

Warrnambool Standard
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The Mahogany Ship **(To the Editor)**

Mr Frank H. Ford's letter referring to the Mahogany Ship supposed to be wrecked many years ago between Port Fairy and Warrnambool, should be the means of reviving this very important question which has been before the executive committee of the Warrnambool Progress Association for some time. Realising the value of its discovery to Warrnambool, the Association instituted enquiries and found that there was a difference of opinion as to the location of the wreck on our western coast. The ancient ship or Spanish Galleon was known definitely to have been seen as late as 1847 some six or seven miles west of our city. The "Austral Light" of March 1897 published an article written by the late Mr J. Archibald, who at one time was in charge of our local Museum. In this article he gives a summary of its history and refers to a search to be made by the Royal Geographical Society. Perhaps this search was made, but I have no recollection of it. An old and respected resident of Winslow, Mr Fred Best who is well over 80 years, supplied me with some very interesting particulars concerning a wreck or a portion of a vessel only about 400 yards west of the present rifle range. Mr Best, in his boyhood days was in the habit of strolling along the coast to the west of Warrnambool. He informed me that at low tide a portion of a wrecked ship could be seen plainly, Mr Best being under the impression that perhaps this was the "Mahogany Ship". Mr Best, I am sure, would be only too pleased to give particulars; his memory is good and he has a vivid recollection of his boyhood days.

In October last, the Melbourne Herald published an article (30/10/33) which referred to this historic wreck, and it has been definitely established that such a wreck occurred on our west coast many years ago, but all attempts up to the present to locate it have proved futile. Some time ago I received a letter from Miss Hilda Stanley, Williamstown, Victoria, who supplied me with the following information: "Her mother aged 85, can recall events connected with the remains of a wreck supposed to be the Mahogany Ship. Mrs Stanley's father, Thomas Allen, rented a farm from William Rutledge, called Springfield about the year 1858. The boundary of the farm took in the sea coast, the sand hummocks being a little smaller there than elsewhere. Mrs Stanley, as a child, often played with some beams that appeared not so worn, and in number about six, and about the size of railway sleepers. At high tide they were covered and they were partly buried in the sand even at low tide. "Springfield" was about 12 miles from Warrnambool following the beach, being three miles from an iron church built on the edge of Tower Hill Lake, near the crossing to the island. The vicarage with a nice garden adjoined the church. The Church of England minister at that time was the Rev L.A. Baker.

The revival of the Mahogany Ship question and its whereabouts is refreshing, but after the lapse of so many years the futility of locating the wreck is apparent and the task a stupendous one.

Yours, etc.,
M. L. CARTER

