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Convicts, Cargo, and Calamity: The Wreck of the Emigrant Ship *Enchantress*

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CONVICTS, CARGO, AND CALAMITY: THE WRECK OF
THE EMIGRANT SHIP *ENCHANTRESS*

BY

ABIGAIL E. CASAVANT

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF

MASTER OF ARTS

IN

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UNIVERSITY OF RHODE ISLAND

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MASTER OF ARTS IN HISTORY THESIS

OF

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ABSTRACT

From 2009-2015, the University of Rhode Island and St. Mary's College of California conducted joint underwater archaeology field schools in the waters off Bermuda on a site called the Iron Plate Wreck. Aptly named for two large stacks of sheet iron, one located at the stern and one at the bow, the wreck's identity remained a mystery. In 2013, however, historical research provided clues to the identity of the wreck, revealing it is likely the *Enchantress*, an early 19th century British merchant vessel with a unique past. The *Enchantress* not only carried cargo when it sank on February 5, 1837, but also the lives of 64 emigrants, all of whom were saved by local Bermudians and eventually the British government. Before the *Enchantress* transported impoverished emigrants, the vessel served as both a merchant ship for the East India Company in 1830 and as a convict ship in 1833.

This thesis will examine the historical and archaeological records as they relate to the Iron Plate Wreck's identification as the *Enchantress*. In addition to a detailed examination of the historical documents pertaining to the *Enchantress*, this paper will also assess other accounts of Irish emigrant and Australian convict shipwrecks within the appropriate context. In depth archival research at the Bermuda Archives in Hamilton, Bermuda and the National Archives in Surrey, England revealed a plethora of historical information concerning the *Enchantress*. Six field seasons worth of preliminary archaeological excavations will also be evaluated. The wreck's unusual historical background, with support from the archaeological record, will be fully analyzed in order to tell the most complete story of the *Enchantress* known to date.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT.....	ii
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.....	iii
TABLE OF CONTENTS	iv
LIST OF TABLES.....	vi
LIST OF FIGURES.....	vii
CHAPTER 1.....	1
INTRODUCTION TO BERMUDA AND ITS SHIPWRECKS.....	1
A BRIEF GEOGRAPHY OF BERMUDA	3
BERMUDA AND ITS SHIPWRECKS	5
BERMUDA’S UNDERWATER CULTURAL HERITAGE	11
CHAPTER 2.....	19
THE WRECK OF THE EMIGRANT SHIP <i>ENCHANTRESS</i>	19
DISASTER STRIKES	22
ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXAMINATIONS OF THE WRECK AND ASSOCIATED MATERIAL CULTURE	37
IRISH EMIGRATION AND ASSOCIATED SHIPWRECKS.....	49
CHAPTER 3.....	66
THE CONVICT SHIP <i>ENCHANTRESS</i>	66
THE FIRST FLEET: POPULATING AUSTRALIA.....	66
HER SERVICE AS AN EAST INDIA COMPANY MERCHANT	71
THE ARRIVAL OF <i>ENCHANTRESS</i> : A 19 th CENTURY CONVICT SHIP	76
OTHER CONVICT SHIPWRECKS	82

CHAPTER 4.....	92
CONCLUSIONS	92
BIBLIOGRAPHY	97

LIST OF TABLES

TABLE	PAGE
Table 1. The complete transcribed passenger list of the brig <i>Eliza</i> , which transported the emigrants from the wrecked <i>Enchantress</i> to New York City.	34
Table 2. Transcribed list of all convicts aboard the <i>Enchantress</i> on her voyage to Van Diemen's Land in 1833.	87

LIST OF FIGURES

FIGURE	PAGE
Figure 1.1. A topographic map of Bermuda. Note Wreck Hill on the westernmost point of the Islands.....	4
Figure 1.2. La Bermuda appears upside down in the upper right hand corner of Pietro Martire d'Anghiera's 1511 book <i>Opera Legatio Babylonica Oceani decas Poemata, Epigrammata</i>	6
Figure 1.3. Teddy Tucker's map of Bermuda shipwrecks. He "explored" all of the wrecks seen on this map	12
Figure 1.4. Bermuda's open wreck list. Note the extent of the reef systems and concentration of wrecks in the north and northwest portions of the reefs.....	17
Figure 2.1. The <i>Enchantress</i> ' first entry in <i>Lloyd's Register</i> of 1830	22
Figure 2.2. George Donaldson's protest of the <i>Enchantress</i> ' voyage	23
Figure 2.3. The total amount the residents paid to feed, clothe, and shelter the emigrants listed in Sandy's Parish ledger.....	31
Figure 2.4. The wreck of the <i>Enchantress</i> lies approximately eight miles from shore in the far reaches of the north west portion of the reef.....	38
Figure 2.5. Concreted stacks of sheet iron at the bow (left) and stern (right)	39
Figure 2.6. Facing the stern of the wreck, the drift pins run down the center line of the keel.....	40
Figure 2.7. Site plan of the presumed <i>Enchantress</i>	41
Figure 2.8. Lead bale seal before conservation (left) and a rough sketch of the artifact after conservation (right)	42
Figure 2.9. Students map the wreck in five by five foot grids.....	43
Figure 2.10. Sample of artifacts from the wreck including coal, glass, copper nails, ceramics, and an iron bolt.....	45
Figure 2.11. A depiction of the <i>Exmouth Castle</i> smashed upon the rocks near Islay Island.....	59
Figure 3.1. <i>Enchantress</i> listed at the East India Company's Blackwall Yard.....	75

Figure 3.2. The beginning of the list of 200 individuals convicted of crimes in England and Ireland, sent to Van Diemen's Land aboard the <i>Enchantress</i>	78
Figure 3.3. Dr. Osborne's medical journal noting the death of William Blackburn	81
Figure 3.4. J. M. W. Turner's unfinished <i>Fire at Sea</i> which was inspired by the wrecking of the <i>Amphitrite</i> in 1833	85

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION TO BERMUDA AND ITS SHIPWRECKS

Bermuda's treacherous reefs have posed a problem to mariners since the 16th century when the first known European explorers reached the small island chain. Before the invention of accurate navigational equipment, mariners relied on Bermuda as a navigational marker for trading voyages to and from Europe and the Caribbean.¹ Despite the islands' ability to aid navigators and define trade routes, it proved to be a deceitfully welcoming place as the shallow reefs that surround the island claimed numerous ships. Even with improved navigational techniques, hurricanes and storms became notorious for blowing ships atop the reef. Bermuda's history is intrinsically tied to shipwrecks and maritime tradition. Indeed, the islands' settlement can be attributed to a shipwreck event. For over four hundred years, Bermuda's reefs have beckoned many vessels to their watery graves including ships dating from the Age of Exploration all the way to 20th century modern seafaring craft.

This thesis will examine the historical background of a 19th century English merchant shipwreck, formerly known as the Iron Plate Wreck, which has subsequently been identified as the *Enchantress*. Using historical and preliminary archaeological evidence to support the wreck's identification, this paper will seek to tell the complete story of the *Enchantress* as it fits into broader historical events. The historical nature of the *Enchantress* is complex; she began her life as an East India Company vessel before transporting convicts from England to Australia in 1833. She continued to

¹ Clifford Earle Smith Jr. and Edward Cecil Harris, "Underwater Cultural Heritage in

journey east following the convict transport. Only four years later, she sank as a merchant vessel carrying Irish, English, and Scottish emigrants destined for New York City.

In the nine short years that the *Enchantress* sailed the high seas, she visited a number of different ports, carried a variety of individuals, and ventured through many bodies of water. The archaeological remains and primary source documents tell a story long forgotten by local Bermudians, maritime archaeologists, and historians. Producing a historical narrative of the *Enchantress* will strengthen what is already known about emigrant and convict voyages.

Rather than a study strictly archaeological or historical in nature, this thesis will incorporate both disciplines to present information on the *Enchantress* that has not yet been published and only recently discovered. The wreck of the *Enchantress*, like many other historical wrecks, can be used as a powerful tool for studying social history.² By rectifying scientific archaeological data with historic documentation, a clearer picture emerges of the purpose of the vessel and those who were aboard her. The purpose of this thesis is to use history and archaeology to tell the story of a previously unidentified shipwreck and in doing so, use both disciplines to articulate larger historical processes that occurred in the 19th century.

Before a complete and detailed discussion of the *Enchantress* can be presented, Bermuda's long history of maritime tradition and shipwrecks and must be examined in order to place this study within its proper geographical and historical setting. To understand where and why the *Enchantress* sank is to understand Bermuda, its

² Richard A. Gould, *Archaeology and the Social History of Ships* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011): 1-4.

expansive reef system, and the maritime history associated with the small island territory. The hundreds of shipwrecks that litter Bermuda's waters, some of which remain to be found or identified, are largely accessible within recreational diving limits (130 ft.). While shallow depths provide exceptional opportunities to study the evolution of shipwrecks in Bermuda's waters, such conditions unfortunately also allow for intentional disturbance and salvage of important historical resources. Despite many years of salvage, the law now protects Bermuda's precious underwater cultural heritage in order to preserve the shipwrecks that are so engrained in the islands' history.

A BRIEF GEOGRAPHY OF BERMUDA

Comprised of over 130 islands, Bermuda lies along latitude 32° 20' N and longitude 64° 45' W almost 650 miles due east from Cape Hatteras, North Carolina.³ The fishhook-shaped island chain's sub-tropical climate lends itself to almost year-round diving conditions, with average surface water temperatures around 73° Fahrenheit, although temperatures can exceed 80° in the summer months (Fig. 1.1).⁴ Bermuda sits atop an extinct Meso-Cenozoic volcano, and the island and its coral-laden ridges are made of limestone and sand deposits.

³ Central Intelligence Agency, "North America: Bermuda," *The World Factbook*, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/bd.html> (accessed January 20, 2016).

⁴ Kathryn Coates et. al., "Introduction to Bermuda: Geology, Oceanography and Climate," in *Coral Reefs of the United Kingdom Overseas Territories*, ed. Charles R. C. Sheppard (Houten: Springer Netherlands, 2013): 120; Eric Gaba, *Topographic map of Bermuda Islands, Great Britain, in the North Atlantic Ocean*, 2009, 1:372,000, Wikimedia Commons, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Bermuda_topographic_map-en.png. (accessed March 1, 2016).

The peripheral reef tract that surrounds Bermuda's islands extends approximately sixteen by thirty-two miles in the shape of an ellipse.⁵ Comparatively, Bermuda's landmasses total only about twenty-one square miles with over 180 miles of coastline. The islands and reef system, together known as the Bermuda Platform, encircle a centrally located lagoon, making Bermuda an atoll-like island chain. Water depths within the Bermuda Platform can range from several feet to over one hundred feet, making some wrecks more accessible than others. Beyond the Bermuda Platform, the water depth gradually drops off from several hundred to several thousand feet.

To date, there are approximately 390 named wrecks within Bermuda's territorial waters, which expand twelve nautical miles from the territory's shores.⁶ This includes traditional-built

Bermudian crafts, vessels from virtually every major nation that voyaged across the Atlantic during the Age of Sail, and more modern 20th century wrecks. The spatial relationship between wrecks, reef, and land is

Figure 1.1 A topographic map of Bermuda. Note Wreck Hill on the westernmost point of the Islands

⁵ Ibid., 115.

⁶ Gordon P. Watts Jr., *Shipwrecked: Bermuda's Maritime Heritage* (Dockyard: National Museum of Bermuda Press, 2014), 28.

evident when considering the density of wrecks in the northern portion of the reef.⁷

On the most western end of the north side of Bermuda at Ely's Harbor in Sandy's Parish, a point still bears the name Wreck Hill. Vessels approaching the islands would have seen this point first, which is also why the area served as a popular lookout for wrecked vessels before the Gibbs Hill Lighthouse was constructed in the mid 19th century.⁸ Just beyond Wreck Hill to the east is Ely's Harbor, a sheltered anchorage for vessels that is important to the story of the wrecked *Enchantress*.

The reefs are fairly close to shore on the south side of the islands, within yards of the shoreline; however, they extend much farther away from land on the north side, almost 14 miles at the most extreme point. On the northern edge of the reef, two small islands, known as the North Rocks, still jut from the sea and are navigational hazards, though World War II naval target practice impacted them down considerably.⁹ Although the deep, cold waters of the middle North Atlantic Ocean, known as the Sargasso Sea, isolate the island chain, the northern portion of the reef would have been the most visited by sailing ships from Europe to the West Indies. It is here that wrecks from the earliest years of exploration are found. The wreck of the *Enchantress* lies in waters on the western end of these reefs.

BERMUDA AND ITS SHIPWRECKS

Historians and mariners have described the dangerous reefs surrounding Bermuda since explorers first spotted the islands in the early 16th century. When Spanish

⁷ William B. Gillies, *Reefs, Wrecks & Relics: Bermuda Underwater Heritage* (Bermuda: Print Link, 2007), 19.

⁸ Frederic Taber Cooper, *Rider's Bermuda: A Guide-Book for Travelers* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1922), 128-129.

⁹ David B. Quinn, "Bermuda in the Age of Exploration and Early Settlement," *Bermuda Journal of Archaeology and Maritime History* 1 (1989): 2.

navigator Juan de Bermúdez discovered Bermuda in 1505, it was nothing more than an uninhabited paradise surrounded by an unnavigable reef system. Bermúdez, on a return voyage to Spain after resupplying the island of Hispaniola, sailed his caravel *La Garza* (the *Heron*) close to the shores of the islands that would eventually bear his name.

The name “La Bermuda” appeared on a woodcut map for the first time in the 16th century historian Pietro Martire d’Anghiera’s 1511 book *Opera Legatio Babylonica Oceani decas Poemata, Epigrammata*, although the island would not be inhabited for almost another hundred years (Fig. 1.2).¹⁰ Curiously, the map indicates the location of Bermuda although the text of the book contains no references to the islands.¹¹

The earliest written accounts of Bermuda derive from Spanish historian Gonzales Ferdinando d’ Oviedo, who credited Bermúdez with discovering the islands in his publication, *De la*

Figure 1.2 La Bermuda appears upside down in the upper right hand corner of Pietro Martire d’Anghiera’s 1511 book *Opera Legatio Babylonica Oceani decas Poemata, Epigrammata*.

natural historia de las Indias.¹² Oviedo passed the islands in 1515 as a passenger

¹⁰ Pietro Martire d’Anghiera, *Opera Legatio Babylonica Oceani decas Poemata, Epigrammata* (Seville, 1511).

¹¹ J. H. Lefroy, *Memorials of the Discovery and Early Settlement of the Bermudas or Somers Islands, 1515-1685, Vol. I* (London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1877): 2.

traveling back to Spain from the West Indies. He noted that Bermúdez previously discovered the islands, and the vessel he travelled in attempted to land hogs on the islands as a fresh meat source for other travelers or shipwrecked crews. A sudden squall interrupted efforts to land the hogs, although not long after, another crew successfully introduced them to the islands where they thrived. This unlikely supply of fresh meat probably saved many shipwrecked crews traveling by caravel, galleon, nao, or carrack. By the mid-16th century, the French, Dutch, Spanish, English, and Portuguese were all very aware of Bermuda's presence and the critical assistance it provided in terms of fresh supplies and navigational landmark.

Bermuda soon earned a reputation as the Devil's Isles or Isle of Devils based on its allegedly cursed ability to doom ships and sailors in dangerous storms upon the rocky shoals. Howling winds and the loud cries of the cahow seabird were believed to be the cries of "wicked spirits" that inhabited the islands.¹³ During the earliest years of transatlantic voyages to North America in the 16th century, historical records suggest that at least ten to sixteen vessels were lost in Bermuda's waters, though this number may be even higher.¹⁴ At least five of these ships were salvaged, at least in part, and the crews managed to repair the derelict vessels or build new ones from Bermuda's ample supply of cedar in order to continue their voyage to Europe or the Caribbean.¹⁵

¹² Quinn, "Bermuda in the Age of Exploration and Early Settlement," 4.

