loading her cargo before sailing back to Fremantle on the 6<sup>th</sup> of September to re-crew and take on provisions. Finally on 11<sup>th</sup> of that month the *Grosvenor* set sail from Fremantle to head in the direction of home via Colombo. This was almost five months since her arrival at Fremantle in May.

'The crew of the *Grosvenor* celebrated their departure by serenading up and down High street, Fremantle, on Monday, and it was nearly 6 o'clock when they were conveyed off to their vessel' (*Western Mail*, 15 September 1888). Health and safety regulations did not exist in those days and many a sailor of old left port in less-than-ideal health.

Did they make it 'home' by Christmas? It seems not as the *Aberdeen Journal* reported on 26<sup>th</sup> of March the next year that a telegram from Chittagong in what is now Bangladesh stated 'that the *Grosvenor*, British barque, is aground at Dapres Shoal.' D'apres shoal lies near the mouth of the Ganges.

Balkley's sister-in-law could well have had more than enough adventures on the sea and chosen to



catch the mail steamer back to England through the Suez Canal from Colombo.

they travelled and whatever time and trials endured, they still had the relative comforts of home.

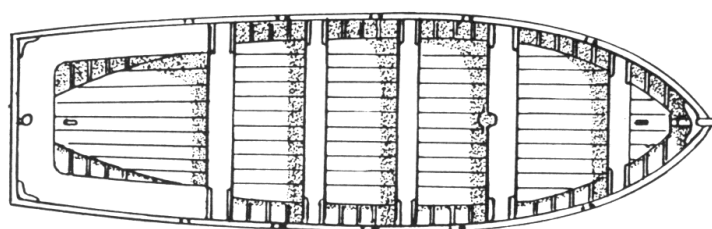
Home was for the Balkleys, it seems, the captain's quarters aboard the *Grosvenor*. As far as

Ron Forsyth

## Can You Help?

In 1841 the barque *Napoleon* was owned by 'Captain Daniel Scott, Captain Bannister and others'. It was used for whaling out of Fremantle until late 1842, when it sailed for London under the command of Daniel Scott, after having sold all the whaling gear.

Is this the first Western Australian owned whaling ship?



## The Blue Peter

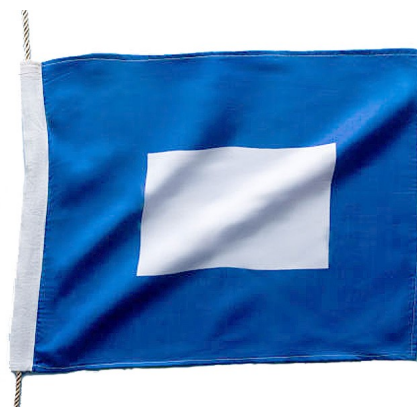
Article found by Ron Forsyth

When you see a ship with a white-on-blue flag, that is, a blue ground with a white centre, flying from her masthead, it means that the vessel is about to leave the wharf or the harbour and continue her voyage to other ports, near or far. This flag is known as the 'Blue Peter', and has the same significance throughout the world. It was originally an ancient British symbol, and is hoisted as a message to the ship's crew to come aboard, for the ship will very shortly sail.

Anyone who has travelled by sea knows the hurry and bustle that takes place on a passenger steamer when she is just about to sail. The order comes "All visitors ashore!" There are hurried farewells, perhaps some tears. Passengers crowd up to the rail on each deck, and the friends and relatives who have come to bid them good-bye troop down the gangway on to the wharf. Hundreds of coloured paper streamers are thrown from deck to wharf, from wharf to deck. They blow in the breeze, mingling in a gay network that is soon to be broken. Voices call all sorts of parting messages; music is heard

from the boat with the 'chug chug' of the engines as the boat draws slowly out. Handkerchiefs, hats, and hands wave in farewell. One by one the paper streamers part, falling in gay confusion on decks, wharf, and into the water. Gradually the figures on the decks become indistinct, the crowds on the wharf drift away, and so another vessel has set out upon her voyage. The 'Blue Peter' is hauled down, and the routine of another journey across the ocean begins for the crew.

