

# Basic Detail Report

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## ANMS1215

### Title

Collection of 92 documents relating to SS KATOOMBA

### Date

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### History

The shipping firm of McIlwraith, McEacharn & Co was founded in London in February 1875 by Andrew McIlwraith and Malcolm Donald McEacharn. McIlwraith, McEacharn & Co entered the Australian trade in 1887 bringing cargo and immigrants from Britain to Queensland. They also entered the coal trade. They entered into the fierce competition for passenger trade in the first decades of the twentieth century when competition for passengers required companies to provide more than converted cargo vessels. In 1909 their ship KAROOLA won a reputation for its salubrious accommodation and its size, and was the first Australian ship to exceed 7,000 tons. The company maintained the advantage in 1912 by commissioning KATOOMBA, which was larger and more luxurious than all its generation of passenger ships. With the growth of rail and road transport, Australian shipping declined during the twentieth century. McIlwraith, McEacharn & Co was a survivor and bought the fleets of James Paterson and Huddard Parker in 1961. In 1957 McIlwraith, McEacharn & Co together with Adelaide Steamship Company and Melbourne Steamship Company, set up Bulkships Pty Ltd to work the heavy ore trade and bought four ships. In 1964 it merged shipping interests with those of the Adelaide Steamship Company to form Associated Steamships. They had a combined fleet of 12 conventional cargo vessels, which they replaced with three container ships. McIlwraith McEacharn continued in the shipping trade until the 1990s when their ships were sold to a US company. The TSS KATOOMBA was built in 1913 by Harland & Wolff, Belfast for McIlwraith McEacharn Ltd of Melbourne. In September 1913 KATOOMBA undertook its first passenger voyage from Sydney to Melbourne, Adelaide, Albany and Fremantle. It was requisitioned in 1918 and refitted as a troopship in 1919, returning to passenger service in 1920. KATOOMBA operated in both the Western Australian and Queensland coastal services from 1932 to 1939, before being requisitioned once again as a troopship in 1942. In 1946 KATOOMBA was returned to its owners and then sold to Goulandris Bros, Greece, before being renamed COLUMBIA in 1949. After operating on routes from Europe and the Mediterranean to Canada, COLUMBIA was laid up in 1958 and scrapped at Nagasaki in 1959.