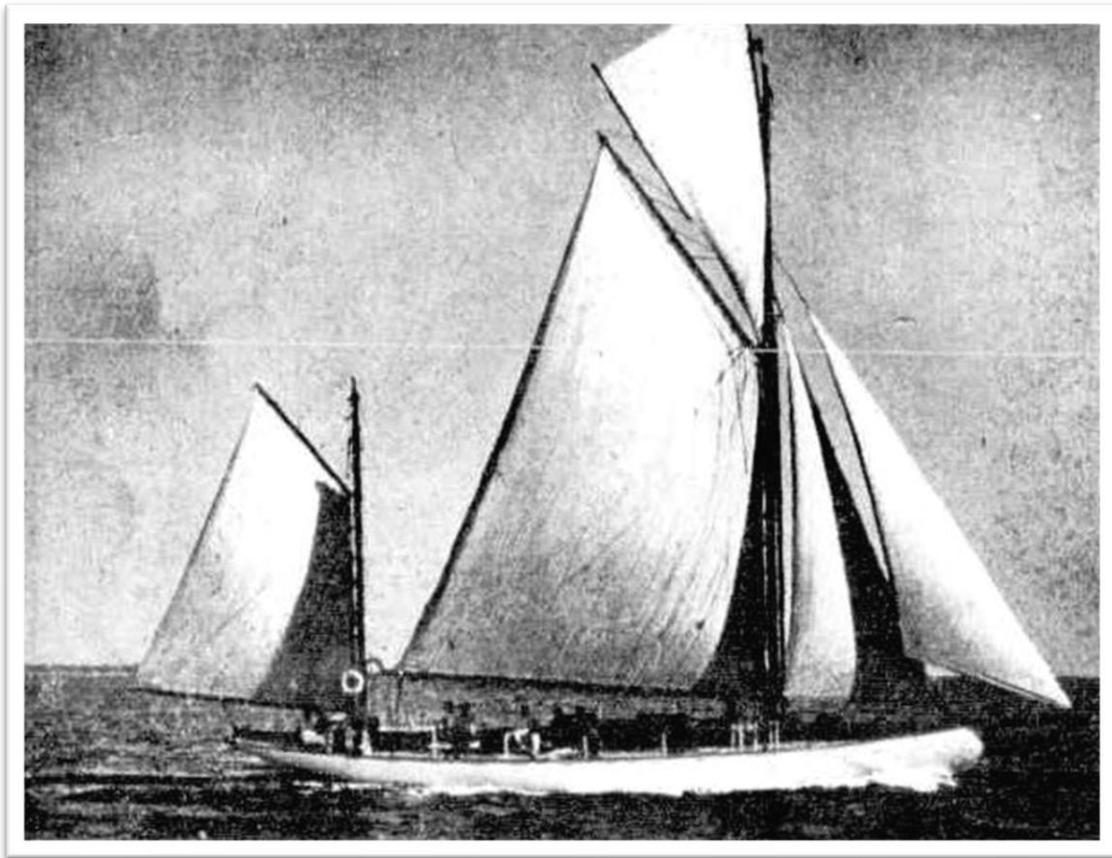




The Voyage of the Stormy Petrel – 1919



In 1919, Sydney Dempster, a prominent member of both the Royal Prince Alfred Yacht Club and the Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron, undertook a 4 month cruise to Torres Straits with 5 of his mates in his 53 foot yawl, Stormy Petrel. This was soon after the end of the First World War, when all yacht racing had been ceased. The Cruise was unique at the time and was reported comprehensively in the Press of the Day.

The following article describes the journey and the adventures of the vessel, starting with a Farewell Dinner held at the Hotel Australia on the 8th of May, 1919.

**Researched and material found by Life Member John Maclurcan.
July 2021**

The Farewell

Friday, 9th May, 1919 – The Daily Telegraph

Yachting to Torres Straits.

MR. DEMPSTER'S VOYAGE.

At the Hotel Australia last evening, a dinner was tendered to Mr. S. M. Dempster and his fellow voyagers on his yacht Stormy Petrel, on their projected expedition to Torres Straits.

About 150 yachtsmen were present, and Mr. A. W. Crane (vice-commodore of R.P.A.Y.C.) proposed the health of the guests and was supported by Messrs. Arthur J. Milson (vice-commodore R.S.Y.S.), J. J. Rouse, Alfred G. Milson, and others.

On behalf of the R.P.A.Y.C., Mr. A. J. Langan (hon. treasurer) presented Mr. Dempster with the club's burgee and ensign, and his own house flag.

Mr. Dempster, in reply, outlined the course which it was intended to follow, and said that he hoped to return in September next. Those accompanying Mr. Dempster are Messrs. T. Hodgson, Stan Spain, H. Andreas, R. Old, and Captain Dobbelle, and the last named has been empowered to make scientific observations on the voyage.



CELEBRATING THE DEPARTURE
OF

Mr. S. M. DEMPSTER

Skipper and Owner of the
"STORMY PETREL"

AND

MESSRS. T. W. HODGSON, STANLY SPAIN,
E. P. ANDREAS, RICHARD OLD,
CAPTAIN A. E. DABELLE.

*Wishing them a Joyous Voyage and
a Safe Return.*

Menu.

Fresh Oysters: Thursday Island

*"To-morrow will be Friday
and we caught no fish to-day."*

Alligator Soup

"Oh, be careful of the Crocodile."

Fillet of Whiting: Chef Andreas

*"Fish are we that love the mud,
rising to no fancy flies."*
-TENNYSON.

Breast of Chicken: Carpentarian

"A Gulf Profound."
(As easily crossed as the chicken crossed the road).

Punch: Hodgson's Special

"A Good Brew and the Mainstay of the Crew."

Pheasant (Mock) All the way from the Barrier

(I don't think).

Salade: Dempster's Extra Special

"My salad days when I was green in judgment."

Asperges Polonaise

"Why Polly gave notice."

Biscuit Iced: Dabelle

"Bring me ice, my head is weary."

Sweets

"The Dainties!—Let's to it, the morn is at hand."

Dessert

"Oh, shades of mal de mer."

Cafe

"The air is full of Farcwells."
-LONGFELLOW.

*"Adieu, Adieu, my native shore
Fades o'er the waters blue."*
-BYRON.

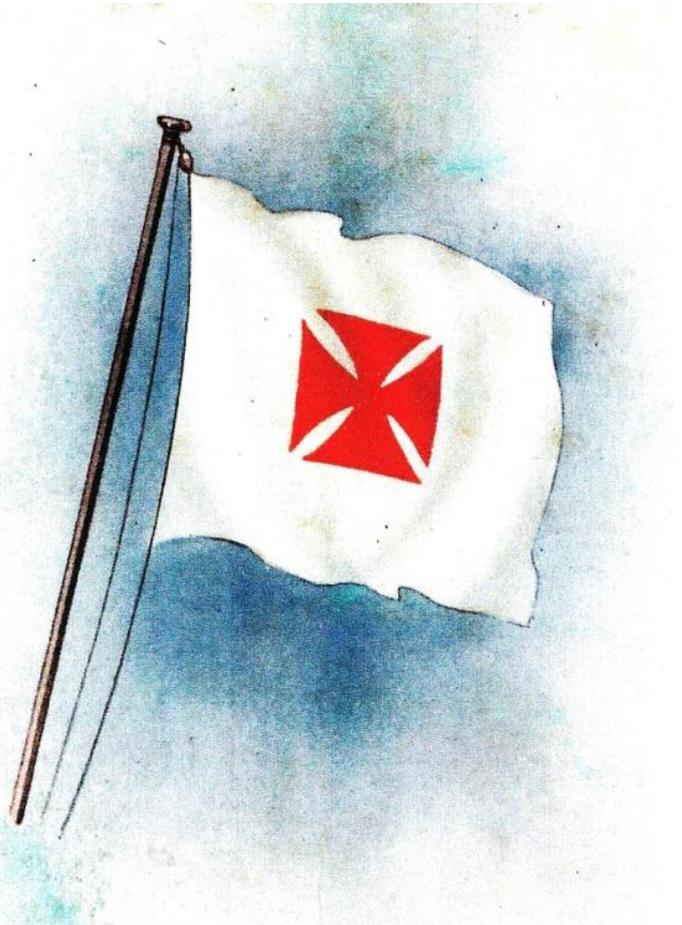
Musical Programme

1. OVERTURE - "White Wings" - Sutton
2. SELECTION - "Sea Songs" - Sewell
3. BALLET MUSIC { (a) "Sylvia" Pizzicato } Delibes
 (b) "Coppelia" Valse lente }
4. SELECTION - "Il Trovatore" - Verdi
5. VALSE - "Anticipation" - McMahon

Toasts

"THE KING."

"OUR GUESTS."

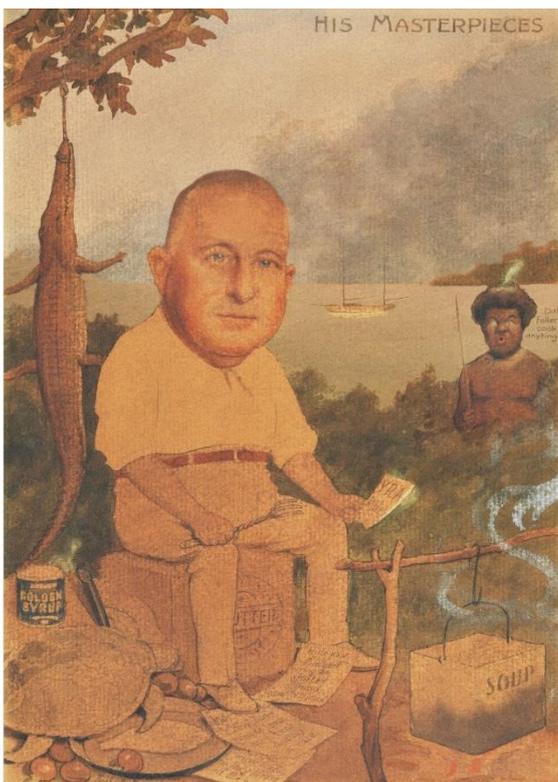


The Skipper

Saturday, 24th May, 1921 - The Maitland Mercury and Hunter River General Advertiser

A NOTED SYDNEY, YACHTSMAN

Mr. Sydney M. Dempster, one-time commodore of the Prince Alfred Yacht Club, served his apprenticeship on the sailing ship Duchess of Edinburgh, under Capt. James Peters, and, although a junior member, is proud of belonging to the Ancient Mariners of this State. As a lad, however, he gave up sea life and has achieved success in the commercial world as a member of the firm of Marshall and Dempster. After passing through his dinghy days, he was one of the pioneers of the popular 18-footer class, and in the 'nineties owned and successfully raced the 18-footers Gynea, O.K., and Aztec. The yacht Petrel, now in Port Phillip, was built for Mr. Dempster in 1900 by Logan Brothers, of New Zealand, and it was as skipper of this 30-rater than he established his reputation as a yachtsman. During a period of six years, out of 85 races in which she started, Petrel secured no fewer than 53 places. Twice she won the championship of the Prince Alfred Yacht Club, and in the hands of Mr. Dempster made good in ocean racing, her great rival being Mr. Walter Marks' Culwulla. After parting with Petrel in 1907, Mr. Dempster retired from yacht racing, but, as part-owner, with Mr. Arthur Boesen, of the 8-ton auxiliary cruiser Ithra, he is in the field again. In recent years Mr. Dempster purchased the 25-ton yacht Hurrica II, re-naming her Stormy Petrel. In five months, he converted her into one of the most wholesome and seaworthy craft ever known in these waters. In 1919 he signed on a crew of yachtsmen and accomplished what he justly claims to be the record yachting cruise in this part of the world, extending, as it did, as far as the islands of Torres Straits and the Gulf of Carpentaria, and covering 5,100 sea miles. For 30 years Mr. Dempster has held official positions in yachting and sailing Clubs, and at present is commodore of the Sydney Dinghy Club. Mr. Dempster skippered Bona against Sayonara when the latter held the cup which bears her name and represented Victoria. Mr. Dempster, besides being a good yachtsman, is genial, charitable, and popular. The Royal Prince Alfred have made him several presentations, including a gold chronometer stopwatch and a gold key to the Club rooms, and for special services he has been elected, a life-member of the Club.