*Telegraph*, 3 July 1937: 16







# The Loss of the Magnificent *Lightning*

This article by Alf Batchelder was originally published in the 2014 World Ship Society newsletter



*Lightning*  
Painting by John Robert Spurling

Sometime after three o'clock on the afternoon of August 20, 1854, the Black Ball clipper *Lightning* passed Point Lonsdale, bound for Liverpool and commanded by Captain James Nicol Forbes. Basil Lubbock writes that 'Bully' Forbes proceeded to drive his ship hard, racing for Cape Horn and 'carrying on in the most desperate manner.' On the night of August 28, 'the fore-topmast went over the side in a violent squall.' For four days, the captain had to 'restrain his impatience and keep his ship under small canvas until a new fore-topmast could be set up. Nevertheless, despite this handicap, *Lightning* reached the Horn in only nineteen days and one hour, a record unmatched by any sailing ship.

In hard, favourable winds, *Lightning* truly justified the claim that no ships 'propelled by wind alone' ever travelled as fast through the water as those constructed by Donald McKay. Between January 1855 and August 1857, in four voyages

under Captain Anthony Enright, *Lightning* sailed from Liverpool to Melbourne in 73, 81, 68 and 69 days. The return voyages took 79, 86, 84 and 82 days. The ship's best seven-day run came in 1856, when, Melbourne-bound, she covered 2188 miles between June 28 and July 4. In 1857, *Lightning* 'made no less than 430 knots' in a day, a run that Enright termed 'the greatest performance a sailing ship has ever accomplished.'

Such feats are made more impressive by the fact that, at 2084 tons, *Lightning* was more than double the gross tonnage of later vessels like the *Thermopylae* or *Cutty Sark*. However, research shows that, in light and moderate conditions between the tropics, these smaller tea clippers 'could sail two feet to a Black Baller's one.' In 1855, for example, *Lightning* covered the distance from Cancer to Capricorn in 25 days. A decade later, the *Ariel* completed the journey in only 18 days, travelling in 'the same season of the year and ...



pretty much the same weather’.

After the Indian Mutiny broke out in 1857, *Lightning* was chartered by the British Government to carry troops but, by May 1859, she was back on the Melbourne run. In the years that followed, her passage times remained creditable, but since ‘she was getting strained and water-soaked’, *Lightning* was probably past her best. Moreover, stiff competition meant that, at times, procuring cargo and passengers was more difficult than it once was.

In September 1862, following the discovery of gold at Gabriel’s Gully in New Zealand, *Lightning* ferried 900 diggers and 1000 sheep from Melbourne to Port Chalmers. Some of the miners caused so much trouble that Captain Tom Robertson unloaded them at The Bluff, the southern extremity of the South Island.

On returning to Port Phillip, *Lightning* made the first of her six visits to Geelong, where a newly-cut channel provided a better gateway to Victoria’s pastoral, agricultural and mineral resources. When she sailed for London on December 1, carrying 4372 bales of wool, copper ore from South Australia and 18,650 ounces of gold, *Lightning* came within a whisker of disaster. Drawing about 19 feet, the clipper hit an underwater obstruction about a kilometre south of Point Nepean. Apparently undamaged, *Lightning* sailed on, but a drydock inspection eventually revealed a piece of sandstone wedged in her forefoot. [The shoal, subsequently termed the ‘Lightning Rocks’, was removed by blasting in 1883.]

In 1866, when severe financial problems hit the Black Ball Line, forty of the company’s ships were sold. *Lightning* was one of four vessels acquired by Thomas Harrison and chartered back to groups that picked up the pieces of the failed line.

By this time, much of the glamour that had once surrounded the magnificent *Lightning* was gone. On October 31, 1869, she was moored at Geelong’s Yarra Street wharf, loaded with 4300 bales of wool, 200 tons of copper ore, and 35 casks of colonial wine. Around two o’clock in the morning, a fire broke out in the fore-hold. An attempt to scuttle her in deep water ‘signally failed’, and crewmen desperately transferred cargo, furniture and stores to the steam tug *Resolute*, lying alongside. However, the flames were ‘working their way aft with a fierceness that defies description.’

When the main mast caught fire, ‘Captain Jones, fearing loss of life, ordered ... everybody to leave the ship ...’

Just before eleven, the mizzen mast collapsed. Since the heat was too intense for further attempts at scuttling, the local artillerymen were invited to fire at the ship. A barrage of more than thirty 32-pound cannon balls ended only when the supply of powder ran out. As the ship grew lighter, she rose still higher ‘until the bows, which on Saturday were drawing 20 feet were only drawing 12 feet’, but the cargo of copper kept the stern low. In another move to scuttle the ship, carpenters ‘quickly cut her down to the water’s edge in several places’. By 6.30, ‘the hull could be seen visibly sinking’ in 27 feet of water. In less than five minutes, ‘nothing remained to show that the *Lightning* had existed but a few burning beams jutting above the placid waters of Corio Bay.

