

THE WRECK OF THE “CHARLES EATON”

by Allan McInnes

*Read to a Meeting of the Royal Historical
Society of Queensland on 24 February 1983.
(All Rights Reserved)*

On 15 August 1834 the *Charles Eaton* was wrecked at a lonely entrance to Torres Strait. For more than a year, nothing was heard of her passengers and crew but then word started to spread in many and scattered countries that some were still alive but in captivity as slaves. Representations were made in the highest places imploring rescue. The Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty commanded both Sir Richard Bourke, Governor of New South Wales and Rear Admiral Capel, the Commander in Chief of the East India Station to ascertain the fate of the survivors and to rescue them. In consequence the armed brig of war *Tigris* was despatched from Bombay in March 1836 and the colonial schooner *Isabella* from Sydney in June 1836. In their search both ships circumnavigated Australia under sail.

Of the *Charles Eaton* passengers and crew, one was drowned at the wreck, seven survived and the rest were massacred. Of the survivors who told of events at the wreck, only one version is acceptable.

The slowly unfolding story of the wreck and of the fate of her survivors provoked great excitement and stirred deep emotion. One author in 1837 commenced his narrative of these events with the Shakespearean quotation: (1)

“I could a tale unfold, whose lightest word
Would harrow up thy soul, freeze thy young blood,
Make thy two eyes, like stars, start from their spheres
And each particular hair to stand on end,
Like quills upon the fretful porcupine.”

The *Charles Eaton*, an English barque of 313 tons cleared the Thames on 18 December 1833 bound for Canton. She touched at the

Mr. Allan McInnes, of Cairns, has a high reputation as a historian, especially in the North Australian Maritime field.

Cape of Good Hope for fresh water and supplies and reached Hobart Town on 15 June. On 13 July she arrived at Sydney, sailing from there on 29 July for Canton and intermediate ports with six passengers and 26 officers and crew and a cargo of 37 bales of woollens, seven cases of muslins, 410 pigs of lead and sundry other items and stores. (2)

Her passengers included Capt. D'Oyly of the Bengal Artillery, his wife Charlotte, their two youngest sons George and William aged seven and two, their female Indian nurse and a Mr. Armstrong, a London barrister. Capt. D'Oyly was on leave of absence from India recuperating from illness. During this leave he received advice of his promotion to a senior position in the Delhi Magazine. (3) D'Oyly had served 20 years in the Artillery Service of the Honourable the East India Company. This was in the twilight of the era when the powerful East India Company was much more than a trading company. Its activities embraced administration and government - it had its own army and its own fleet of heavily built vessels, not unlike men of war and actually used as such. (4)

The D'Oyly family intended to disembark at Sourabaya and catch a ship to Calcutta. Capt. and Mrs. D'Oyly had two other sons at school in England staying with Mrs. D'Oyly's brother William Bayley.

The ship's company of 26 consisted of her Commander Capt. G.F. Moore, first, second and third mates, surgeon, carpenter, steward, two midshipmen, 13 seamen and two cabin boys, John Sexton and John Ireland. (5)

From Sydney on 20 July 1834, Mrs. D'Oyly wrote affectionate letters to her sons and her brother. They were to be her last letters. (6) On 29 July 1834 the *Charles Eaton* left Sydney in company with the schooner *Jane and Henry* under the command of Capt. Cockburn. Both ships were bound for Torres Strait via the Outer route but en route they parted company in a gale. (7) On 10 August the *Augustus Caesar* under the command of W. Wiseman sailed from Sydney also bound for Torres Strait via the Outer. On 27 August, *Augustus Caesar* fell in with the *Jane and Henry* outside the Barrier Reef and both ships proceeded in company through the reefs and anchored under Double Island, a few miles N E of Thursday Island. Second mate Hartley and two of the crew of the *Augustus Caesar* landed and discovered wreckage of a ship including some casks marked *Charles Eaton*. Hartley walked around the island but there was no sign of any part of the main wreck. In their search they disturbed some natives who ran into the bush. The natives had recently had a fire, near which were human bones. They returned to the *Augustus Caesar* with a keg and other pieces of wreckage which convinced Wiseman they came

from the *Charles Eaton* and that she must have been wrecked at a considerable distance to windward of Double Island. (8)

On continuing their voyage Wiseman sent a boat on shore at Booby Island but found no trace of any survivors of the *Charles Eaton* having been there. The *Jane and Henry* proceeded on to Batavia and to the Cape of Good Hope, where Cockburn gave his limited account. In a letter to London, shipping agents barradaile Co. wrote:

“Captain Cockburn, of the ship *Jane and Henry* sailed with the *Charles Eaton* four days from Sydney, and parted company in a gale of wind; afterwards fell in with the *Augustus Caesar*, which ship sent a boat on shore to Booby Island. The officers reported that they had seen a vessel bottom upwards, and several casks marked *Charles Eaton*, and also a cuddy door. The *Jane and Henry* left Batavia 17th of October, 1834, and up to that time, the *Charles Eaton* had not been heard of.” (9)

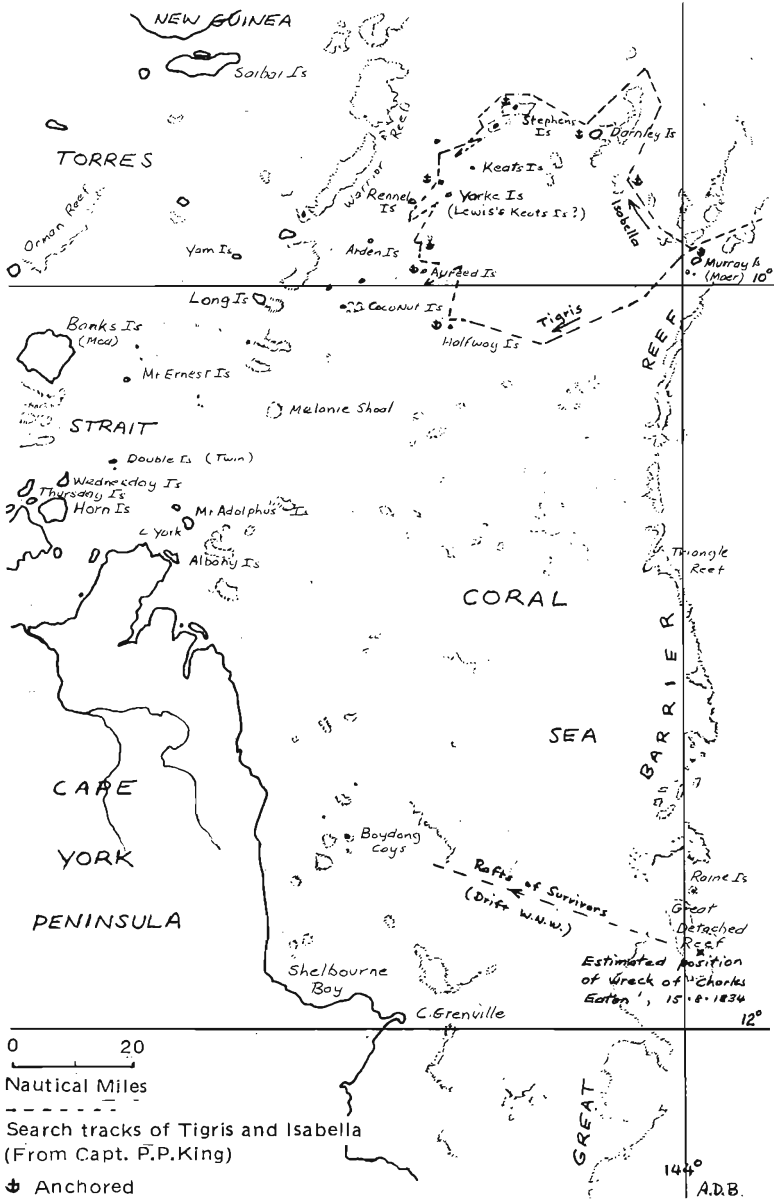
This was the first indication received in London that the *Charles Eaton* had been wrecked. Shortly after an account was received in London from Captain Wiseman but it too contained no word as to the fate of the passengers and crew. Wiseman’s account resulted in the following being posted at Lloyds several months after the actual wreck.