John Maclurcan notes:

Beecroft's painting of Sydney Dempster, dating to 1922, is one of his most complex. The painting is titled "The Masterpieces." This could be a pun on "Master Pieces" whereby the Master (Mr. Dempster) pieces together a meal from the stores and in his right-hand he holds a fork used in his cooking. He is seated at a campfire on a box of butter, heating soup. On his left, an alligator has been hung and a turtle is at his feet. A black tin of golden syrup sits on a rock. A few onions and potatoes are on the ground beside a plate with a fish on it. On the right, a native is watching the camp with a funny expression on his face. Next to him, in small barely visible writing, he says "Dat Fella cook anything!" Dempster's yacht, "Stormy Petrel" is in the bay in the distance.

In Dempster's left-hand, he holds a copy of the YRA rules. On the ground are some loose sheets of paper. The one between his feet says: Rule XXV – Ballast may be shifted behind Garden Island. The one under his right foot says: Rule ... Crews may join or leave any time during a race. The last one under the dish says: Crews may luff as they please off the wind.

The Crew

Friday, 12th April, 1921 - The Sydney Morning Herald
OBITUARY.

MR. T. W. HODGSON.

Mr Thomas Wilson Hodgson, principal of the firm of T. W. Hodgson and Sons architects died at a private hospital at Darlinghurst on Wednesday. Born in England, Mr Hodgson came to Australia 46 years ago, and had since lived in North Sydney. He was an alderman of the North Sydney Council for 15 years and Mayor for three terms. Mr. Hodgson was Past Grand Architect of the United Grand Lodge of New South Wales and filled all the offices in Lodge Harmony, being treasurer for 27 years. He also was a vice president of the Royal Society of St George and a member of the North Sydney Orphans the Royal Prince Alfred Yacht Club and the Civic Club. He practised as an architect for 45 years and was also an expert in building law. He planned many of the large business buildings of the city.

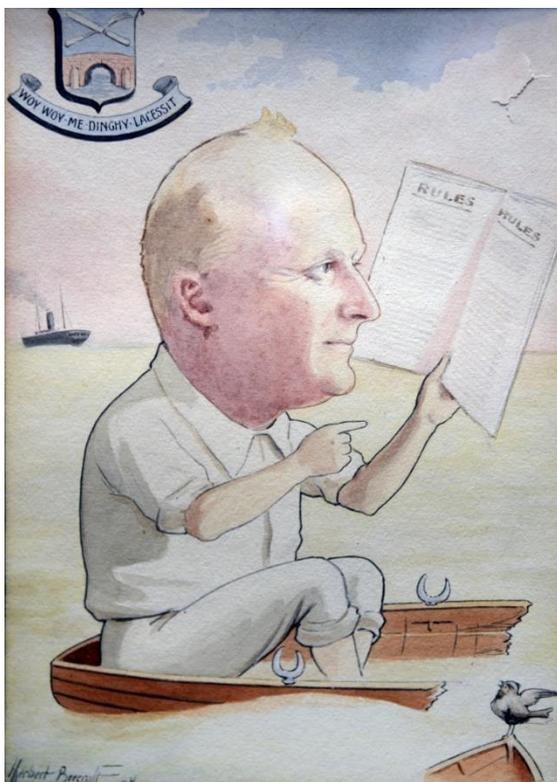
He is survived by Mrs Hodgson, three daughters and four sons, one of the latter being an alderman of the Mosman Council. The funeral took place at the Northern Suburbs Crematorium yesterday following a service in St Thomas Church North Sydney, conducted by Canon Baker.



Tuesday, 31st July, 1945 - Sydney Morning Herald

DEATH OF MR. R. OLD

The death of **Mr. Richard Old** at his home, "Waverton House", after which the suburb of Waverton was named, removes one of North Sydney's oldest residents and the last survivor of the founders of the firm of Messrs. Asher, Old, and Jones, solicitors. Mr. Old, who was 77, was admitted to practice as a solicitor in 1894, and founded the firm of Messrs. Asher, Old, and Jones in 1901. He was chairman of the Moree Electric Light Co., Ltd., and was a member of the Union Club, the Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron, and the Prince Alfred Yacht Club, and was an early member of the Killara Golf Club. He took an active interest in welfare institutions, including the Royal North Shore Hospital. He represented Christ Church, North Sydney, on the Anglican Diocesan Synod. He is survived by three sons, two of whom are members of the A.I.F.



John Maclurcan notes:

The grandson of Richard Old, Mr. Fraser Old, provided the following information about his grandfather in April, 2016. *“As a young boy stored in my grandfather’s garden shed were various bows and arrows from around the Sepik River district of New Guinea. I was given to understand that these were souvenirs from a sailing expedition undertaken by my grandfather.”*

Ehienriech Phillip [Harry] Andreas was an Australian businessman and company director. As a big-game fisherman he pioneered the sport in New Zealand. He was the inventor of the Andreas Fortuna Game Fish Reel and is described in the 1935 edition of Who's Who in Australia as being of "Independent Means."

Harry Andreas was born in 1879 in Sydney, the first son of Australian-born Hannah Denning and English-born Phillip Ehienriech Andreas. During his childhood, the Andreas family lived in Palace Street, Petersham. Andreas was educated at Newington College where he was a talented sportsman and shot. From his earliest years out of school, Andreas was notable as a sportsman with his activities chronicled by the Sydney Morning Herald and other newspapers.

In 1902, Andreas married Alice May Burton, the daughter of William Henry Burton of Leicester, England. The marriage produced two sons and two daughters.

Lauralla was Andreas's house in Leura. In 1903 a house was built on the current site but was destroyed by bushfire in 1909. Between 1910 and 1914 the present house was built and is a notable example of an early 20th Century permanent residence for a wealthy family. The property is still owned by the family and now houses a toy and railway museum. Andreas also maintained a family residence on Sydney Harbour at Elamang Avenue, Kirribilli.

In 1905, Andreas applied to the Commonwealth Commissioner of Patents to register his improvements to an acetylene generator. Only 46 of his "Fortuna Reel Andreas Pat. No 123405/18 & 19 Ex Wide" were produced between 1934 and 1936 and one was sold at auction in London on 14 July 2012 for £5,200. His friend and fellow Old Newingtonian, George Harker, was the inventor of a patented system of extinguishing fires at sea and fumigation and in 1908 when the Harker Fire Extinguisher and Fumigator Company was formed, Andreas became a director.

During the 1927 Royal Tour of Australasia, Andreas acted as a fishing guide for The Duke and Duchess of York (later King George VI and Queen Elizabeth) in the Bay of Islands. Whilst her parents were fishing with Andreas the young Princess Elizabeth (later Queen Elizabeth II) was at home in London but during the 1954 Royal Visit to Australia, Andreas welcomed Her Majesty and His Royal Highness The Duke of Edinburgh as guests at Leuralla.

From as early as 1906, Andreas was the Country Vice-President in Leura for the Old Newingtonians' Union (ONU) and he continued to serve in that position until his death in 1955.



Monday, 19th October, 1925 - Sydney Morning Herald

CAPTAIN A. E. DABELLE

Captain A. E. Dabelle, well known in connection with the Torres Strait pilot service, died yesterday at his residence, Cowles Road. Mosman. Captain Dabelle had been in indifferent health for some weeks past.

Before joining the Torres Strait pilot service he was in the E. and A. Steam ship Line, trading to the East, and held command of the Guthrie under that company's flag. When the Guthrie was sold the late Captain Dabelle joined the pilot service, and was an active member of the association for many years.

Captain Dabelle, who was 57 years of age, had a wide circle of friends in the Commonwealth, among whom the announcement of his death will be received with regret.

The funeral will take place at South Head to-morrow.

STANLEY SPAIN

Born 1873 at Neutral Bay, Sydney, in the family home "Wallaringa". His father, Staunton Spain, owned "Grampus", "Varuna" and "Happy Thought" and these were the principal boats in which he learnt to sail.

1878 was a milestone as this was the year of his first sailing race and I quote from a cutting in his own scrapbook (paper or magazine from which extracted not indicated. Ed.) "The first sailing race that I can recollect as having taken part in was on Boxing Day, 1878, the occasion being the Neutral Harbour Amateur Regatta. Flagship—the well-known old coastal cruising yacht "Opossum", owned by the late Alex Oliver, to whom so many of us owe a debt of gratitude for trips up and down the coast, and our knowledge of boating. The Committee of Management for the Regatta was my father Staunton Spain, Archibald C. Fraser and Alex Oliver. "Opossum" was moored just off my old home "Wallaringa". There were not any programmes as far as I can remember but the printed card of admission to the flagship reproduced here sets out the particulars.

(Sailing Races fixed to begin about 11.30 a.m.—refreshment interval 1.00 p.m. to 2.00 p.m.—pulling races after 2.30 p.m.—other nautical sports as may be arranged—on behalf of Committee of Management S. Spain—A. C. Fraser—A. Oliver. Ed.)

The dinghy I sailed in was about 15 ft. long, 4 ft. 6 ins. beam and 2 ft. deep, fitted with a fixed fin. Centreboards were only to be found in a very few boats in those days. She was rigged with a sprit sail, bamboos being used for spars—partly for lightness, but principally because they grew in great numbers in Wally Bennett's old home "Honda" in Hungry Bay. (Shell Cove Bay. Ed.) The course was round Fort Denison and back. Of course spinnakers were unknown—and I think our parents prohibited us from using square-sails, except when they were with us. I have long since found out it is safer to carry either a squaresail or spinnaker when running free. I think there were about six dinghies of the foregoing type in the race—some of the other competitors were Livvy and Vic Mann, D. W. Roxburgh, Sainy George, Billy Gilchrist, Alf and Wally Bennett, Fred Love and Ned Lord. It was my brother Bill's dinghy that I sailed in. I don't think she was ever christened but was always known as the "Blue Dinghy". Our victory was mainly due to the fact that most of the others in the race capsized. It was quite the usual thing to do if you could not win. It was a kind of excuse. I never did hold this view and although I have been in many races since I have never been in the "drink". Perhaps I am lucky."

Thus started a life of sailing.

Joined S.A.S.C. in 1903, Honorary Life Membership conferred 1937, died 1967. Sixty-four (64) years continuous membership—the greatest in the Club to date.

During his active life in the Club he was always to the fore, having held office as Honorary Secretary, Honorary Treasurer, Club Captain, Rear-Commodore and Vice-Commodore.

Wrote many sailing articles for the "Journals of the Day" under such pen names as Sasca, Bucolic and Double S.

Stan and "Mischief" were very well known on Sydney Harbour. Built in 1902 by W. Golding for D. W. Roxburgh (a cousin of Stan's) she was 22 ft. long and under Stan's hand she was Champion of Champions in 1920 and at this point of time was acquired by him. He again sailed her to Champions of Champions in 1921.

In 1923 he won the "Tempest" Trophy (refer Gales) and requested that he be allowed to convert same into a perpetual trophy for annual competition. The Club agreed and the original trophy then became the "Tempest Memorial Trophy" and the winner received a miniature.

Having made his annual pilgrimage to Broken Bay for the Christmas break he was returning to Sydney on 1st January, 1928, when a southerly buster caught him off Long Reef and unable to make headway he turned and ran back to Broken Bay where "Mischief" was lost on Pearl Beach, Woy Woy.

Stan was always a great supporter of the Pittwater Regatta and served on the organising committee for many years, thus, following the above tragedy a Mischief Memorial Race was always on the programme.