Some attributed the blaze to spontaneous combustion, but the jury at the coroner’s inquiry rejected the suggestion, and returned an open verdict. Some of the cargo was salvaged and sold. In 1870, two attempts were made to blow up the wreck, with one explosion raising a hundred-foot column of water. By the end of the year, most of the timber and iron from the wreck had been removed, and it is said that ‘many a home in Geelong used pieces from the *Lightning* as firewood.’ A bell from the ship is displayed at the Queenscliffe Maritime Museum. Metres of mud now cover what remains of the most famous passenger ship of her time. According to the Encyclopedia of Australian Shipwrecks website, the wreck ‘is not worth a visit.’



*Lightning on Fire*

Illustration: Public Records Office, Victoria





# Glenbank



Glenbank

Photo: State Library of South Australia

Some readers will have recently heard of the discovery by divers of the wreck of the sailing ship *Glenbank*. Two years ago I wrote a small report for the Western Australian Maritime Museum, and I thought it might be appropriate to include it in this journal.

## Glenbank

<b>Official Number:</b>	102561
<b>Port of Building:</b>	Glasgow, UK
<b>Year built:</b>	1893
<b>Port of Registration:</b>	Nystad, Finland
<b>Rig Type:</b>	Barque
<b>Hull:</b>	Steel
<b>Length:</b>	240.1 ft (73.2 m)
<b>Breadth:</b>	37.0 ft (11.3 m)
<b>Depth:</b>	21.7 ft (6.6 m)
<b>Tonnage:</b>	1 481 gross, 1 359 net, 1 381 under deck
<b>Port from:</b>	At anchor
<b>Date lost:</b>	6 February 1911
<b>Location:</b>	Off Legendre Island

The *Glenbank* was built by Anderson Rodgers and Company (Yard No. 302) for Archibald Sterling and Company's Glen Line, and launched in

September 1893. It had a poop 28ft (8.5m) long and a forecastle 27ft (8.2m) in length, one deck, two tiers of beams, one bulkhead and was cemented. The barque was fitted with double topsails and double topgallant sails, but no royal sails. Registered initially at Glasgow, it was sold in 1905 to J.A. Zachariassen and Company of Nystad (now Uusikaupunki), Finland. At that time Finland was in Russian hands, and the barque therefore flew the Russian flag.

On either 7 or 9 December 1910 the *Glenbank* under the command of Captain Frederik R. Morberg with a crew of 23, mainly Finns, had arrived in ballast at Cossack from San Nicholas, Argentina. The *Glenbank* was to load copper ore at Balla Balla, but Captain Morberg had sailed firstly to Cossack in order to obtain pratique and arrange for the services of a pilot to guide the vessel into the Depuch anchorage. Being unfamiliar with a coast he had heard was incompletely surveyed, he anchored 15 miles from Cossack and sailed into the port in the ship's boat. The doctor at Cossack refused to go so far out, but the wharfinger MacGinnis agreed to act as pilot, and brought the *Glenbank* to the anchorage at Depuch Island where pratique was given. Shortly afterwards two crewmen were paid off from the



barque and travelled to Roebourne.

By 6 February 1911 the *Glenbank* had taken on 1,800 tons of copper ore. The ore was loose rather than bagged, a fact that may have contributed to the disaster. At that time a cyclone was heading towards the north-west coast of Western Australia, and the winds at the Depuch anchorage were increasing. At 3.00p.m. Captain Morberg decided to sail from the anchorage and ride the expected storm at sea. The *Glenbank* departed under reduced sail at 4.00p.m., and headed on a north-westerly course in steadily increasing winds until 9.00p.m. During the evening the main topmast staysail blew away so the crew were therefore sent aloft to shorten sail but, without warning, the *Glenbank* capsized. At that time the vessel was off Legendre Island.

The *Glenbank*'s capsize was so sudden that only one man, Antle Katola, survived. He had been aloft furling a topsail, and after being thrown into the sea managed to find a boat paddle. With the aid of the paddle he swam until at daylight he managed to reach Legendre Island. Failing to attract the attention of four passing luggers, he lived without food or water for three days before being saved by one of William Banger's luggers and taken to Cossack. Katola spoke no English, so it was difficult to obtain information on exactly where and what had happened.