“On the 31st of August, 1834, the second mate and boat’s crew of the *Augustus Caesar* saw and picked up a wreck of the S.E. side of Double Island, sufficient to convince them that the ship *Charles Eaton* was a total wreck at some distance to south-eastward from thence; and from the weather they had on the 22nd, they much feared for the safety of the crew and passengers.” (9)

When *Charles Eaton* left Sydney, Capt. Moore had with him Ashmore’s chart. (10) This chart showed a number of tracks previously used by ships coming from the Outer into Torres Strait. All these tracks were clustered between 11°47’S and 12°8’S - a mere 25 miles. Ashmore’s small 13” x 11” chart was published. “According to an Act of Parliament at the Hydrographical Office of the Admiralty on 15th January 1835” and its official title was “Tracks through the Barrier Reefs of New South Wales by Capt. Ashmore and Others 1822 to 1830”. Presumably Moore obtained an advance copy. The most northerly track shown was through “Indefatigable Entrance”.

ENTRANCE TO STRAIT

Under the command of Capt. Bowles, *Indefatigable* arrived at Port Jackson in April 1815 with 198 male convicts. In July 1815 with a cargo of coal she sailed for Java and passed through the Outer into Torres Strait pioneering the entrance with later bore her name. (12)



Indefatigable Entrance is on the southern side of Great Detached Reef. Just a few miles north of Great Detached Reef is Raine Island, where in 1844 Blackwood in the first proper survey of these waters was to erect his circular stone tower, which was to be for many years the most important point of entering Torres Strait from the Outer. ⁽¹³⁾ The Blackwood survey stemmed directly from the loss of the *Charles Eaton*.

Great Detached Reef is 12½ miles long SE by S and NW by N and 3½ miles broad, except at its centre where a huge elbow protrudes four miles out east into the Pacific Ocean. In addition to the usual and sudden great depth of water off its eastern or weather face, this remarkable reef has deep water off its northern and western faces, provoking the description by Yule that it had the appearance of having been thrust by some violent effort of nature out into the Coral Sea to the south-eastward of its proper position. ⁽¹⁴⁾

Moore appears to have opted for the Indefatigable Entrance. He brought his ship into a very favourable position but the weather was so clouded he could obtain no observation of his latitude. On the evening of Thursday 14 August, as a matter of prudence and to avoid entering the passage before daybreak, Moore ordered the first reef to be taken in the topsails.

Next day the *Charles Eaton* headed for the entrance. A survivor was later to relate "The master was provided with Captain Ashmore's chart, guided by which he boldly steered for the reefs." ⁽¹⁵⁾ No marine survey had ever been carried out in these waters - that was to await Blackwood's arrival in another 10 years. Until the labouring details of a survey were carried out, all early navigators were at great risk in sailing in these uncharted and hazardous waters.

The phrase Ashmore's chart was inappropriate. It was not a chart in the usual sense - nor did it purport to be. It purported to be what its subsequent official title said - viz "Tracks through the Barrier Reef". In the vicinity of Great Detached Reef, Ashmore showed three vague crescent-shaped reefs and showed nothing which suggested the existence of the protruding elbow of Great Detached Reef. ⁽¹⁷⁾ In relation to Great Detached Reef, Ashmore's chart was quite misleading. Captain Samuel Ashmore, a well-known master mariner and shipowner of Sydney, never went on a voyage without, on his return, giving his fellow mariners the benefit of what he learned by a careful study of the many problems which confronted the early navigator or the dangers of the Australian coast. He was an advocate of the Outer route, and disagreed with King's pushing of the Inner route. ⁽¹⁶⁾

At 10 o'clock on Friday 15 August, with the breeze blowing strongly, the reef suddenly loomed close ahead. An attempt was made

to tack, but she would not stay. *Charles Eaton* was immediately hove up in the wind; both anchors let go and the cables paid out to the end - but they found no holding ground even close to the reef, as she was in unfathomable waters. She fell broadside on to the reef with a sea making a clean breach over her. Her keel and rudder were instantly torn off and carried away, and two of her boats were wrecked. Moore assessed the situation and informed all that the *Charles Eaton* was totally lost, but at the same time gave orders to get the boats ready and furnished with provisions in order to reach Timor. ⁽¹⁸⁾ The precedents were there! Bligh and Mary Bryant had each reached Timor through Torres Strait in open boats from greater distances, and so too had Edwards reached Timor from the *Pandora* which had been wrecked only about 20 miles to the north of the wrecked *Charles Eaton*.

After she struck, an abandoned ship was seen high and dry on the reef with her masts standing, royal yards across, and sails set. Philip Parker King subsequently claimed that the stranded vessel was the *Flora*, wrecked on 1 May 1832. The sole passenger, an elderly European lady together with all 36 crew reached Timor safely in the *Flora's* long boat. ⁽¹⁹⁾ This other wreck was three or four miles to windward, and as strong south-easterlies prevail in August, this suggests that the *Charles Eaton* struck high in the centre of the southern armpit of Great Detached Reef rather than its elbow.

There were four boats on the *Charles Eaton* - a long boat, a dinghy and two cutters. In the calamity the long boat and dinghy had been knocked to pieces. The smaller cutter was lowered but immediately swamped and seaman James Price drowned. Soon after, three of the crew, third mate, G. Piggott, carpenter, L. Constantine and seaman W. Grindall put sails, provisions, water and all the carpenters tools in the remaining and larger cutter and launched her. The cutter with its occupants stayed near the wreck for the rest of that day and the following night, keeping their position there by the use of oars, as they had no anchor. ⁽²⁰⁾ Next morning two seamen, R. Quinn and J. Wright, swam out through dangerous seas and joined the cutter. When Quinn and Wright left the *Charles Eaton* all on board were still alive and well on the forecastle. Quinn, Grindall, Wright and Constantine later deposed that they had been unable to save any more as they could not pull up to the *Charles Eaton* against the strong current and that no more passengers and crew would venture swimming through the heavy breakers to their cutter. They further deposed that on the morning of Sunday 17th, as no sign of life could be seen on *Charles Eaton* they concluded all had been washed off and drowned during the night.

CAPTIVES AT OLILET

Their provisions consisted of 30 lbs of hard bread, one ham and four gallons of water. In 15 days, steering by the sun and stars, they reached the eastern coast of Timor Laut or Tenimber Islands - about 300 miles north of Darwin and about 300 miles east of Timor. They went on shore, replenished their water and collected coconuts. On resuming their course along the coast they were attacked by a number of proas, and being fatigued and without arms they were forced to surrender. Brought on shore and stripped of all their clothes they were confronted by natives who were inclined to kill them but through the intercession of two native chiefs, Pabok and Lomba, their lives were spared. ⁽²¹⁾ The captors took them to their nearby village of Olilet. This was a picturesque village on a cliff overhanging the sea and protected on the land by thick jungle through which it would be difficult to penetrate. Access from the shore was up a flight of steps rudely formed by logs cut into the hillside. The last 40 or 50 feet to the site of the village was by two movable ladders placéd almost perpendicularly against the cliff. From the top of the upper ladder final entrance to Olilet was through a gateway intended as the last bastion of defence to the village. The houses in Olilet were built on stumps about 6 to 8 feet high. Their steeply pitched roofs were thatched with palm leaves and mounted at the top of each gable end was a large richly carved wooden horn from which shells hung down to the ground. The houses were neatly laid out on either side of one wide street from which narrow alleys branched on either side. ⁽²²⁾

For more than a year they stayed at Olilet. Some of their clothes were returned to them and they were well treated and not forced to work. The natives supplied them with corn, yams, rice and fish but only in small quantities, barely enough to keep them alive. The Olilet natives were then at war with the natives of Laourau, a neighbouring settlement four miles further north. They were told that at Laourau there was another European from an English ship. ⁽²³⁾ Some years later, when he was rescued from the natives of Laourau, it was ascertained that in 1823 the English schooner *Stedcombe* whilst watering off Laourau was seized by the natives who murdered all the crew other than the lone survivor and a boy who had since died. ⁽²⁴⁾

Thirteen months after their capture, a trading proa arrived from Amboyna. The *Charles Eaton* survivors sought permission from the native chiefs to depart, promising that they would come back in an English ship with arms and ammunition to assist them in defeating their enemies. On the faith of this promise the chiefs consented to their leaving on the proa. After a passage of five days they arrived at Amboyna on 7 October 1835 and finally reached Batavia, where on 6 December the sworn joint depositions of Constantine, Grindall,

Quinn and Wright were formally taken down by Barrister-at-Law and Resident at Batavia, Mr. P.W. Pietermaat. Piggott was then in hospital with fever and subsequently died. Their depositions reached England in June 1836. ⁽²⁵⁾

In March 1839 Captain Owen Stanley, having sailed from Port Essington, was off the coast of Timor Laut in the brig H.M.S. *Brittomart* when two large proas came out from the land under sail. With their large outriggers they could not get close to the sides of *Brittomart* but manouvered into a position off her stern. A rope was thrown and a little thin shrivelled old man came scrambling over the taffrail. He was dressed in a long black serge coat, check shirt and black trousers. The climb up from the proa over the taffrail and on to the stern of the *Brittomart* exhausted him. After he regained his breath he presented Stanley with a neat little basket containing papers which he wished Stanely to examine. In Stanley's own words:

“I took them up, rather to please him, than with any expectation of being able to understand them, but to my surprise and great interest found carefully rolled up in several envelopes two pieces of lead pencil, part of Norrie's Navigation Tables and some scraps of paper, on which, written in pencil, was a rough journal of the proceedings of the men who left the ill fated *Charles Eaton*.... in one of her cutters.”