Not wishing to be without a boat he purchased the "Imp" in 1928 and she carried the S.A.S.C. registration A2 as on "Mischief". She was a very handy 21-ft. restricted class and Stan soon had her winning races but she was not his type of boat and he sold her. (It is of interest to note that she sank off Cremorne Point in a heavy westerly in 1935 and was not recovered. Ed.)

Actually Stan was never without a boat because he kept the "Happy Thought" (built 1874) a boat that he dearly loved and since his death his sons have retained her, and although nearly one hundred years old she is still in good condition in a shed in Neutral Bay.

Probably about this time he obtained a half rater which he named "Mischief" but was so shocked at her handling that he very quickly disposed of her.

He knew where there was a 22-ft. half decked boat "Ena" built by W. Dunn in 1903 that was of similar hull lines to the original "Mischief" and in 1935 he was able to purchase her. Removing the half deck, altering the rig, strengthening the hull to allow for the half deck removal he renamed her "Mischief".

Actually this boat proved to be better than the original and he won many races in her, but in himself he was happy and content because he had the correct type of boat again.

He disposed of her in 1953 and completed that season in "Happy Thought" who remained on the Club Register as A2 for his remaining years.

Spain's Steps, Spain's Lookout, Spain's Wharf and Spain's Wharf Road are all well known round Neutral Bay and it was from a small shed at the foot of the latter that Stan always sailed.

The Journey

Sunday, 11th May, 1919 – The Sun

BY YACHT TO NEW GUINEA

Stormy Petrel's Long Voyage

START MADE YESTERDAY

(By the "For'ard Hand")

Mr. S. J. Dempster, a well-known Sydney businessman, left Sydney yesterday afternoon aboard his yacht the Stormy Petrel on a cruise to the Torres Straits and New Guinea. If the voyage is accomplished, it is claimed that it will be the longest undertaken by a Sydney yachtsman.

"The sea has been calling me for a long trip for 32 years," said Mr. S. M. Dempster to me yesterday afternoon, prior to setting out on a cruise to New Guinea and Torres Straits in his handsome yawl-rigged yacht Stormy Petrel. I promised to undertake the present voyage, with Messrs. T. W. Hodgson, E. P. Andreas, R. Old, Captain Stanley Spain, and Captain A. E. Dabelle, in 1915, but when the war assumed such a serious aspect we thought it was advisable to postpone the trip until peace was in sight," he explained. "It has been a long wait, but nevertheless we will enjoy ourselves, as my crew have been brother yachtsmen and the best of friends for many years."

SCIENTIFIC INVESTIGATIONS

Mr. Dempster pointed out that the long trip will not be solely on pleasure, but a number of scientific investigations will be made by Captain Dabelle, who is to be the navigating officer of the craft. His chief inquiry will be on behalf of the New South Wales Observatory as to the origin of the north east winds, which are so popular to all the sailing fraternity. The Stormy Petrel looked a perfect picture as she moved out of Rushcutters Bay shortly after 2.30 p.m. to a blast of many sirens and cheering. She was well down to Plimsoll, heavily laden with ballast, provisions to last for at least two months, and with sufficient fresh water to meet the crew's requirements for at least a month. She is also carrying two auxiliary engines, fishing nets, and reserve gear, in case the unwelcome typhoon is met off the North Queensland coast.

SPLENDID YACHT IN A SEA

The Stormy Petrel has the reputation of being one of Sydney's best yachts in a sea. Mr. Dempster has had many enjoyable trips on the coast, and all classes of dirty weather have been met. He has no fear of accident, as the boat will be under the guidance of such a clever mariner as Captain Dabelle, who is the chief pilot of the Queensland Government. He was also for many years the commanding officer on several of the E. and A. line trading to China and Japan. Prior to coming to Sydney the Stormy Petrel was known as the Hurrica II., was built for Mr. Edward Webster, of Hobart, from the plans of that great English designer Nicholson. Mr. Nicholson, it will be remembered, prepared the plans for Sir Thomas Lipton's Shamrock IV. Mr. Webster for many years cruised in the craft around the Tasmanian coast, and often made many journeys to Melbourne.

The Stormy Petrel is 54ft. 6in. long and has a beam of 12ft. 9in. She has a draught of 7ft. 4in., and the registered tonnage is 24.44. The cruise will occupy four months, and Mr. Hodgson remarked, "We are going to follow the sun." The craft is to visit Broken Bay, then Port Stephens, and a stay will also be made in Moreton Bay before proceeding to Thursday Island, which will be the base of the tourists. The New Guinea coast will be explored, and a peep along the shores of the Gulf of Carpentaria will be undertaken. Mr. Dempster is to inaugurate a series of sports at Thursday Island in honour of Lord Jellicoe's visit, and at this little spot he is to be joined by another Sydney yachtsman, Mr. Robert Bromley.

YACHT'S RECORD

It will be the longest trip that has been undertaken by a yacht on the Australian coast for many years. In the early days the Jess put up a great performance by sailing to Thursday Island. Of later years Mr. Walter M. Marks took a long voyage in the Culwulla III., now known as the Eun-na-mara. She travelled nearly 7000 miles of ocean, including one trip from Sydney Heads to Brisbane, and from Sydney to Hobart, and thence to Port Phillip, in quest of the Sayonara Cup, which was eventually won on an appeal from the Sayonara.

Mr. Dempster has done a great deal of yachting, and it is stated that he served in his early days as an apprentice under the well-known veteran mariner, Captain Peter. His great races in the inter-State contests 15 years ago off Sydney Heads, when he steered the Bona against Sayonara, are still fresh in the minds of all yachtsmen.

At a complimentary dinner given to Mr. Dempster and his amateur crew by the Royal Prince Alfred Yacht Club at the Hotel Australia on the eve of his departure, the yachtsman was complimented on his enterprise by Vice-Commodore Arthur Crane (R.P.A.Y.C.), Vice-Commodore Alfred Milson (R.S. Y.S.), and Messrs. J. J. Rouse, Walter Reeks, Arthur Milson, A. Wallis, and C. L. Garland. Mr. A. Langan, on behalf of the R.P.A.Y.C., presented Mr. Dempster with three flags—the blue ensign, the club's burgee, and his own house flag.

Sunday, 11th May, 1919 – Sunday Times

Stormy Petrel Starts for New Guinea

Mr. S. M. Dempster of the Sydney firm of Marshall and Dempster set out in his handsome yawl-rigged yacht, Stormy Petrel, on a voyage to Torres Straits and New Guinea yesterday afternoon. He was accompanied by several old yachting enthusiasts, viz., Mr. T. Hodgson (an ex-Mayor of North Sydney), Captain Stanley Spain, Mr. H. Andreas (of Leura), Mr. R. Old, and Captain Dabelle (a Queensland Government pilot, who is to act as navigating officer of the craft).

Mr. Dempster in a message to our representative yesterday afternoon, said that he had been looking forward to this voyage for 32 years, but for business reasons, and owing to the war, he could not undertake the voyage before. "It will not be altogether a pleasure voyage," added Mr. Dempster, "as Captain Dabelle has been commissioned by the New South Wales Observatory to conduct a number of scientific investigations along the Queensland coast, the chief being the origin of the north east winds."

The little craft, which is just over 54 feet long, looked a picture as she started from her moorings in Rushcutter's Bay. She was well down to her plimsoll with stores sufficient to last two months, and water to meet the requirements of the amateur crew for a month. She carried two auxiliary engines and a reserve gear and extra ballast in case the unwelcome typhoon is met off the North Queensland coast. It was claimed that Mr. Dempster's adventure would be the longest voyage undertaken by a yachtsman in the Southern Hemisphere. The previous longest voyage on record was by Mr. W. M. Marks, in the *Culwulla*, when he sailed from Sydney to Brisbane, thence to Hobart and Port Phillip where he beat *Sayonara* on an appeal in the Interstate contest.

Before putting to sea the yacht visited the grounds of the Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron at Neutral Bay where a number of farewells took place. Sir Alexander MacCormick (commodore of the R.S.Y.S.) Mr. Alfred Milson (vice-commodore R.S.Y.S.), Mr. Arthur Milson and Mr. T. W. Bremner visited the *Stormy Petrel* and there were many heart good wishes for a safe return.

The journey down the harbour was one that will be long remembered. There was a fleet of yachts, cruisers, open boats and motor boats in the vicinity, and they surrounded the yacht until she dropped anchor in Watson's Bay for medical inspection. The most prominent were the ex-Victorian champion *Sayonara* (Mr. and Mrs. Paul Ross), *Bona* (Messrs. Bradley and Towne), *Morna* (Sir Alexander MacCormick), *Mistral* (Mr. A. G. Milson), *Athene* (Mr. D. Carment), *White Wings* (Mr. A. J. Muston), *Aoma* (Mr. J. S. Palmer), *Eun-na-mara* (Mr. A. Wilson), *Hermione* (Mr. R. Walters), *Oithona*, *Rana* (Mr. R. H. C. Down), *Dawn* (Mr. O. Backhouse), *Happy Thoughts* (Mr. Arthur Spain), *Yeulba* (Mr. Eric Heath), *Magic* (Mr. Fred Dendy), *Culwulla 1V* (Mr. W. Dalgruno), and numerous others.

Medical inspection was not completed until nearly 5 o'clock, and at 5.30 the *Stormy Petrel* cleared the Heads on her long voyage. Calls on the New South Wales coast will be made at Broken Bay and Port Stephens. A stop is to be made at Moreton Bay, and the base of the happy sportsmen will be Thursday Island.

Monday, 12th May, 1919 - Sydney Morning Herald

STORMY PETREL."

STARTS FOR NEW GUINEA.

INTERESTING YACHT CRUISE.

An auspicious start was made on Saturday afternoon by Mr. S. M. Dempster and his friends in the ketch *Stormy Petrel* for their pleasure cruise to New Guinea. Promptly at 2.30 p.m. the yacht left her moorings with jib and mizzen set and her engine going. At Garden Island she was met by Mr. Alfred G. Milson in his motor yacht *Mackerel*, and was accompanied to Neutral Bay, where they were joined by *Sayonara* (Mr. P. Ross), *Mischief* (Mr. Arthur J. Milson), *Culwulla IV*. (Mr. W. Dalgarno, representing Mr. W. M. Marks), *Thistle* (Mr. G. E. S. Sandeman), *Istria* (Col. A. Spain), with Commander W. S. Spain, R.A.N.R., on board, both brothers of Captain Stanley Spain, who is one of the crew of the *Stormy Petrel*, and *Kestrel* (Mr. Russell Marshall). The last-named boat, which is owned by Mr. Dempster's partner, carried a large party of friends, including Captain Webber, representing the League of Ancient Mariners, whose Burgee was hoisted.

The *Stormy Petrel*, flying the Royal Prince Alfred Yacht Club's Burgee and Mr. Dempster's racing flag, which were presented at the valedictory dinner on Thursday evening, cruised past the club house of the Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron. Mr. Dempster, being a member of both clubs, dipped his ensign and received, from the clubhouse flagstaff the message by code flags - "Wish you a pleasant voyage" and "Good-bye." Captain Stanley Spain's residence in Neutral Bay was also saluted, and the yachts then proceeded direct to Watson's Bay.

It was necessary for the *Stormy Petrel* to cruise in Watson's Bay for about an hour and a half awaiting final inspection of the authorities, who unfortunately were delayed on the *Anchises*, and the yacht consequently did not clear the Heads until almost 5 o'clock, when the accompanying boats returned to the harbour as the *Stormy Petrel* hoisted her mainsail and stood out to sea.

The *Stormy Petrel*, which is a well-found auxiliary ketch of 27 tons, Thames measurement, was built by C. Lucas, of Hobart, in 1907, and was purchased under the name of *Hurrica II*. from Mr. William Oliver, of Melbourne in 1912, Captain A. E. Dabelle (Torres Straits pilot; is navigator, and Mr Dempster has been most thorough in equipping the yacht for the cruise, during which it is intended to take some scientific observations.

