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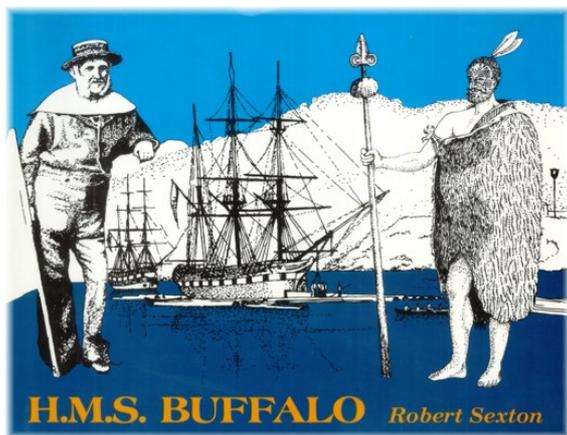
H.M.S. Buffalo

Ref. AU0026

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- Generally 95% - 99% of the words can be searched. Where the original type was poor the words may not be recognized for searching.
- For more detailed explanation and tips to get the best search results click here

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H.M.S. BUFFALO

An account of
His Majesty's Ship Buffalo;
Naval Storeship and Timber Carrier,
Quarantine Ship, Transport, and
Emigrant Ship bringing the first
Governor to South Australia

Robert Sexton

AUSTRALASIAN MARITIME HISTORICAL SOCIETY

# Contents

2.

Quarantine Ship: 1831-1832

The reason for the loan of H.M.S. *Buffalo* to the Customs Department for use as a quarantine ship at Stangate Creek is not hard to find. On 2 July 1831, *The Times* published the report of an Englishman living in Russia who had been requested by the Clerk of the Privy Council, Charles Greville, to investigate a disease ravaging that country. Dr Thomas Walker set out on a fact-finding journey, and just three months later reported back to London that he was satisfied that the infection was cholera of the Indian type. It had made its appearance at Astrakhan, near the mouth of the River Volga, and spread thence up the rivers into Russia. Although observed to affect boatmen before townspeople, the manner of its transfer was not understood, and the good doctor considered that the use of the much-feared police rather than medical men to investigate the problem was not conducive to finding the answer. There were conflicting opinions as to whether or not cholera was contagious, or merely the result of some peculiar state of the atmosphere. However, the disease appeared to Dr Walker to require some human agency, and he concluded that it would be sufficient to subject ships coming from any place where the disease was prevalent, or on which an outbreak had occurred, to a fourteen day quarantine.

The Government's attention had been called to the course of the disease in Russia in November 1830, but they were fully occupied with other matters and except for the commissioning of this report, nothing more was done than to place Russian ships under a precautionary quarantine. Further measures were forced upon them when intelligence was received that the cholera had reached Riga, where there was a fleet of 700 or 800 English vessels, loaded principally with hemp and flax, and ready to sail. An order was issued on 8 June 1831 subjecting

all vessels coming from Russia, the Baltic, the Kattegat, or the Elbe to quarantine in certain nominated ports. Vessels which lacked a Bill of Health or had a foul one were to proceed either to Cromarty Bay, Milford Haven, or Stangate Creek to undergo quarantine.

Charles Greville considered Walker 'a very useless and inefficient agent', in other words perhaps, the writer of an unpalatable report. Never the less, his report was amongst the various documents received by the Government and submitted to the Royal College of Physicians for advice. Sir Henry Halford, the president, immediately pronounced that cholera was contagious, but could not be spread by goods. When the College met on 15 June, they 'considered their independence required a show of dissent', and after long discussion, affirmed that they were of the opinion that cholera could be 'communicated by infected persons to those in health', and that although there was no evidence to suppose that it could be transmitted by merchandise, the present quarantine arrangements should continue as a measure of safety. In their report, they noted that the spread of the disease to Astrakhan on 20 July 1830 followed the arrival from Baku of a ship on which eight people had died, and it was remarked that the disease—although of tropical origin—had been prevalent in Moscow during the coldest months.