The *Brittomart* was off the village of Olilet and the thin shrivelled old man was Chief Lomba, who no doubt hoped that the *Brittomart* was bringing the promised arms and ammunition. The natives sought trade. Coconuts were readily sold for a couple of pins each. They offered yams, bananas, and fowls but only in exchange for gunpowder which Stanley prohibited. ⁽²⁶⁾

Previously the following article appeared in the Canton Register of February 16, 1836:

“Sir, I beg leave to acquaint you that the ship *Mangles* under my command arrived under Murray's Island in Torres Straits, on the evening of the 18th of September. On the morning of the 19th several canoes came off for the purpose of trade, in one was a white person apparently a European, quite naked like the savages. The greater part of the natives came on the starboard quarter, quarter boats being lowered half down for the purpose of trade. I remained sometime on the starboard quarter watching their movements, till several had left to go on shore, and then went on the other side to enquire respecting the person whom I had seen, he had then

dropped a little astern, and from enquiry found he was an Englishman wrecked some ten months since in the "CHARLES EATON" in Torres Straits, and wished very much to come on board, but the natives would not allow him. At the report of this I manned and armed my cutter, and sent the second officer, the boatswain and six men to take him at any price, being myself on the poop with armed men to protect them in the event of any objection made to his being given up; they hooked the canoe with the boat hook, and told him they were come for him. His reply was, take that man, pointing to a savage before him, he will go with you. No, says the second officer, I am come for you, and you I will have. The man immediately threw down the paddle he had in his hand, and dashed under the midships of the canoe out of sight. I then ordered my boat to return, and said if he preferred a life with savages, let him remain. The boat returned and was hoisted up. I made further enquiries about him, the fourth officer told me he should say there were eight or more on shore detained by the natives; he at that time was close in shore again, but what his motive could be for not coming into my boat, I am at a loss to conceive, as he might have stepped into her. However, not feeling altogether satisfied, I manned and armed the cutter again, and went myself in her, close to the beach with my spy glass, and remained there two hours. The natives were very anxious for me to land, but seeing so many on the beach, and many more behind the bamboo work, and a large canoe ready for launching, I did not think it prudent to land. They brought a little European boy down close to the beach but would not allow me to touch him. I also saw a boat building by European hands, I am certain; but could not see a white man. After I returned on board, I watched with my glass the remainder of the day, but saw none, I also remained all that night at anchor, thinking it might be possible for some of them to make their escape. The next morning at nine I weighed and came away through the Straight, and anchored under Booby's Island on the morning of the 21st - That there are Europeans on Murray's Island I know, and that they are detained by force too, or why not have come off to me? The one that was alongside I could not see again - I thought it right to make this known to you, to act on the information as you may think proper. I shall also write to London by the first opportunity - (Signed William Carr, Commander of the Ship *Mangles*).

On this letter the Editor of the *Canton Register* remarked:-

“The news of the wreck of the “*CHARLES EATON*” in Torres Straits reached China many months ago; as likewise a rumour that many of the crew were detained by the natives. The foregoing account, which Captain Carr has handed to us, has set the question at rest; and we must conclude, that the commander-in-chief on the East India station has before now adopted measures to rescue these unfortunate men from their captivity.” (27)⁰⁰

But even prior to the first receipt of Carr’s report and prior to the seaman reaching Batavia, there had been rumours in China, Batavia, India and England that there were survivors. (28)

CONFUSION OVER WRECKS

The wreck claimed by King to be the *Flora* was often mistaken for the *Charles Eaton*, and this contributed to these rumours. King appears to have erred, for there are strong grounds for believing that the wreck seen from the *Charles Eaton* could not possibly have been the *Flora*. The extensive damage suffered when the *Flora* was wrecked on 1 May 1832 makes it inconceivable that some 2¼ years later she could remain intact with royal yards across and sails set. (29) But whatever ship it was, her appearance lent to the conjecture that there was a likelihood of survivors and being wrecked on Great Detached Reef lent to the belief that she was the *Charles Eaton*. The rumours reached Mrs. D’Oyly’s brother William Bayley in England.

Bayley made representations and in a letter dated 5th October, 1835, he wrote:-

“When I was lately in London I did myself the honour of calling upon you at the Office in Downing Street to invite the attention of His Majesty’s Government (through you) to one of the most dreadful cases of shipwreck and murder or slavery or both that perhaps ever occurred.... there is every reason to believe the whole of the crew and passengers of the *Charles Eaton* had landed on that island (i.e. Double Island) but that many of them if not all had been murdered or carried into slavery by the savages; and as it is not unusual for the inhabitants of those Islands to preserve the females for purposes worse than death itself, I do implore the interference of His Majesty’s Government to send out a Frigate of War to rescue the poor surviving sufferers (if any should still be living) from the dreadful case of slavery....” (30)

In the copies of this letter which have been handed down, the name of the addressee has been removed, but it appears to have been Sir

John Barrow, Second Secretary of the Admiralty ⁽³¹⁾. Bayley was a man of persistence and influence. He soon solicited the support of the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, the Lord Mayor of London and Lord Glenelg, His Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for the Colonies. The Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty gave immediate and sympathetic consideration of Bayley's submissions and referred the matter to Lord Glenelg at the Colonial Office, but in terms which clearly raised the question of sending a Colonial vessel to search for survivors. Lord Glenelg too gave immediate and sympathetic consideration, and on 20 October 1835 Glenelg sent a despatch to Sir Richard Bourke, Governor of New South Wales, stating "... it will be highly desirable that you should adopt such measures as may appear to you most advisable for ascertaining the fate of those unfortunate persons, and for rescuing them. . . ." ⁽³²⁾ At the same time similar instructions were forwarded to Rear-Admiral Capel, Commander in Chief in the East India Station ⁽³³⁾.

About the time when Bourke received Glenelg's despatch a copy of the *Bengal Herald* of 28 ebruary 1836 reached Sydney. The *Bengal Herald* contained a formal Government Notice to the effect that on 5 August 1835 the Governor-General of India had requested the Governor of Batavia to exert his influence to discover the persons supposed to have survived the wreck of the *Charles Eaton* and that the Governor of Batavia, on private information received, had instituted such an enquiry in July 1835.

The communication from the Governor-General of India was received in Batavia on 20 November 1835 just before the arrival there of the seamen from Olilet. On 9 December 1835 the Governor of Batavia reported on this and included a copy of the depositions of the seamen taken on 6 December before P.W. Pietermaat. All of this was reported in the *Bengal Herald* of 28 February, including a copy of the depositions. The *Bengal Herald* commented on the discrepancy between the statement in the depositions with that given by subsequent witnesses who declared that the *Charles Eaton* stood "high and dry. . . with her royal yards across". The mistaking of the other wreck for the *Charles Eaton* ⁽³⁴⁾.