Wednesday, 28th May, 1919 - The Macleay Chronical

THE STORMY PETREL

Friday last, through stress of weather, the well-known yawl-rigged yacht, *Stormy Petrel*, owned by Mr. S. M. Dempster, a Sydney businessman, put into Trial Bay, and sheltered there till Saturday afternoon, when she left to continue her cruise to Torres Strait and New Guinea. Accompanying Mr. Dempster are five of his old yachting comrades, and the yacht is under the command of Captain Dabelle, chief pilot of the Queensland Government and a mariner particularly

acquainted with the Eastern seas.

Strange to say, Cap, Hinde, the Macleay pilot, on visiting the yacht in Trial Bay to inquire her trouble, found in Capt. Dobelle an old friend he had not soon since 1888.

Saturday, 14th June, 1919 – Bowen Independent

VISIT OF THE STORMY PETREL.

The arrival of the auxiliary yacht Stormy Petrel on Wednesday last was an event of considerable interest, as it is rarely a vessel of her class calls here.

In connection with the above the "Sydney Bulletin" of May 15 has the following: - "The Stormy Petrel hoisted sail last Saturday for its blow in island seas. Thursday Island and New Guinea are to be visited by yachtsman Dempster and party. The P. A. Y. C. (Prince Alfred Yacht Club. — Ed.) gave them, a great send-off dinner at the Hotel Australia."

The Stormy Petrel is an auxiliary yacht, 52 feet long; and 14 feet beam; a draught of 9 feet, cabin 12 feet long, with 7 feet head room and beautifully fitted throughout, every available space being utilised. She left Sydney on 10th May and never touched land until she put in at Long Island in search of water, of which she carries only 80 gallons. 'Being unable to find water there the party came on to Port Denison and express themselves immensely pleased with their visit. The personnel of the party is as follows: S. Dempster, (Marshall & Dempster; Estate Agents, Sydney) owner and skipper; T. Hodgson (Hodgson & Sons, Architects, Moore Street; Sydney); H. Andreas, Sydney; Captain Henry, (Returned Soldier) Neutral Bay, Sydney; A. Decell (Torres Straits Pilot) Navigating Officer; and one paid hand.

Having landed on a half-holiday difficulty was experienced in obtaining rations, which was got over by kindness of the host and hostess of the North Australian Hotel, who quickly supplied fresh provisions which needless to say was done full justice to after weeks of corned pork and biscuit.

Some delay was experienced undergoing quarantine and thus full use of the three days in port could not be made, however time was found for a shooting expedition to Kaili Valley on Saturday, Messrs Hodgson and Andreas, accompanied by Commodore T. J. Heron, as the guest of the Port Denison Sailing Club, putting in a good day there, the menu being changed to wild duck of which 15 were put aboard. The party were enthusiastic in their praises of Bowen and their treatment and the shooters so pleased with their days outing that they made arrangements with Mr A. J. Hall-Scott to pay a visit to Kaili Valley next year.

If it is possible the Stormy Petrel will call in here on her return trip South.

Wednesday, 18th June, 1919 - The Daily Telegraph

YACHT STORMY PETREL

A telegram received yesterday by the Royal Prince Alfred Yacht Club from Mr. S. M. Dempster stated that the yacht, Stormy Petrel, arrived at Thursday Island on the 15th instant. all well.

The following articles appeared in the Evening News and contain log entries by one of the crew of the Stormy Petrel. There are 5 instalments but unfortunately, the ends of Instalments 3 and 4 were illegible.

Thursday, 24th July, 1919 - The Evening News

THE STORMY PETREL

Arrives at Thursday Island

STORY OF THE CRUISE 1.

The cruise of the Sydney yacht Stormy Petrel from Fort Jackson to Thursday Island - the most adventurous up to date of any vessel of her class, has not been without incident. A member of the crew. in a letter to "Bob Backstay," of the "Evening News," gives a full account of the trip north. He writes: -

We arrived at Thursday Island at 2 p.m. on June 15. and dropped anchor just off the west jetty among a fleet of pearling luggers. Just as we were coming up through Ellis Channel a yacht about half a mile off hoisted the blue ensign and dipped. It was our old friend Sandy Hutchins, captain of the Government ketch Melbider, and incidentally an old R.P.A.Y.C. man. and like a Sydney yachtsman has been a pal to us during our stay.

On the way from Sydney to Port Stephens a large waterspout passed very close; the Chief Gunner was ready with the ship's cannon. but as the spout passed it was not necessary to bring same into use.

After stowing everything snug and rigging our life lines and sea anchor we made ready for sea, but just as we were about to start a southerly gale started and lasted for a week. We put in a very wretched time during that period as it blew and rained constantly and it knows how to rain, too, in Port Stephens.

The Start North

At last we started our trip north. We were given a great send-off from Nelson's Bay, all the available craft accompanying us as far as the Heads, and there was much flag wagging from the Lighthouse. On the eve of our departure several presents came aboard. Including a crate of nice young fowls from Mr. Robinson, the outer Lighthousekeeper. It was from there our trip really started, so we were all put into our proper watches. The skipper and the navigating officer (Captain Dabelle) took the 8 to 10 and 2 to 4: the mate (Stan Spain) and the bo'sun (Tom Hodgson) the next, and the

A.B. (M'Crea) and chief engineer (Harry Andreas) followed on.

During the first night out just as the mate came on watch at 1 p.m. he called out all hands to witness the Australian Squadron passing. The night was fine and an excellent view was obtained. Towards midnight the wind increased from E.S.E. and the sea became rough at a quarter-past midnight. Crowdy Head Lighthouse was abeam when the wind changed and came away hard from the west. The next day the wind being very heavy and the sea rough with a heavy E.N.E. swell, the vessel was put under storm canvas. Later we went into Trial Bay and anchored for the night.

The next day, May 23, the mate was on deck at 8 a.m. and noticing the blue ensign being hoisted at the Pilot Station came below and reported that Peace had been signed. However, when the pilot came aboard later on he told us they were keeping up Empire Day, consequently the mate was logged for making a mistake and was compelled to shout for all hands.

We continued our journey north. We were in a dead calm off Clarence Heads and all hands put lines over the side, and in a few minutes the decks were lined with flathead. This addition to the stores came in handy, for during the morning it was discovered that something had gone wrong with the corn beet in the harness cask, and the whole of the contents had to be dumped, the funeral rites being carried out by the bo'sun.



Catching a Porpoise

About 3 o'clock next morning during the skipper's watch, as the Stormy was bowling along at about eight knots, a sudden shock was felt. The watch below rushed on deck thinking a mine had been struck, but it was discovered that a Porpoise had been caught across the bob stay, where it had evidently been attempting to scratch the barnacles off its back. When it became released the other porpoises chased him, apparently to his death, as they all disappeared.

After experiencing strong southerly weather, Moreton Bay was entered and anchor dropped in Yellow Patch at three minutes to midnight. Next morning it dragged during the night, so we weighed and took up a fresh anchorage closer to the pilot boat. At breakfast time our mail arrived, also an invitation from the pilots to lunch with them and placing their bathroom at our disposal. All hands accepted the invitation and did ample justice to the lunch. We spent the last part of the day aboard their ship, and thoroughly enjoyed the rest. Pilots Roberts, Lang, and Scott returned our call later in the day.

As our supply of fresh meat had run out we arranged through our friends the pilots to obtain a supply from Brisbane. Alas! during the next night the wind and sea increased, and as the vessel was rolling and straining at her anchors, which we expected to part at any time, we were compelled to up anchor, wear ship, and put to tea under stormy conditions. Much difficulty was experienced in weighing anchor, and at times it was feared it would be necessary to slip them.

We thus reluctantly left our stores behind, and our anticipation of Queensland's tropical fruits and juicy steaks vanished, and by noon all sight of Cape Moreton was lost, and we were tearing along with the south-westerly gale. It was our intention to go via Sandy Strait. But owing to the strong wind we could not enter.

Staunch Little Vessel

We also lost our second chance by being unable to enter the Curtis Channel, on account of westerly gale blowing; we were thus compelled to take Capricorn Channel, the outer deep sea route – a record for such a small craft as the little Stormy. However, she came through safe and sound, and although during the night much anxiety was felt that some of the seas would come aboard, the staunch little vessel proved her sea worthiness, and under skilful handling not one real sea came aboard. During the voyage between Brisbane and North Reef lighthouse there was a big sea running and too rough to read the log. To ensure the safety of the crew extra lifelines were rigged across the deck at the mizzen. As we approached the lighthouse the weather became much more moderate, until at last, when we got up to the reef, it was calm enough for us to obtain a photo of what is considered the most lonely lighthouse in Australia. The attendant is entirely dependent upon the 'relief' ship for news and supplies as very few vessels pass close to this part.

The following morning (Sunday) the seagulls welcomed our arrival in the strait by perching on our trucks and spars. At one time there was a bird perched on the main truck, main gaff, and mizzen aft. During the day the square sail was set and remained as practically our means of propulsion until we reached Thursday Island, the total distance run under it being 627 miles and the longest continuous run 381 miles, an average of 4.75 knots per hour.

(To be Continued]

Friday, 25th July, 1919 - The Evening News

THE STORMY PETREL

Story of Northern Cruise

WELCOME AT THURSDAY

11 - (Continued from yesterday)

Although the day was an ideal Sunday, and everything was peaceful, we ended up by a very exciting event. At midnight we had at last entered a narrow passage and were bowling along in grand style. As we were passing a small island the navigation officer took a bearing and found that the tide had set us out of our course, and that we were dangerously close to an island dead ahead. To lower away squaresail and start engines was the work of a few seconds. The wind was blowing hard from the south at the time, and there was not sufficient power to effect an offing, so it became necessary to set the mizzen and staysail, a rather dangerous operation in the big sea that was running. However, it was accomplished without mishap and the vessel slowly beat up to windward and got clear.

On Monday night Whitsunday Passage was entered and we anchored off Long Island as the crew wanted to stretch their legs, and also insisted upon being initiated into the art of drinking the milk from coconuts which they viewed from the deck. We remained at Long Island till Wednesday morning when owing to shortage of fresh water we made a start for Bowen. While at Long Island the muffler belonging to the engine was taken ashore to be cleaned out, when it was found to be so full of carbon that it was impossible to clean same. It was decided to discard it altogether.

A Thrilling Time

While we were under the lee of Gloucester Head we had a thrilling time. The squalls hitting off the headland were exceptionally sudden and scary, and formed powerful whirlwinds, one of which shifted the dingey out of her lashings. Bowen was reached, and we anchored close to the pier, which is the only berth available for craft at our site. As we were on a lee shore, and a big sea running, two anchors were let go. Captain Wilson, of the ketch Florant, came off and assured us that while we were not in the most comfortable berth, we were at least in a safe one, as we had dropped our anchors in the swinging berth, and they would have to drag uphill if they shifted. During next day, as the wind had increased, another and bigger anchor was set out and with the extra weight of chain the vessel rode more comfortably. The following day all hands went ashore and had a look around. Some of the party were invited to shoot and came aboard in the evening with a bag full of fine duck. Among those we met ashore was our old friend Captain Hutton, of Houlder Brothers, who in his usual hospitable manner made our visit very enjoyable. On the Thursday evening all our hands were invited to a public dinner of welcome, but as the weather was so bad only two of the party could get away, but they had an enjoyable time. Mr. Heron, Commodore of the local Sailing Club, was particularly good to our party, and made all sorts of arrangements for our enjoyment. Our party are also very indebted to Captain Wilson of the Florant, also to the mate, his brother.

On Saturday we weighed out three anchors and put to sea again. At noon next day we passed Palm Islands. The sight of these Islands reminded us of the early stages of the war, as it was upon them that the Berrima landed the men to stretch their legs, and give them an opportunity for becoming accustomed to the style of country that they would meet in Rabaul.

Lunar Rainbow.