On hearing of the disaster, but without any details, the officer in charge of the police station at Cossack, Corporal Fry, sent the police cutter with Constable Rogers to search Legendre and adja-

cent islands, and Constable Brown to search the coast. The ketch *Queen Alice* under the command of Captain Charles Anderson was also sent to search the area off Legendre Island. Constable Rogers found no survivors or bodies, only wreckage such as smashed casks and ladders on the east end of Legendre Island and on Haüy Islet. He considered that the *Glenbank* had struck a reef near Legendre Island. Constable Brown found no survivors or bodies, but a great deal of wreckage on the beach at Nicol Bay.

Using the interpretive services of one of the two men who had been paid off, details of the disaster were obtained from the survivor Katola. These details were not always clear, possibly because of problems arising from translation. For example, it was first reported that four employees of the Whim Well Copper Mines who had been helping load the ore had been taken to sea when the *Glenbank* sailed. This was later found to be incorrect.

Opinions as to the reason for the capsize of the *Glenbank* include that the loose copper ore had shifted thereby altering the balance of the vessel, and alternatively that it had struck Legendre Reef. Regardless of the reason, there was heavy loss of life in this disaster. The wreck has never been found.

This last sentence is, of course, now incorrect, and it appears that the reason the barque capsized was the cargo of loose copper ore shifting. This has always been considered the probable reason for the loss of the *Glenbank*. Now it has been confirmed.



## Sailing Ship Days

Thanks to Ron Forsyth for finding this article.

From an article in *The West Australian*, 31 Jan 1930 by 'Half-Deck' recalling 'four years of his adolescence as a 'wind-jammer' apprentice ...in the early days of the century—1902 to 1906.'

In 1930 the last British registered square rigger to sail under the British flag was wrecked on Boavista Island, one of the Cape Verde Islands off the east coast of Africa. She was on her way to Australia in ballast to load wheat. Built in Dun-

dee in 1891 she was then named *Juteopolis*. The author was prompted by this to pen the following:

### Running the Easting- Down.

Three contrasted pictures of conditions in a full-rigged ship carrying a crew of 30 and about the seven seas must suffice to round a quite inadequate sketch. One of 'running the Easting down' from Cape Agulhas as point of departure to the Leeuwin as a landfall, in high latitudes all the way, on a 'great circle' route. The 'roaring for-





ties' were appropriately named, Westerly gales blowing ceaselessly in thundering diapason. Never have I heard winds so eerily full of the noise of great guns. As a natural corollary, mountainous swells surge unbroken from degree to degree of longitude, their hoary crests skimmed by great albatross, 'bosun birds' and mollyhawks. Lucky, now, if we carry all the three topgallant sails, running in a smother of foam with the wind on the quarter. The wheel kicks like a mule, and even with 'kicking tackles' hauled taut and two men at it, it is no rare thing to have the man on the weather side thrown clean over it. Behind him is rigged a weather cloth, less to keep the force of the gale from bellying his oilskins than to prevent him from looking over his shoulder. When a sea as high as the crossjack yard comes towering and racing up astern the strongest nerves are apt to go, and blind instinct dictates a rush forward away from the wheel and the menacing black wall of water. Many a good ship has broached to and been dismasted and even swamped from this one cause. Yet - and this is the miracle of ship design - she will lift on that terrific water-precipice yawing if the sweating helmsman let her - and point heavenward with her running jib-boom from the rearward slope in the time a man may draw a long breath. Fifteen and sixteen knots (by the old log with a canvas bag on the end of it) was nothing out of the ordinary in these latitudes, and the face of the dour 'Old Man' would break now and then

into a dry, humourless, but pleased smile. A moment, and a frown would replace it as he peered under the foot of the foresail for ice, the destroyer.

### The Doldrums

Then—months later, homeward bound—the doldrums, cheek by jowl with 'The Line.' Sails flapping idly, and rain pouring as it pours nowhere else, quite literally in blankets, of water. All hands out on deck, stark naked, scrubbing, with soap that looks like Gorgonzola cheese, clothes unwashed for long weeks because of water shortage. Buckets, tubs, and vessels of all shapes, sizes and descriptions being filled for future use. Long strings of naked men pulling on the braces to swing the yards to every passing air, and 'The Old Man' chewing his fingers in exasperation.

Finally—logically after the doldrums—the North-East trades. A blue sky flecked with tenuous white clouds; every rag set; shoals of flying fish shimmering across the surface of the almost purple sea; and a strong breeze singing gladly through every shroud and backstay. This is the time when, aloft to overhaul the royal bunt-lines, one tried to crack one's lungs bellowing sea chanties and well-remembered hymns (strange juxtaposition!) at the top of one's cracking voice from sheer joy of being alive, at sea, aloft, and homeward bound! Twenty-four years ago? Yesterday!