¹³ Addison Emery Verrill, *The Bermuda Islands: An Account of Their Scenery, Climate, Productions, Physiography, Natural History and Geology, with Sketches of their Discovery and Early History, and the changes in their Flora and Fauna due to Man* (New Haven: Published by author, 1902), 419.

¹⁴ Gordon P. Watts Jr., "The Western Ledge Reef wreck: A preliminary report on investigation of the remains of a 16th-century shipwreck in Bermuda," *The International Journal of Nautical Archaeology* 22, no. 2 (1993): 103.

¹⁵ Quinn, "Bermuda in the Age of Exploration and Early Settlement," 2.

These shipwreck survivors provide detailed accounts of the islands including its climate, geography, flora, and fauna.

One such account of shipwrecked survivors comes from English mariner Henry May's disastrous shipwreck event in 1593. A passenger aboard the French privateer *Bonaventure* leaving Hispaniola, May detailed the ship's unfortunate strike upon Bermuda's reefs near the North Rocks.¹⁶ Although half the crew perished in the wrecking event, the crew sustained themselves from the wild hogs previously placed on the island, and constructed a new seaworthy vessel from salvaged timbers, tools, and the islands' abundant cedar supply.¹⁷ Of these early Age of Exploration wrecks, the earliest dates to 1533. The unidentified Spanish nao is one of many Spanish vessels from this period including two tentatively identified as *Santa Lucia* and *San Pedro*, although French and Portuguese ships are also noted in the archaeological record.¹⁸

Despite plans by the Spanish and Portuguese to colonize the islands, these settlements never came to fruition. The "Utopian purgatory" was deemed too dangerous to populate.¹⁹ It wasn't until 1609 that shipwrecked passengers from the English vessel *Sea Venture* unintentionally settled the islands. The flagship of a squadron of seven ships and two pinnaces, *Sea Venture* was intentionally grounded upon the northeastern reefs on July 28, 1609 in a terrible hurricane after separating

¹⁶ Verrill, *The Bermuda Islands*, 534.

¹⁷ Walter Brownell Hayward, *Bermuda Past and Present: A Descriptive and Historical Account of the Somers Islands* (New York: Dodd, Mead & Company, 1910), 10.

¹⁸ Richard Marx, *Shipwrecks of the Americas* (New York: Bonanza Books, 1980), 300.

¹⁹ Wesley Frank Craven, "An Introduction to the History of Bermuda," *The William and Mary Quarterly* 17, no. 2 (Apr. 1937): 182.

from the rest of the fleet.²⁰ Amazingly, there was no loss of life and the ship's dog even made it safely ashore. However, some of the original shipwrecked passengers perished on the islands after initial settlement while others died attempting to reach Virginia after the construction of two new vessels.

Destined to replenish supplies at the Virginia Company's suffering Jamestown settlement, the passengers and crew endured ten long months on the remote islands before constructing two vessels that would be used to finish the voyage. The aptly named *Deliverance* and *Patience* were constructed of ship components salvaged from *Sea Venture* and cedar from Bermuda. Many passengers from the *Sea Venture* wanted to remain on the islands because of its rich and healthful resources, and fertile land.²¹ This desire to stay was only strengthened when they arrived to Jamestown and witnessed the mere skeleton to which the colony had been reduced to. The wreck of *Sea Venture* is even said to have inspired William Shakespeare's shipwreck tale, *The Tempest*. In 1958, local sport divers discovered the wreck of *Sea Venture* in only twenty feet of water. The Bermuda Maritime Museum and partners later completed archaeological investigations of the wreck to confirm its identity as *Sea Venture*.

After 1609, more English settlers came to populate Bermuda and many more shipwrecks occurred despite growing knowledge of the local environment and of navigational techniques. At least thirty more wrecks occurred in the 17th century alone.²² The Virginia Company extended its authority into Bermuda and by 1612,

²⁰ Louis B. Wright, ed., *A Voyage to Virginia in 1609: Two Narratives of Strachey's "True Repertory" & Jourdain's "Discovery of the Bermudas"* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1964),

²¹ Michael J. Jarvis, *In the Eye of All Trade: Bermuda, Bermudians, and the Maritime Atlantic World, 1680-1783* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2010), 15.

²² Watts, *Shipwrecked*, 30.

Admiral George Somers, who had survived the wrecking of *Sea Venture*, returned to Bermuda along with its first governor, Sir Richard Moore, thus beginning the well-established colonial history of Bermuda. It became a central place for tobacco farming, shipbuilding, slave trading, and other maritime commerce well into the 17th and 18th centuries.²³ Although the tobacco plantations eventually failed due to climate limitations and competition from North America, Bermuda proved to be too small to produce an economically viable agricultural staple crop.

Bermudians eventually found their economic foothold with the construction of ships using native cedar. The 18th and 19th centuries were perhaps the most dynamic and revolutionary periods in Bermuda's history. The American Revolution, French Revolutionary Wars, and War of 1812 highlighted Bermuda's strategic location as a stronghold for the Royal Navy.²⁴ Privateers became a common presence in the waters in and around Bermuda during this time and the local population began to join military efforts to fortify the main island through the construction of forts. Innovations in ship design and navigation, colonial expansion, and the development of a global maritime economy resulted in increased traffic across the Atlantic, which inevitably led to more wrecks along Bermuda's shores.²⁵ Another 113 vessels wrecked around Bermuda in the 18th century, but by this time, there were a much higher proportion of English and American vessels.²⁶

The development of steam-propelled and iron vessels only furthered the expansion of maritime transportation in the 19th century for the transportation of both

²³ Jarvis, *In the Eye of All Trade* 1-9.

²⁴ Watts, *Shipwrecked*, 22.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 30.

²⁶ *Ibid.*

trade goods and people. Although sail-propelled and wooden vessels were still common sights in 19th century Bermuda, larger, faster ships slowly replaced them. There were 147 documented wrecks during this century, more than half of which were American or English in origin.²⁷ This includes the wreck of the *Enchantress* in 1837, which was part of a larger network of merchant ships passing through Bermuda's waters at any given time.

The 390 known wrecks around Bermuda, and likely many more waiting to be discovered, represent an almost definitive collection of the kinds of vessels that have been sailing the Atlantic for over four hundred years. The underwater cultural heritage of Bermuda can fill in gaps in the historical record while illustrating the intersection of many cultures and traditions. Bermuda was a true maritime crossroads, and archaeological and historical research of the wrecks that dot its waters can only further shed light on its unique history.

BERMUDA'S UNDERWATER CULTURAL HERITAGE

With the advent of SCUBA diving technology in the 1950s and 1960s, Bermuda's hundreds of shipwrecks became accessible to any enthusiast looking for sunken treasure. The shallow reefs allowed divers to hunt for wrecks and salvage artifacts with relative ease. During this time, divers salvaged many of Bermuda's most historically significant wrecks looking for valuable trinkets, souvenirs, and unmistakable gold from Spanish and Portuguese shipwrecks.

The most notable and perhaps notorious of these treasure hunters is the late Edward Bolton "Teddy" Tucker, who passed away at the age of 89 in 2014. He is

²⁷ Ibid., 31.

credited with discovering many of Bermuda's most famous wrecks, including the gold laden *San Pedro* and the shipwreck at the heart of this paper, the *Enchantress* (Fig. 1.3).²⁸

Tucker's name became synonymous with treasure, and his most valuable find, a gold cross inlaid with emeralds from the 1594 Spanish wreck *San Pedro*, became known as the "Tucker Cross." Despite his reputation as a salvor among archaeologists and historians interested in Bermuda's underwater cultural heritage, he remained a well-respected local hero until his death.

Other notable early discoverers of Bermuda's wrecks include Mendel Peterson, Alan Albright, Peter Copeland, William Gillies, and Harry C. D. Cox, who earned credit for

Figure 1.3 Teddy Tucker's map of Bermuda shipwrecks. He "explored" all of the wrecks seen on this map.

employing the first underwater archaeological methods in Bermuda.²⁹ These early salvors did not employ the rigorous standards used in present-day underwater

²⁸ "Shipwrecks," *Teddy Tucker's Wreck Map*, <http://www.teddytucker.com/shipwrecks.html> (accessed March 1, 2016).

excavations. The scientific study of underwater archaeology was a developing field during this time, and it has since evolved in order to adhere to the same scientific standards carried out in terrestrial archaeology. This includes meticulous documentation in order to preserve the context in which the site is found. True archaeological work requires a research question and systematic data collection rather than a mere interest in the curiosities underwater sites have to offer.³⁰ While early shipwreck investigators including Tucker undoubtedly advanced local appreciation and knowledge of Bermuda's wrecks, it is difficult to argue that proper archaeological methods were employed.

It is often argued that shipwreck salvage has been a distinctly Bermudian activity since Sir George Somers built the *Deliverance* and the *Patience* from the salvaged remains of the *Sea Venture*.³¹ This mentality continued into the 1950s when the Bermudian government commissioned the salvage of nonferrous metals from shipwrecks to meet post-World War II shortages.³² Salvage legislation from 1959 did little to protect historic wrecks despite an understanding that these wrecks were to be treated differently than those that had sunk only fifteen to twenty years prior.

In the 1950s, when salvors discovered gold on the shipwreck-littered reefs, Bermuda's underwater cultural heritage became subject to widespread looting and

²⁹ Charlotte Anderson, "Cultural Heritage Management and Alternative Publics: Bermudian Attitudes to Bermuda's Underwater Cultural Heritage" (MPhil diss., University of Cambridge, 2005), 34.

³⁰ Keith Muckleroy, *Maritime Archaeology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978), 5.

³¹ Philippe Max Rouja, "From Salvage to Science," *Shipwreck Legislation in Bermuda: A Short Overview*, <http://www.conservation.bm/salvage-to-science> (accessed January 21, 2016).

³² Ibid.

pilfering.³³ Wrecks became popular dive sites for the sole purpose of artifact recovery, creating an ongoing commodification of cultural resources that to some extent, still exists today. The Smithsonian Institute even became involved with salvage projects, only furthering the misconception of what constituted proper archaeological methods.³⁴ An incalculable amount of historical and archaeological knowledge was lost when artifacts were removed and sites were disturbed or improperly recorded. A gradual shift took place, however, with the establishment of Bermuda's own maritime museum in the 1970s.

Bermuda's shipwrecks have been a major source of study for both the scientific community on the island and the greater global underwater archaeology community since the acceptance of scientific underwater archaeological methods. The National Museum of Bermuda (NMB), formerly known as the Bermuda Maritime Museum, has assumed a critical role in addressing the historical and archaeological value of Bermuda's shipwrecks since its establishment in 1974. Their vast archival and artifact collections offer researchers and other interested parties the opportunity to scientifically study what has been lost through decades of salvage activity. Although a large portion of the artifact collection is comprised of artifacts recovered during the early days of salvage "archaeology," they still represent Bermuda's history as the entrepôt of the Atlantic.

After years of salvage, the Bermuda Senate and House Assembly finally passed the Historic Wrecks Act in 2001. The Act was established in order to "preserve, protect and safeguard Bermuda's underwater cultural heritage by making provision for

³³ Smith Jr. and Harris, "Underwater Cultural Heritage in Bermuda," 299.

³⁴ Ibid.

the classification of wrecks and to control the archaeological and scientific examination of historic wrecks.”³⁵ The Act further provides that no person shall mark, remove or otherwise interfere with, deal in, or possess any wreck or historic artifact unless licensed and authorized to do so.³⁶ Ownership of the artifacts and wrecks are lies completely with Crown, as Bermuda remains a territory of Great Britain.

The Act also established the creation of the Historic Wrecks Authority, lead by the Custodian of Historic Wrecks. Together, the Custodian and Authority are responsible for issuing Research Licenses, classifying wrecks for the Register of Wrecks, managing and conserving artifacts as part of the National Collection, and overall management of the sites. The Marine Police Section, Fisheries Wardens from the Department of Environmental Protection, and Technical Officers from the Department of Conservation Services actively enforce the regulations by patrolling the waters for suspicious activity. Failure to comply with the Act can result in heavy fines. While this legislation is critical to the protection of shipwrecks previously discovered and those yet to be found, over forty years of damage and destruction have already taken place.

In conjunction with the Historic Wrecks Authority and its Custodian of Historic Wrecks, both of which fall under the purview of the Bermuda Government’s Department of Conservation services, the NMB works to study, preserve, and manage shipwreck sites and associated artifacts. NMB produces publications and strives to protect its non-renewable cultural resources for future generations of Bermudians, as

³⁵Government of Bermuda, *Historic Wrecks Act 2001*, <http://www.bermudalaws.bm/Laws/Consolidated%20Laws/Historic%20Wrecks%20Act%202001.pdf> (accessed January 21, 2016).

³⁶ Ibid.

well as those who visit the islands to dive these sites.³⁷ The Bermuda National Trust, a non-profit conservation organization, has also been a driving force behind the preservation of Bermuda's shipwrecks through its support of cultural heritage legislation.³⁸

Universities with maritime archaeology programs have also been critical to the study of Bermuda's underwater cultural heritage. The University of Rhode Island, East Carolina University, Texas A&M University, and other institutions have all contributed to the examination of Bermuda's shipwrecks, including the *Enchantress*. A number of underwater archaeologists, historians, anthropologists, and conservators, such as Dr. Gordon Watts, Dr. Jon Adam, and Dr. Richard Gould, have led multi-year projects to document sites in Bermudian waters. Wrecks include the 1619 English galleon *Warwick*, the 1838 wreck of French man-of-war *L'Herminie*, and the Western Ledge Reef Wreck, an unidentified 16th century Iberian vessel (likely *Santa Lucia*), to name a few.

The Bermuda Government's Department of Conservation Services maintains an open wreck list that includes wreck names and locational information. This allows local residents, tourists, and researchers to visit the sites (Fig. 1.4).³⁹ The Department also maintains a closed wreck list that contains historically significant sites that recreational divers are not allowed to visit or disturb.

³⁷ National Museum of Bermuda, "Why are Shipwrecks Important?," *Bermuda Underwater Cultural Heritage*, <http://nmb.bm/explore/underwater-cultural-heritage/> (accessed January 21, 2016).

³⁸ Smith Jr. and Harris, "Underwater Cultural Heritage in Bermuda," 300.

³⁹ Government of Bermuda Wrecks Authority, "Open Wrecks," *Marine Heritage Policy*, <http://static.squarespace.com/static/501134e9c4aa430673203999/501295cfe4b0ebc53ba7b245/501295cfe4b0ebc53ba7b247/1336143556507/> (accessed March 1, 2016).

Under the Historic Wrecks Act, universities and research institutions can apply for Licenses in order to carry out proper scientific investigations. Licenses allow for pre-disturbance surveys, excavations on closed and open wrecks sites, training excursions, and filming for documentary purposes. They are open for one year in

which all **Figure 1.4 Bermuda's open wreck list. Note the extent of the reef systems and concentration of wrecks in the north and northwest portions of the reefs.**

research

must be

conducted.

In order to

be issued a

License, an

applicant

must have

reputable

past

experience,

funding available for excavation and conservation, and a scientific plan with methods and objectives. Results of research and findings must be reported or published.⁴⁰

Despite over sixty years of destruction by treasure hunters, salvors, and natural processes, Bermuda's shipwrecks remain integral to the historical and cultural fabric of the islands. These non-renewable resources will continue to be a valuable asset to

⁴⁰ Government of Bermuda, *Historic Wreck Act 2001*.

Bermuda. Not only do the wrecks tell the history of the islands, they also sustain local economic opportunities through the diving and heritage tourism industries.

While it's almost undeniable that every known wreck in Bermuda's waters has been salvaged at some point or another, there is still plenty to learn from what remains of these sites. This is especially true of the *Enchantress*, whose structural components, scant artifact assemblage, and historical documents reveal a plethora of information previously unknown. From 2010-2015, the University of Rhode Island and St. Mary's College of California held a License to perform archaeological investigations on the site, resulting in the discovery of new information both underwater and on land in the local archives.