There was ready response to the appeal for rescue. Glenelg's request reached Bombay at a time when Sir Charles D'Oyly, a relation of Captain D'Oyly, was lobbying for the despatch of a rescue ship. ⁽³⁵⁾ In March 1836 the Government at Bombay despatched the Hon. East India Company's armed brig of war *Tigris* to Torres Strait in search of survivors. ⁽³⁶⁾

EXPEDITION FROM SYDNEY

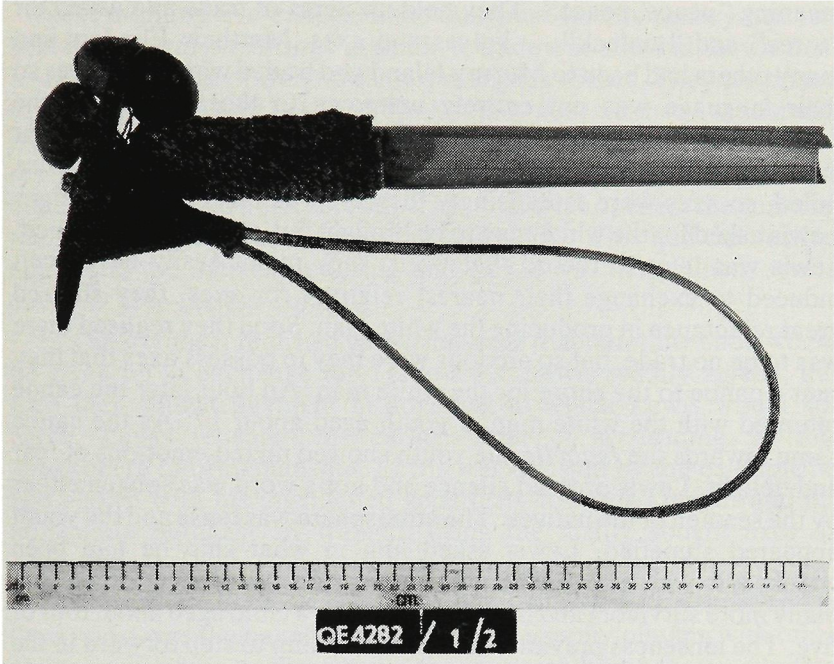
Sir Richard Bourke received Glenelg's despatch at a time when no suitable ship was in Sydney. An armed ship of the Royal Navy fitted out with stores for a long voyage would have been best suited. Bourke decided not to wait for the arrival of the armed cruiser which occasionally visited Sydney from the Indian Station, and decided to use His Majesty's Colonial Schooner *Isabella* after it returned to Sydney ⁽³⁷⁾.

The 116-ton *Isabella*, maintained out of convict funds, was used for carrying convicts, personnel, stores and mail between Sydney and the penal settlements at Moreton Bay and Norfolk Island ⁽³⁸⁾. On her return to Sydney, the *Isabella* was fitted out and prepared for her mission at great expense. A crew of five officers and 25 men were recruited. They anticipated the search would take four months. Bourke made every arrangement he possibly could to ensure success ⁽³⁹⁾. Charles Morgan Lewis readily volunteered for the position of Master and he was appointed at a salary of 7/6d. a day plus keep ⁽⁴⁰⁾. Captain Phillip Parker King, the charterer of the Inner Route, was the most knowledgeable man in the world with the waters of the Barrier Reef and Torres Strait. Bourke relied heavily on King, from the supervision of the fitting out of the *Isabella* to the drawing up of sailing directions and advice to the Master of the *Isabella*. ⁽⁴¹⁾

The evidence in Sydney was sparse and conflicting. The depositions taken at Batavia indicated there could not be survivors, whilst Carr's statement (which had reached Sydney) claimed there were survivors on Murray Island. Another statement claimed the *Charles Eaton* had been wrecked near Sir Charles Hardy's Island, which was close inshore and far from the outer reefs. ⁽⁴²⁾ In an accompanying memorandum prepared by King and endorsed by Bourke, King advised Lewis to proceed directly to Murray Island. He could not have given better advice, for it had immediate results.

On 3 June 1836, with all stores and ammunition on board, *Isabella* got under way for Torres Strait on a belated mission of rescue. The *Isabella* was familiar with such a mission, for in 1834, months after the wreck of the barque *Harriett* in New Zealand and the massacre of 12 of her crew, *Isabella* formed part of a small task force which succeeded in rescuing the remaining crew of nine, a woman and two children enslaved by the Maoris. ⁽⁴³⁾

Bourke's instructions to Lewis were to search and enquire thoroughly wherever he landed, to conciliate with the natives whilst using the utmost precaution to prevent a surprise attack from them. En route they conceived a plan of bringing up only a few hands on deck and to make no display of firearms. Also en route, bottles were prepared with



Beheading knife and skull carrier of a type used by many natives of Torres Strait.

(By courtesy of the Queensland Museum)

messages describing the purpose of their visit in the hope that a bottle might reach survivors so that they could avail themselves of any opportunity of escape which might offer itself. ⁽⁴⁴⁾

At 9 on the morning of 19 June, Murray Island was seen from the masthead. By 10 a.m. *Isabella* had cleared Cumberland's passage and one hour later dropped anchor off the northern side of Murray Island. ⁽⁴⁵⁾ As the *Isabella* was anchoring, natives congregated on the beach and quite clearly among them was a naked white man. As the natives launched their canoes, defence precautions were quietly taken on board the *Isabella*. The guns were loaded but run in out of sight, and half the crew were sent below. All was in concealed readiness for an attack, but at the same time *Isabella* put on a friendly and disarming front.

TENSION WITH NATIVES

Four huge 40ft long canoes came out, each containing 16 men. They were fitted with outriggers and with a large platform amidship on which was tortoise shell, coconuts, plantains and other articles of trade. As they approached they made signs of friendship by rubbing their hands over their abdomens and calling out "poued, poued"

meaning “peace, peace”. They held up items of trade and asked for “toree” and “tooleck” — knives and axes. Matthew Flinders and many others had been to Murray Island and traded with the natives so their language was not entirely unknown to those on board the *Isabella*, who pretended - by signs - not to understand in the hope that the natives would bring out the white man to interpret. This ruse failed, so axes were tantalisingly displayed as baits. Then by signs Lewis asked for the white man to be brought out, which they declined. Lewis was later to record that whilst they might easily have been induced to exchange their nearest relatives for axes, they showed great reluctance in producing the white man. Soon they realised there was to be no trade, but so anxious were they to possess axes that they sent a canoe to the shore for the white man. An hour later the canoe returned with the white man, a youth aged about 17. As the canoe came towards the *Isabella* the youth showed mixed emotions of fear and delight. Lewis ordered silence and not a word was spoken either by the seamen or the natives. The atmosphere was tense and the youth appeared stupefied. Lewis asked him in what ship he had been wrecked, to which he replied - the *Charles Eaton*. He was asked how many more survivors and he answered - one, a child aged about four or five. The tenseness prevailed as Lewis told him to step forward in the canoe, which he did, but the natives, wanting a ransom, held him and refused to permit him to board the *Isabella* until some axes were given in exchange. The exchange was readily made.

Deferring further enquiries for the moment, Lewis sought to win the friendship and confidence of the natives — for he had yet to secure the release of the other survivor and ascertain the fate of the rest of the passengers and crew. Lewis gave permission to trade, and brisk friendly bartering commenced. Whilst this was going on, Lewis was quietly talking to the youth who was the cabin boy John Ireland. Ireland said he had been treated with great kindness by the natives but pointed out one in particular named Duppar to whom he was indebted for his life and from whom he had received parental kindness. Lewis, realising that this presented an opportunity to secure greater confidence with the natives, invited Duppar on board and openly rewarded him for his humanity and clothed him in fine linen and loaded him with presents.

Lewis then enquired about the other survivor, young William D’Oyly. The natives said he was on the other side of the island and could not be produced that afternoon, but promised to bring him in the morning. Lewis sensed that they were reluctant to part with D’Oyly, and fearing they might conceal him, ordered all bartering to cease until he was given up.

Next morning five canoes came out to trade, but as they had not kept their promise to bring the child, no trade was allowed. Lewis then had the advantage of Ireland's interpreting his wishes. They continued to be reluctant to give the child up - yet they coveted the axes so much that Lewis had great hopes of obtaining the child's release without resorting to force. After waiting for some time without any sign of the child, Lewis put on a sterner face. The ports were opened, the guns run out and Lewis announced he would use force. This had the desired effect and the natives, realising that Lewis was determined, sent a canoe ashore for the child.

In a short time it returned with a message that the white child would be given up in exchange for Toree-axes. Lewis readily agreed, but then they sought payment in advance, to which Lewis would not agree. Lewis repeated his earlier order of no trading. In this atmosphere of brinkmanship, Lewis was assisted by the example he had shown with his unsolicited generosity towards Duppar and his immediate purchase of Ireland, using the highly sought axes as currency.