*Juteopolis later Garthpool*  
*Photographer Allen C. Green, 1878–1954,*

Photo: State Library of Victoria



# Smith Versus Lichtensteiger

A tale with a twist—a condensed version of a short story by Weston Martyr, first published in 1931.

Smith stood five foot five in his boots, weighed nearly 10 stone in his winter clothes and an overcoat, and he had a flat chest and a round stomach. Smith was a clerk in a small branch bank in East Anglia; he was not an athlete but he had fought for a year in France without ever seeing his enemy when a piece of shrapnel reduced his fighting efficiency by abolishing the biceps of one arm.

For 49 weeks he laboured faithfully at his desk. But every year in April Smith suddenly came to life. For he was a yachtsman and he owned a tiny yacht which he called *Kate* and loved with a great love. The spring evenings he spent fitting out, painting and fussing over his boat. Thereafter, as early as possible every Saturday afternoon, he set sail and cruised alone returning again as late as possible on Sunday night. And every summer when his holidays came round he would sail away from East Anglia to voyage afar.

The year Smith encountered Lichtensteiger he had sailed as far east as Flushing [Holland] and was on his way back when a spell of bad weather drove him into Ostend. Lichtensteiger was also detained at Ostend; but not by the weather. He had come from Alexandria with a rubber tube stuffed full of morphine wound round his waist. A Customs official at Dover (who had suspicions but no proof) had debarred him as an ‘undesirable alien’ from entering the United Kingdom.

Lichtensteiger was a Swiss who stood 6 feet 1 inch in his socks, weighed 14 stone stripped and he had a round chest and a flat stomach. He was as strong as a gorilla and had never done an honest day’s work in his life.

Smith was due back at his bank again in three days but could not hope to sail single-handed against strong headwinds. Lichtensteiger, having spotted ‘an Englishman, a fool’, soon entered into conversation with Smith who admitted he was running late for a return to Harwich and would welcome help from an extra hand.

After that, of course, it was easy for Lichtensteiger. He did not ask Smith if he could sail with him; he led Smith on to make sure that suggestion himself. Then he hesitated awhile at the unexpectedness of the proposal, and when he finally

yielded to persuasion, he left Smith with the impression that he was doing him a favour. It was very beautifully done.

At sea, Lichtensteiger said he wanted to be landed on a lonely stretch of beach, thereby avoiding Customs clearance. Smith answered: ‘It’s illegal. I might get into trouble over it, and I can’t afford to get into trouble. If they heard in the bank I’d lose my job. I’d be ruined. I’m sorry, but I can’t risk it. Why, if I got caught they might put us in prison!’

But Smith did not get any further. Lichtensteiger interrupted him. He drove his heel with all his might into Smith’s stomach and Smith doubled up with a grunt and dropped on the cockpit floor. Lichtensteiger then kicked him in the back and the mouth, spat in his face and stamped on him. Smith vomited. When he could speak he said, ‘Don’t kick me again. I’ll do it. I’ll do what you want. Wait.—and I’ll do it – if I can. I think my back’s – broken.’

Smith lay still and gasped until his breath and his wits returned to him. He explored his hurts with his fingers gingerly, and then sat up and nursed his battered face. He was thinking. Smith was sorely hurt and frightened, but he was not daunted. Presently he said, ‘Better now. But it hurts me to move. Bring up the chart from the cabin.’

He put his finger on the coastline between Deal and Ramsgate and said, ‘There, that looks the best place. It’s a stretch of beach with no houses shown anywhere near. You’re making me do this against my will, but nobody will believe that if they catch me doing it. I promise to do my best to land you where no one will see you.’

‘Let her go then,’ said Lichtensteiger. ‘The sooner you get me ashore the sooner you’ll get quit of me, which ought to please you some.’

Approaching the coast at night, Lichtensteiger said: ‘What’s that light in front there?’ ‘Lighthouse,’ said Smith. ‘That’s the South Foreland light. I’m steering for it. The lights of Deal will show up to the right of it presently and then we’ll pick out a dark patch of coast and I’ll steer in for it.’





