

Port Fairy Gazette
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An Historic Wreck

The Port Fairy Secret

Extract from the Warrnambool Standard

Mr W.J. James, of Barkly St East Brunswick in a communication (dated April 5th) to Mr N.C. Graham Port Fairy :- says "I will try and get down to Port Fairy next week. I have been advised by the Royal Geographical Society not to form a proprietary company, as I intended doing, to raise the necessary capital to refloat the ship. They think I should, in my own interests, first recover the name or if that is not possible, to try and get something out of her hold, as that would enable them to establish her identity. I will construct a large raft, and bring with me the necessary appliances to do what I can when down.

I had a very interesting conversation with the Consul-General for the Netherlands today. He informed me that the walnut timber was used in the construction of galliots prior to 1790. Peter the Great having learned the art of shipbuilding from the Dutch. The walnut being strong and durable, the young trees were trained to grow into shape for stays and ribs, and the Dutch did extensive trade with Peter the Great in this particular kind of wood for shipbuilding, and walnut not being indigenous to any particular country, it being a native of the Pacific Islands, the young trees were transplanted in Spain, Russia, Germany and Holland and used for furniture and ornamental work. Teak and elm came into use after 1790 for shipbuilding with the Dutch, the former being obtained from Rangoon and the later [*sic*] from European countries. However I intend to hasten slowly. I may not be able to raise her until next summer.

Mr Gordon McCrae considers I have a very historic find."