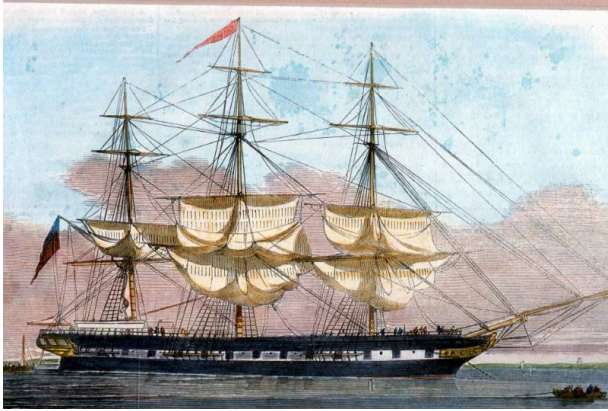


Basic Detail Report



00000957

Title

The DUNBAR New East Indiaman

Date

1853

Primary Maker

Illustrated London News

Medium

Handcoloured wood engraving on paper

Dimensions

Overall: 130 x 240 mm

Name

Print

History

The DUNBAR was a passenger and cargo ship that ran the route between London and Sydney as a result of the Australian gold rushes. It was owned by Duncan Dunbar and was the pride of his growing fleet. After being requisitioned during the Crimean War it was returned to Dunbar and in 1856 it made its first journey to Sydney which was a success, and it was proclaimed a "splendid ship". In 1857 she left England again bound for Sydney and was looking forward to repeating her success. On this journey it was laden with both expensive and important cargo and also a full contingent of passengers including some local Sydney dignitaries who had been visiting England. Her Captain, Green, was no stranger to the route and managed to sail it to Australia where it arrived off the coast of Sydney on 20 August 1857. However, there was a raging storm that night which made visibility particularly poor and the sea very rough. Shortly before midnight Captain Green estimated the ship's position off the entrance to the Heads and changed course to enter, keeping the Macquarie Light on the port bow. However, the estimation of where the ship was in relation to the heads was wrong and the DUNBAR, instead of entering the harbour through the heads was rammed against cliffs. The desolation in that weather was quick and savage. There were no survivors except one seaman, James Johnson, who had been thrown higher up the cliff face where he waited two days before being rescued. The shock the next morning was city wide, and business came to a standstill as the populace tried to understand and process the disaster. Wreckage and bodies were widespread along the foreshores and there was a day of mourning, and an estimated 20,000 people lined the streets on the day of the funeral procession. Many of whom had relatives amongst the 121 people who had died. A memorial to the DUNBAR is located at South Head and the bodies of those victims located were buried together at Camperdown Cemetery.