By 2 a.m. the land was close ahead, a low black line looming against the lesser blackness of the sky. 'Looks quiet enough here,' said Lichtensteiger. 'Right,' said Smith, sounding over the side with the lead-line, 'Four fathoms. We'll anchor here.' He ran *Kate* into the wind, lowered the jib and let go his anchor with a rattle and a splash. 'Cut out that flaming racket,' hissed Lichtensteiger. 'Trying to give the show away are you, or what? You watch your step, damn you.' 'You watch yours,' said Smith, drawing the dinghy alongside. 'Get in carefully or you'll upset.'

'You get in first,' replied Lichtensteiger. 'Take hold of my two bags and then I'll get in after.'

And you want to take pains we don't upset. If we do, there'll be a nasty accident – to your neck! I guess I can wring it for you as quick under water as I can here. You watch out now and go slow. You haven't done with me yet, don't you kid yourself.'

'No, not yet.' Said Smith. I'll put you on ashore all right. I'll promise that. It's all I can do under the circumstances; but, considering everything I think it ought to be enough. I hope so, anyhow. Get in now and we'll go.'

Smith rowed the dinghy towards the shore. Presently the boat grounded on the sand and Lichtensteiger jumped out. He looked around him for a while and listened intently; but except for the sound of the little waves breaking and the distant lights of the town, there was nothing to be heard or seen.

'All right,' said Lichtensteiger. Smith said nothing. He pushed off from the beach and rowed away silently into the darkness. Lichtensteiger laughed. He turned and walked inland with a suitcase in each hand. He felt the sand under his feet give way to shingle, the shingle to turf and the turf to a hard road surface. Lichtensteiger laughed again. It amused him to think that getting himself unnoticed into England should prove, after all, to be so ridiculously easy.

He turned to the left and walked rapidly for half a mile before he came to a fork in the road and a signpost. It was too dark for him to see; but he stacked his suitcases against the post and climbing on them struck a match. He read: 'Calais – 1½'.

## Did You Know?

Due to a shortage of steel during World War I the Liberty Shipbuilding Company, Brunswick, Georgia, USA, built 12 concrete troopships ships under contract for the US Navy. The second ship built was the *Atlantus*, 2,391 registered tons, with a length of 259.8 feet and a beam of 43.6 feet. After the end of the war *Atlantus* made several trans-Atlantic voyages bringing troops back to the US. However, it proved impractical due to it's heavy displacement (the concrete hull was 5" thick) and slow speed. It was de-commissioned in 1920 and placed in a ships' graveyard. In 1926 an entrepreneur tried to use it as a ferry landing, but it broke loose from its mooring and ran aground. The remains are a popular diving site.



# Maritime Day 2022

On Saturday the 29<sup>th</sup> of October MHA was at Fremantle Ports Maritime Day. DAF organised together with ABBA, MHA, OGA and CBCWA. We had a stall, four wooden boats on display and an amazing wooden boat parade. Because of the weather forecast many small boats had to withdraw. With more than 8000 visitors the 2022 Ports of Fremantle was bigger than we expected and more successful.

We sold 44 raffle tickets. A good result from donated prizes. What was particularly pleasing was the winners. Jill's beautiful quilt on the *Mermaid* was won by Jamie Hulme the Fleet Operations General Manager of Mermaid Marine, and he likes it so much, he plans to hang it in his office. Second prize went to Cherie Strickland of 'Swan Genealogy'. She had already visited our stand and understandably bought a copy of Jill's book *The Waugal and the Swan*. She also won a free membership to the MHA. Three other new memberships were also filled in. Thanks Bob Johnson, Julie Taylor, Roger Price for managing the booth and Ron Forsyth coming down on the day and signing a few copies of *A Hazardous Life* and all members from MHA who came down to say hello.

In addition to the financial results, we had a good opportunity to spread the word about MHA. We only had eleven of the seventy copies of the Special Edition reprint left at the end of the day and Elly took these down to Augusta on Sunday together with the copies of the Leeuwin Commemorative Edition.

Sunday the 30<sup>th</sup> early to Augusta for the Leeuwin 400 years Festival where DAF organised a small exhibition with contributions of Ross Shardlow and Nonja Peters and also the model of the *Leeuwin* ship built by John Alferink, a member of the Margaret River Historical Society.

The ambassador for the Netherlands in Canberra, Marion Derckx, was at the Leeuwin 400 year's festival to reveal a new plaque with the text in three different languages; from Pibulum Wadani people, Dutch and English.

All the Special Edition reprints together with the copies of the Leeuwin Commemorative Edition went to people who will fill in the membership form, or gave or will send a donation to our bank account.