The only way to quarantine goods, Greville recorded in his diary, was to employ men-of-war in which they could be aired. Three of the five members of the Admiralty—Lord Grey, Sir James Graham, and Sir Byam Martin—at first objected, but Sir Thomas Hardy and Captain Elliot did not. After an argument during which it was made clear that the ships would sustain no damage, they agreed to provide them. The *Buffalo*

LOWER DECK

ORLOP
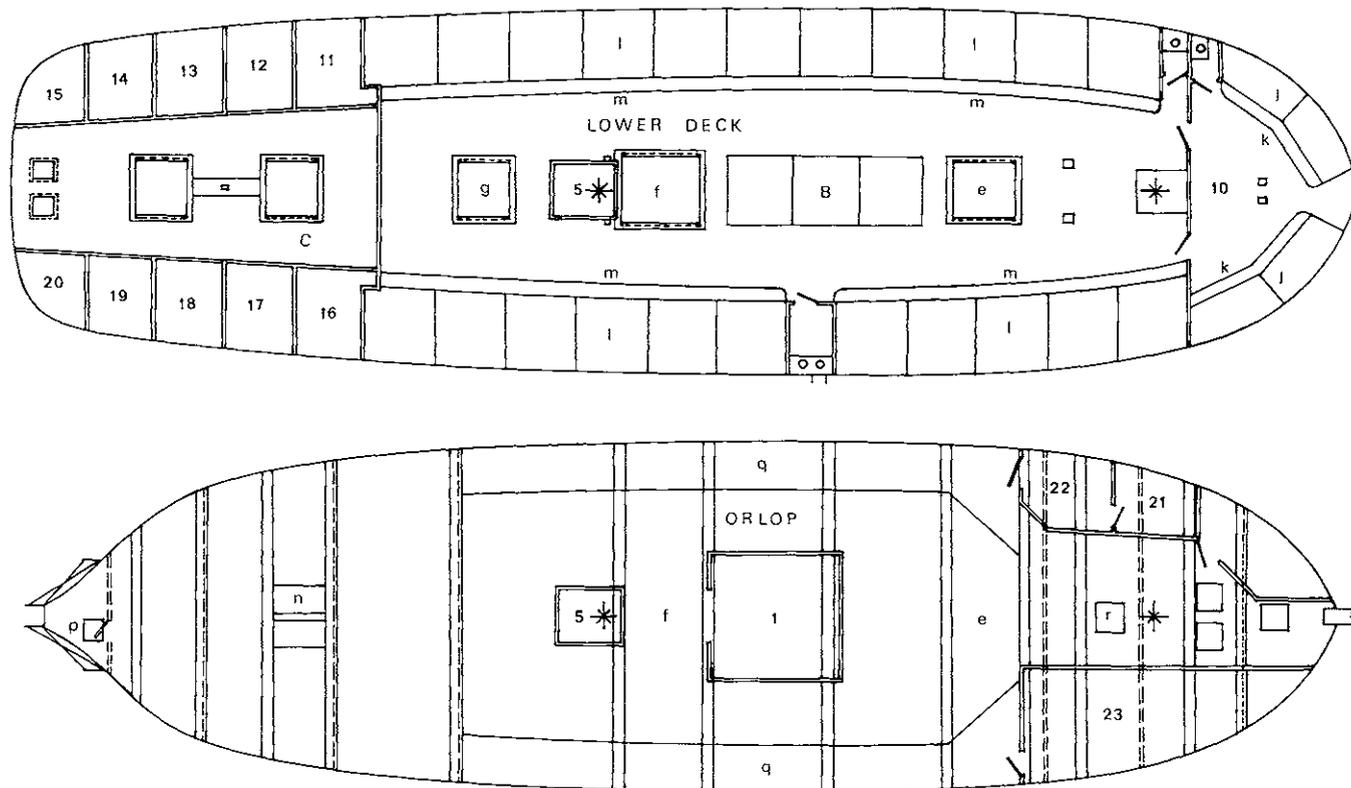
Redrawn from 'Profile and Plans of the Buffalo, as fitted to carry female convicts to New South Wales', prepared at Chatham Yard, March 1833.

Profile: A 'The scuttles to drop down as shown here instead of swinging up'; 1 sail room; 2 gunner's storeroom; 3 carpenter's and boatswain's storeroom; 4 coals, 5 pump well; 6 dry provisions; 7 spirit room; 8 magazine; 9 light room.