We passed Cooktown at 10 p.m. next day about five miles off. During the early morning a very brilliant lunar rainbow was seen. During the early hours of the morning while passing through the Lizzard Passage the wind suddenly changed and set us back just as we were at a very dangerous spot and it was again necessary to call upon the engine to pull us out of a hole. There were thick rain squalls, accompanying the wind, and which made things more unpleasant; however, thanks to "Thornycroft" we got through. During this time a number of fish were washed aboard.

We anchored in Stokes Bay, Stanley Island for the night. Just as anchors dropped a number of fires appeared on shore. It was feared by the crew that they were unfriendly natives, so the ship's cannon was brought on deck and a couple of rounds fired. However, no natives came aboard and as all hands were tired after that broken rest in Lizzard Passage, they were soon in their bunks asleep.

Night Island and Pelican Island were passed and we anchored under Farmer Island for night. The next night we dropped our pick under the lee of Carincross and put in a nightmare of a night. The Island split the wind and tide, and both came together at the spot we anchored. The vessel rolled, gunwales under and at times it was feared that she would roll her masts out. At 3 a.m. we could stand it no longer, so we weighed anchor and started away under double reefed squaresail with an overcast sky and big following sea. Towards daylight the weather had sufficiently moderated to shake the reefs out and the voyage continued under favourable conditions.

At about 10 a.m. we entered Albany Pass, the most glorious sight we had seen since leaving Sydney. We passed through with our friend the squaresail set, and ably assisted by engine, ran off nine knots per hour, but even at the speed we had an excellent view, giving the most tantalising invitation for us to land and have a picnic. Coconut palms with their gigantic leaves and loaded with fruit offered not only shade but a cool and invigorating drink.

Fast Running Tide

We passed quite close to Jardine's house and as we did so we dipped our ensign and the caretaker and his family waved flags and palm leaves in reply. On the sloping hills of the Pass are a number of ant hills some of which are over 15ft. high. There are, however, some on Cape York which are 36ft high. Just as we left the Pass a Japanese steamer entered, but as we took a shorter route to Thursday Island and entered by the Ellis Channel we beat her. Great care had to be exercised in entering this channel as the tide runs at a tremendous pace. We dropped our pick just about two lengths off the western jetty, among a flotilla of luggers, and shortly afterwards the doctor came aboard, granted us pratique, and all hands went ashore and had a bath of fresh water and a nice meal at the Imperial Hotel. Although it was Sunday, we were not in the hotel for five minutes before the postmaster sent us down our mail.

After tea a number of the leading townspeople came and offered us a welcome to their island. We found the island was suffering much for want of foodstuff, owing to the shipping strike, and we were compelled to bring our own food ashore.

We paid a visit to the local hospital and found them short of necessaries so we sent them a large hamper. The following day was spent in loading stores, which we had sent on ahead, and in generally cleaning up the ship. Advantage was also taken of an offer from one of our friends to store a lot of our spare gear which we would not require while cruising around the island. A motor launch was placed at our disposal for fishing and several of our party went out. Our host was Mr. Tom Farquher, a household name from Thursday Island to Sydney.

Tuesday, 5th August, 1919 - The Evening News

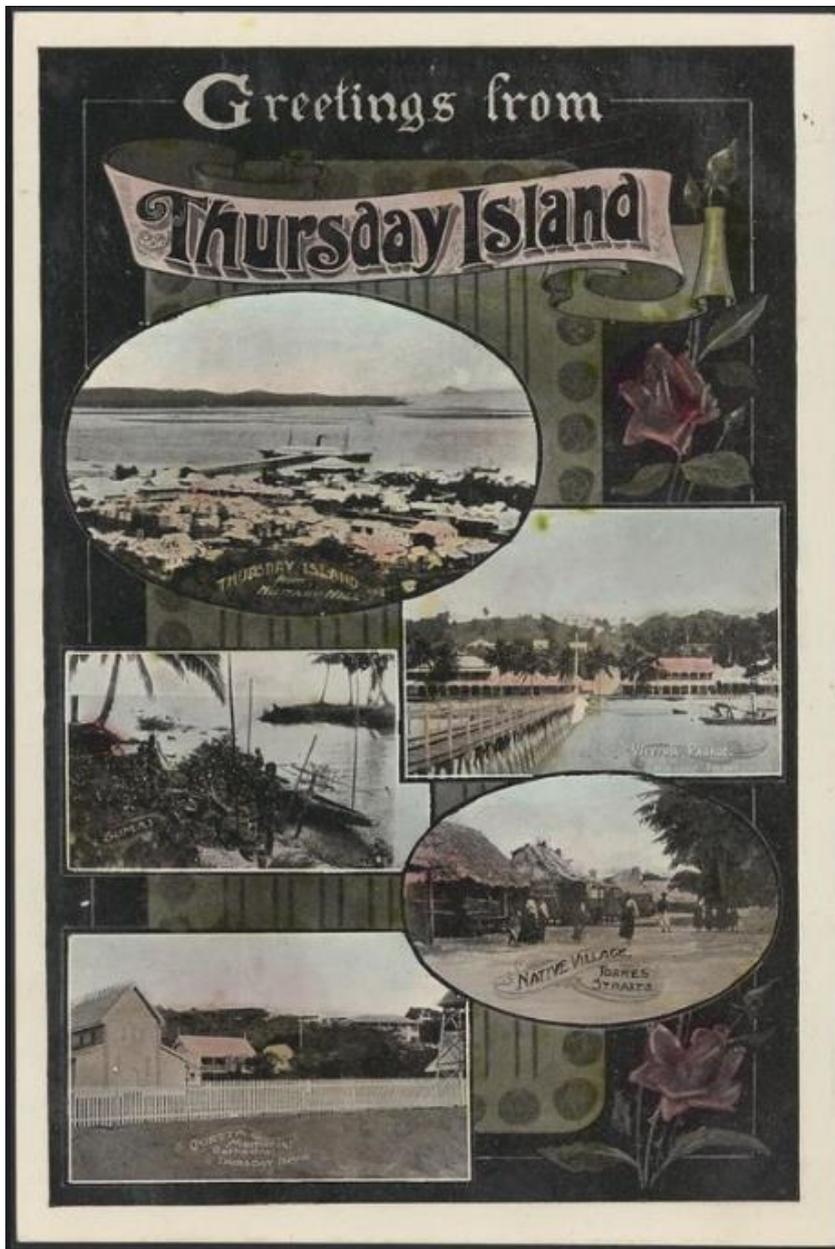
THE STORMY PETREL

STORY OF NORTHERN CRUISE

INTERESTING NATIVE CUSTOMS

III

At six bells on Friday morning, the captain started to heave up the anchor and by 7.25 a.m. we were under way, and,



accompanied by several luggers, passed out via Ellis Channel. Before leaving Thursday Island we engaged two natives to act as pilots.

The first night out we anchored at Coconut Island and went ashore next day. Some of the party took their guns and the rest went net fishing. Coconut is a small Island, with very few natives on it. A charming grove of palms may be seen, and whoever planted them showed great discretion, as they cover about 300 yards by 150 yards, and beneath the branches the natives have their huts, and even in the hottest day of summer it is quite cool. The natives on this Island have no matches, and no idea of time. There is no clock on the Island.

Leaving there at lunch time, we arrived at Yorke Island at 5.30, and dropped anchor just off the village. We were fairly successful at fishing here, and spent a very pleasant day with Mr. Connolly, the schoolmaster in charge, who took us all round and showed us the sights. Here we had an opportunity of seeing some of the school work done by the native children, and let me say that we had never seen better. I have samples of writing done by boys of 14 years better than the best I have ever seen in any school in New South Wales, and I have visited many in my time. We were received by the councillors when we landed, and conducted up an avenue of palms about a mile long, and artistically laid out. We were shown a pet billy goat, which stands on his hind leg, and begs like a dog. We were presented with some fowls and shells by the natives, and when leaving all the children lined up on the beach and sang 'Tipperary' and several other songs in English for us.



Native Boys on Yorke Island

Dancing for the benefit of the visitors. These natives live the ideal simple life. They are, to a great extent, prevented from contamination from outside influences by Government regulation. No one is allowed to land on the islands without permission from the Protector of Aborigines in Queensland.

Clever Piloting

We arrived at Darnley Island at 7.30. during a very heavy rain squall and anchored just off the beach. When ashore next day the skipper and mate walked up a hill, and, as it was low tide, saw the reefs round the spot where the Stormy was lying and It was simply wonderful how the natives had brought her in, for it must be born in mind there are no leading lights in these spots. The pilot simply stands up for'ard and directs; sometimes he will stand up in the cross trees and direct. Arrangements were made to put the Stormy Petrel on the beach and clean her. In order to make sure of keeping clear of the reefs two more pilots were brought into requisition. One of them, Koko, is the Chief Councillor of the island; the other, Peter, the Second Councillor. In Koko we found a man just as punctual as our skipper, for, on the tick of the appointed time, he stepped aboard. We beached the Stormy, and found her in an excellent state, beyond a few pieces of green weed, she was perfectly clean. While making arrangements for beaching, the skipper and mate were sorely tried, for as they went from one spot to another the natives came out with coconut milk and snorted not an ordinary tot, but about a pint each time. Now this is all right in the form of beer, but when it comes to six coconuts in an hour, one wishes one were a camel, for the natives cannot understand a refusal to accept a drink. The skipper and mate were just about to step into the dingey, after a fifteen mile walk, when they were accosted by a fine old native, who

said, "My name is Louis; me church warden;" and insisted upon them returning to his palace, where he invited them to sit down on the floor and he unearthed an old glass from a box and more milk came along. However, Louie proved a very entertaining chap and it ended by them coming away laden with eggs.

At Darnley Island

Darnley Island is a fine island and grows good food, including paw paws, yams, bananas, sugar cane, sweet potatoes, beans etc. The rock is volcanic and there is plenty of fresh water. The natives are principally employed in the luggers, obtaining shell and bech-de-mer. Fish are plentiful and obtained by huge traps built like a swimming bath which overflows at high tide and as the tide recedes the fish remain in, and the natives catch them by means of spears. We endeavoured to find out how long these traps have been in use but even the oldest native could not tell us. Tradition has it that they were originally not built as traps for fish but as a defence against other natives landing.

During our stay here we had an opportunity at attending a Court of Justice held in the local schoolroom and presided over by three Councillors and a more solemn affair one could not imagine. The only amusing part was the fact that the court was kept waiting.....

Wednesday, 6th August, 1919 - The Evening News

The Stormy Petrel

Interesting Northern Cruise

THE GARDEN OF THE STRAIT

IV.

Leaving Darnier, we went along to Murray Islands, which are without doubt the garden of the Straits. Every kind of food is grown on these islands, and the gardens would be a credit to any white man. We arrived just on sundown and anchored in about two fathoms of water. We drifted astern about our own length and putting the lead line over, found we were floating to 18 1/2 fathoms of water. This is quite the rule here. The water deepens very quickly. Another curious thing is the wind is always offshore at this time of year, and you can drop your pick in a few feet and pay out chain. If you were to swing in the opposite direction, you would soon be high and dry on a bed of coral.

Mr. John Bruce, the schoolmaster in charge, rowed off to welcome us, and extend an invitation to a native dance given in honour of our arrival. The ship's cannon was brought into requisition, and a salute was accorded to Mr. Bruce. It was afterwards ascertained that the natives on shore were somewhat scared. They reckoned the first gun killed Mr. Bruce, and the second the boy who rowed him off. Their belief was further strengthened, owing to the fact that we had previously been working the search light on their village. Mr. Bruce has been just on thirty years at Murray Island. He is a fine old Scotch gentleman, and beloved by everyone who meets him. The natives there almost worship him.

Murray Island Natives

We accompanied Mr. Bruce ashore, and were entertained by the natives dancing for some hours. As time was short, they had not had a chance of getting into proper dance rig, but, all the same, it was a fine sight. The following day all hands went ashore and were officially welcomed by the Mamoose and his councillors and police, all in uniform. The councillors wear red Jerseys, with the word councillor in gold, and white trousers; and the police wear a blue uniform - G.R.I. buttons, red facing on cuffs, red piping on trousers, and a peaked cap, with red band. They also wear gold chevrons, according to rank. The welcome, being finished, each of us was taken in hand by a guide, who conducted us to spots of interest on the island.