Elly Spillekom







## Captain Wishart and the *Wallaby*

John Watson, a famous shipwright of early Tasmania, was born in Yorkshire in 1801. Migrating to Tasmania in 1831, his competence soon led him to the position of Master Shipwright at the Government Shipyard at Port Arthur. At that time the Tasmanian Government was anxious to build up ship-building capabilities in Tasmania, and to provide useful (to the colony) work for the convicts. Apart from his overseers all of Watson's labourers were convicts. He held this position for a few years before setting up his own yard in Hobart. One of the vessels built at Port Arthur by Watson and his convicts was the barque *Wallaby*. (Watson also built the whaling barque *Runnymede*, wrecked on 19 December 1881 at Frenchman Bay, Albany, during a gale.)



John Watson

Launched in 1838, the *Wallaby* had a length of 87.5ft, breadth of 23.8ft, depth of 16.3ft, and was 285 registered tons. It had been built of Tasmanian blue gum for the partnership of Askin Morrison and William Young, and was used for a few months in trading voyages. Shortly afterwards, on 6 April 1839, the *Wallaby* sailed under the command of Captain Henry Wishart on a whaling voyage. Captain Wishart was a well-known and well-liked captain, and this was his first voyage in command of the *Wallaby*. His previous command had been the 243-ton barque *Lady of the Lake*.

It had been a successful cruise, and by 7 August *Wallaby* had an almost full cargo. Almost half the whales caught had been harpooned by Captain Wishart, some 11 in number. The barque was in

Sealers Cove near Wilsons Promontory, Victoria, making ready to return to Hobart when a whale was sighted. Captain Wishart launched a boat and gave chase. He quickly harpooned the whale which then towed the boat for about 15 minutes. Suddenly the whale stopped dead in the water. Before the way on the boat could be checked it bumped into the still whale. With a violent flurry the whale overturned the boat, damaging it and spilling the six man crew into the sea.

Two of the men couldn't swim. One sank immediately and was not seen again. Captain Wishart, a good swimmer, found a floating oar and using this assisted the other non-swimmer to reach the upturned boat. Ensuring that the man was safely holding on to the floating wreck Captain Wishart swam towards the shore. He soon caught up with the other three crew who were also swimming for the shore. He passed them, but when he was only about 50m from beach he suddenly cried out and disappeared.

Meanwhile a boat had been launched from the *Wallaby*, and after collecting the survivors, the men searched for their captain. His body was located in 4.3m of water, recovered, placed in a barrel of spirits and taken back to Hobart. A subsequent medical examination found deep lacerations on both legs caused by a shark. His funeral was the biggest of any private burial ever held in the colony to that time with over 150 attendees.

The *Wallaby* went on to continue whaling, firstly under the command of Captain Bailey, the first mate on that fateful voyage, and later others. On 21 September 1851 it struck a reef at Fanning Island. Captain Wilson bought the wreck, refloated it, re-named it *Charlotte* and registered the barque at Samoa. Its subsequent history is not known.

Note: John Watson's favourite shipbuilding timber was Tasmanian blue gum (*Eucalyptus globulus*), which could be obtained in extremely long lengths.

*I have found blue gum, which grows in great quantities in the forests, equal to English Oak in durability, and superior to it on account of the long lengths obtainable; there is no difficulty in procuring lengths of 70 and 80 feet, and if required it could be procured upwards of 100 (John Watson, 1851).*

Peter Worsley



## ***“Lady with the Hurricane Lamp”***

(WA Fishers Lost at Sea Memorial – FlatSea Memorial Project)

### **What Inspired Us**

*“In 1916 two fishing vessels left Port Denison to fish as this was their livelihood. Harold the father and young son Francis in one boat, with elder sons Theodore and Albert in the other. By mid-afternoon with the breeze freshening Harold and young Francis returned to port, leaving brothers Theodore and Albert to do one more drift before heading home. They never returned. For many years their grieving mother Elizabeth each evening would walk to the Port Denison Point and as the sun went down over the horizon, she would light her hurricane lamp in the hope this would one day guide her boys’ home.” They never came home.*

### **Who We Are**

We are a committee, formed in late 2021 dedicated to the recognition of the hundreds of fisher men and women who have lost their lives in pursuit of the development and operation of commercial fishing in Western Australia, since early settlement. We are in the process of Incorporating an Association that details out objectives and will call for membership shortly.

Seafood caught in the waters of WA have always been an important and integral food source as the colony developed, grew and prospered. Today, thanks to these pioneers we have magnificent, well-managed world class fisheries supplying the population of WA and beyond.