Shortly after a group of about 100 natives gathered on shore and in their midst was the naked William D'Oyly happily playing with other children. For two or three hours the group gathered in consultation and then slowly moved towards the waters edge.

For months D'Oyly had been cared for by Oby, and about 4 p.m. a reluctant Oby carried D'Oyly into a canoe which then came out to the *Isabella*. William, crying and frightened, clung to Oby's neck and pointed to the shore. They were brought on board and taken to the cabin where Lewis showered Oby with presents and dressed him in clothes. Like Duppar, Oby was delighted!

As they left the *Isabella*, the natives asked Lewis to visit them, to which Lewis readily agreed. Next morning he landed and was immediately surrounded by over 100 cheerful natives who hugged him, caressed him and shook his hand. He had no need for the two armed boats resting on their oars, just off shore.

To the women and children who had not been out to the *Isabella*, Lewis gave handkerchiefs and toys. On 26 June, Lewis prepared to leave this friendly island and said his farewells. As he returned to his boat on the beach the natives followed, shouting "Lewis, Lewis". That evening, as a parting gesture, all the guns of the *Isabella* were fired off.

WRECK STORY RETOLD

When Lewis first spoke to Ireland he had great difficulty in understanding him, for he had forgotten much of the English language. He mixed it with the Murray Island language and was scarcely

intelligible. It was several days before he regained a coherent grasp of English and could tell of the events of the past two years.

He stated that after Quinn and Wright joined the three in the cutter they refused to take any more; even though six of the crew made their way over the reef the next morning and wished to join them. The cutter bore away and was seen no more. Moore made a raft which took seven days to complete. During this time they managed to distil some sea water by the aid of the ship's coppers, and a leaden pipe which they placed on the raft with some beer and pork. Whilst the raft was being made they were rationed to two glasses of distilled water and a few pieces of damaged biscuit per head per day.

When launched the raft was not buoyant enough to hold them. In desperation they threw over the water, pork and beer but still it did not support their weight so most of them returned to the *Charles Eaton*, leaving Mr. Moore, Mr. Grant the surgeon, the D'Oyly family, Mr. Armstrong and two seamen on the raft. Next morning it was found that the rope which tied the raft to the stern of the wreck had been cut. It is probable that the uncomfortable situation in which they found themselves, up to their waists in water, and the sea constantly breaching over them, induced them to cut the rope and trust they would drift to some place of safety.

A second raft was made, and in seven days it was launched. By then seas were breaching over the *Charles Eaton* at high water and she was close to breaking up. All those remaining on the *Charles Eaton* boarded the raft and set their sail, but the raft was so heavy and deep that very little progress was made - she drifted, rather than sailed, at about a mile or so an hour.

After two days and nights upon the raft, up to their waists in water and having eaten very little food they passed an island, and then saw several more ahead. Soon afterwards a canoe paddled towards them, containing ten or twelve natives who as they approached stood up and extended their arms to show they had no weapons. On reaching the raft the natives got in and were friendly and peaceable. The natives proposed they leave the raft and go in the canoe. They hesitated until a midshipman, Thomas Ching, said he would as he should then have a better chance of getting to England, upon which they all boarded the canoe. They left the raft about 4 p.m., and in an hour landed on a sandy cay which the natives called Boydan and which is still known by that name today.

They plodded around the island in search of food and water but were so exhausted by fatigue and hunger they could scarcely crawl and fell on the ground in despair. At this time the peaceful attitude of the natives changed alarmingly. The natives stood grinning and

laughing in the most hideous manner and it soon became evident that they were exulting in anticipation of their murder. When their massacre became obvious, Mr. Claer the first officer calmly read prayers to his fellow survivors and urged them to be resigned to their fate, after which commending themselves to the protection of the Almighty, they lay down, worn out and exhausted, and were soon asleep. Ireland was roused by a shout and upon looking up saw natives murdering his companions by dashing their brains out with clubs. The first killed was Ching and after him Perry and then Mr. Mayer, the second officer. The last to meet his fate was first officer Claer, who in an attempt to escape to the canoe was overtaken and killed by a blow to the head.

Ireland and another boy named Sexton were now left awaiting their fate. Ireland described his escape:-

“An indian came to me with a carving knife to cut my throat, but as he was about to do it, having seized hold of me, I grasped the blade of the knife in my right hand and held it fast struggling for my life. The indian then threw me down, and placing his knee on my breast tried to wrench the knife out of my hand, but I still retained it, although one of my fingers was cut through to the bone. At last I succeeded in getting uppermost, when I let go and ran into the sea, and swam out, but being much exhausted, and the only chance for my life was to return to the shore, I landed again fully expecting to be knocked on the head. The same indian then came up and with an infuriated gesture, and shot me in the right breast with an arrow, and then in a most unaccountable manner suddenly became quite calm and led or dragged me to a little distance and offered me some fish and water, which I was unable to partake of.

Whilst struggling with the indian I observed Sexton who was held by another, bite a piece of his arm out, but after that know nothing of him, until I found his life had been spared in a manner similar to my own.

At a short distance off, making the most hideous yells, the other savages were dancing round a large fire before which were placed in a row the heads of their victims; whilst their decapitated bodies were washing in the surf on the beach, from which they soon disappeared.”

Next day, the natives collected all the heads, and paddled to another island called Pullan where their women lived. There Ireland saw the two D'Oyly children. The elder George D'Oyly, told him that

the first raft had landed on Boydan and that all the passengers excepting himself and his brother had been instantly murdered. His mother was killed by a blow with a club and his little brother was in her arms at the time but was saved by one of the women, who afterwards took care of him. Ireland saw the skulls of those from the first raft. Those of Mrs. D'Oyly and Captain Moore were plainly distinguishable; the former by her hair, the latter by his features. The heads were suspended by a rope to a pole that was stuck up near the huts of the women; round which they danced every night and morning, accompanying their infuriated gestures with the most horrid yells.

This group of about 60 natives were merely residing on Pullan during the fishing season; for their home was a considerable distance away. After remaining on Pullan two months the natives separated, with one party taking Ireland and the infant D'Oyly with them. For weeks they continued northward, calling at different islands until they reached one where they remained a month, and then they visited Darnley Island where for the first time Ireland met with kind treatment.

After a fortnight they again embarked and returned by the way they came to an island situated near Aureed Island, where their voyage ended. Duppar, a Murray Islander, having heard that there were two white boys in captivity at Aureed, embarked in a canoe with his wife Pamoy for the purpose of obtaining them, taking fruit for barter. The price for their ransom was a bunch of bananas for each. Duppar and Pamoy took Ireland and young D'Oyly back with them to Murray Island where they remained until their rescue and where they were most kindly treated.

Duppar entrusted the care of young D'Oyly to Oby; a charge which he faithfully carried out. At Aureed the natives had named Ireland, Wak; and D'Oyly Uass; names which they retained at Murray Island.

CONFLICTING VERSIONS

Whilst the search was going on, other events were happening in England. Captain Carr of the ship *Mangles* reached London and was examined before the Lord Mayor of London, Mr. Drew and in the presence of Bayley and others. Carr repeated his earlier version of events and his belief that there were eight or 10 Europeans on Murray Island. He asserted that he had offered axes as ransom which was not accepted. A statement by Anderson, one of the crew of the *Mangles*, was handed in which contradicted Carr's account. Anderson claimed Carr had not offered ransom. Carr claimed Anderson's account false.

(46)

The wreck of the *Charles Eaton*, the rumours of survivors being enslaved and the activity of Bayley attracted widespread publicity.

Bayley received letters seeking information. One written from the Deanery, Wolverhampton, Staffordshire was from the father of a member of the crew of the *Charles Eaton*. It was written on 15 August 1836, the second anniversary of the wreck, and it read my son

“... whose melancholy fate has awakened feelings of sorrow which nothing but death can entirely remove. I appreciate time has not elapsed for the Government vessel to have gone and returned and in this dreadful state of hope and fear where I and my family have kept - but alas - I cannot flatter myself that there is any rational gleam of hope to be indulged - and if there is any ray of hope that they be alive, the state of slavery and misery in which they are kept is too appalling for one’s imagination to reflect upon.”