They have a road right round the island, about 30 feet wide, and on either side, at regular spaces, are gigantic palms, the branches of which, meeting at the top, form a glorious shady avenue. As we reached each little village the chief would meet us, and after cutting down a palm leaf, and spreading it on the ground, invite us to be seated; he would shout a tot in the form of a coconut drink.

One spot of great interest was the cemetery. Several graves had fine granite headstones; while many graves were merely marked with bamboo. Here and there an old iron bedstead had taken the spot. Tablets, printed in English, were on many headstones, some of them dating many years.

The following day was Sunday. The natives have the greatest respect for the Sabbath, and Divine service appears to go continuously from 8 a.m. We attended 11 a.m. service and it has left an everlasting impression on the writer - the way in which the service is ardently conducted.

The church is built of lime, manufactured in the island, and has seating accommodation for about 360 persons. On the occasion of our visit it was filled and many had to stand. The service is conducted by one of the natives, who is assisted by a native lay reader. They have a fine choir, made up of all ages, ranging from 60 years to 14 years. All the men sit on one side of the aisle, and the women on the other. A space at the end of the church is reserved for women who being babies, in order that they may retire should their babies cry.

Barbarous Custom Disappears

In the early days it was the custom for the natives to kill one of the twins when such an event occurred. However, when the wife of one of the missionaries gave birth to twins, and did not follow the native custom, they changed their ideas,

and now all the children are allowed to live.

The natives regard the coconut trees as sacred and to destroy one is an offence. On one occasion Mr. Bruce wanted to clear a space for a garden, which necessitated cutting down a couple of trees. The natives readily agreed to his suggestion; but when later on the sardines disappeared, they blamed the destruction of trees for this. However, the sardines re-appeared in due course; but no attempts have been made to cut any more trees down.



NATIVE VILLAGE, MURRAY ISLAND.

On Monday a picnic was given in our honour, and we were taken over to Dover Island, about five miles distant. This island has the appearance of once being part of the main island. The natives say it was but the storm came and blew it away, as God was angry with them for having killed a shipwrecked crew who were cast ashore there many years ago. One day the mate of the Stormy treated us to a thrilling time by harpooning a shark. He and two natives went out in the dingey belonging to the yacht, which is only 12ft. long. They were soon fast to a hefty shark 9ft long and the dingey was towed along at record speed over coral reefs in a few feet of water, much to the anxiety of the skipper, who expected every moment to see his little pet smashed to splinters on a lump of coral. However, although the shark towed her along at about 18 knots, the mate by skilful handling of his steering oar kept clear, and the shark was eventually landed on the beach, much to the admiration of the natives and the relief of the skipper.

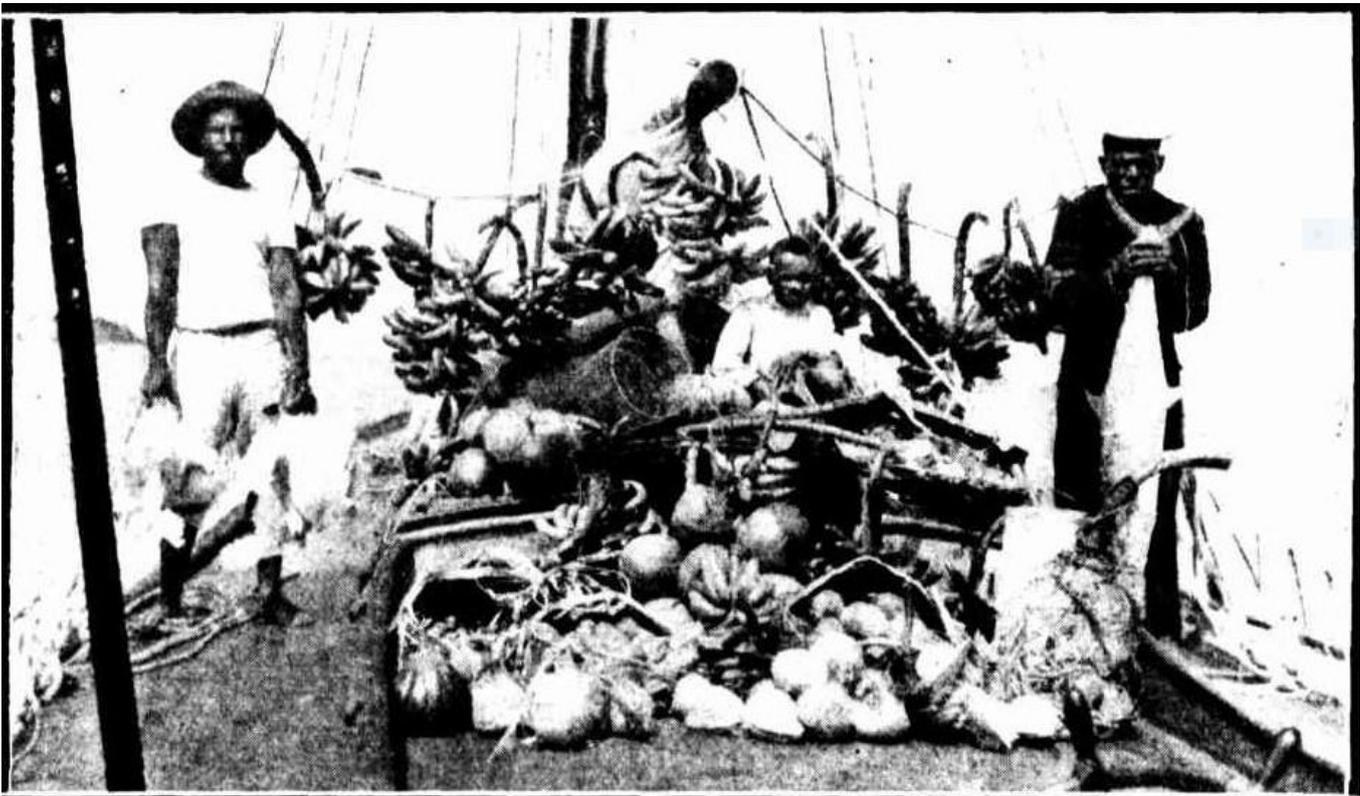
A Native Dance

In the evening a special native dance was arranged and we were again invited ashore - this time the natives having had more time at their disposal for preparation, appeared in full warrior rig, and judging by the result, they went to no end of trouble to do the thing properly. Their head dress consists of feathers set up on a frame of bamboo, shaped like a tyre and making a very weird effect. Various coloured grass cover their loins and shells are used on ankles and arms and in addition pretty leaves are used, decorating the forearms. Light is obtained by lighting a bundle of palm leaves and kerosene lamps are set up round the circle. When the dance is in full swing, about 50 warriors take part, and as a conclusion each one comes and dances a solo, so one can imagine the length of time it takes to get through a dance – and especially as say one performer may be entered half a dozen times. A full orchestra consisting of drums and singers continues without a break from start to finish. At certain stages of the dance the wives of the performers are allowed to run into the centre and light up their husbands by means of a lamp. This adds to the weirdness of the scene. Upon the first occasion that we witnessed a dance



Sardine Fishing at Murray Island.

It takes five people to make a fishing team. Two, with bamboo poles, rush amongst the fish close to the shore and beat the water behind them, while one scoops up as many as he can in a werris (bamboo basket), and transfers the catch to the basket held by the two girls.



Gifts to Sydney Yachtsmen from the Natives of Murray Island

The islanders are an exceedingly generous people. When the Stormy Petrel was sighted they brought all kinds of gifts to the shore to greet the visitors. Some of these are seen in the photograph. They included yams, pawpaws, coconuts, bananas, pumpkins, fowls, and other things grown on the island, in addition to a number of curios.

Friday, 8th August, 1919 - The Evening News

The Stormy Petrel

CRUISE AMONG THE ISLANDS

Fishing by Searchlight

V.

This same light proved a very useful piece of cargo. as the mate took it aboard the dingey and setting it in motion soon had her half-full of garfish. This operation was repeated with great advantage upon many occasions. Prior to leaving this charming island the Chief Councillor sent a message to our skipper that the people wanted to make us a present, and the ceremony took place just in front of Mr. Bruce's house. The presents consisted of coconuts, bananas, yams, paw paws, sweet potatoes, shells, fowls and various curios. At 8 a.m. the anchor was weighed and sail set for Darnley. As we gathered way, we dipped our flag and fired a salvo from the cannon. The natives assembled on the beach and gave us three cheers. Our intention was merely to land our pilot at Darnley and then proceed to Stephens Island, but we had no sooner dropped our anchor than our old friend Koko came alongside and told us the people wanted to make us a present so we accompanied him ashore. On arrival at the village we were asked to be seated on forms and while waiting for the presentation were regaled with paw paws. While we waited the natives came from all the different parts of the Island, each carrying some present, which they deposited at the rear of one of the huts.

Generous Natives

When all was ready, Sergeant Speer the head of the police, took charge and marshalled them all up. He formed them into a procession with Koko at the head, and the children next, then the people, and as they marched along they sang songs. The most touching part was when they all came up and deposited their various presents at our feet. Then Koko made a speech, and said how pleased the people were to see us again and while they were very anxious to make us a present they regretted that as they had some worm in the ground which was eating all their food they were unable to give as much as they wanted to. Judging from the size of the heap, goodness knows what they would have given had they not been prevented. Suffice it to say it again filled the ship's dingey for two trips. After Koko's speech, our skipper replied, and the ceremony was completed by all hands singing 'God save the King.'

We made old Koko accompany us aboard, and after entertaining him for a while sent him back loaded with presents from the ship's stores. Among the presents we received from Darnley were pearl shells, eggs, fowls, goat's meat, pumpkins, as well as similar presents which were given us at Murray Island. We left early next morning, and, as we dipped our ensign, Koko fired six shots with his gun, and we replied with our cannon. Koko had been waiting since daybreak on the beach to give us the send off.

Setting our squaresail, we soon covered the distance to Stephens Island, where we dropped anchor, and had lunch. We had intended to remain there for the night, but found the position too exposed, and, as it reminded us too much of Carincross, we up pick and went on to Dalrymple Island. Stephens Island is notorious for a legend that a number of diamonds are planted away and cannot be found. Many years ago a ship was wrecked on this spot, and the natives stole the diamonds from the captain. They were hidden, and the only native who knew where they were hidden died, and the secret died with him. Many attempts have been made to locate them, but without success. One, a well organised one, by the Rev. Walker, who engaged a number of the natives to dig every particle of soil and sift it. One of the boys who we have on the Stormy at present, was of the party. Our course from Stephens to Dalrymple permitted us to set our fore and aft canvas—a thing we had not done for many weeks. The little ship romped along at a great pace and hit up eight knots.

Dalrymple Island

Dalrymple is a nice, quiet island, surrounded by beach, with, of course, the usual belt of coral reef. We, however, dropped our anchor in a charming lagoon quite close to the shore. There are only three natives living on this island; they are caretakers. As this is the garden for York Island, fish and game are very plentiful, and every inducement being thus offered us, we put in a couple of days. The beaches are very suitable for hauling the net, but this was quite unnecessary as we were able to catch all the fish we wanted from the ship's deck. Here, again, we were given presents, and in return gave the natives some pickled pork. Included among the shoot which our chief engineer and bo'sun brought aboard were 43 brace of jack snipe; these were soon in the pot. The caretaker on this island told us he was short of cartridges, so we gave him some in return for his present of produce and shells.

We left this lovely spot early in the morning and were soon romping away under skysail and staysail, but later on in the day as the wind steadied a bit we set the mizzen and jib, and our little ship very soon bit up about nine knots. At the end of the day we worked it out and found that our average for the day was 8.4 knots, which is very good considering we had a very rough sea to come through.

