

Basic Detail Report

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Title

Collection of documents relating to SS KAROOLA

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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.