

Basic Detail Report

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Title

SS LISMORE midship plans

Date

1880

Primary Maker

Gourlay Brothers & Co Dundee

Medium

Paper

Dimensions

Overall: 651 mm

Name

Plan

History

The Gourlay Brothers were a marine engineering and ship building company based in Dundee, Scotland. Originally begun in 1790 as the Dundee Foundry, the company moved into producing steam engines and later, locomotives. In 1846 the business was renamed Gourlay, Mudie and Co. and in 1853 known as Gourlay Brothers and Co. The four Gourlay brothers - Alexander, William, Gershom and Henry - began shipbuilding in 1854. The business was successful for many years, manufacturing vessels for an international client base including Europe, South America, Australia and South Africa. As the years went on the business survived with fluctuations in the economy and was able to diversify. They produced paddle steamers, screw propellers and locomotives for railways. However in 1908 the company was forced to close, despite modernising the shipyard and having its biggest year of production in 1906. Debt and economic forces beyond their control in addition to labour disputes became too much and in 1909 the yard's equipment was auctioned off. One of the companies that Gourlay Brothers and Co. manufactured for was the Australian based shipowners George and Bruce Nicoll. The enterprise comprised of shipping on the east coast, north of Sydney, focusing on the Northern Rivers region. Their screw ship steamers carried passengers and cargo to the area and it is recorded that in twelve years they imported and ran approximately twenty steamships and contributed large sums of money to wharves and shipping infrastructure. In the mid-1880s Bruce and George separated the business and focused on different north coast regions. After only a decade, both brothers sold their shipping interests to the North Coast Steam Navigation Co. and while George settled in Canterbury near Sydney, Bruce became involved in politics and representative in the Legislative Assembly for Richmond in northern New South Wales. He fought strongly for local issues effecting his electorate and was a staunch supporter for Federation but advocated for a

system similar to that of the United States. Bruce Nicoll died in 1904 in Sydney, preceding his brother George who died nearby in 1906. Between them they were survived by ten sons and one daughter.