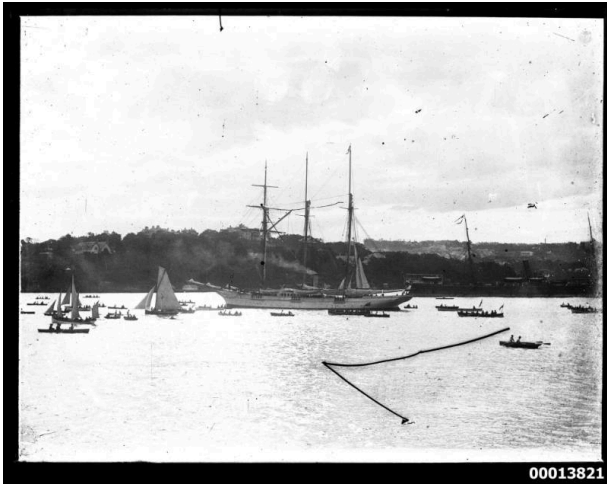


Basic Detail Report



00013821

Title

Steam yacht SUNBEAM and smaller craft on Sydney Harbour

Date

July 1887

Primary Maker

William Hall Photographic Studio

Medium

Emulsion on glass

Dimensions

Overall: 164 x 215 mm, 1 mm, 0.15 kg

Name

Glass plate negative

History

The steam yacht SUNBEAM was designed by Mr St. Clare Byrne, of Liverpool, England, and launched in 1874. The yacht was built for politician Lord Thomas Brassey (1836-1918) who later became governor of Victoria, Australia. 'Sunbeam' was the nickname of Brassey's daughter, Constance Alberta, who had died of scarlet fever, aged four, in 1873. SUNBEAM's figurehead, a gold-painted depiction of the young girl, is now in the collection of the Royal Museums Greenwich. Between July 1876 and May 1877, Brassey, along with his wife, four children and two pugs, sailed SUNBEAM around the world. The family embarked on the circumnavigation with 30 crew members including a doctor, a carpenter, stewards and a cook. Brassey's wife Annie published a book on the journey, titled 'A Voyage in the Sunbeam: Our home on the ocean for eleven months'. The book recorded their journey in detail and became a best seller, running to nine editions and being translated into seventeen different languages. The family completed many more voyages and Lady Brassey wrote three more books on their adventures. The Brassey's last journey included a four month circumnavigation of Australia, in mid-1887. In September 1887, several days out of Port Darwin and onboard SUNBEAM, Lady Brassey succumbed to malaria and was buried at sea. The completion of her final book, 'The Last Voyage, to India and Australia in the Sunbeam', was overseen by Thomas and published posthumously in 1889. In 1895 Lord Brassey accepted the post as governor of Victoria, a position he held for five years. Brassey sailed to Australia in SUNBEAM to take up his post, arriving in Melbourne in October 1895 with his new wife and young daughter. SUNBEAM was a regular and popular sight in Australia during Brassey's time as governor as he continued to use the vessel as a means of travel during his official duties. The previous adventures of Brassey and SUNBEAM were already well-

known to the public at this time due to Annie Brassey's celebrated book on their 1876-77 circumnavigation. Brassey and his family returned to England on SUNBEAM in 1900. Fifteen years later the yacht was utilised as a hospital ship during the Gallipoli campaign of WW1 and in 1916 Brassey donated SUNBEAM to the Government of India to continue in use as a military convalescent ship. The last owner of SUNBEAM was Sir Walter Runciman who built a second yacht, SUNBEAM II, along similar lines. SUNBEAM was broken up in Morecambe, in 1930.