CHAPTER 2

THE WRECK OF THE EMIGRANT SHIP *ENCHANTRESS*

On February 5, 1837, the British merchant ship *Enchantress* sank in the northwestern waters off of Bermuda near a notoriously shallow portion of the reef called Chub Heads. In an already decrepit state before she struck the reef, the *Enchantress* was approximately eight miles from shore as she began to take on water. Despite her proximity to shore, the ship could not reach the safety of any of Bermuda's harbors. Bermuda's reef system, home to many wrecks from varying cultures and time periods, claimed the merchant ship but spared the lives of all individuals aboard. In addition to the captain and several crewmembers, the *Enchantress* carried 66 emigrants bound from Waterford, Ireland, to New York City, all of who lived to tell the story of the wrecked vessel.

The wrecking event of the *Enchantress* intersects with the early years of the mass exodus that took place from Great Britain and Ireland from 1835 to 1860. During these years, over four million people left Ireland and England for new lives across vast oceans far away from their homes.⁴¹ Across Canada, the United States, Australia, New Zealand, and other countries, desperate emigrants arrived and began to carve out their places in a growing new world. In the year 1837 alone, approximately 37,000 individuals left Great Britain and entered the United States, though this number is

⁴¹ Terry Coleman, *Passage to America: A history of emigrants from Great Britain and Ireland to America in the mid-nineteenth century* (London: Hutchinson & Co., 1972), 295-296.

likely higher.⁴² Despite some efforts by captains and emigration officers to account for passengers, the process was negligent and many emigrants were overlooked. Oftentimes, passenger totals were estimates, especially given the fact that many captains allowed more passengers on board than the vessel was legally able to hold.

A number of issues brought Irish and English emigrants to North America beginning in the early 19th century, continuing through the 1830s, and steadily increasing throughout the mid-19th century. Although the effects of the Great Famine drove many to North America in the 1840s, earlier Irish emigration can be attributed to economic disadvantages brought on by overpopulation.⁴³ British control of Ireland, which lasted from 1801 to 1912, forced economic and religious restrictions upon the people of Ireland. Poor English farmers, oppressed by economic conditions and lack of employment, also chose to emigrate. Emigrants thus began boarding vessels in large numbers, beginning one of the largest mass migrations of people to North America.

Although some farmers and merchants could afford the journey to North America, a majority of the emigrants used every penny they had to leave Ireland and England. The cost of passage to North America varied based on the final destination, the vessel in use, and what provisions were provided for the voyage. Prices usually averaged between £1 10 shillings and £3.⁴⁴ In the earlier years of large-scale migration, the cheapest routes brought emigrants to British North America (Canada). Some of these voyages were even paid for by the British government, especially

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Kerby A. Miller, *Emigrants and Exiles: Ireland and the Irish Exodus to North America* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985), 197.

⁴⁴ Ibid.,

during the Famine, as well as local ship owners and landlords eager to rid themselves of what they perceived as their burdensome, unprofitable tenants.⁴⁵

The summer of 1836 proved to be a difficult one for many in Ireland. Colder than average temperatures lead to a major potato crop failure, resulting in a minor famine especially compared to the one that would occur less than ten years later. These crop failures occurred often, but none were as severe as the failures that caused widespread famine in 1845.⁴⁶ A number of potato crop failures in the 19th century, compounded with oppressive social and political conditions, drove Irish emigrants to board the emigrant ships bound for North America. Many historians consider these earlier famine years to be the catalyst to the Great Famine.

The wreck of the *Enchantress*, and subsequent aftermath of the wreck, reflects 19th century attitudes towards emigration and the general disregard for the lives of the poor and destitute people during this time. Individuals aboard the *Enchantress* were crammed into the hold of the ship, provisions were low, and the captain and owner of the ship had no substantial stake in the safe transport of the 66 emigrants. Even more telling of the attitudes towards emigrants during this time is their treatment post-wrecking. Although saved by the charity of the Bermudian government and the islands' local citizens, it was made quite clear in official meetings and communications that the emigrants must continue to their original destination. There was no place in Bermuda for these unwanted emigrants, especially given the fact that

⁴⁵ Kathryn Miles, *All Standing: The Remarkable Story of the Jeanie Johnston, the Legendary Irish Famine Ship* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2013), 21.

⁴⁶ Miller, *Emigrants and Exiles*, 281.

most of the Irish already on the island were convicts locked away in prisons and floating hulks.

DISASTER STRIKES

The *Enchantress* sailed from Liverpool, England, on November 21, 1836 and into the storms that make the Atlantic Ocean a notoriously awful place to sail during the winter months, especially for wooden sailing vessels without modern navigation and communication capabilities. The *Enchantress* was an average sized vessel for her time. At 401 tons builder's old measurement, she was 112 feet and six inches in length and twenty-eight feet and one inch in beam.⁴⁷ Joseph Tippett, a shipbuilder out of Bristol, completed building the *Enchantress* in 1828 for her original owner and master, William Drew. Not long after Tippett finished the ship in 1830, he filed for bankruptcy. The *London Gazette* reported Tippett's financial downfall. The paper listed Tippett of the city of Bristol, as a shipbuilder, dealer, and chapman. He was issued a Commission of Bankrupt by England's Commissioner of Bankruptcy on

6	Enchantress	W. Drew	401	Bristol	2	W. Drew	18	Br. St Vin	A	1	A	1
	Ss.C29			LS&K.				2 C 1H		1	2	
7	Bg s.C	Ponington	129	Plymh	12	J. Roberts	12	Li. Genoa	E			
	24 pt 29							1 C 1H		9	10	

Figure 1.1 The *Enchantress*' first entry in *Lloyd's Register* of 1830.

January 22, 1830 and forced to sell his assets to pay his debtors.⁴⁸

The *Enchantress*' first entry in *Lloyd's Register* in 1830 provides further information about the vessel's construction (Fig. 2.1).⁴⁹ The then two-year-old ship

⁴⁷ Rowan Hackman, *Ships of the East India Company* (Gravesend: World Society Ship, 2001), 275.

⁴⁸ His Majesty's Stationary Office, *The London Gazette Part 1* (London: The Stationary Office, 1830), 182.

February 22, 1837 and provided Charles Fogard, Deputy Secretary of the Public Notary, an account of the voyage (Fig. 2.2).⁵¹

Donaldson began by describing the earliest parts of the voyage when the *Enchantress* faced fierce storms near her homeport. Before even losing sight of land, the *Enchantress* faced severe gales that blew from the north and northwest. On November 23rd, only two days out from Liverpool, she lost her gig, a small rowing boat used for transporting a few people at a time from ship to shore. In these strong winds on the night of the 23rd, only three leagues (just over ten miles) away from the popular ferry port of Holyhead, the *Enchantress* also lost six water casks. The storms claimed another six water casks on the 25th. The voyage seemed ill fated before even crossing into the open ocean.

Conditions worsened and then quickly ebbed as the *Enchantress* crossed the Irish Sea and approached Waterford, Ireland, on the 29th. Under the guidance of a pilot who navigated the ship into Waterford, the *Enchantress* anchored for much needed repairs and to replenish lost provisions before boarding the emigrants. The crew, comprised of chief mate John Dudley, second mate John Heron, and ship's carpenter John Thompson, repaired the sails, rigging, and water casks, caulked the port side of the ship, rimmed the cargo in the hold, and filled the vessel with provisions for the voyage. She departed Waterford on November 30. Although most emigrant vessels that departed Waterford at the time traveled to Newfoundland, the *Enchantress* was

⁵¹ *Enchantress* Protest, February 22, 1837, Protests for Inbound Vessels, Bermuda Archives and Government Records Centre, Hamilton, Bermuda.

destined for New York City.⁵²

From November 30 to December 25, the crew noted that nothing out of the ordinary occurred. The cargo shifted due to heavy seas and rolling swells, and the crew made minor repairs to the caulking. At four o'clock in the evening on Christmas Day, conditions worsened again. At that time, an unnamed passenger died of unknown causes. The *Enchantress* was in the middle of the North Atlantic. By January 3, heavy gales and lightening squalls broke the main topmast and unshipped the topgallant cap. On January 11, storms carried away the bobstay and the crew moved some of the cargo to the middle of the ship to ease the stress placed upon the ship. The *Enchantress* began to leak badly.

Misfortune would continue to hamper the voyage to New York City. From January 14 to January 20, very heavy weather carried away the main topmast stay and filled the cabin with water. A small break in the weather allowed the crew to mend the sails and send out the jib boom. On January 25 at an observed latitude of 33° 45' and longitude of 62° 56', the chief mate fell and fractured two of his ribs which rendered him bedridden the rest of the voyage. Two days later on January 27 at nine o'clock in the evening, a second passenger was lost on. He was a male passenger by the name of Mr. Rowing. He fell from the main deck into the sea, never to be seen again.

The winds shifted to the northwest the morning of January 28, and with it came the most ferocious storm the *Enchantress* encountered to date. Tremendous cross seas, which occur when two different weather systems create opposing wave patterns, caused the ship to labor excessively and the leak increased. The bilge pumps had to be

⁵² Jenny Higgins, "Irish Migration," *Heritage Newfoundland & Labrador*, <http://www.heritage.nf.ca/articles/society/irish-migration.php> (accessed March 1, 2016).

kept running in order to prevent the ship from becoming inundated with water. The foretopsail was split and at noon, the crew discovered the rudder had been damaged to such a degree that the vessel was rendered unsafe to continue the voyage. Because of the rudder damage, the ship's captain changed course for Bermuda.

On January 29, the winds carried away the jib boom and end of the bowsprit, which helped the ship hold before the wind until the foretopmast was secured. Five men and a boy turned in as they were unfit for duty due to seasickness brought on by the storm. From January 31 to February 3, winds were variable but not heavy. It was during this time that the crew discovered that some of the passengers had broken open the hold by candlelight and began to drink the casks of whiskey. Two of the crew had joined in and had become intoxicated, thus endangering the lives of all on board. For the safety of those on board and for the security for the property on board, the captain ordered the cargo to be secured and the passengers to remain in their quarters.

By this point in the rerouted journey to Bermuda, the *Enchantress* began to run low on provisions, including water and bread. The captain was able to secure a cask of water from a nearby barque called the *Brunette*, but in doing so, had drifted two degrees to the south to latitude 32° 13' and longitude 65° 20'. On February 5 at four o'clock in the afternoon, Captain Donaldson began to make towards the Bermuda islands. He hoisted a signal for a pilot and steered in towards land. A pilot familiar with the environmental conditions around the islands could have easily guided the *Enchantress* into port. However, at half past five, Donaldson saw the bottom and hauled off. Shortly after, the ship struck the reef and unshipped the rudder.

Unaccustomed to the varying depths and shallowness of the reef, Captain Donaldson found the Bermuda seas too difficult to navigate. He managed to direct the *Enchantress* away from the direction of the islands and into five and a half fathoms of water (33 feet), where he let go the anchor and furled the sails and desperately hoped a Bermuda pilot would arrive before darkness set in.

A few hours later, a pilot arrived to navigate the vessel through the treacherous reefs. By now, night had fallen and the passengers were hungry, thirsty, and scared. Upon seeing the condition of the passengers and the lack of provisions, the pilot immediately set off back towards shore to gather supplies for those aboard the *Enchantress*. With a light on the masthead as a signal of distress, the *Enchantress* was still taking on water at an alarming rate of more than nineteen inches of water per hour. At 2 o'clock in the morning on February 6, a heavy squall came from the east, which caused the ship to swing and strike heavily against the reef. She soon bilged even though the pumps worked constantly. A mere hour later, there was ten feet of water in the hold and there was no hope left for the sinking *Enchantress*.

Preparations began to abandon the vessel. The long boat was hoisted out and the female passengers were escorted on board. By four o'clock in the morning when daylight just began to break, the pilot returned with several other small boats and began rescuing those aboard the *Enchantress*. The passengers, crew, and their few provisions were transported ashore. Later, some parts of the rigging, the sails, and other portable materials, including some of the cargo, were saved.

Local salvors, speaking to the inherent nature of Bermudians to utilize what resources could be had on the small islands, recovered some of these items. A notice

published in the *Royal Gazette* after the sinking required, “All persons concerned in saving any part of the cargo, hull or materials of the British Ship *Enchantress*-wrecked off the North West of Sandy’s Parish, are hereby requested to report them to the Subscriber, and to deliver them without delay at his Stores at Ely’s Harbor.”⁵³ This notice was published throughout the spring of 1837 in order to return salvaged components of the ship that would later be sold by the agent.

The water had reached the lower deck at 7 o’clock in the morning. At that point, Captain Donaldson had also abandoned the ship and reached the nearest harbor, Ely’s Harbor in Sandy’s Parish, at eleven o’clock. Here, he appointed Thomas R. Tucker Esq. as the agent for the ship and cargo. Tucker then provided rooms and necessary provisions for the passengers and crew. Tucker wrote to the governor of Bermuda, Stephen A. Chapman, immediately after the *Enchantress* sank stating that all but fifteen of the emigrants were in a desperate state and were left with nothing but the clothes on their backs and their own bedding that they managed to save from the sinking ship.⁵⁴ His plea to the governor for assistance was a success, and Chapman reached into his own pocket to aid the shipwrecked victims.

News of the sinking of the *Enchantress* first broke to the public a day after the disaster on February 7, 1837, though by word of mouth, the news likely spread much faster on the small island chain. The details of the wreck were published in Bermuda’s local newspaper, *The Royal Gazette*. The report, despite some inaccuracies detailed the wreck as follows:

⁵³ “Notices,” *Royal Gazette* (Hamilton, Bermuda), February 28, 1837 – May 23, 1837.

⁵⁴ Thomas Tucker to Stephen A. Chapman, February 7, 1837, Governor Correspondence 1837-1838, Bermuda Archives and Government Records Centre, Hamilton, Bermuda.

The British ship *Enchantress*, Davidson [*sic*], Master, out eleven weeks from Liverpool, England, bound to New York with 70 passengers, and laden with coal and iron, ran on the rocks off the West End about twilight on Sunday evening last. – We understand that the *Enchantress* was in a very leaky state – that the passengers and crew were much debilitated, from the limited allowance to which it was found necessary to reduce them, and that they were quite out of provisions the day they made this land. – During Sunday night they were supplied with provisions and water, by J. A. M. Gilbert, Esq., acting agent for Lloyds, at the West End; Captain Davidson having communicated to him the state of his ship. – A gig with some of the passengers landed yesterday morning at Somerset, and the whole of the passengers and crew were subsequently taken off by the boats from that part of the Island. – The vessel now lies among the rocks bilged and filled with water. – Agent, Thomas R. Tucker, Esq.⁵⁵

With the assistance of Gilbert, another acting agent from Lloyd’s maritime insurance company, the passengers were cared for. Gilbert likely passed word of the wreck to London, after which the incident was published in *Lloyd’s List*. This weekly maritime and shipping newspaper reported ship casualties, and its entry for the *Enchantress* provides no further information on the wreck and simply states, “Bermuda, 8th Feb. ... The *Enchantress*, Donaldson, from Liverpool to New York, struck on the rocks 5th inst. bilged and sunk. Crew and Passengers saved.”⁵⁶

The story eventually spread to American newspapers and publications. *The Sailor’s Magazine and Naval Journal* noted that the *Enchantress* bilged and sank on the rocks off the West End of Bermuda in its “Disasters at Sea” section.⁵⁷ Several weeks after she sank, New York’s *Evening Post* reported that the *Enchantress* sank off the West End of the islands, laden with iron and coal and almost seventy passengers who were out of provisions as a result of the voyage and wreck.⁵⁸ A week later, the

⁵⁵ “Custom-House St. George’s: Entered,” *Royal Gazette* (Hamilton, Bermuda), February 7, 1837.

⁵⁶ “Shipping Casualties,” *Lloyd’s List* (London: Guildhall Library, March 28, 1837).

⁵⁷ *The Sailor’s Magazine and Naval Journal Vol. IX* (New York: American Seaman’s Friend Society, 1837), 293.