The writer was the Reverend John Claer whose son some two years previously had calmly led his fellow survivors in prayer on Boydan Cay when he realised their massacre was inevitable. ⁽⁴⁷⁾

Ireland’s version of the visit of the *Mangles* differed vastly from Carr’s. He claimed Carr offered no ransom and that if he had offered even an axe he would have been freed and that Carr mishandled the situation, which was a bitter disappointment to him. When the first news of Ireland’s version reached London, Lord Mayor Drew wrote to Bayley “. . . that Captain Carr’s statement is a tissue of falsehoods from beginning to end.” ⁽⁴⁸⁾

Whilst all the evidence supports Ireland’s criticisms of Carr, the fact remains that it was Carr’s report which triggered matters which finally led to the rescue missions.

The natives of Murray Island claimed that Sexton and the elder D’Oyly boy had been murdered and they claimed they had seen their heads. They added that the hair of one of them had been so much admired it had been cut off and made into an ornament. Lewis was not satisfied and chose to prove it for himself.

DENIALS AT DARNLEY

Ireland informed Lewis that the natives of Darnley Island frequently visited the island where his companions were massacred. Lewis decided to go to Darnley Island and on arriving there canoes came out to trade. Through Ireland, they were told there would be no trade until the white men they had were given up. They denied there were any. Ireland recognised two of the natives as belonging to the tribe who murdered his companions and thought they were actually present at the massacre. Soon afterwards, as no trade was permitted, the natives left, saying they would return in the morning. Next day more canoes came out. Ireland and D’Oyly were recognised by many of the natives

who greeted them by their native names of Wak and Uass. They stayed here some days replenishing their water and searching the island. In their search, part of a ship's sail was found in a hut which they said had been given to them by the natives of Aureed. It had come from the first raft. Lewis continued his enquiries but the natives continued to assure him they had no white people on the island. They also told him the two natives implicated in the massacre by Ireland had gone away to their own island. They were not seen again and probably were hidden somewhere on Darnley Island.

Before leaving Darnley Island, two letters were written setting out what steps had been taken by Lewis in his search. These, together with presents were given to two natives who had previously been kind to Ireland. They were asked to deliver these letters to the first white people they should see, who would reward them with Tooree. Similar letters had been left at Murray Island as a precaution in case anything should happen to the *Isabella* and her crew.

Lewis persisted in his questions about survivors, and finally a group told him that the heads of the white people who had been murdered at Boydan were preserved on Aureed Island and that the natives danced round them every morning and night expressing their delight by yelling and hooting and making most horrid gestures. They repeated that there were no more survivors alive and they confirmed the statement by the Murray Islanders that Sexton and the other D'Oyly boy had been murdered. They said the native who murdered Mrs. D'Oyly was named Cut-Cut; little George D'Oyly's murderer was Maam and Sexton, Ab-oo-yu. They described these three murderers so well that Ireland recognised them, for although he had never seen them he had frequently heard about them. The Darnley Island natives also told Lewis that the murderers had eaten the eyes and cheeks of their victims to excite them and forced their children to join them in this in order to make them brave.

Whilst the *Isabella* was at Darnley Island no weapons were seen, which caused suspicion and put all on guard. As Lewis finally left Darnley he repeated his hope that they would never injure or ill-treat any white persons who might become shipwrecked. Again and again they promised they would carry out his wishes. In Ireland's view the natives of Aureed would murder just to obtain skulls, but the Murray Islanders would take great care of survivors for the sake of Toree and trade.

Lewis sailed for Aureed, calling and searching at islands on his way. Ireland recollected having seen some of the skulls of his shipmates at Keats Island where he had once stayed. Lewis landed on Keats and demanded the white men, to which the natives replied they

had none. On being asked what had been done with the "white skulls" they denied having them in their possession. They claimed the natives of Aureed had brought the skulls merely to show them and had taken them away again.

Lewis was not satisfied and ordered 18 men out of the boats. Armed with muskets, fixed bayonets and cutlasses they looked fierce as Lewis repeated his demand for the skulls. The natives were terrified, but they did not produce any skulls, from which Lewis concluded their story was correct. As calmness was restored they said that the natives of Aureed had left their island having heard that the schooner was on her way to punish them for the murders. A thorough search of Keats Island was made but no signs of Europeans were found.

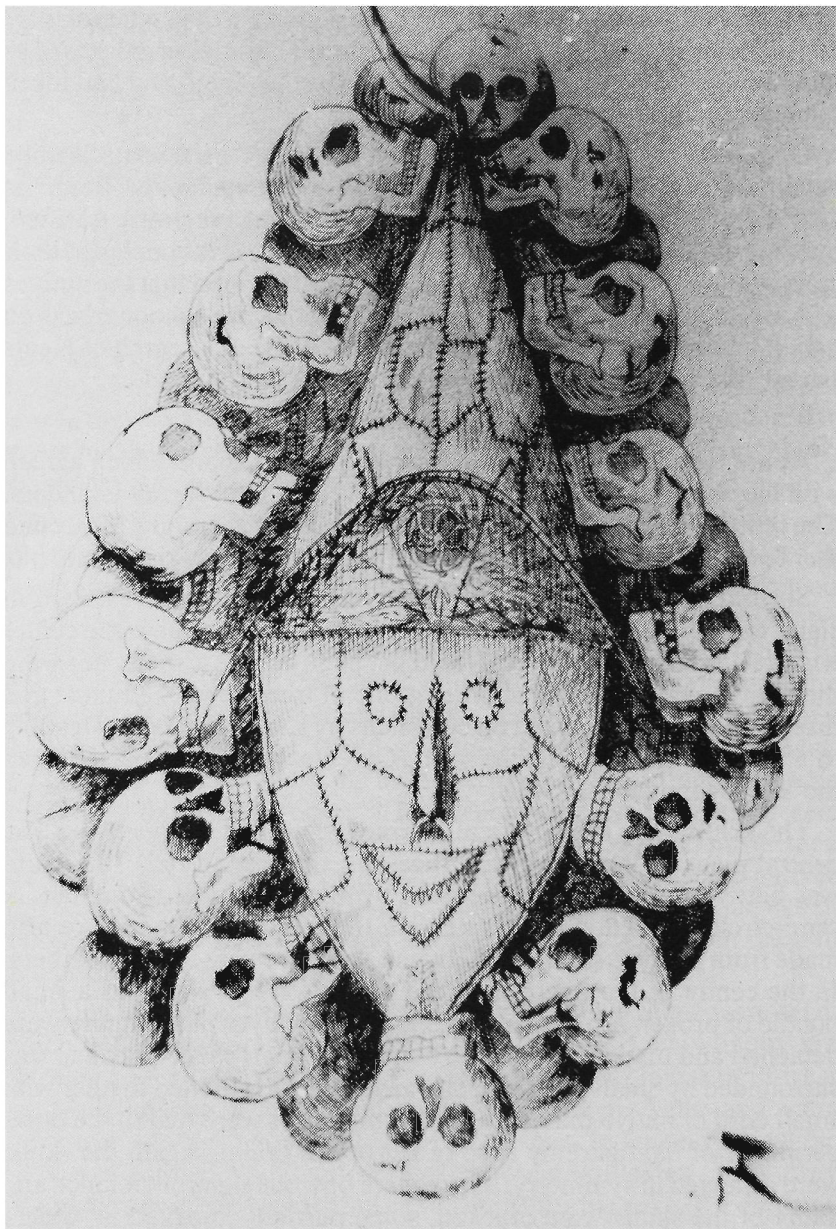
MYSTERY SOLVED

At noon on 25 July, *Isabella* anchored off an island which agreed with the description of Aureed Island given by the Murray Islanders. The latitude checked at noon as 9° 56'7" S. After searching all around the Torres Straits, Lewis had at last found the mysterious isle.

Several dogs were howling on the beach but no natives were in sight. Lewis landed and walked towards coconut trees near the centre where he assumed their huts would be, but there were none, nor were there any natives. Seeing another group of trees he walked there and discovered an avenue lined on both sides by shells painted red leading to a dilapidated low thatched shed. On entering it Lewis discovered the long searched-for skulls.

The skulls were systematically arranged around a large figure, the central piece of which was a tortiseshell smeared in red. The figure was between four and five feet long by about two feet and a half. A semi-circle projection stood out from the forehead of the figure also made from tortoise shell fancifully cut and ornamented with feathers. In the centre of the figure from the projection upwards was a small bundle of broken arrows bound together. The eyes of the figure were detached and made from a silvery shell like pearl shell. The face was surrounded by shells methodically arranged and stitched together with small cord of native manufacture but the skulls were tied to the outer perimeter of the figure by rope of European origin. Again the skulls were arranged in symmetry. There were obvious signs of violence and many of the skulls were cracked, some partially knocked in, others bore deep incisions - some even had hair driven into the indentations. The skulls of two females and two children stood out, and attached to one was long sandy hair.