Forecastle: a grating; b funnel.

Poop: c skylight.

Upper deck: d scuttle; e fore hatch; f main hatch; g after hatch; h pumps; i ladderway.

Lower deck: B '3 bed places with ironing board over the top'; C 'Messrs Betts and Fowles to sleep in hammocks'; e fore hatch; f main hatch; g after hatch; j 2 bedplaces; k seat; l bedplaces; m bench; 5 well; 10 sick berth; 11 carpenter; 12 gunner; 13 3rd master; 14 1st master; 15 clerk; 16 purveyors; 17 boatswain; 18 2nd mate; 19 2nd master; 20 surgeon.

Orlop: e fore hatch; f main hatch; n scuttle to spirit room; p scuttle to magazine and lightroom; q platform; r to coals; 1 sailroom; 5 pump well; 21 slop room; 22 steward's room; 23 bread room.

Hold: For details of compartments, see profile.

25

(A steamship between 400 and 500 tons burden.)
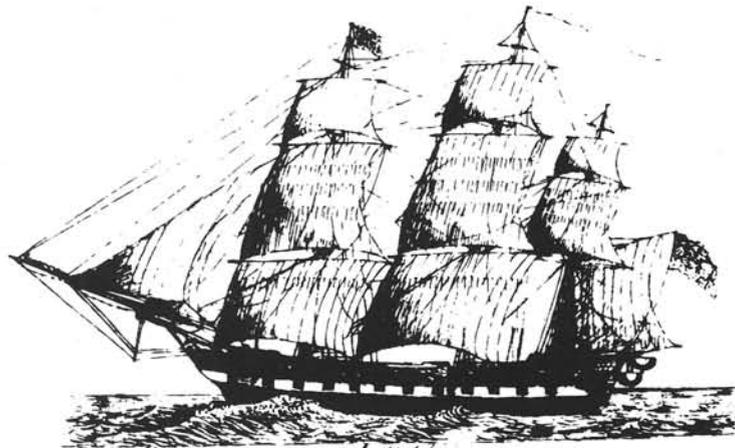
JOURNAL

of the Voyage of His Majestys Ship

"BUFFALO,"

from Portsmouth to the

New Colony of South Australia,

with His Excellency Governor Hindmarsh R.N. K.H.

I.H. Fisher, Esq.ᵉ Geo Stevenson; Esq.ᵉ Osmond Gilles, Esq.ᵉ
and various private individuals, Emigrants, on board

kept by Bingham Hutchinson,
Emigrant passenger.

Title page of the journal kept on board the Buffalo in
1836 by passenger Young Bingham Hutchinson.
This incorporates the only known portrait of the
Buffalo, a valuable guide to both the overall
appearance of the ship and to some aspects of rig
and decoration which cannot be deduced from
written records: steps down the side at the gangway,
the double leechlines fitted to the courses, the form
of dolphin striker, the lead of braces, and the details
of spanker brails. It can be deduced that since the
square sails are shown extending to the top of their
yards, they were bent by robands to jackstays rather
than around the yards themselves, as was earlier
practice, even though the topmast rigging was set
up in the old style with futtock shrouds secured to
the lower rigging rather than to the mast in the
manner introduced to East Indiamen in 1811.

preliminary arrangements to establish the Province, he held office for several years before retiring to manage his private affairs. Place-names around Adelaide are an indication of his major investment in land. The finding of copper on his property at Glen Osmond in 1838 drew attention of prospectors to the area, and the subsequent discovery of rich though limited deposits of silver and lead nearby led to the first mineral mining in Australia.

The other notable official on the *Buffalo* was the Colonial Chaplain, Charles Beaumont Howard (1807-1843), whose family was related to the Howards, Dukes of Norfolk. He obtained his Master of Arts degree from Trinity College, Dublin, the city of his birth, and was ordained in 1832. After arrival in South Australia, he enlisted the aid of his friend Gilles to haul up a ship's sail from the port for use as a tent in which to hold services. On 26 January 1838, the foundation stone of Holy Trinity Church on Adelaide's North Terrace was laid, and Howard accepted a heavy financial burden in having it built. His worries undoubtedly hastened his early death in 1843, and in spite of earlier criticism in what has been described as a 'Paradise of Dissent', he was sincerely mourned by the colonists.