⁵⁸ “From Bermuda,” *The Evening Post* (New York City, New York), February 24, 1837.

Post reported a memorandum to the story, and conveyed that on February 5, the last of ship's provisions were given only to the crew.⁵⁹

With nothing but the shirts on their back and the few provisions they brought with them for the voyage, the emigrants were rescued from the wreck and taken to the shores of Ely's Harbor. All passengers and crew were clothed and fed by the hospitable residents of Bermuda, including Governor Stephen A. Chapman who let some into his own home, as well as residents Richard J. Tucker and Samuel A. Smith.⁶⁰ The Powder Fund, which consisted of tax dollars pooled by the government and used to defray miscellaneous costs incurred by the colony during government recesses, had been exhausted over the winter. There were no public funds available to assist the passengers and crew of the *Enchantress*.⁶¹

Unable to access government funds as the House of Assembly was not in session, Governor Chapman and the people of Sandy's Parish paid a substantial sum of 328 pounds, six shillings, and seven pence to care for the emigrants and help them depart for their original destination New York City (Fig. 2.3).⁶² The *Royal Gazette* made the following announcement on February 21, 1837:

The Emigrants by the late ship Enchantress – The destitute circumstances of these people, from being cast on our shores by the loss of their Ship, in which they were voyaging to New York, from Liverpool, rendered it imperatively necessary that something should be done, and that speedily, to ameliorate their condition, and forward them on their way. Immediately on their landing, the Magistrates of this parish of Sandy's, on which they were thrown, with an alacrity and zeal truly commendable, lost not a moment in procuring for them, shelter,

⁵⁹ "Memoranda," *The Evening Post* (New York City, New York), March 9, 1837.

⁶⁰ House of Assembly Printed Journal, June 21, 1837, Bermuda Archives and Government Records Centre, Hamilton, Bermuda.

⁶¹ House of Assembly Printed Journal, June 19, 1837, Bermuda Archives and Government Records Centre, Hamilton, Bermuda.

⁶² Ledgers and Estimates, Sandy's Parish Records, June 28, 1837, Bermuda Archives and Government Records Centre, Hamilton, Bermuda.

necessary sustenance, and other requisites of the like nature, as their exhausted and impoverished state demanded; and many of the Parishioners, furnished them with such clothing as the season required or their scanty covering rendered particularly acceptable. The Ladies also of that Parish were assiduous in administering to the wants of the women and children, of whom there are many.

A report of the circumstances having been made to His Excellency the Governor, His Excellency directly convened the Council, not only for the purpose of relieving, the immediate wants of these unfortunate people, but of devising means of getting them from the Colony, and sending them on to their original Port of destination. The Funds, however, at the disposal of this Board, and from which on former similar occasions, aid had been liberally and freely granted, being exhausted, a new and formidable difficulty presented itself. – At this juncture – when an appeal to the Inhabitants seemed to be the only plan likely to be successful, but to which the parties exerting themselves in behalf of the Emigrants felt dubious in resorting, from the well known circumstance that their charity had of late been severely taxed, as well for domestic as for cases of a like nature – His Excellency Sir Stephen Chapman, with a benevolence and humanity which are alike creditable to his head and heart, announced his intention to advance from his private purse, sufficient means to furnish passages and provisions for these unfortunate people, to New York – which object, under the direction of a Committee of the Council, will in a few days be accomplished, in the British brig Eliza, Capt. Laffoley.

Such an act as this, needs no aid of our's to portray it: the Inhabitants of these Islands, will, we feel assured, duly estimate it, and the unfortunates who are assisted and relieved, will no doubt fully appreciate the extent of a charity which enables them to go their way in comparative happiness and comfort.⁶³

When the Bermuda House of Assembly returned to session in June of the same year its members resolved to reimburse the full amount to Gov. Chapman and local

The image shows a handwritten entry on a piece of paper, likely a ledger page. The text is written in cursive and reads: "Total in Septr of 1837 -", followed by "amt of charge for Emigrants", then "landed here on ship Enchantress", and finally "£328.6.7". There is a horizontal line drawn under the amount "£328.6.7".

Figure 2.3 The total amount the residents paid to feed, clothe, and shelter the emigrants listed in Sandy's Parish ledger.

⁶³ "The Emigrants by the late ship *Enchantress*," *Royal Gazette* (Hamilton, Bermuda), February 21, 1837.

Bermudians who expensed this unforeseen calamity.⁶⁴ However, an appeal by Chapman to Her Majesty's Treasury led the Home Office to pay for the costs incurred by Bermuda and its local residents. A portion of the costs were paid for by July 4, 1837, the date in which Governor Chapman wrote to Her Majesty's Treasury and Emigration Agent that there ought to be some measures adopted to relieve the Colony of such burdens and inconvenience in the future.⁶⁵ It wasn't until September of 1838, however, that the Treasury paid the full costs incurred by the Colony.

According to Bermuda's Executive Council minutes dated February 15, 1837, the passengers were required to pay their passage in advance and furnish themselves with provisions before setting off from Ireland. William Smith of Liverpool chartered the vessel for the sum of £750 to John William Shaw of Liverpool with George Donaldson as the captain, to take goods and steerage passengers to New York.⁶⁶ After the shipwreck, the owner showed no interest in his vessel, leaving passengers abandoned in Bermuda and at the mercy of the local population and officials.

Although the colony saved the emigrants, it came at quite a cost. In the winters of 1837 and 1836 alone, Bermuda was a place of refuge for over 340 emigrants forced into the colony by distress. By necessity, residents used public and private funds to care for such burdens "thrown on them from abroad."⁶⁷ Included among these burdens were the British emigrants on board the Prussian barque *William Frederick* that

⁶⁴ House of Assembly Printed Journal, June 23, 1837, Bermuda Archives and Government Records Centre, Hamilton, Bermuda.

⁶⁵ Governor's Despatches, No. 49, July 4, 1837, Despatches from Governor Stephen A. Chapman as well as letters from various offices, Bermuda Archives and Government Records Centre, Hamilton, Bermuda.

⁶⁶ Executive Council Meeting Minutes, February 15, 1837, Bermuda Archives and Government Records Centre, Hamilton, Bermuda.

⁶⁷ House of Assembly Printed Journal, June 29, 1837, Bermuda Archives and Government Records Centre, Hamilton, Bermuda.

arrived to the islands in an unfit state and completely out of provisions in January of 1836.⁶⁸ The House recognized “the increase of emigration, and the efforts which are making by the people of England and Ireland to relieve themselves from the pressure of their unemployed poor, render it highly probably that similar occasions will arise for an appeal to the charity of the Inhabitants of these Islands.”⁶⁹

Local officials wondered if there was a more appropriate way to handle travel-worn vessels, emigrants, and passengers, though reimbursement for expenses occurred to provide aid alleviated their concerns. Bermuda’s reserved willingness to assist the emigrants eventually became a requirement to any English colony faced with the same situation. Section forty-nine of the British Passengers Act of 1852 required that if passengers found themselves in a colonial port other than the one in which they were contracted to land, and the master declined or was unable to continue to the final destination, the governor of the colony would be required to forward the passengers to the intended destination.⁷⁰

Captain Donaldson left Bermuda for London five months after the *Enchantress* sank on July 22, 1837 aboard the *Steadfast*.⁷¹ The 64 surviving emigrants departed on March 7, 1837 for their original destination, New York City. They arrived to the United States on March 18, 1837 aboard the brig *Eliza*, which was hired by the colony to transport the emigrants. The passenger list for the *Eliza* contains the names of those who survived the voyage to Bermuda and wrecking of the *Enchantress*, with 64

⁶⁸ Governor’s Despatches, No. 9, April 30, 1836, Despatches from Governor Stephen A. Chapman as well as letters from various offices, Bermuda Archives and Government Records Centre, Hamilton, Bermuda.

⁶⁹ House of Assembly Printed Journal, June 29, 1837.

⁷⁰ George Sharswood, *Reports of Cases Argued and Determined in the English Courts of Common Law* (Philadelphia: T. & J. W. Johnson & Co., Law Booksellers, 1856), 587.

⁷¹ “Custom-House St. George’s: Cleared,” *Royal Gazette* (Hamilton, Bermuda), July 25, 1837.

individuals accounted for. It appears as though none of the emigrants chose to build a life for themselves in Bermuda, or more likely, none were given the opportunity.

Although varying accounts suggest 76 passengers were originally aboard the *Enchantress*, 74 excluding the two deaths while underway, the passenger list of *Eliza* only contains 64 names (Table 1). It is possible that the discrepancy in passenger totals was the result of the captain giving an estimate while describing the voyage for the protest. Alternatively, ten individuals' names may not have made it on the passenger list due to limitations regarding passenger quotas, or the original passenger count was actually 64. The passenger list for *Eliza* reveals the surnames of the passengers including Kennedy, Shannon, and Lynch, as well as their occupations. All of the emigrants are listed as laborers, merchants, painters, or bakers. Only seven emigrants came from England, one from Scotland, and the rest from Ireland.

Table 1. The complete transcribed passenger list of the brig *Eliza*, which transported the emigrants from the wrecked *Enchantress* to New York City.⁷²

Name	Age	Sex	Occupation	Country of Origin
J. Shingerland	25	Male	Laborer	Ireland
Thomas Clark	27	Male	Laborer	Ireland
John Muleahy	35	Male	Laborer	Ireland
Mrs.(?) Kennedy	40	Female	-	Ireland
Mary(?) Kennedy	12	Female	-	Ireland
John Muleahy Jr.	6	Male	Laborer	Ireland
Thomas Kennedy	7	Male	Laborer	Ireland
John Kennedy	2	Male	-	Ireland
Judy Kennedy	5	Female	-	Ireland
Joseph Kennedy	6	Male	-	Ireland
John Rooney	7	Male	Laborer	Ireland
Thomas Barry Sr.(?)	25	Male	Laborer	Ireland
Charles Lee	25	Male	Laborer	Ireland
Miss(?) Lee	20	Female	Laborer	Ireland
Hannah Haye	25	Female	Laborer	Ireland
Mrs.(?) Walsh	25	Female	Laborer	Ireland

⁷² Passenger list of vessels arriving at New York, March 16, 1837-June 11, 1837, Reel 34, Records of the Bureau of Customs, National Archives and Records Administration.

Eliza Walsh	6 mo.	Female	-	Ireland
Sarah Middleton	30	Female	Laborer	Ireland
William Patterson	75	Male	Laborer	Ireland
John Kelly	22	Male	Laborer	Ireland
Patrick Morrison	26	Male	Laborer	Ireland
Mary Brennan	22	Female	Laborer	Ireland
Margaret Brennan	17	Female	Laborer	Ireland
Mary Brennan	20	Female	Laborer	Ireland
Jane Lonity(?)	17	Female	Laborer	Ireland
Pat(?) Byrnes	39	Male	Laborer	Ireland
Mrs.(?) Byrnes	25	Female	Laborer	Ireland
John Byrnes	7 mo.	Male	-	Ireland
Joseph Barry	30	Male	Laborer	Ireland
Mrs.(?) Barry	20	Female	Laborer	Ireland
Anne Barry	5 mo.	Female	-	Ireland
Arthur(?) McSamuels	25	Male	Laborer	Ireland
Cook: Wolfe	22	Female	Laborer	Ireland
Thomas Burnile	25	Male	Laborer	Ireland
John McSamuels	25	Male	Laborer	Ireland
David McGinnity	25	Male	Laborer	Ireland
Ernest Shannon	30	Male	Laborer	Ireland
Mary Shannon	22	Female	Laborer	Ireland
Anne Shannon	20	Female	Laborer	Ireland
Anne McLee	18	Female	Laborer	Ireland
B. Farley	40	Male	Laborer	Ireland
Joseph Kelan	21	Male	Laborer	Ireland
Jane Kelan	20	Female	Laborer	Ireland
Joseph McKiernan	25	Male	Laborer	Ireland
Judy McLowell	17	Female	Laborer	Ireland
Rose Leonard	20	Female	Laborer	Ireland
M. L.?	45	Female	Laborer	Ireland
Thomas L.	18	Male	Painter	Ireland
George L.	25	Male	Merchant	Ireland
John L.	12	Male	Laborer	Ireland
Joseph L.	14	Male	Laborer	Ireland
Mary Heron	20	Female	Laborer	Ireland
M. Lynch	50	Female	Laborer	Ireland
Thomas Lynch	22	Male	Merchant	Ireland
Joseph Lynch	25	Male	Baker	Ireland
Julia Lynch	17	Female	Baker	Ireland
Bridget Clinton	18	Female	Baker	England
Jeremiah Early	20	Male	Laborer	England
M. Harris	30	Female	Laborer	England
M. Stacy	25	Male	Laborer	England
Eliza Clinton	13	Female	Laborer	England
John Conley	35	Male	Laborer	England
M. Pickering	30	Male	Laborer	England
B. McSamuels	22	Male	<i>illegible</i>	Scotland

Very few secondary sources discuss the wrecking of the *Enchantress*. It likely faded out of local consciousness soon after the death of Thomas Tucker and other rescuers. One source, riddled with inaccuracies and inconsistencies, described the scene as follows:

But with the new year, British brig, the *Enchantress* of 400 tons, heavily laden with rice from Liverpool and fifty four days from Waterford with emigrants through a continuously tempestuous sea ran on the western shoals and not long after slid off to sink in the deep water. With abundant help from the shore, all hands were disembarked in time, but with virtually nothing except the garments they stood in. The justices of the peace called upon the parishioners of Sandy's to shelter the refugees, the powder fund was broached once more, a hat was passed around, the ladies collected clothing, and Sir Stephen Chapman personally undertook to get fifteen people off in a small vessel which happened to be in port. The direction of these emergency measures fell upon Thomas R. Tucker, J.P., who again showed his capacity. The ship herself had been chartered by a Liverpool merchant for this single voyage at 750.⁷³

Although no primary sources indicate the *Enchantress* carried large stores of rice, almost all emergency measures did fall upon local agent Thomas R. Tucker. Tucker, an esquire, was a well known and respected resident of Bermuda's Sandy Parish. His extraordinary character and civil duties are noted in his obituary on June 6, 1843 which suggests he was the father figure of the parish.⁷⁴ He also served as a Justice of the Peace and lived the rest of his life a local hero after the rescue of the emigrants from the wrecked *Enchantress*.⁷⁵

The wreck of the *Enchantress*, while a harrowing and all too common event, turned out to be a story of survival and luck rather than tragedy. While the voyage was

⁷³ Henry C. Wilkinson, *Bermuda from Sail to Steam, 1784-1901, Volume 2*, (London: Oxford University Press, 1973), 593.

⁷⁴ "Obituaries," *Royal Gazette* (Hamilton, Bermuda), June 6, 1843.

⁷⁵ Bermuda National Trust, *Bermuda's Architectural Heritage Sandys: Volume Three of the Historic Buildings Book Project* (Hamilton: Bermuda National Trust, 1999), 80.

marred by the deaths of two passengers, horrible storms, and ultimately shipwreck, the sixty-four emigrants aboard the ship were fortunate enough to leave Bermuda with their lives. The wreck of the *Enchantress* reflects the tide of emigration that reached many Atlantic shores during the 19th century. Bermuda proved to be a saving grace for those aboard the wrecked *Enchantress*. Many others were not as fortunate.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXAMINATIONS OF THE WRECK AND ASSOCIATED MATERIAL CULTURE

Over 170 years after the *Enchantress* sank, from 2009-2015, the University of Rhode Island and St. Mary's College of California conducted underwater archaeology field schools in the waters of Bermuda primarily focused on a site called the "Iron Plate Wreck." Led by Dr. Rod Mather of the University of Rhode Island and Dr. James Allan of St. Mary's College of California, the project directors first developed an interest in the Iron Plate Wreck when they attended graduate school together at East Carolina University. Aptly named for two large stacks of sheet iron, one located at the stern and one at the bow, the wreck's identity remained a mystery. In 2013, however, historical research provided clues to the identity of the wreck, revealing it is likely the *Enchantress*.