Ireland stated that the natives on Murray Island had a similar figure which was brought out at times of corroborees, feasting days, and those of general rejoicing.



Tortoise shell figure and skulls sketched by Brockett on the "Isabella".

To avoid damage to the figures the shed was unroofed and the figure, complete with its accompanying skulls, was carefully taken to the *Isabella*. Lewis gave vent to his anger and disgust by destroying everything he could and burning down the skull house. The fire raged

over the whole island. The following day was spent in destroying all the coconut trees and cutting down other trees. After another search two more European skulls, scorched by the fire, were found and taken to the *Isabella*. Lewis renamed the island Skull Island.

Prior to the *Isabella's* visit Aureed had a large population. It was largely a bartering centre for trading with New Guinea, Cape York and other islands and thus occupied an important position. Aureed was later totally abandoned, and no doubt the destruction wrought by Lewis contributed to this.

Masks and effigies were regarded by Torres Strait islanders as sacred objects and the turtle shell mask predominated. Professor Hadden, who led the Cambridge Anthropological Expedition to Torres Strait, formed the opinion that the mask-like figure taken by Lewis at Aureed represented the great Culture hero Kulka. ⁽⁴⁹⁾

Beheading and the preservation of skulls was an important feature of many of the natives of Torres Straits. Some carried a special beheading knife and accompanying head carrier. ⁽⁵⁰⁾

The blade was made of a split piece of bamboo. When the knife was to be used a nick was made on the edge, close to the handle, with a small shell; then a strip would be peeled off from the other end, the nick preventing the handle from splitting. The rind of bamboo is full of minute flinty particles, so much so that a freshly cut edge is very sharp and will cut off a man's head. Its handle was lashed with knotted string to give a grip when the knife was reeking with blood. The edge was sharp enough for only one beheading and a fresh edge was made after each decapitation. The notches also served to keep tally of the number of decapitations. The head carrier consisted of a cross bar tied to a loop of cane which was threaded through the severed throat and out through the mouth then grasped as a handle. ⁽⁵⁰⁾

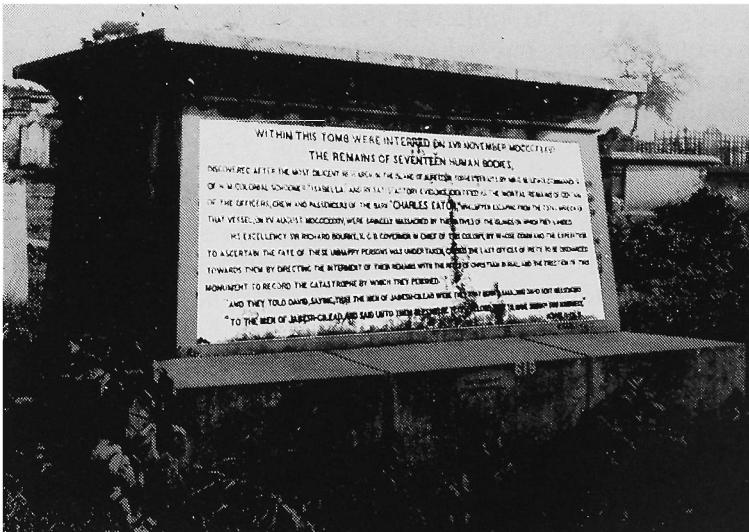
Leaving Aureed, the *Isabella* called at other nearby islands but all had been deserted by the natives for fear of being punished. On 30 the ship arrived at Double Island where two years earlier the *Augustus Caesar* had found the first wreckage from the *Charles Eaton*. Lewis again questioned the natives about survivors but without success. Next day the *Thomas Harrison*, bound for Java from Sydney, came into sight and from her master, Lewis learnt that the *Tigris* was somewhere in Torres Strait also searching for survivors.

The *Tigris* had left India in March 1836 and reached Sydney on 12 June. She was damaged in a gale between Hobart Town and Sydney and was delayed there for 28 days whilst repairs were carried out. On 10 July she left Sydney and arrived at Murray Island on 29 July. There Duppar delivered a letter Lewis had left. Whilst Lewis was on

board the *Thomas Harrison*, the *Tigris* under the command of Captain Iggledson arrived. The surgeon of the *Tigris* examined the Aureed mask figure and the 45 skulls and pronounced that 17 were European. Iggledson sought to take young D'Oyly to his grandfather in Calcutta, which Lewis declined in view of his instructions from Governor Bourke.

On Tuesday 2 August, *Isabella* weighed from Double Island in company with the *Tigris*. They called at Wednesday Island and at the Post Office on Booby Island where they obtained information of the safe passage through the Torres Straits of six ships. Their course was west for the prevailing winds, and complex reefs and shoals would not permit a return to Sydney down the east coast.

At about 7 p.m. on Saturday 6th, after having made Croker Island, the crew of the *Isabella* heard a gun fired from the *Tigris* which was three miles ahead, and shortly after five minute guns. Being certain that the *Tigris* was on shore, *Isabella* tacked and stood towards her. The *Tigris* had struck violently and her rudder carried away. With difficulty *Tigris* backed off and anchored under *Isabella's* quarter. Next day both ships sailed for the abandoned settlement at nearby Raffles Bay where a new rudder was made. On 24 August both ships reached Coupang where they separated - the *Tigris* for India and the *Isabella* for Sydney via Cape Lewin which she reached on 12 October. She had been absent for 19 weeks and 3 days.



Tombstone in cemetery at Botany Bay.

(By Courtesy of Mitchell Library)

On 17 November 1836, at the direction of Governor Bourke the 17 European skulls were given a Christian burial in the Sydney cemetery in Devonshire Street. An appropriate monument - in the form of a huge altar stone - recording the catastrophe by which they perished, was erected. When that cemetery was resumed for the site of the Central Railway Station in 1904 the skulls and monument were removed to the Bunnering cemetery at Botany Bay. ⁽⁵¹⁾ In Bunnering, just a few paces away was the grave of Richard Nugent, the chief officer of the *Isabella* who died on 9 November 1836 after a short illness brought on by his arduous duties in search of the survivors of the *Charles Eaton*. ⁽⁵²⁾

DISPUTE OVER REWARD

Lewis had carried out his duties meritoriously and Bourke sought from Lord Glenelg permission to reward him. As his duties were carried out by direction of the authorities in London, Bourke sought a grant of 1,240 acres or £300 from the Revenue of Crown Land ⁽⁵³⁾ Glenelg objected to the practice of rewarding by grant of land or payment from the Land Revenue. However, he did approve of payment of £300 from General Reserves. ⁽⁵⁴⁾ Bourke's successor, Sir George Gipps, was not prepared to seek approval from the New South Wales Legislative Council for payment from the General Reserves of the Colony. He considered the service on which Lewis had been engaged was in the general interest of the trade of the British Empire rather than any particular interest of the Colony of N.S.W. Moreover he claimed that the order for the search came from England and that the *Charles Eaton* did not belong to the Port of Sydney but merely touched there on her way to the East Indies. ⁽⁵⁵⁾

Lewis escorted young D'Oyly to London leaving Sydney on H.M.S. *Buffalo* on 13 May 1838. ⁽⁵⁶⁾ For a period he was on half salary, but when the establishment at Moreton Bay was reduced and it was intended to abandon it as a penal station, Sir George Gipps was able to dispense with the *Isabella*. This resulted in there being no service to which the half salary to Lewis could be charged. Whilst in the service of the Government his salary had been paid out of convict and not colonial funds. ⁽⁵⁷⁾

In 1840 he was appointed Harbour Master at Port Phillip. Later he became insane and totally destitute and friends brought his case before the Legislative Council. ⁽⁵⁸⁾ Ultimately in 1845 he was rewarded with a gratuity of £300. ⁽⁵⁹⁾

Bourke realised that the journal and log books of Lewis warranted publication. King agreed to compile the book and its accompanying chart, and 1022 copies were printed in Sydney by George William Evans, the first Australian publisher and bookseller, at a cost of

£33/10/2 paid from the Military Chest; £6/10/0 was spent in printing the chart and £8/11/0 in engraving it. A copy was sent to Lloyd's coffee house and 100 copies to the Colonial Agent, London. The remainder were available for sale. The Lord Commissioners of Her Majesty's Treasury in London questioned this unusual expenditure. They commanded Lord Glenelg to call upon the Governor of New South Wales for further details before they could sanction such an unusual expenditure. ⁽⁶⁰⁾ Today the book is a great rarity of Australiana. Governor Bourke's personal copy is now in the Ferguson Collection in the National Library, Canberra.

