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The Mahogany Ship

Mr. W. James, of Brunswick, who claims, as already reported, to have discovered the historical mahogany ship near Port Fairy, is confident about the genuineness of his discovery. He recently stated in an interview that shortly he would startle the residents of Victoria with the full announcement of his discovery. Mr. James procured from the wreck a piece of petrified wood, which, he states, a professor of the University has declared to be Spanish walnut. Another article in his possession is a piece of beaten copper. To prove that the vessel was an old one he has ascertained that the copper has been punched by means of a chisel, and, therefore, had been worked before the auger was invented, about 160 years ago. Mr. James has intimated that he knows the name of the vessel, in fact, it is cut in lead below the taffrail. He will not announce the name just yet, but has proved to his own satisfaction that she was one of the four exploration vessels sent out by the Spanish Government in 1614. Three of these vessels returned, but the fourth never came back. She went down off the Australian coast, and Mr. James reports, lies half buried in the sand within 2 ¹/₂ miles of the township of Port Fairy. He is confident that he can raise the vessel and recently he enthusiastically remarked to an interviewer: "What a sensation it will cause to see a stately old Spanish galleon of the time of the old sea dog, Drake, sailing up the waters of Port Phillip Bay. She may even visit London - perhaps get there in time for the Coronation, who knows? It will only cost me £100 to get on that vessel's deck, and ascertain what she contains. She is a single-masted vessel, as all Spanish vessels of that date were, and she is in excellent order. In length she is 80 feet, and has a 20 feet beam. She has a 6 feet bulwark". Asked what he intended to do, Mr. James said that he had taken the matter in hand himself and would carry it through. He added that one of the oldest residents of the district could remember seeing the wreck some 70 years ago. Though naturally elated about his discovery, Mr. James asserts vigorously that his is no daydream, but a real practical discovery, and he expects to get to work on the raising of the vessel within a fortnight. It is hoped Mr. James will soon furnish indisputable proof of his claims, and the many people interested in the matter, although doubting at present that he has got the right wreck, will wish him every success in his enterprise.