Bermuda's famous explorer Teddy Tucker originally discovered the Iron Plate Wreck in 1948 along the most western portion of Bermuda's shallow but expansive reef system. He found the remains of the ship embedded in the reefs with its bow facing north, away from Bermuda.⁷⁶ Approximately eight miles due west of the islands, where the reef juts out to its furthest extent, the site lies in only 28 to 30 feet

⁷⁶ William Chalfant and Justin Daley, "'Iron Plate' still a riddle," *MariTimes* 25, no. 1 (2012): 26.

of water (Fig. 2.4).

The nearest point on land to the site is Wreck Hill, which as previously mentioned, was a popular vantage point for spotting ships in distress during the 19th

Figure 2.4 The wreck of the *Enchantress* lies approximately eight miles from shore in the far reaches of the north west portion of the reef.

century. The Iron Plate Wreck is located close to a dangerous portion of the reef known as Chub Heads. It is also home to a number of Bermuda's most well known wrecks including the French frigate *L'Herminie*, which sank a year later than the *Enchantress* in 1838, and the English iron-hulled steamer *Darlington*, which sank in 1886.

The Iron Plate wreck is located between two coral heads with the bow facing in a north-northwest orientation. Two concreted stacks of sheet iron clearly mark the site, one at the bow and one at the stern. The stacks take the form of the bow and stern of the ship, respectively (Fig. 2.5). The total length of the wreck, including the sheet iron blocks, is approximately 95 feet. The width of the wreck measures about 20 feet. A sandy area approximately 40 feet in length runs between these large features. The total length of the site, including the sheet iron concretion stacks, is approximately 100 feet. Running down the center of the site are 16 large brass drift pins driven through the

wreck's keel and keelson (Fig. 2.6). There is evidence of a sister keelson on the wreck, which would have distributed the weight of the load across the bottom, thus reducing the stress placed solely on the keel.

The baseline was established in the same location for all field seasons, down the center of the site in line with the drift pins and attached to two pieces of rebar that has been placed at the stern and bow. A number of disarticulated timbers are located in a sand pocket that starts about 18 feet from the starboard amidships and extends 49 feet out. The capstan and windlass are visible just forward to the port side bow. The 2012 site plan features the most well studied and mapped portions of the wreck to date (Fig. 2.7). There is no evidence of rigging elements or anchors at the site. The best-preserved timbers are towards the bow of the wreck.

Given the general design and build of the ship, it was already concluded that it was of mid-19th century origin.

The ship timbers are fastened with trunnels (wooden tree nails) and iron bolts. Copper

Figure 2.5 Concreted stacks of sheet iron at the bow (left) and stern (right).

sheathing is evident on a number of places on the site particularly the starboard side, and in the artifact assemblage. Excavations resulted in the discovery and recovery of

several small copper nails, which would have been used to fasten the sheathing to the vessel. Copper-sheathing vessels became standard practice in 18th century England, especially for Royal Navy ships and vessels that traveled to the East and West Indies as the *Enchantress* had done in her earlier years.⁷⁷ The sheathing prevented shipworms from eating away at the wooden hull, therefore slowing the deterioration of the wood and lengthening the life of the vessel.

Water temperatures at the site are consistently around 80 degrees Fahrenheit during the summer months, allowing for comfortable diving, excavating, and mapping conditions. With brain coral, fire coral, and other soft corals surrounding the wreck, divers have to be careful with their movements so as to avoid harming marine life. The

site is frequented by an abundance of marine organisms including angelfish and parrotfish. The Iron Plate Wreck serves as a useful site to teach

Figure 2.6 Facing the stern of the wreck, the drift pins run down the center line of the keel.

students the methods associated with proper scientific underwater archaeological excavations and mapping.

⁷⁷ Mark Staniforth, "The Introduction and Use of Copper Sheathing – A History," *Bulletin of the Australian Institute of Maritime Technology* 9 (1985): 26.

The first field season in 2009 involved only preliminary reconnaissance dives in order to determine the extent of the site. Simple hand fanning methods revealed intact timbers of the starboard bow assemblage. The excavation and documentation was conducted under a Research License issued by the Bermuda Historic Wrecks Authority. Similar licenses were obtained for each field school from 2010-2015. Field operations began in 2010 with careful systematic excavation of the starboard bow section. The intention was to expose the buried structural remains that had been briefly examined through hand fanning during the 2009 field school operations. Despite a poor quality induction dredge and only two days worth of excavations due to inclement weather, a number of cant frames were exposed out to the remaining edge of the hull and aft to the last full floor.⁷⁸ Students recovered about two dozen, mostly non-diagnostic

ceramic artifacts and three copper fasteners.

Artifacts that were exposed during excavation were recovered so as to preserve them

Figure 2.7 Site Plan of the presumed *Enchantress* from 2012.

from loss and to assist with site analysis, identification, and assessment. The recovery of artifacts was strictly limited, therefore, to objects that may have been in jeopardy or

⁷⁸ James Allan and Roderick Mather, "Final Report: 2010 St. Mary's College of California and the University of Rhode Island Field School in Maritime Archaeology," April 2011.

that could provide clues to the ship's identity and origin. When all excavations were complete for the season, the site was backfilled with sand using the induction dredge. All timbers were buried in order to maximize site preservation.

Although the project directors received another Research License to continue investigation on the site in 2011, weather-related disruptions prevented the team from excavating the Iron Plate Wreck. Students spent two days at the site completing simple trilateration measurements, focusing on the starboard side of the wreck.⁷⁹ The project directors applied for and received another Research License for 2012. Field school participants

dove and worked on the Iron Plate Wreck for seven full days

Figure 2.8 Lead bale seal before conservation (left) and a rough sketch of the artifact after conservation (right).

and focused again on the starboard side of the wreck. The induction dredge was utilized again for excavations, and sand was screened through a quarter inch mesh screen for small artifacts.

Again, trilateration was used to map the exposed timber frames, cant frames, ceiling planking, outer hull planking, and the two large sheet iron features at the bow and stern. Artifacts recovered during this season included coal, copper fasteners, copper sheathing fragments, iron bolts, white and green glass fragments from panes

⁷⁹ James Allan and Roderick Mather, "Final Report: 2011 St. Mary's College of California and the University of Rhode Island Field School in Maritime Archaeology," February 2012.

and bottles, and a trunnel that included evidence of copper sheathing. The most interesting find of the season was a lead bale seal (Fig. 2.8).⁸⁰

Bale seals were very common when shipping and trading cargo in the 19th century. They served as means of identification for cargo and also marked that the goods had passed necessary regulations and quality control. The National Museum of

Figure 2.9 Students map the wreck in five by five foot grids.

Bermuda loaned the project directors the lead seal for further analysis. The seal, approximately one and a half inches in diameter and found folded in half, was taken to the Saint Mary's College Conservation Laboratory for treatment. At the laboratory, conservators cleaned and stabilized the artifact through electrolytic reduction, which exposed marking on both sides of the lead seal. The markings include the letters "EPA" and the numbers "184" and "75" on one side of the seal and "81" and "28" on the opposite side. Although the markings are enigmatic at this point in the examination of the artifact assemblage, further research may lead to a determination as to which cargo this seal may have been attached to, its owner, and possibly its consignee.

⁸⁰ James Allan and Roderick Mather, "Final Report: 2012 St. Mary's College of California and the University of Rhode Island Field School in Maritime Archaeology," April 2013.

The Museum also loaned the project directors a thirteen-inch trunnel from its collection during the 2012 field season that had previously been recovered from the Iron Plate Wreck. Conservators at the laboratory kept the wood sample wet while awaiting testing, which was performed at the Laboratory of Tree-Ring Research at the University of Arizona in May 2013. Analysis revealed the trunnel was fashioned out a white oak (*Quercus sp.*), a tree native to North America, Europe, and parts of Asia.⁸¹ The sample did not contain enough rings to provide meaningful dendrochronological data. White oak was the most common shipbuilding timber throughout 18th and 19th century England due to its durability, flexibility, and availability.⁸² It is likely that other portions of the ship are constructed out of different types of wood, such as oak, though further research and samples must be taken to confirm this.

Excavations and mapping operations continued on the Iron Plate Wreck in 2013 with ten full days of work completed. Field research on the wreck consisted of a continuation of hull excavation and mapping. In addition to using trilateration to continue mapping the sheet iron at the stern, a new six-station mapping grid was utilized to provide more accurate measurements of the hull structure on the starboard side of the bow and of the remaining portion of the keel amidships and towards the stern (Fig. 2.9). Each aluminum grid measured five by five feet. Under the supervision of Dr. Mather and Dr. Allan, students were assigned to one of the six mapping stations. Once those sections had been mapped, the grid was moved and more stations established. The grid was tied into the baseline.

⁸¹ James Allan and Roderick Mather, "Final Report: 2013 St. Mary's College of California and the University of Rhode Island Field School in Maritime Archaeology," January 2014.

⁸² Kellie M. Vanhorn, "Eighteenth-Century Colonial American Merchant Ship Construction" (MA thesis, Texas A&M University, 2004), 13-14.

Other students were assigned to the dredging operation, which eventually exposed the entire starboard portion of the bow. As the mapping of the keel section was completed, individual mapping stations were moved to the bow section, where additional detailed mapping was completed. These individual maps were then transferred to the existing site plan, which had been developed from similar individual maps prepared during the previous field schools. A total of 24 individual artifacts were recovered from 2013 dredging operations. These largely consisted of copper sheathing nails, ceramic sherds, shards of clear and green glass, a green glass wine bottle base, and an iron bolt head. Preliminary analysis in the conservation lab suggests these are probably non-diagnostic but they have been cataloged and entered into the Museum's artifact database pending further analysis (Fig. 2.10).⁸³

During the 2013 field season archival research produced a lead regarding the identity of the wreck as the *Enchantress*. Bermuda's national daily newspaper, *The Royal Gazette*, is

digitized and searchable through the Bermuda National Library's website beginning with the newspaper's first issue in 1784 and

Figure 2.10 Sample of artifacts from the wreck including coal, glass, copper nails, ceramics, and an iron bolt.

⁸³ Allan and Mather, "Final Report: 2013."

continuing to the present day. A general search on the website for “sheet iron” produced several results, including this auction advertisement for cargo from the wreck *Enchantress* dated September 18, 1841:

By Permission of the Principal Officers of Her Majesty’s Customs. Will be sold, by auction, at Ely’s Harbor, on Thursday Next, 23d, at 11 o’clock a.m., for the Benefit of Owners, Underwriters, and others concerned, The Bottom of the Ship *Enchantress*, as it is, on one of the Reefs off the North Coast of Somerset; and such part of her Cargo, as may be with it-consisting of Sheet Iron, Round and Flat Bars of Iron, And some Pigs of Iron.
Also, 15 Bars of Rail Road Iron, and Lots of Tins.
Thos. R. Tucker
Sept. 18, 1841⁸⁴

With this information, more in depth archival research was conducted. A search for the ship *Enchantress* in the *Royal Gazette* database produced a number of leads, including the first entry in the newspaper about the wreck dated to February 7, 1837. Other searches included key terms such as “wreck” and “sheet iron,” with no results but the *Enchantress*. Further research was completed at the Bermuda Archives and Government Records Centre in a separate research trip in the spring of 2014. These archives contained a number of significant and informative documents pertaining to the *Enchantress* detailed earlier in this chapter. The 2014 field season, although shorter than the normal three-week timeframe, allowed for five full days of excavation and mapping and an additional trip to the archives. No artifacts were recovered during excavations. Efforts were concentrated on the port and starboard bow, which had only been briefly investigated in 2009.

In 2012, Mather and Allan were able to interview Tucker for any pertinent information regarding the wreck’s original condition. In addition to noting the

⁸⁴ “Advertisements,” *Royal Gazette* (Hamilton, Bermuda), September 21, 1841.

orientation of the wreck, he states that the wreck measured over one hundred feet in length. Tucker removed a number of artifacts from the site upon discovery, and presumably in subsequent years, including English made bricks, several Ricketts Company bottles, ceramics, railroad iron, coal, pig iron, and iron bar.⁸⁵ This mold-type bottle was first used in England in 1814 under Henry Rickett's patent for the design. Many Rickett's bottles were embossed on the base with "H. Ricketts & Co. Glass Works Bristol." The presence of Ricketts bottles on the site suggests the wreck dates between the years these types of bottles were most common, 1821 to 1853.⁸⁶ Although University of Rhode Island and St. Mary's College of California excavations did not yield any embossed Ricketts bottles, their earlier presence on the site can assist with determining the age of the wreck. The interview with Tucker confirmed the site had been salvaged since its discovery, and small diagnostic artifacts were likely rare on the site.

A number of important archaeological details suggest the site of the Iron Plate Wreck is that of the *Enchantress*. A few of the most telling signs are the orientation, location, and size of the wreck. The bow facing north away from shore fits Captain Donaldson's description of the wrecking event. Donaldson attempted to sail the *Enchantress* away from the shore and into deeper water in a desperate maneuver to save the sinking ship. He noted that the vessel, while taking on a large amount of water, was anchored in about five and a half fathoms of water while waiting for the pilot to arrive. The site of the Iron Plate Wreck lays in water almost exactly this deep.

⁸⁵ Teddy Tucker to Project Directors, personal communication,

⁸⁶ Society for Historical Archaeology, "Bottle Bases," *Historic Glass Bottle Identification & Information*, <https://sha.org/bottle/bases.htm> (accessed March 1, 2016).

In order to prevent the *Enchantress* from striking the bottom again, which likely would have caused the vessel to sink more rapidly and result in the loss of life, Donaldson secured the vessel in slightly deeper water

Located near Chubs Heads reef about eight miles from Ely's Harbor, the location of the wreck fits the general descriptions of where the *Enchantress* sank in the northwestern-western portion of the reef. Given the location the Iron Plate Wreck, the nearest safe harbor is Ely' Harbor, which is where the emigrants and crew landed after being rescued. The general wreck dimensions and features of the site also support the Iron Plate Wreck as the *Enchantress* as the wreck measures almost the same length and width as the original vessel. Additionally, evidence at the site reveals the Iron Plate Wreck was copper sheathed, just like the *Enchantress*. There are no other known wrecks in the same vicinity that match the *Enchantress*' features.

Cargo descriptions also match a number of archaeological features and finds from the Iron Plate Wreck. Perhaps the most indicative and compelling evidence comes from the presence of sheet iron, which was the main cargo of the *Enchantress*. The sheet iron still located at the stern and bow of the site, are likely what remained after salvors recovered what surviving cargo they could. While it is known that the *Enchantress* was salvaged several years after she sank in 1841, it is unclear as to how much cargo was taken off the vessel. It is likely, however, that the sheet iron at the bow and stern proved too complicated or dangerous to remove, thus leaving an absence of this cargo elsewhere on the site. In addition to sheet iron, Tucker noted a number of other iron cargos when the site was first discovered in the late 1940s, including pig iron and iron bars, that were also part of the *Enchantress*' original cargo.

The presence of coal at the site also correlates with the descriptions of the *Enchantress* which was laden with coal during her final voyage. No personal artifacts such as buttons or buckles have been found at the site. This suggests, as historical documentation supports, that the emigrants and crew made off with the few personal effects they brought with them before the ship sank. In addition to the lack of personal effects, there are no rigging elements or anchors at the Iron Plate Wreck. Because the *Enchantress* sank slowly enough for the rigging to be saved, it is not surprising that no evidence of the rigging exists at the site. As for the anchors, they were likely sold or salvaged.

The final report for the 2015 field season is still being written at the time of publication of this thesis. Further work will continue on the site during the 2016 field season in order to better understand the construction and preservation of the vessel. The archaeological work completed on the site is still preliminary in nature, however the initial findings reveal a plethora of information that can help strengthen the argument that the Iron Plate Wreck is that of the *Enchantress*. A full study of the site, including an in depth analysis of the vessel and artifact assemblage, should be conducted in order to present an even clearer understanding of the wreck. Although this merchant vessel was a typical early to mid 19th century ship, future studies can strengthen what is already known about the ship's construction and purpose for this time period.