In April 1844, after finishing the construction of the Raine Island beacon, H.M.S. *Fly* visited Murray Island. Her officers made immediate enquiry for Duppar. After a little while an old grey-bearded native, of a Jewish cast of feature but with a benevolent expression came forward and pointing a finger at his beard, said "Duppa, Duppa!". From the swollen conditions of his extremities he appeared to be afflicted with elephantiasis. He was presented with a "how sapura" or big axe, in token of their appreciation for his humane conduct towards Ireland and William D'Oyly. ⁽⁶¹⁾

The Mitchell Library has acquired a substantial part of Bayley's file, including manuscript letters from Charlotte D'Oyly, Rev. Claer, and Mr. Drew the Lord Mayor of London. Just outside the Mitchell Library, is a statue of Sir Richard Bourke who in Sydney was so instrumental in organising and despatching the mission which rescued Ireland and young D'Oyly and ascertained the fate of the others. It is an apt coincidence that just a few feet behind this statue is the file of William Bayley who in England was so instrumental in provoking the decision to order a rescue mission. But there is an even more apt coincidence. The letters written by Charlotte D'Oyly to her sons and brother in England on 20 July 1834 whilst the *Charles Eaton* was tied up at Sydney Cove have now come back from England and are preserved in the Mitchell Library just up the hill from Sydney Cover, a few hundred yards from where Charlotte D'Oyly had written them.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

MANUSCRIPTS

A1704 letter forming a substantial part of the original file of W. Bayley (Mitchell Library)

Petition by Charles Lewis to Governor with accompanying letter. Ref. Colonial Secretary Correspondence: Letters received: Port Phillip AONSW 4/2741, letter 46/1623 (Archives Office, New South Wales)

NEWSPAPERS

Australian (Aust) various editions 22/7/1836 and post.

Sydney Herald (SH) various editions 28/4/36 and post.

Sydney Monitor (SM) various editions 19/7/1836 and post.

Sydney Gazette (SG) 24/1/1833 p. 3.

CHARTS

Chart of part of N.E. Coast of Australia by Phillip P. King 1819, 20, 21. Commander R.N. Sheet 3 (Published 17th November 1824).

As above but with additions by Lieut. Roe RN 1829 and by Captain F.P. Blackwood RN 1844.

Tracks through the Barrier Reefs of New South Wales by Captain Ashmore and others 1822 to 1830 (Published 15th January 1835).

Barrier Reefs from Raine Island to Cape York surveyed by Captain F.P. Blackwood 1843-4 (Published 19th March, 1846).

THE AUSTRALIAN DIRECTORY (SAILING DIRECTIONS)

Vol. II Comprising the East Coast, Torres Strait and the Coral Sea by Commander Charles B. Yule RN (2nd ed) London 1864.

Vol. III North, North West and West Coasts compiled chiefly from various surveys (2nd edition) London 1881.

BOOKS AND ARTICLES

ASHMORE, Samuel Letter 13 May 1836 published in Nautical Magazine May 1837 Vol 6 No.4 pp 211-214.

BROCKETT, W.E. Narrative of a Voyage from Sydney to Torres Straits in search of the survivors of the Charles Eaton, in His Majesty's Colonial Schooner, Isabella, C.M. Lewis Commander, Sydney (1836).

ENCYCLOPEDIA
BRITANIA

- CURTIS, John Shipwreck of the Stirling Castle . . .
To which is added the Narrative of the Wreck of the
Charles Eaton, London (1838).
- HADDON, A.C. (ed) Reports of the Cambridge Anthropological
Expedition to Torres Straits Vols I-VI (1904-1935)
Cambridge.
- HISTORICAL
RECORDS OF
AUSTRALIA
(HRA) Series 1 - various volumes.
- INGLETON G.C. Charting a Continent, Sydney 1944.
- JOHNSON, K.A. Gravestone Inscriptions, N.S.W. Vol 1 Sydney Burial
& SAINTY, M.R. Ground, Elizabeth and Devonshire Streets, "The
(Compilers) Sandhills" (Monuments relocated at Bunnerong)
Sydney (1973).
- KING, Philip A voyage to Torres Strait in search of the Survivors of
the Charles Eaton - arranged from the Journal and Log
Book of Commander C.M. Lewis, Sydney, 1837.
- MELVILLE, H.S. The Adventures of a Griffin on a Voyage of Discovery,
London 1867.
- WATSON, Capt. J.H. Ships of Long Ago in The Scottish Australian, Sept.
1916 pp 4954-4960.
- STOKES, J.L. Discoveries in Australia, London 1846.
- WEMYSS, Thomas Narrative of the Melancholy Shipwreck of the Ship
Charles Eaton Stocktown 1837.
- NAUTICAL Vol. 2 No. 20, Oct. 1833, pp 595-598, Loss of the Ship
MAGAZINE Flora in the Barrier Reef 1832.

REFERENCES

1. Curtis P 243
2. Wemyss P4 & SM, 19, 23, 26 and 30 July 1834 & 6 August 1834.
3. Wemyss pp 10 & 12, King ii
4. Encyclopedia Vol 20 p. 525.
5. King p 62/3 Curtis p 62/3 Curtis p. 246.
6. Mitchell A1704/Wemyss pp 9-11 & Curtis 261-264.
7. Curtis p 247.
8. King p (ii) Curtis p. 266
9. Curtis p 259.
10. King p 6.
11. Chart - Tracks through the Barrier Reef.
12. HRA VII p 553; VII pp 76 and 82.
13. Chart Raine Is. to Cape York.
14. Sailing Directions Vol II p 224.
15. King p.p vi and 6
16. Watson p 4957 in Scottish/Aust. and Ashmore in Naut. Mag.
17. Tracks through the Barrier Reefs
18. King p vi.
19. King p 6 & SG p 3.
20. King p 7 and SH 28 April 1836.
21. King viii.
22. Stokes pp 455-459.
23. King viii.
24. King pp 475-478.
25. King ix.
26. Stokes pp 439/40; 456-460.
27. Wemyss pp 17-19.
28. King p (iii) Batavia & Calcutta Wemyss p 20 Calcutta.
HRA Vol 18 P168 London.
29. Nautical Magazine, Oct. 1833.
30. HRA Vol 18 p 169.
31. Wemyss p 12.
HRA Vol 18 p 169 - Ingleton p 50.
Barrow was a naval celebrity, a founder of the Royal Geographical Society in 1830 and exerted great influence on the exploration and surveying of Northern Australia.
32. HRA Vol 18 p 168.
33. Curtis p 270.

34. King pp (iii) and (iv).
35. Curtis p 275.
36. Curtis p 288.
37. HRA 18 p 432 King iii.
38. HRA 13 p 550 and
39. HRA, 18, p 432.
40. King iii, HRA Vol 18 p 775.
41. HRA 18 p 432-6 (also supervising fitting out of Isabella).
42. King p x
43. HRA 17 pp 545, 596 and 782.
44. Brockett pp 10 and 11; HRA 18 pp 432-3.

45. No references are given to Ireland's statement nor to events during the Isabella mission as they would be repetitive. The primary source for such are King and Brockett.
46. Wemyss pp 24-25.
47. Mitchell A1704.
48. Mitchell A1704.
49. Haddon Vol I pp 88-90
50. Haddon Vol IV p 199.
51. Johnson & Sainty pp iv, v & 42.
52. Watson p 4960.
53. HRA Vol 18 p 775.
54. HRA Vol 19 p 209.
55. HRA Vol 19 p 592.
56. HRA Vol 20 p 73 & Australian 15/5/1838.
57. HRA Vol. 19 p 694.
58. Petition by Lewis.
59. HRA Vol 24 p 773.
60. HRA Vol 19 pp 287-288.
61. Melville pp 202-3.

The map accompanying this paper was prepared by Mr. Alan Broughton, a member of the Cairns Historical Society, who based it on maps and material made available by Mr. Allan McInnes.