The names of landholders Thomas Bewes Strangways (c.1810-1859) and Young Bingham Hutchinson (1806-1870) tend to go together—even amongst those unaware of their association on the *Buffalo*—because of their joint exploring expedition to the mouth of the River Murray in December 1837. During this trip, they named features including Hindmarsh Island, Currency Creek, and Points Sturt and McLeay. Their whaleboat was swamped while coming out of the Murray Mouth into the heavy seas of Encounter Bay, and Chief Justice Sir John Jeffcott who had joined them there was drowned.

As a result of this accident, lawyer Henry Jickling, another of the gentlemen passengers who came out on the *Buffalo* as tutor to the Fisher children and who in fact had been an unsuccessful candidate for the position of Chief Justice was appointed temporarily in Jeffcott's place. For all his eccentricities, Jickling carried out the necessary duties with his usual independence and impartiality. Returning to his practice at the Bar, he held appointment as Master of the Supreme Court from 1850 until his retirement and departure for England in 1861.

Osmond Gilles, first Colonial Treasurer of South Australia. Various placenames reflect his considerable landholdings in the early colony.

Getting around this CD

NAVIGATING ARCHIVE CD BOOKS CDs

All Archive CD Books products can be navigated easily using the handy bookmarks on each CD.
The table of contents in most original books, and the original book index where it exists, can provide additional ways of finding the information required.

SEARCHING TEXT ON ARCHIVE CD BOOKS AUSTRALIA CDs

Optical Character Recognition (OCR) technology has been developing over the years as a useful mechanism to convert images (as Archive CD Books pages are) into text which can be searched.

The quality of the OCR can still vary, and hence the searchability can vary. Around 95% or 99% of the words in books with good type are searchable—or even higher with very good type.

OCR is now a wonderful searching aid in many instances
but there is still no substitute for reading the book!

DIFFERENT VERSIONS OF ADOBE ACROBAT READER

Adobe Acrobat Reader 4 or later should be used. Adobe Reader 6 (as it is now named) in fact has considerably better searching options and is recommended.

- **Acrobat Reader v4** has both a "Find" and a "Search" tool. Those tools are two *totally* different things. Our CDs (that are searchable) work with the *FIND* tool
- **Acrobat Reader v5** has only a "Find" tool (not a "search" tool). Our CDs (that are searchable) work with the *FIND* tool.
- **Adobe Reader v6** has only a "Search" tool (not a tool labelled "Find")
  HOWEVER — what is called "Search" is the same as the tool that used to be called "Find" Our CDs (that are searchable) work with the *SEARCH* tool

TIPS FOR SEARCHING AND GETTING MORE FROM THE CD BOOKS

- update to Adobe Reader 6 for more versatile searching options, including the ability to bring up a list of all instances of the word you are searching for — across multiple files on a single CD in a single search request.
- enter the MINIMUM number of characters needed to bring up the search results required.
- use Adobe Reader 6 to do some trial searches to try to identify the characters that may be misread. These can show up in the extra text in the search results list (Adobe 6 only). A few minutes trial will help you to avoid using characters that are more prone to being misread, e.g. try entering "rederi" if you want "Frederick", but find that the letters "F" "c" and "k" are sometimes misread.
- use the "Match whole word" option to eliminate unnecessary items in your results list, e.g. to eliminate all the blacksmiths and tinsmiths etc when you only want the name Smith
- use the "Match case" option when you want to eliminate all the occupations "smith" if you only want the name "Smith"
- Don't just search for names. Search the book for other names, places and subjects of interest:
  - look for others of the same name
  - look for others who lived in the same place or street
  - who was the postmaster or police officer in the town?
  - how often and at what time did the coach arrive in town?
  - what churches were there and what time were services held?
  - what other activities were there in the community?
  - look for others who had the same occupation of other interests
- All of this and more may be available in a seemingly mundane book such as a directory. You could learn or write much of the background of life at the time, even if your ancestor is not listed there.

ADOBE ACROBAT SEARCHING IS A WONDERFUL FIRST FINDING AID.
BUT DO NOT RELY ON IT TO PICK UP ALL THE INFORMATION YOU WANT