IRISH EMIGRATION AND ASSOCIATED SHIPWRECKS

Like the many other emigrant vessels that sailed before and after her demise, the *Enchantress* represents a dynamic shift that was taking place in the 19th century in

North American immigration history. Although the peak years of Irish emigration to North America were between 1846 and 1855, many emigrant passenger vessels sank before, during, and after this time.⁸⁷ Numerous shipwreck stories highlight the lengths many went to in order to secure themselves better lives abroad, away from disease, poverty, oppression, and starvation that riddled their home countries. While the emigrants aboard the *Enchantress* were to some extent fortunate in that they all survived the sinking and only two passengers were lost en route, this was not the typical ending for sinking immigrant ships during this time.

The year 1845 marked the beginning of the Great Famine and the mass emigration of the Irish to North America. An unbalanced system of social classes, built upon years of agrarian conflict between tenant farmers and absentee landlords, left Ireland in shambles. With a growing population, land became scarcer and the poor became poorer. This social and economic catastrophe, exacerbated by the potato blight, forced many Irish people to depart their country in order to escape the unyielding grip of land proprietors and large farm owners.⁸⁸ Farmers and tenants, already impoverished by their inability to sustain themselves agriculturally on small plots of land, were left with nothing when the blight annihilated crops.

The blight, coupled with preexisting poverty, forced many to emigrate to Canada or the United States. Government efforts, including the construction of workhouses, assisted emigration, and the development of the Irish Poor Law in 1838, did little to

⁸⁷ Coleman, *Passage to America*, 295.

⁸⁸ Miller, *Emigrants and Exiles*, 280.

mitigate the suffering inflicted on millions.⁸⁹ British authorities often regarded the situation in Ireland as one wrought by the Irish themselves and that their reliance on the potato had destroyed their work ethic and produced a society of lazy people.⁹⁰ Ireland's difficulty became England's opportunity to rid itself of this tiresome burden.⁹¹

During the peak emigration years, emigrant passenger ships earned their reputations as coffin ships because they became floating caskets for many who died on the voyages. Over one million people perished during the Great Famine due to disease and starvation, not including those lost on the emigrant transports. Almost 50,000 emigrant deaths can be directly attributed to losses related to the voyage across the Atlantic, whether from shipwrecking, disease, or malnutrition.⁹² The population of Ireland lost an eighth of its population due to death or emigration between 1846 and 1851 alone.⁹³ In the year 1847, known as "Black '47," a fifth of those who sailed from Ireland perished en route to North America or soon after arriving as a direct result of shipboard conditions.⁹⁴

During the first half of the 19th century, coffin ships were notorious for deplorable conditions. Disease often ran rampant in the tight quarters of the ships, especially when cholera, typhus, and smallpox became prevalent. For quite some time, emigrants

⁸⁹ James M. Bergquist, *Daily Life in Immigrant America, 1820-1870* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 2008), 102.

⁹⁰ Lori Henderson, "The Irish Famine: A Historiographical Review," <http://www.eiu.edu/historia/Henderson.pdf> (accessed March 11, 2016).

⁹¹ Miles, *All Standing*, 20.

⁹² Joel Mokyr, *Why Ireland Starved: A Quantitative and Analytical History of the Irish Economy, 1800-1850* (London: Routledge Publishing, 1983).

⁹³ Henderson, "The Irish Famine: A Historiographical Review."

⁹⁴ William Henry, *The Wreck of the Brig St. John* (Cork: Mercier Press, 2009), 16; Cormac Ó Gráda, *Black '47 and Beyond: The Great Irish Famine in History, Economy, and Memory* (Princeton: Princeton University Press), 3.

did not have to pass health inspections before boarding a vessel, which dramatically increased the risk of spreading infection in cramped, stifled passenger berths. British ships allowed three passengers for every five tons of the ship's total tonnage, versus American ships' allowance for one passenger per five tons.⁹⁵ Generally speaking, British ships were not purposely built for emigrant voyages, however, American packet ships were strictly built to transport passengers.⁹⁶

As a result, decks were often too low, and there was not enough room for passengers to stand in the dark cramped spaces of their bunks. Little was done to mitigate the merchant ship's lack of safety and comfort. Berths and bunks were hastily built and packed into spaces that could barely accommodate such features. In some cases, these merchant ships were no longer safe for carrying valuable cargo, especially delicate dry cargos, so owners and captains converted the vessels for passenger transport voyages. It was still economically viable for ship owners and insurers to lose an old, worthless vessel with passengers on board who had already paid for passage rather than a vessel filled with cargo.

Overcrowded ships became breeding grounds for disease and unsanitary living quarters. Hygiene was notably lacking, and passengers were usually offered little time on the top deck for fresh air and sunlight. In the event of a sinking, lifeboats were few in number and rarely left open; they were usually filled with cargo.⁹⁷ In order to make as much money as they could off the cost emigrants paid for passage to North America, captains often permitted more passengers to board their ships than legally

⁹⁵ Tom Kindre, *Jeanie Johnston: A Voyage Against All Odds* (Victoria: Trafford Publishing, 2003), 9.

⁹⁶ Coleman, *Passage to America*, 87.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 87.

allowed. Stowaways regularly snuck onboard further crowding the vessel and complicating estimates as to how many emigrants arrived in North America. Mortality rates aboard coffin ships could run as high as thirty percent during the busiest emigration years.⁹⁸ In addition to disease, the loss of life aboard coffin ships can be attributed to shipwreck events related to bad weather, inadequately maintained ships, and poorly trained captains and crewmembers.

Emigrant ships could be taken from any class of vessel, usually of the second rate according to *Lloyd's Register* standard rating system. Many of these vessels were not even fit to carry dry cargo due to the risk of sea damage.⁹⁹ Smaller English-built ships sailing from their home ports were generally accepted for any voyage given the fact that the conditions on privately owned vessels were only given cursory inspections for seaworthiness.¹⁰⁰ Conditions aboard emigrant ships were likened to those aboard slave ships, although the captain and crew generally had more interest in keeping keep slaves alive for monetary purposes.¹⁰¹ As previously stated, masters and captains of vessels often had no real stake in the health and safety of emigrants.

With increasing numbers of passengers leaving England and Ireland, Parliament was forced to address the unforgivable conditions aboard coffin ships. A number of Acts were passed in the 19th century that sought to tackle the growing problems arising from passenger voyages, including shipwreck, disease, and malnutrition. These Acts were taken face value, as they were often partially followed or completely

⁹⁸ "The Crossing," *Emigration*, <http://www.mayolibrary.ie/en/LocalStudies/Emigration/CrossingtheAtlantic/TheCrossing/> (accessed March 1, 2016).

⁹⁹ Coleman, *Passage to America*, 85.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.

¹⁰¹ Ibid., 86.

disregarded.¹⁰² Although the British Passenger Vessel Act of 1803 had attempted to limit the number of passengers allowed on a vessel based on the ship's tonnage, it failed to provide safer measures for emigrants aboard a ship. The Act stipulated that only one passenger was allowed on the vessel for every two tons of burden, after deducting equal amounts for the master and crew.¹⁰³ In addition to passenger restrictions, the Act called for better conditions aboard emigrant ships including hygiene, proper amounts of provisions, and berth sizes.

After Parliament repealed the 1803 Passenger Vessel Act in 1827, conditions declined aboard emigrant transports during the 1830s and 1840s. This resulted in a largely unrestricted and unregulated period of emigrant voyages. Between 1828 and 1837, over 400,000 emigrants arrived in North America without proper regulations for safe transport.¹⁰⁴ Although fares became less expensive for those paying for passage, the revocation of the Act reduced the space requirements per passenger, increased the number of passengers allowed per ton, and eliminated detailed specifications regarding provisions.¹⁰⁵

While the Passenger Vessel Act of 1803 did little to alleviate the ailments of many emigrants aboard a transport ships, later Acts addressed the growing number of issues that resulted from the eruption of emigration in the 1840s and 1850s. Later British Acts attempted to regain control over conditions aboard the emigrant ships, and these Acts were fairly successful in the overall improvement aboard transport ships.

¹⁰² Ibid., 287.

¹⁰³ Donald M. Schlegel, *Passengers from Ireland: Lists of Passengers Arriving at American Ports Between 1811 and 1817* (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co., Inc., 1999), 5.

¹⁰⁴ Miller, *Emigrant and Exile*, 197.

¹⁰⁵ William Forbes Adams, *Ireland and Irish Immigration to the New World from 1815 to the Famine* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1923), 160-161.

This includes the establishment of a new British Passenger Act in 1847, with later revisions in 1848, 1849, and 1855, that stipulated requirements regarding more provisions per passenger, less passengers per ton, and proper ventilation within the ship.¹⁰⁶

The most well documented shipwreck stories that involved Irish emigrants occurred after the year 1837 during the peak years of famine-driven emigration. Newspapers and local magazines often reported the tragic tales of emigrant ships that captivated many readers. The disaster stories of emigrant shipwrecks became classical Victorian tragedies to the delight of readers around the world.¹⁰⁷ Emigrants often had to choose between two difficult decisions, die of disease, starvation, and oppression in their home country, or tempt death by boarding a coffin ship for the chance of a new life across the Atlantic Ocean. Those who chose the latter could only hope for safe passage across the tempestuous seas. As one article that described a wreck noted, “The tale of one unfortunate vessel is the tale of many.”¹⁰⁸

Although the passengers aboard the *Enchantress* had little to their names when they eventually arrived in the United States, they were lucky enough to have their lives. In many cases, shipwrecked passengers drowned or died of exposure. Such was the case when the American barque *Mexico* sank off the coast of the South Shore of Long Island, New York on January 2, 1837 during the coldest, iciest time of the year. Abandoned by her captain and crew, the *Mexico* was left to smash against the rocks, taking with her all of the Irish emigrants aboard, almost all of whom were women and

¹⁰⁶ Coleman, *Passage to America*, 287-290.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid., 120.

¹⁰⁸ “Report of Wreck,” *Liverpool Telegraph and Shipping Gazette* (Liverpool, England), May 5, 1847.

children. Some six weeks prior on November 21, 1836, another ship, the *Bristol*, sank in the same location with 100 lives lost.¹⁰⁹ These wrecks were said to have inspired Walt Whitman when he wrote of “waifs from the deep, cast high and dry, wash’d on America’s shores” in his classic poem collection, *Leaves of Grass*.¹¹⁰

While American passenger ships were generally more reliable and faster than British ships, the second-class merchant vessels *Bristol* and *Mexico* were not the packet ships famous for speedy, safe voyages. By using bulkier and slower ships, owners and insurers saved money by keeping shipping costs and passenger ticket prices lower than their packet counterparts.¹¹¹ The larger the ship, the more cargo and passengers she could carry, although overloading often effected the vessel’s ability to remain seaworthy. Although the wrecks of *Bristol* and *Mexico* are contemporaneous to the loss of the *Enchantress*, many more wrecks occurred during the peak years of the Great Famine.

On May 19, 1847, the peak year of Irish emigration to North America, the British ship *Carrick* wrecked at the mouth of the St. Lawrence River. A few weeks earlier, *Carrick* left Sligo, Ireland for Quebec with nearly 200 emigrants aboard. A particularly treacherous evening snow squall left the captain unable to reckon his location and the ship struck the rocks along the shore of Cap-de-Rosiers, Quebec. Under dangerous winds and pounding waves, the vessel crashed upon the rocky shoals and broke into pieces. The emigrants aboard, many of who suffered already from fever and illness, attempted to cling to the wreckage, but over half of them perished. The

¹⁰⁹ Arthur S. Mattson, *Water and Ice: The Tragic Wrecks of the Bristol and the Mexico on the South Shore of Long Island* (Lynbrook: Lynbrook Historical Books, 2009), loc. 398.

¹¹⁰ Ibid., loc. 344.

¹¹¹ Ibid., 542.

ship had previously been inspected in accordance with the Passenger Act, and was deemed seaworthy for the expedition.¹¹² In the aftermath of the wreck, bodies were strewn along the beach for nearly a mile and a half. Local residents collected the corpses of the emigrants and buried them on the beach near the scene of the disaster.¹¹³

In 2009, hull remains purportedly from *Carrick* washed ashore in Blanc Sablon, almost 350 miles from where she wrecked, although these timbers were never confirmed to belong to the ship.¹¹⁴ It was reported that the vessel, after breaking apart in the waves, floated away. This is supported by the fact that the ship's bell was recovered in Blanc Sablon in 1966 where a memorial still exists to commemorate the victims of the shipwreck.¹¹⁵ By 2011, erosion produced by heavy storms washed skeletal remains ashore on Caps-de-Rosiers. These remains are believed to belong to some of the victims of *Carrick* that had been buried along the beach. Forensic analysis revealed the remains included that of several malnourished children who had suffered from the vitamin D deficiency disease, rickets.¹¹⁶ A number of other emigrant wrecks occurred near Cap-de-Rosiers, including several vessels chartered by the government.

¹¹² "The Brig *Carrick* and others Shipwrecked," *The Belfast Commercial Chronicle* (Belfast, Ireland), July 3, 1847.

¹¹³ Margaret Grant MacWhirter, *Treasure Trove in Gaspé and the Baie Des Chaleurs* (Quebec: The Telegraph Printing Co., 1919), 13.

¹¹⁴ "Remains of Sligo's forgotten Famine ship emerge from Canada's icy waters," *The Sligo Champion* (Sligo, Ireland), May 13, 2009.

¹¹⁵ Gaspé Tourism Office and Convention Board, "Carrick Shipwreck Monument, Gaspé," *Historic Landmarks*, <http://gaspesie.quebecheritageweb.com/article/carrick-shipwreck-monument-gaspe> (accessed March 2, 2016).

¹¹⁶ Ingrid Peritz, "Human bones discovered on Gaspé peninsula 'witness to a tragic event,'" *The Globe and Mail* (Montreal, Canada), December 29, 2014.

The *Imogene* and *Zenobia* wrecked in the same area, but did not lose any of the emigrants aboard both ships.¹¹⁷

The tragic effects of overcrowded ships became evident when the *Exmouth Castle* sank on April 28, 1847. Registered to carry only 165 passengers, the ship had at least 240 emigrants on board as she set sail from Londonderry, Northern Ireland to Quebec. she wrecked on the northwest coast of Islay Island, Scotland. Some of the emigrants were small farmers and laborers, but most were women and children going to join their husbands and fathers in Canada. When boarding emigrants, the captain counted two children as one adult. Consequentially, most of *Exmouth Castle*'s losses were children.¹¹⁸

The ship ran into terrific gales and squalls just after losing sight of land. The badly damaged Consequentially, *Exmouth Castle*'s captain sought a harbor for refuge to repair the sails. During the storm, the ship's only lifeboat washed away. When the captain of the vessel, Isaac Booth, spotted land and a far away light he presumed the light was shining from Tory Island, Ireland. Unfortunately, as the vessel sailed towards the light, it became evident it was a flashing light warning mariners of the dangerous shoals and rocks ahead. Before Captain Booth could right his position, the ship soon dashed against tall jagged rocks, splintering the mainmast and the hull. Only three of the eleven crewmembers survived. All of the emigrants perished, almost all while still huddled or asleep in their berths, drowned or crushed against the rocks. Only twenty bodies washed ashore of the individuals who made it to the top deck

¹¹⁷ "The Brig *Carrick* and other Shipwrecked."

¹¹⁸ "The Wreck of the *Exmouth*," *The Illustrated London News* (London, England), May 8, 1847.

during the initial strike against the rocks (Fig. 2.11).¹¹⁹ The consequences of overcrowding an emigrant ship were all too tragic.