**But it came at a price and continues to do so. Throughout the pioneering and development of WA’s fisheries, hundreds have lost their lives and we believe it is high time a memorial is erected to recognise those who have paid the ultimate price and that their stories can be told.**

The Project will be in two stages. Firstly, every catastrophe will be researched in detail and the story written describing the circumstance, then listed on a website, so others can learn from the tragedies – This will form part of a “virtual” or digital memorial experience. Secondly, a suitable memorial will be erected somewhere on Western Australia’s coastline for people to visit. This memorial, in conjunction with the web site, will preserve the history and tell the stories. There is also likely to be a memorial trail which links existing memorials together.

### **We need help**

**We need help in so many areas. Undertaking the research and writing the stories is an onerous task and we are appreciative of any help and information we can get. Let’s preserve our history and the memory of those who never returned home.**

### **Can you help?**

If you can help in any way, we would like to hear from you.

Contact Email: [Jamie.para@gmail.com](mailto:Jamie.para@gmail.com) OR [fishermemorial@wafic.org.au](mailto:fishermemorial@wafic.org.au)

James Paratore 0472 786 492

James Paratore

Project Lead

## **Notice**

The United Kingdom Hydrographic Office has announced that, because of the rise of digital navigation aids, it would cease producing paper charts by 2026. The process will be gradual, commencing 2022 when Admiralty large scale charts will cease to be produced. Other UK chart providers, such as Imray, will continue as there is a large demand from owners of leisure craft.





## MHA Book Club

The final Book Club meeting for 2022 was held in Mandurah on Saturday 1 October. As an experiment, the meetings held every second month have proved to be enjoyable, low-fuss social occasions where members have discussed a wide range of literary experiences and maybe slightly expanded their knowledge of things nautical.

It was decided to continue meetings next year, starting on Mandurah on Sunday 5 February.

NOTE: Sunday instead of Saturday—we hope this will accommodate more members. Details later.



## 120 Years – Happy Birthday Gage Roads Leading Light 23 August 2022

**O**n 23 August 1902 the Minister for Public Works, CH Rason, declared the Gage Roads leading light officially open. Although he was ‘not sure himself that the lighthouse was needed’, it is still an important aid to navigation all these years later.

One hundred and twenty years later a group of MHA members gathered to inspect the lighthouse, which is operated by Fremantle Ports.

Our hosts were Dean Symes, Navigation Coordinator, and Alan Pearce, part of whose role it is to look after the ports’ photo archives. After many years of working at the port, it was Alan’s first visit to the lighthouse! Alan provides the *Flash-back Friday* post on Fremantle Ports’ Facebook page. Each Friday he presents a series of historical images of port activity -- it is well worth a look.

We split into small groups to ascend the tower with Dean as our guide. Now that the lighthouse is unmanned, the windows are all covered to protect it from vandalism, which is a shame. The tall fence and security cameras tell the same story.

The light was originally powered by vapourised kerosene. Today it is powered by mains electricity. Entry to the ground floor reveals batteries charged by solar power and a large diesel-powered generator as back-up systems.

We ascended the stair case which is attached to the walls of the tower and partially original. The

wooden treads have been replaced by metal but the original decorative supports remain. The first floor contains various spare items such as glass panes, and a sector range light for the Woodman Channel. There is also a nice example of curved fitted lighthouse furniture. Concealed within the cupboard is a sink.



Photo: Peter Worsley





More climbing and now we were in the lantern room. Much of the original apparatus remains – massive pedestal, kerosene cylinders, clockwork for the occulting mechanism, and the first order lens which is mostly deconstructed and leaning against the walls.

Very noticeable is the large WM 380 LED light mounted where the kerosene burner would once have been. Dean demonstrated the modern version of the sunvalve. He put his hand over a small sensor at the base of the LED and within seconds the light sprang to life.

The technological changes of 120 years were brought home when Dean pulled out his phone. Surrounded by surviving examples of 19<sup>th</sup> century technology we witnessed the technology of the present day. Until 1955 Woodman Point had two full-time keepers; now Dean can monitor 140 aids to navigation, including four lighthouses, on an app on his phone!

The visit was followed by a convivial lunch at North Coogee. Unfortunately Dean and Alan were too busy to join us. Thank you Dean, Alan, and Neil Stanbury at Fremantle for making our visit possible.

And thanks to all MHA members who came – we hope to see you at our next outing. For those who couldn't make it, we hope you enjoy the accompanying photos.

Julie Taylor



Photos:  
Julie Taylor