It is worthy of mention that Dalrymple Island is used by the natives of York Island for their gardens, although these Islands are a day's sailing from each other, yet these chaps sail over, work their gardens, and produce their supplies. In Sydney we often say the Chinese work hard to run their market, gardens, but I think the palm should be given to these natives; especially when it is borne in mind that they do not have up-to-date steamers to run them across; their luggers and cutters have not even oil engines to assist them. The way they handle these boat is a credit. We pulled up at night time at a couple more islands, but as there was a sameness about them we did not stay very long - in fact, at one of them

we did not even land. Our ambition now was to get back to Thursday Island and pick up the rest of our party, and get letters from home, for we were then just two months away from home. We sighted Thursday Island just after our breakfast on Tuesday morning, and by 1 p.m. were safely moored in our old spot. No sooner was the anchor down than one of the crew hailed us from the jetty, he having arrived two days before per Aki Maru. He brought the ship's mail off with him, and all were soon deeply engaged with letters.
(Concluded.)

Wednesday, 13th August, 1919 - The Daily Telegraph

THE STORMY PETREL.

The Royal Prince Alfred Yacht Club yesterday received a message from Thursday Island to the effect that the yacht Stormy Petrel had left there at 3 p.m., on her return voyage to Sydney.

Wednesday, 24th September, 1919 - The Daily Telegraph

Stormy Petrel's cruise.

BRISBANE. Tuesday. — Captain A. Gray, of the steamer Musgrave, which arrived from Gulf ports last night, reported having passed the yacht Stormy Petrel off Hammer Island, 480 miles north of Brisbane, on September 1, when the Sydney yacht signalled "All well."

Thursday, 25th September, 1919 - The Brisbane Daily Standard

Stormy Petrel.

The yacht, Stormy Petrel. was sighted by the steamer Wiltshire off Derwent Island at 1 p.m. on Monday last, and reported "all well".

Saturday, 4th October, 1919 - The Sydney Morning Herald

YACHT STORMY PETREL.

The auxiliary yacht Stormy Petrel, which has been engaged in a five-months' cruise through Torres Straits, is now on the way from Brisbane to Sydney, having left the northern port on Thursday last. She left Sydney on May 10 last and has covered about 4,000 miles since. She encountered a number of gales on the Queensland coast, but has sustained no damage. The strong southerly at present prevailing will no doubt delay the yacht, but, unless she has to seek shelter, she should reach this port shortly.

Monday, 13th October, 1919 - Sydney Morning Herald

YACHT'S CRUISE.

SCENES IN NORTHERN ISLANDS.

ALLIGATORS AND DUGONG HUNTING.

STORMY PETREL RETURNS.

"It was a cruise full of interest and incident. We were always up against it, and, until now, I have not had time to look back." Mr. Sydney M. Dempster thus expressed himself on his return from a five months' cruise in his yacht Stormy Petrel. The little vessel, which had left Sydney on May 10, entered Sydney Heads at about 2.40 p.m. on Saturday, and was greeted by a fleet of yachts and motor launches. Commodore Walter Marks, together with the members of the Royal Prince Alfred Yacht Club, on board the launch Lily Brayton, met the Stormy Petrel in Watson's Bay, and extended a nautical welcome to those on board.

A ROUGH START

Mr. Dempster said that throughout and practically the entire trip from Port Jackson to Thursday Island the yacht encountered heavy weather. She was forced to shelter for eight days in Salamander Bay, Port Stephens. Off Smoky Cape she was hove to under storm canvas for 15 hours with the engine going full, and just holding her own against a northerly wind in thick rainy conditions. She arrived at Cape Moreton, and the party were waiting there for provisions from Brisbane, when a westerly gale compelled them to up anchor and put to sea without their provisions. The yacht went out under a reefed storm trysail, this being her first experience under such sailing conditions since she was launched ten years ago. The gale drove the yacht 60 miles offshore, and it was decided to take the deep-sea route instead of passing through Sandy Straits. After being close hauled under reduced canvas for 249 miles, the yacht reached East Rocks. For four days and five nights she drove before the gale before gaining the entrance inside the Great Barrier Reef, where it was found possible to set a square sail. Under this she ran before the wind for nearly 800 miles, about half this distance being covered without dropping a sail.

BASE AT THURSDAY ISLAND

"Thursday Island was reached on June 15," said Mr. Dempster. "We were then 36 days out from Sydney. I took the precaution before going on this voyage to send our stores on to Thursday Island, which point we used as our base. From Thursday Island we sailed for the Murray and Darling Islands group. Murray Island is particularly interesting. It is the most easterly of the Torres Straits groups. It is in charge of the superintendent, Mr. Bruce, who has been on the Island for 29 years, and is much loved by the natives. Murray Island has a population of 440, and produces almost everything

necessary to sustain life, the main products being fish and vegetables.”

MYRIADS OF SARDINES

“One interesting feature of the island is that throughout its whole circumference of about six miles, the foreshores are fringed with a belt, about 15ft wide, of the true Mediterranean sardines. They form one moving mass as they huddle up towards the shore out of the way of the big fish. The shark's tail which at present graces the bowsprit of the Stormy Petrel was secured here. As the tide comes in the larger fish and sharks come over the coral reef and feed on these sardines. The yacht was moored off the edge of one of these reefs, and numerous sharks were noticed enjoying their food. Captain Spain suggested to one of the native boys that he should try and harpoon one of them. They took the cedar dinghy and were soon fast to a 10ft shark. I was watching from the deck of the yacht, and thought it was going to be the end of the dinghy if she struck a 'nigger-head' - one of the many boulders of coral which stick out near the reef. The dinghy had never before travelled so fast as it did when the shark set off with it in tow. However, the shark was secured without disaster overtaking the dinghy or Captain Spain, who was in it.”

HEARTY WELCOME FROM THE NATIVES

"This was the first time these islands had been visited as we visited them, and it was the first occasion on which the Royal Prince Alfred Yacht Club's flag had been flown there. We did not know how we were going to be received, so we started off by promising all the inhabitants a present, which we are going to send up at Christmas. I had previously got special permission to land at the islands from the Protector of Aborigines in Queensland. It was not long before news spread around regarding our visit. By some means word was sent round to the other islands, and when we eventually visited them we found the natives awaiting our arrival. We were presented at the different islands in a most touching way with numerous gifts of vegetables and curios. Visits were made to the Moa and Bada groups, and to the Gulf of Carpentaria, and the party took part in a delightful little romance. Warrant-officer Jardine, son of Mr. Jardine, of Somerset, Alban Pass, who had recently returned from the front, was about to marry Miss Duffy, at Brisbane. The wedding took place in the cabin of the Stormy Petrel, Father Beck performing the ceremony, and another settler of the far north, Mr. Virgin, giving the bride away. Mr. Dempster acted as best man, and the Wedding March was played on the yacht's gramophone. The happy couple were conveyed on the Stormy Petrel to their new home, about 30 miles distant.”

SHOOTING ALLIGATORS

"While in the Gulf of Carpentaria the yacht proceeded up the Batavia River, where numerous alligators were sunning themselves on the bank. Several of these were shot from the yacht, but no effort was made to secure any as trophies. Four alligators were secured by the party at the village of Adam, on the island of Moa, in the Torres Straits Group, and a young one was stuffed and hung in the yacht's cabin. The work of the pearling luggers was very interesting," added Mr. Dempster. "They are very fine sailing vessels, after the style of my own yacht, only more roughly built. To encourage the natives to work the Queensland Government will supply a syndicate of natives with a new lugger, for which they eventually pay out of their earnings. They deal in pearl shell, beche-de-mer, and trocas shell. The price secured for pearl shell when we were there was 2/6 per lb. in the rough, while £90 per ton was secured for beche-de-mer. The Japanese seem to have gained control of the pearling industry. Their boats are better equipped than those of the natives, and they also have diving outfits."

FORTUNES FOR NATIVES

"The divers themselves get any pearls that are found in the shells now," said Mr. Dempster. "When I was there, I saw Mr. Tom Farquhar pay one of his men £500 for one pearl when he brought it in. On the island of Mobaiaig one of the natives, who had received £100 for a pearl, paid for a new roof for the church, which cost £60. At Mobaiaig we gave a picnic to the chief natives and proceeded in two of their cutters on a dugong hunt. This was a very exciting experience. A spearsman stands in the bow, and, as soon as the boat comes over a dugong, or sea-cow, he throws his spear and jumps overboard with his weight on the spear in order to force it through the dugong's tough hide, which is nearly two inches thick.”

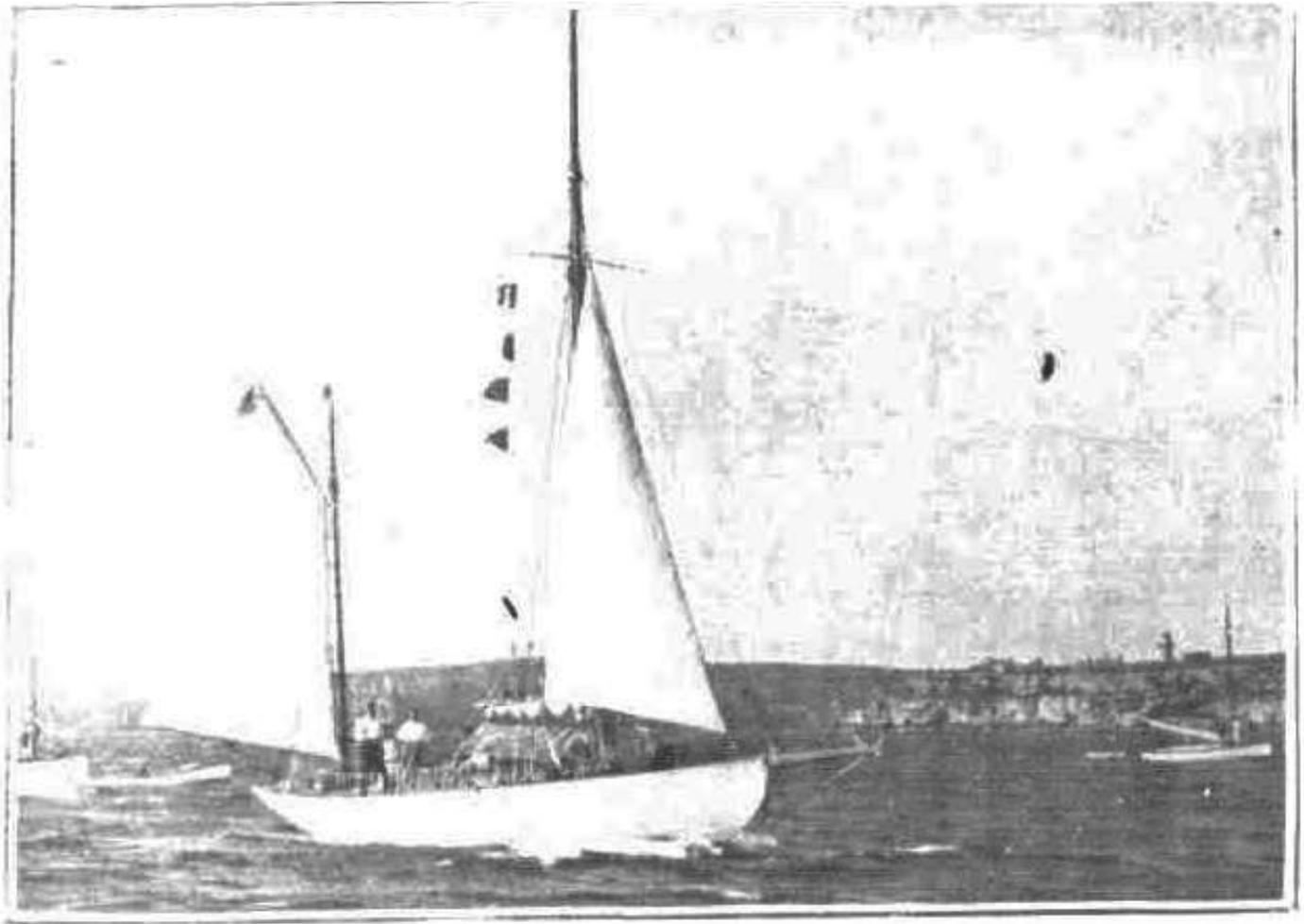
AN EXCITING CHASE

"The spear is attached to a fairly long rope, with an oil drum at the end, and it is a case of 'stand clear' when the dugong sets off with this in tow. When the cutter catches up to the oil drum again several natives go overboard and hang on to the rope, which they hold over their shoulder. Away goes the dugong again, and these natives are towed backward at a great rate. Then they go hand over hand along the rope toward the dugong. Other natives go over from the boat with another rope, which they make



fast round the dugong's tail and haul him along- side, where he drowns. The dugong is a mammal and has to come to the surface to breathe. They have two tusks with which they bite the grass and seaweed off the rocks. They weigh between six and seven hundredweight, and their flesh is just like beef. We got four of them on this hunt, and I have

brought home a pair of tusks which I intend to mount and keep on the yacht as one of the mementoes of the trip."