On April 29, 1849, a small brig of 175 tons, the *Hannah*, also sank in the cold waters of the St. Lawrence River. The story of her wrecking highlights the disparities between

Figure 2.11 A depiction of the *Exmouth Castle* smashed upon the rocks near Islay Island.

captain, crew, and passengers during this time. With nearly 200 Irish emigrants bound to Quebec from Newry, Ulster, *Hannah* was captained by a very young captain when she struck an iceberg and ran aground on the solid ice mass. When it became obvious to the captain that there was no way to save her, he ordered several of his crew to seal the hatch and trap the passengers below decks. This atrocious act illustrates the mentality of many captains and crewmembers aboard emigrant passenger ships who had nothing to lose or gain from the safe passage of the emigrants. Other crewmembers from the *Hannah* acted upon good conscience and pried open the hold to save the emigrants. As the passengers were helped onto the solid ice mass by the

¹¹⁹ Ibid.

bow of the sinking ship, approximately fifty passengers fell into the water and drowned or were crushed by the compacting ice between them and the ship.¹²⁰

The remaining survivors, who numbered over a hundred, huddled on the ice floes. The passing barque *Nicaragua* rescued the survivors fifteen hours after the vessel began to sink and brought them to their final destination, Quebec on May 10, 1849. The soulless Captain Shaw, joined by his first and second mates, escaped via *Hannah's* only long boat and were picked up by a passing ship four days after the sinking. They were never punished for their actions.

The *British Queen* suffered a similar fate as the *Enchantress* off of Nantucket on the morning of December 18, 1851. The two vessels share the same tale of desperation, wrecking, and survival. Built in 1785, the 534-ton full-masted sailing ship allegedly began her career as a slaver before becoming a derelict emigrant passenger ship.¹²¹ All too often, old vessels unfit for transatlantic voyages served as passenger ships, which resulted in countless shipwrecks during the 19th century.

British Queen began her voyage to New York City from Dublin on October 22, 1851. Although accounts vary, it appears that the *British Queen* carried around 228 passengers, all of whom were escaping the dire conditions of Ireland's famine.¹²² An already long and difficult journey was hindered by unfavorable weather throughout the passage. Freezing temperatures, gale force winds, and ice floes created treacherous

¹²⁰ Laxton, *Famine Ships*, 126-129.

¹²¹ Ibid., 224; Copies of Lists of Passengers Arriving at Miscellaneous Ports on the Atlantic and Gulf Coasts and Ports on the Great Lakes, 1820-1873, M575, Reel 5, National Archives and Record Administration.

¹²² Laxton, *Famine Ships*, 225.

conditions around Nantucket's already perilous shoals and breakers on the night of December 17th.

Under blizzard conditions and the blanket of evening skies, the crew lost sight of land and navigation became impossible. The ebbing tide complicated the already difficult task of maneuvering through the shallow waters of Muskeget Channel between Nantucket and Martha's Vineyard. It wasn't long before the ship became grounded on a sand bar and began to list just north of Muskeget Island, only miles away from the safety of Nantucket Harbor. Captain Christopher Thomas Conway ordered the stowage of the sails and the crew hoisted the distress signal in desperate hopes that they might be discovered through the dense snow squalls.

As the Red Ensign flew upside down in signal of distress, a watchman on fire-watch duty at the Unitarian Church of Nantucket spotted the *British Queen*. Despite the early signal and detection, the passengers and crew would spend another twenty-four harrowing hours aboard the vessel. This would fall especially hard on Captain Conway, who had been sick for some time on the voyage.¹²³ Gusting winds, ripping waves, and frozen water made early rescue attempts futile. The captain ordered the foremast and mizzenmast to be cut from the ship in order to prevent the *British Queen* from breaking apart in the high winds and seas. Facing bitter cold temperatures and low provisions, the passengers huddled on the main deck for warmth as eleven feet of water washed into the hold of the ship. Two passengers succumbed to exposure during the overnight hours, awaiting rescue that would eventually come.

¹²³ "The vessel British Queen runs aground off Nantucket," *The Belfast Mercury*, Thursday, January 8, 1852.

A group of men quickly gathered outside the office of merchant Joseph Macy to devise a plan that would rescue the passengers and crew of the *British Queen*. Although there were people to save on board, the Nantucket men likely saw this an opportunity to make a profit. Salvage operations proved to be a rewarding venture and the monetary gain could be as high as half the value of the ship and its cargo.¹²⁴ This was likely the case as well when the *Enchantress* sank and many came to salvage what portions of the rigging and cargo they could.

The *Telegraph*, a paddle-steamer ferry moored in Nantucket's Straight Wharf, became the main rescue vessel. Captained by George Russell and with the help of professional wreck master Captain Thomas Gardner, the *Telegraph* could not leave the harbor until the next high tide, when the steamer's eight foot draft could clear the sand bars at the mouth of the harbor.

At midday on December 19th, high tide allowed the *Telegraph* to clear the sandy bottom and make its way toward the *British Queen*. Risking grounding and damaging her paddle wheels from the floating ice, the *Telegraph* towed the schooner *Game Cock* and its captain, William Patterson, through the icy waters and over the sand bar. Declining to be towed, Captain David Patterson and the *Hamilton* also joined the rescue efforts. The Patterson brothers were a welcome sight to the weary crew and passengers aboard the *British Queen*. After anchoring near the wreck, the crews of *Telegraph*, *Game Cock*, and *Hamilton* took to the ships' boats to assess how the schooners might navigate up to the wreck in order to ensure the safety of the rescuers and their vessels. When Captain David Patterson reached the wreck in one of the small

¹²⁴ Robert F. Mooney, *The Wreck of the British Queen* (Nantucket: Mill Hill Press, 1988), 2.

boats, Captain Conway met him with discouraging news for the salvors; the *British Queen* carried no cargo and left Dublin uninsured. With little hope of monetary gain, the captains continued the rescue of the emigrants.

Game Cock, the smaller of the two schooners, anchored first next to the *British Queen* and rescued sixty passengers before it too began to strike the bottom. The heaving waves made it difficult to moor the rescue ships to the sinking vessel, but as the *Game Cock* returned to Nantucket, the *Hamilton* anchored next to the starboard side of the wreck, rescuing the rest of the passengers and crew. By five o'clock that evening, the rescue ships returned to the wharf where locals waited with dry clothing, food, and warm homes. Although the hull and its effects were sold at auction for a sum of \$290, what remained of the *British Queen* was swept away during strong storms in January of 1852.¹²⁵

The sinking and subsequent rescue of the *British Queen* bears a striking resemblance to the loss of the *Enchantress* just twelve years prior. In both cases, the charity of local citizens saved the emigrants from a likely death. The residents of Nantucket, like those of Bermuda, were familiar with the sight of a ship wrecking on its shores and were always prepared for the worst. While a sinking ship may have been a sign of financial gain, rescuers must have also acted on instinct to save the lives of those barely clinging on to timbers and wreckage. Although not all passengers survived the wrecking of the *British Queen*, many were fortunate enough to walk

¹²⁵ Arthur H. Gardner, *Wrecks around Nantucket since the settlement of the island, and the incidents connected therewith, embracing over seven hundred vessels* (Nantucket: The Mirror and Inquirer Press, 1915), 59.

away with their lives and continue their voyage to their original destination, as those aboard the *Enchantress* were also able to do.

Only one of the so called “coffin ships” earned a reputation for its ability to transport emigrants without a single loss of life. The *Jeanie Johnston*, a three-masted barque built in 1847 at the height of the coffin ship years, could safely carry over 200 passengers during her voyages from Ireland to Canada.¹²⁶ In her lifetime, she made 16 emigrant voyages to North America and carried over 2,000 passengers between Ireland and North America. Not only did the *Jeanie Johnston* never lose a passenger, she also never lost a crewmember, making her the most reputable passenger transport of her time. Captain James Attridge and ship’s surgeon Richard Blennerhassett were credited with providing the safest and most comfortable voyages possible.¹²⁷

Even the eventual wrecking of the vessel could not blemish her impeccable safety record. In 1858, while en route to Quebec City carrying a large cargo of timber but no passengers, the *Jeanie Johnston* began to take on water after the cargo shifted during a storm. The fifteen people aboard the ship, including its crew and their family members, spent nine days on the slowly sinking ship before being rescued by the passing Dutch barque *Sophie Elizabeth*. Those 15 individuals who clung to the rigging, nearly dead of dehydration and edema, continued to illustrate the luck of the *Jeanie Johnston*.¹²⁸ A replica of the famed ship launched in 2000 from the same port that it first sailed, Tralee, County Kerry, Ireland, and made numerous voyages across

¹²⁶ Laxton, *Convict Ships*, 153.

¹²⁷ Miles, *All Standing*, 152.

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*, 210.

the Atlantic. The new *Jeanie Johnston* now resides at the Custom House Quay in Dublin's city center.

Irish emigrant ships earned a notorious reputation during the 19th century as floating coffins. Passengers on board these old, rotting merchant ships faced deplorable conditions. Although the emigrants aboard the *Enchantress* escaped the wreck with their lives, their passage to Bermuda was marred by such conditions. During the same years of Irish emigration to North America, many convicts experienced similar conditions while being transported to penal colonies. Irish and English convicts, forcibly relocated across the world for crimes committed in their home countries, embarked on mass transports away from overcrowded prisons of England and Ireland. The difficulties faced by the emigrants aboard the *Enchantress* on her incomplete voyage to New York were likely the same struggles felt by the convicts who also were on the *Enchantress* during her first and only convict transport, a mere four years before she sank.

CHAPTER 3

THE CONVICT SHIP *ENCHANTRESS*

From 1788 to 1868, over 160,000 male and female convicts arrived to the shores of England's Australian penal colonies.¹²⁹ The convicts were sent to numerous places across the vast southern continent including Van Diemen's Land (present day Tasmania), New South Wales, Queensland, and other locations along Australia's eastern coast to serve time for various crimes committed in Great Britain. While convicts generally served their terms on land, some also spent their sentences aboard floating prison hulks, banished to a hard life far away from homes they likely never saw again. Coincidentally, Bermuda also served as a penal colony for England, and held about 9,000 British and Irish convicts in prisons and convict hulks between 1823 and 1863, forced to years or a lifetime of hard labor.¹³⁰ Some of Bermuda's convicts were only temporarily held on the islands and eventually made their way to Australia. In 1833, three years before the *Enchantress* embarked on her final voyage across the Atlantic, she served as a convict ship transporting criminals from England to the Australian penal colony of Van Diemen's Land.

THE FIRST FLEET: POPULATING AUSTRALIA

Before the arrival of England's First Fleet in 1788 dispatched to populate its newly claimed land, the indigenous people of Australia had likely seen very few

¹²⁹ C. W. Sullivan, "Reconsidering Convict Ships," *New Hibernia Review* 12, no. 4 (2008): 101.

¹³⁰ Brenda Mortimer, "Prisoners in Paradise," *Ancestors* 78 (Feb. 2009): 40.

Europeans. Although the Dutch began exploring the unknown lands of present day Australia in the 17th century, the advent of English settlement impacted the continent to a far greater extent. It created a new social and cultural landscape far away from the shores of Great Britain. When the Royal Society and Admiralty funded an expedition to explore the unfamiliar expanses of the South Seas, they chose the newly appointed Lieutenant James Cook to carry out the mission.¹³¹ The expedition's mission included charting New Zealand's coast and a secret instruction to look for new habitable land. Little was known about Australia at the time of the expedition, which was known as New Holland thanks to previous Dutch voyages. Cook's orders to claim land for the British and confirm the existence of an expansive southern continent proved difficult, and required two multiyear voyages.

Cook left Plymouth, England aboard the 368-ton barque HMS *Endeavour* on August 1768 and returned in July 1771 after an almost three year journey. In addition to mapping the shores of New Zealand, Cook explored the eastern coast of Australia with little knowledge that this was the continent many were seeking. He narrowly avoided disaster when the *Endeavour* struck the Barrier Reef in 1770, but he and his crew saved the vessel from wrecking and continued on their journey.¹³² The British claimed this new eastern territory as New South Wales, with big plans for the land and little regard for the Aboriginal population. Unknown to Cook at the time, he had already stumbled upon the continent he longed to find.

¹³¹ National Centre of Biography at Australian National University, "Cook, James (1728-1779)," *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/cook-james-1917> (accessed December 4, 2015).

¹³² Mike Connell and Des Liddy, "Cook's 'Endeavour' Bark: Did the Vessel End its Days in Newport, Rhode Island?," *The Great Circle* 19, no. 1 (1997): 40.

Steadfast in his desire to confirm the existence of a southern continent, Cook made out for a second scientific voyage to the southern extents of the world. As a newly appointed commander, Cook set out on the HMS *Resolution* and successfully mapped thousands of miles of coastline. Captain Tobias Furneaux joined Cook to captain the HMS *Adventure*, which sailed alongside *Resolution*. This second expedition confirmed the existence of *Terra Australis Nondum Cognita*, the “Southern Land Not Yet Known,” when Cook completed the first southern circumnavigation of the globe. Although it was widely accepted that a southern continent existed, Australia was no more than a rough sketch on world maps.

Cook would not live to see Australia inhabited by his countrymen. During his third and final voyage to the outermost expanses of the Pacific Ocean from 1776-1779, he met his demise during a confrontation with native Hawaiians. He did not witness the peopling of Australia by the convicts and criminals of his home country, which many speculate would’ve upset the explorer deeply.¹³³

Not long after the English laid claim to the eastern shores of New South Wales during Cook’s second voyage, the First Fleet arrived and began populating England’s newest colony. This First Fleet consisted of eleven vessels including six transports, *Alexander*, *Friendship*, *Prince of Wales*, *Scarborough*, *Charlotte* and *Lady Penrhyn*, three storeships, *Borrowdale*, *Golden Grove*, and *Fishburn*, and two naval escorts, the naval tender HMS *Supply* and the warship HMS *Sirius*, which served as the fleet’s flagship.¹³⁴

¹³³ Charles Bateson, *The Convict Ships: 1787-1868* (Sydney: Library of Australian History, 1985), 2.

¹³⁴ A.K. Cavanagh, “The Return of the First Fleet Ships,” *The Great Circle* 11, no. 2 (1989): 1.

Of these vessels, *Lady Penrhyn*, *Charlotte*, and *Scarborough* also served as East India Company (EIC) merchantships, like many other convict ships in service throughout this time. Between crewmembers, naval officers, sailors, family members, and convicts, almost 1,500 individuals sailed onboard the First Fleet, although not all survived the journey south. Of this number, 568 of the convicts were male and 191 female.¹³⁵ While a number of passengers and convicts died underway, the conditions aboard the First Fleet were better compared to later convict fleets. The First Fleet landed in Botany Bay but the area was unsuitable for a proper settlement. The ships therefore sailed further north to Sydney Harbor.

After bringing the convicts to their destination, the three EIC vessels routed to Canton (present day Guangzhou), China to collect cargos of tea and return to England. Only one vessel of the First Fleet, *Friendship*, sank on its course back to England in the Makassar Strait off the eastern coast of Borneo on October 28, 1789.¹³⁶ The vessel was intentionally scuttled as the scurvy stricken crews of both *Friendship* and *Alexander* only had the manpower to sail one vessel. This was the first of many convict ships to sink along the routes between Europe and Australia. Although no lives were lost, passengers and personnel on other convict ships would not be so lucky. HMS *Sirius* also wrecked in 1790 off of Norfolk Island as she landed supplies for the penal colony.

Hundreds of other vessels would make their way from England, Bermuda, India, and other English colonies where convicts were being held to Australia and Van Diemen's Land to exile convicts to hard labor. Despite the success of and the general

¹³⁵ Bateson, *Convict Ships*, 97.