Wednesday, 15th October, 1919 - Referee

THE STORMY PETREL

INTERESTING CRUISE IN THE ISLANDS- How Natives Hunt the Dugong: Harpooning Sharks

Tied up to her moorings in Rushcutters Bay on Saturday afternoon, the 25-ton auxiliary yawl-rigged yacht Stormy Petrel, owned by **Mr. S. M. Dempster**, a well-known Sydney real estate salesman, after an absence of five months on a cruise of the Southern Pacific. As the little vessel came through the Heads she was met and given a rousing welcome by a fleet of yachts and motor launches comprising the Wingigi Wingigi, Istria, Bona, Sirocco, Oeonone, Mischief, Valencia and Valhalla. Commodore Marks, in the Lily Brayton, directed the plucky little craft into Watson's Bay, where dozens of hands were outstretched to give a real nautical welcome to the sun-tanned crew. The latter consisted of Mr. Sydney M. Dempster, owner and captain; Capt. A. E. Dabelle, navigating officer for the passage North and the island cruising; Capt. Hutchins, navigating officer for the return trip; Capt. Stanley Spain, mate; E. P. Andreas, engineer; T. W. Hodgson, bosun; and Richard Old, gunner.

OF VALUE TO NAVIGATION

It was not merely for an idle holiday that Mr. Dempster undertook his interesting trip north, but for research work of value to navigators. This included registration of the temperature of the water at different points on the Queensland coast, and included a study of tides and currents. Bottle messages were thrown overboard each day, but when at Night Island, in the Torres Strait Group, the crew picked up a bottle containing a printed form of the Hydrographic Office. This form conveyed the information that it had been consigned to the sea from the Union Steamship Co.'s R.M.S. Marama, by Capt. Cranford, on September 29, 1914, in latitude 34deg 24min south, longitude 157deg 39min east. Mr. Dempster intends forwarding the message on to the Hydrographic Office, Washington. The cruise was one of the longest undertaken in the history of Australian yachting and extended well over 5000 miles. Leaving Sydney five months ago, the Stormy Petrel headed north and worked up along the Queensland coast into Torres Strait and the Gulf of Carpentaria. The whole trip was accomplished without serious mishap, although there were times when the navigation of the vessel was a most difficult task on account of the tremendous number of low-lying coral islands that abound in those waters, and their proximity to one another. It was found necessary to engage the services of four native assistant pilots to assist the navigating officer.

While lying at Thursday Island a wedding was solemnised on board the Stormy Petrel between a returned Light Horseman and a young lady who had nursed him while on active service. The couple were afterwards taken to Cape

York by Mr. Dempster, where their home is established.

'One of the most remarkable sights of the cruise,' said Mr. Dempster, 'was at Munar Island, which is about six miles in circumference. During our stay there the water for a distance of 15 feet right round the island was literally alive with millions of Mediterranean sardines, which seek the protection of the shore from larger fish. At the same spot I saw for the first time an immense shark harpooned by a native from a dinghy.

'We took the opportunity while cruising in the Gulf of Carpentaria of exploring the Batavia River, the banks of which were covered with alligators. At Mobaig we entertained the natives to a picnic, and in return were treated to the spectacle of a dugong, or sea cow, hunt. Drawing alongside the mammal, a native in the bow of the boat thrusts a spear into the quarry and jumps overboard, and with his weight forces the weapon through the thick hide of the sea-cow. The spear is secured to an oil drum by a length of rope, and as soon as the dugong feels the point it makes off at a great rate with the oil drum in tow. Other natives then go overboard and hang on to the rope until the boat arrives, when another rope is passed around the dugong's tail and he is hauled alongside and allowed to drown. Most of them weigh any thing up to half a ton.'



CREW OF THE YACHT **STORMY PETREL** WHICH ARRIVED IN SYDNEY AFTER A FIVE MONTHS' CRUISE AROUND THE NORTH COAST OF AUSTRALIA. MR. S. M. DEMPSTER, OWNER OF THE YACHT, IS THE SECOND FIGURE FROM THE RIGHT. THE REMAINDER OF THE CREW COMPRISED CAPT. S. C. HUTCHINS, CAPT. S. SPAIN, AND MESSRS. E. P. ANDREAS, T. W. HODGSON, AND R. OLD.

Thursday, 24th June, 1920 – The Sun

Yacht Stormy Petrel Sold

Mr. S. M. Dempster has disposed of his handsome yacht Stormy Petrel for £1900, the purchaser being Mr. Bernard, of George -street. Last year the Stormy Petrel cruised from Sydney to New Guinea and through the Gulf of Carpentaria,

Wednesday, 5th June, 1929 - The Daily Telegraph

DEATH OF YACHTING CHIEFTAIN

Mr. Sydney M. Dempster Sydney's— and perhaps Australia's —best known yachting man, Mr. Sydney M. Dempster, 63, died yesterday at his home, "Petrel," 139 Darley Road, Randwick.

One of the founders of Marshall and Dempster, estate agents, 35 years ago. Mr. Dempster ran away to sea on the clipper ship Duchess of Edinburgh in the early 'eighties.

In Sydney yachting circles he was known as the owner of the Petrel, and skipper of the Bona when it raced against Sayonara in the first series of the interstate races for the Sayonara Cup. Mr. Dempster was a member of the Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron and the Prince Edward Yacht Club but was chiefly associated with the Royal Prince Alfred Yacht Club, in which he had held every executive position.

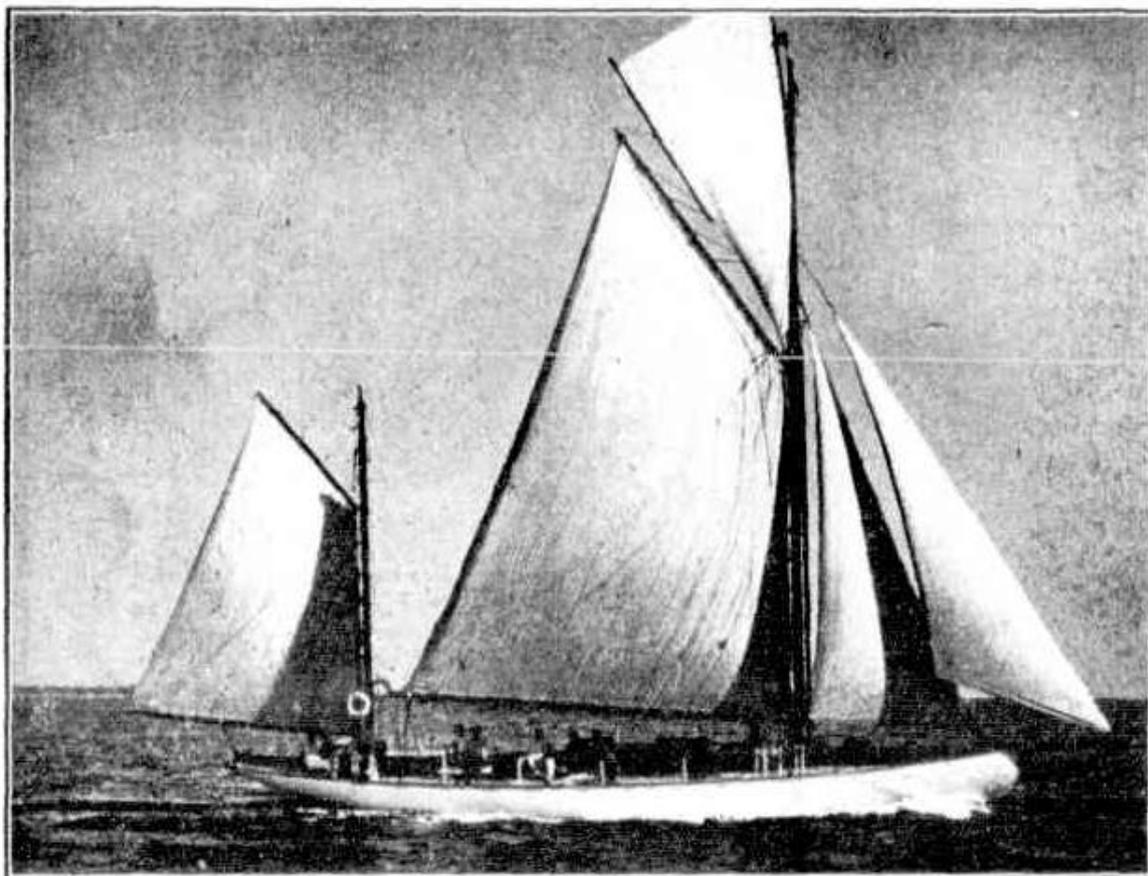
For his services to the R.P.A.Y.C. he was made a life member — the seventh in 64 years. For many years he was president of the Sydney Yacht Racing Association. As owner of the Stormy Petrel, in 1919, with Captain Stanley Spain, Messrs. Tom Hodgson, E. P. Andreas, and Captain Dabelle (a Torres Strait pilot), he spent four months among the islands north of Australia.

Postscript

Friday, 31st December, 1937 — The Adelaide Advertiser

The decision of the owners Messrs. T. C. Angove and R. R. Martin, to sell the hull of the yacht Stormy Petrel where she lies on a reef near Cape Casini, on the north coast of Kangaroo Island, marks the end of the racing career of one of the finest yachts which has sailed in South Australian waters. The yacht went on the reef last week when visibility was bad. The stormy Petrel, which is about 30 years old, was purchased in Sydney about 16 years ago by Mr. Napier Birks and was sailed to Port Adelaide under her own power by that fine old skipper, Captain Marshall Smith. She was purchased by her present owners some years ago, and since then has won many races in the A class from the scratch mark. The Stormy Petrel was a fine sea boat, and probably the fastest yacht in Australia of her size when she made the journey from Sydney. For many years she secured fastest time in the ocean races conducted by the Royal South Australian Yacht Squadron, but in recent years she has not been a competitor in the 150-mile Island Cup race or the 61-mile Orontes Cup race.

The last report from her owners was that the boat had been stripped of most of her movable gear, including the engine and inside lead, and all that now remains is the hull, masts, and about five tons of lead on her keel. If fine weather holds, and the purchasers can make temporary repairs to the holes in her hull, it may be possible to float her off with a high tide, and tow her to Port Adelaide, but even if the hull can be salvaged, it is likely that she will end her days as a fishing boat.



"STORMY PETREL" ASHORE. The "Stormy Petrel," flagship of the Royal South Australian Yacht Squadron, which went ashore last week on a reef near Cape Casini, on the north coast of Kangaroo Island, and it is feared she may become a total loss. She is owned by Messrs. C. T. Angove (Commodore R.S.A.Y.S.) and R. H. Martin.—McKenzie.