¹³⁶ Cavanagh, "The Return of the First Fleet Ships," 9.

health and wellbeing of the convicts aboard the First Fleet, the following fleets were not as fortunate. Scurvy, dysentery, mutiny, starvation, and squalor ran rampant on many of the voyages in the mid-19th century. On ships where death was especially common, fellow convicts kept the dead bodies of their neighbor so as to receive their rations.¹³⁷ Generally speaking, the convict experience varied greatly depending on the decade of the voyage, the crime of the prisoner, and the nature of the crew on the vessel on which the convict was transported. Because of the emotional impact of horrific shipboard tales of death, cruelty, and starvation, convict ships became infamous.¹³⁸

In addition to disease and maltreatment, marine disasters claimed the lives of at least 550 convicts in the 19th century. Although this number is small compared to the deaths from other causes, individual wreck stories are particularly horrific.¹³⁹ The first loss of human life in a convict ship maritime disaster occurred in 1789 when the Royal Navy's HMS *Guardian* struck an iceberg at the Cape of Good Hope resulting in the deaths of only several convicts and crewmembers. The gallantry and heroism displayed by some of the convicts during the wrecking event even earned them pardons.¹⁴⁰

Although the first wave of free emigrants did not arrive until 1820s, most of Australia and Tasmania had already been populated by men and women banished from their home countries to serve life sentences. This became the "dumping-ground"

¹³⁷ Sullivan, "Reconsidering Convict Ships," 103.

¹³⁸ Ibid., 104.

¹³⁹ Bateson, *Convict Ships*, 6.

¹⁴⁰ David J. Hepper, *British Warship Losses in the Age of Sail, 1630-1859* (Paris: Jean Boudriot Publications, 1994), 73-74.

for the surplus convict population England and Ireland struggled to feed, clothe, and shelter at home.¹⁴¹ The Transportation Act of 1717 afforded mercy to prisoners, otherwise destined for execution, a new sentence in the form of lifetime penal servitude.¹⁴² Although the Transportation Act spared the lives of criminals, some of who committed insignificant crimes, it also banished and exiled them to unknown parts of the world far away from their families and past lives.

Up until 1787, convicts, reaping the “benefits” of the Transportation Act were sent to North America. After that, Australia became the primary destination of Great Britain’s prisoners. While it took many years for this area of the world to become a desirable place to live for free English citizens, both Australia and Tasmania were truly pioneered during their first several decades of existence as English colonies by those who “left their country for their country’s good.”¹⁴³

HER SERVICE AS AN EAST INDIA COMPANY MERCHANT

Before her service as a merchant-emigrant ship, the *Enchantress* took part in the mass forced emigration of people to the eastern colonies of Australia and Tasmania. She set sail in 1833 with 200 convicts and brought them to Van Diemen’s Land (Tasmania), which had seen its first convict ship in Hobart on October 19, 1812.¹⁴⁴ Van Diemen’s Land had been established in 1803 but became an independent colony in 1825. The colony, specifically Hobart, served as a major disembarking point for

¹⁴¹ Bateson, *Convict Ships*, 3.

¹⁴² John Pearn, “Surgeon-Superintendents on Convict Ships,” *Australia New Zealand Journal of Surgery* 66 (1996): 253.

¹⁴³ Bateson, *Convict Ships*, 3.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 8.

convicts especially after New South Wales abolished convict transportation to its shores in 1840.

When transportation of convicts to Van Diemen's land was also abolished in 1853, the only place left in the Southern Hemisphere for convicts was Western Australia. On January 1, 1856, the colony of Van Diemen's Land was recognized under the name Tasmania. Although an earlier voyage in the service of the East India Company involved the transportation of cargo and goods to India, the *Enchantress* entered the convict transportation business in 1833.

Preceding her 1833 passage to Van Diemen's Land, the *Enchantress* served as a licensed ship under the Honorable East India Company. Her voyage to India for the Company was only one year prior to the collapse of its mercantile and maritime trade monopoly in the East.¹⁴⁵ The East India Company, a joint-stock company that existed from 1600 to 1874, had a major foothold in the politics, economy, and military of India, Australia, Tasmania, and other eastern island nations, especially regarding maritime trade. An 1810 Act of Parliament permitted the Company to take up contracts with privately owned ships due to improvements in the way ships were constructed.¹⁴⁶ These better built vessels were capable of completing more voyages without needing repairs than earlier built ships, and many EIC-licensed privately owned ships took part in convict transports.

Under the Act, privately owned vessels, due to their tonnage and made-to-last construction, could sail more than eight voyages, provided the ships were repaired or

¹⁴⁵ Hackman, *Ships of the East India Company*, 275.

¹⁴⁶ E. Keble Chatterton, *The Old East Indiamen* (London: Rich & Cowan, 1933), 187.

fitted as necessary.¹⁴⁷ Numerous first-class East Indiamen were built at Blackwall Yard, London, earning the EIC's merchant vessels the moniker "Blackwall Frigates." It was generally known that the owners of such merchant vessels, the so-called "India husbands," were destined for great wealth. That changed after the EIC lost its lucrative monopoly in 1834.¹⁴⁸

In the early 19th century, the Company seized the opportunity to allow privately owned, but EIC-licensed vessels, to trade cargos in China, India, and also to bring convicts and supplies to Australia and Tasmania.¹⁴⁹ During this time, the Company held a monopoly on the British trade in the East, making it difficult, if not impossible, for any private non-licensed merchants to earn money while transporting convicts.¹⁵⁰ Statutes placed upon licensed vessels also limited their capabilities, including restrictions regarding the routes they travelled, their date of passage around the Cape of Good Hope or Magellan Strait, and the number of ships one owner could license per year or trading season.¹⁵¹ Such statutes guaranteed the Company's monopoly remained unbroken. Although the EIC had the finest, fastest ships and most well trained men, it could not compete with the reduced costs of convict transport afforded by privately owned merchants.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid.

¹⁴⁸ Basil Lubbock, *The Blackwall Frigates* (Glasgow: James Brown & Son Ltd., 1922), 50.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid.

¹⁵⁰ Clare Anderson, "Convict Passages in the Indian Ocean, c. 1790-1860," in *Many Middle Passages: Forced Migration and the Making of the Modern World*, eds. Emma Christopher, Cassandra Pybus, and Marcus Rediker (Oakland: University of California Press), 130.

¹⁵¹ Great Britain, *A Collection of Statutes Relating to the East India Company: With an Appendix, Containing Acts and Parts of Acts, Relating to Shipping, Duties, Regulations for Export and Import which in General Do Not Solely Relate to the East India Company* (London: G. Eyre and A. Strahan, 1810), 33-338.

Prior to 1821, privately owned vessels were often too small to participate in the longer and more dangerous voyages around Africa and across the Indian Ocean. Before this date, the Company also generally licensed to vessel-owners already associated with the EIC. Post 1821, however, vessels were generally larger and more suitable for transoceanic voyages allowing non-EIC merchants the opportunity to participate. Merchants took advantage of the economic prospects for commerce in the East, and continued trading there despite the collapse of the Company's trading capabilities in 1834.¹⁵²

The *Enchantress* possibly began her East India Company service soon after she was completed in Bristol in September of 1828, although no record of any voyages East prior to 1829 have been found. The movements of vessels during her early years can be tracked in local newspapers and magazines, as well as *Lloyd's Register of British and Foreign Shipping*, a yearly publication that detailed vessel conditions, owners, ports visited, and other pertinent ship information. *Lloyd's Register* for 1830 notes that the *Enchantress* sailed from Bristol, England to St. Vincent, an island just north of South America that is now comprised of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines. It is unclear whether she sailed to St. Vincent in 1829 or 1830 because the month of inspection of the vessel is not provided.¹⁵³

Her first known and verifiable voyage to the East can be found in *Lloyd's Register* of 1831 in "Ships Trading to India." Under her first captain and original owner, William Drew, she set sail from London on April 9, 1830 for Bengal, India.¹⁵⁴

¹⁵² Hackman, *Ships of the East India Company*, 247.

¹⁵³ *Lloyd's Register of British and Foreign Shipping* (1830).

¹⁵⁴ *Lloyd's Register of British and Foreign Shipping* (1831).

Captain Drew appointed Tomlin & Man Company as the agents of the ship. The agents would have been responsible for ship repairs, maintenance, and supplies while the vessel was in port. The *Enchantress* returned from Calcutta, India and arrived in London on August 24, 1830 with Captain Drew, R. Percival as Chief Officer and A. Bourne as the Second Officer.¹⁵⁵

The *Enchantress* can be tracked throughout 1831 in the *Asiatic Journal and Monthly Register for British and Foreign India, China, and Australasia* Volume IV.¹⁵⁶ On July 30, 1831, the *Enchantress* arrived in Calcutta, India from London, traveling up the Hooghly River to trade.

Figure 3.1 *Enchantress* listed at the East India Company's Blackwall Yard.

EAST-INDIA DOCK REPORT, the 11 April 1831						
SHIPS UNLOADING.						
Ship's Name.	Number of Loads sent to the Company's Warehouses.	Articles delivered from Hops or Liquors.	Landing Waiter and Book-keeper.	Ticket Writer and Marked.	Probable Date of Clearance.	Seizures and Detentions.
Enchantress	22		Boyle	Boyle		
Enchantress	21		Boyle	Boyle		
Enchantress	8		Boyle	Boyle		
Enchantress	3		Boyle	Boyle		

SHIPS AT BLACKWALL.

Ships in Dock, in the Order of Turn in which they are to be unloaded.

Royal Charlotte 11 April
Rear Admiral 12 April

SHIPS CLEARED

After some time in port, she then journeyed northward towards Madras, India, and arrived there August 29 before sailing again for Calcutta on September 3. During the 1830s, the *Enchantress* unloaded cargos of rice and sugar from India at Blackwall

¹⁵⁵ List of seafaring Europeans employed on vessels arrived and sailed from the Port of Madras as for the year 1830, 1830, L/MAR/C Marine Miscellaneous Records 1600-1879, India Office Marine Department Records, British Library.

¹⁵⁶ *Asiatic Journal and Monthly Register for British and Foreign India, China, and Australasia* Vol. IV (London: Parbury, Allen, and Co., 1831), 36, 102-104.

Yard, London, one of the EIC's primary docks for loading and unloading cargo, ship repairs, and ship construction (Fig. 3.1).¹⁵⁷

She appears to have left Gravesend, England on October 26, 1831 under Captain Thomas Canney destined for New South Wales.¹⁵⁸ The husband, or agent, of the ship for this voyage was the original owner and captain, William Drew.¹⁵⁹ In the early spring of 1832, *Enchantress* reached new South Wales with Captain Thomas Canney as the master and one passenger in the main cabin (name illegible) and four in steerage (Sarah Burns, Edward Hayward, John Rogers, and Charles Rogers).¹⁶⁰ She arrived off of Liverpool from Batavia (present day Jakarta, Indonesia, the former capital of the Dutch East Indies) November 29, 1832 under Captain Canney.¹⁶¹ Although not all departures and returns can be tracked for the *Enchantress*, it is evident she spent her early days trading exclusively in the east under the EIC.

THE ARRIVAL OF *ENCHANTRESS*: A 19th CENTURY CONVICT SHIP

The 1830s proved a difficult time for convict service, as more and more ships were used for the rising flux of emigrants to America and Australia.¹⁶² Shipowners found that immigration transports proved to be a quicker and more profitable business venture than the transport of convicts. Many convict vessels during the 1830s and beyond were decrepit, aging ships, and some were unseaworthy. Almost all vessels chartered for convict transportation were square-rigged ships and barques and

¹⁵⁷ East-India Dock Report, 1831, L/MAR/C Marine Miscellaneous Records 1600-1879, India Office Marine Department Records, British Library.

¹⁵⁸ "East India Shipping," *The Spectator* (London, England), October 29, 1831.

¹⁵⁹ *Lloyd's Register of British and Foreign Shipping* (London: W. Marchant, 1832).

¹⁶⁰ Passenger list, March 20, 1832, Reel 1286, NRS 1291, Colonial Secretary and Registrar of the Records of New South Wales, Unassisted Passengers 1826-1900, New South Wales State Archives Collection.

¹⁶¹ "East India Shipping," *The Spectator* (London, England), December 1, 1832.

¹⁶² Bateson, *Convict Ships*, 215.

generally under 600 tons.¹⁶³ Issues with rowdy, untrained, and incompetent crewmembers only added to the dangers of the voyage. Marine disaster was more common during the 1830s than any other decade of convict transportation to Australia and Tasmania.¹⁶⁴ Despite quicker voyages in the later years, scurvy, seasickness, mutiny, and wrecking were still all too common aboard passages in the 1830s when the *Enchantress* made her first and only convict voyage.

The *Enchantress* departed Portsmouth on April 13, 1833 and arrived to Hobart, Van Diemen's Land July 31, 1833.¹⁶⁵ The total voyage took 109 days, and it's likely she traveled along one of the popular sea routes of the time. This ran from England around the Cape of Good Hope, towards New Guinea where a ship then passed through the Solomon Islands, the northernmost part of the Bismarck Archipelago, and then in a westward direction parallel to the New Guinea coast until a course could be taken south into the Makassar Strait.¹⁶⁶ Many ships stopped for supplies or repairs at the Cape of Good Hope, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, or the island of St. Helena, which could add considerable time to a voyage.

In the earliest days of convict voyages, this route could take as long as six to ten months, though it shortened considerably as ship technologies, navigation, and food storage techniques improved. Ships no longer had to carry supplies and tools needed to begin a colony because by the mid-19th century the Australian and Tasmanian colonies were already well established. The later convict ships were also considerably

¹⁶³ Bateson, *Convict Ships*, 83.

¹⁶⁴ Ibid., 216.

¹⁶⁵ Ibid., 362.

¹⁶⁶ Cavanagh, "The First Fleet Ships," 2.

larger than the late 18th century fleets and could hold more convicts. After 1818, passage generally took less than 130 days.¹⁶⁷

Enchantress left Portsmouth on April 13, 1833 with 200 English and Irish convicts, although one of these prisoners would not make it to Van Diemen's Land (Fig. 3.2).¹⁶⁸ The medical journal of ship's surgeon-superintendent Dr. James Osborne provides insight into the daily routine aboard the *Enchantress* on her way to Van Diemen's Land. The journals and narratives of other surgeons aboard convict ships reveal the unfortunate conditions passengers, crew, and prisoners had to face.

Such is the case in Dr. Colin A. Browning's, *The Convict Ship*, which details his time as surgeon-superintendent on the *Earl*

<i>Enchantress.</i>			
<i>200. V.D.L. 6 April 1833.</i>			
<i>Names.</i>	<i>Where convicted.</i>	<i>When.</i>	<i>Term.</i>
<i>William Jeyes</i>	<i>Bucks Assizes</i>	<i>19th July 1830</i>	<i>Life.</i>
<i>Richard Briggs</i>	<i>Cambridge (Town) 2^d Assizes</i>	<i>15th October 1832</i>	<i>Seven years.</i>
<i>James Peachey</i>	<i>D. ——— D.</i>	<i>14th January 1833</i>	<i>Seven years.</i>
<i>Charles Deverall</i>	<i>Chesham Assizes</i>	<i>31st March 1832</i>	<i>Life.</i>
<i>Joseph Hockton</i>	<i>Epsom Assizes</i>	<i>9th March 1829</i>	<i>Life.</i>
<i>James Sharpe</i>	<i>Epsom Assizes</i>	<i>9th March 1829</i>	<i>Life.</i>
<i>William Wood</i>	<i>D. ——— D.</i>	<i>9th March 1829</i>	<i>Fourteen years.</i>

Figure 3.2 The beginning of the list of 200 individuals convicted of crimes in England and Ireland, sent to Van Diemen's Land aboard the *Enchantress*.

Grey.¹⁶⁹ Browning, like many other surgeons, traveled on seven convict voyages.¹⁷⁰ In order to curb death and illness aboard convict transports, the surgeon-superintendent

¹⁶⁷ Bateson, *Convict Ships*, 176.

¹⁶⁸ Medical and surgical journal of HM transport ship *Enchantress*, 1833, Record Num. 101/25/9, Records of Medical and Prisoner of War Departments, Subseries: Convict Ships etc., The National Archives.

¹⁶⁹ Colin A. Browning, *The Convict Ship: A Narrative of the Results of Scriptural Instruction and Moral Discipline on board the "Earl Grey"* (Philadelphia: Lindsay & Blakiston, 1850).

system generally appointed naval surgeons to serve on the transports. The surgeons made multiple voyages because of their knowledge of the diseases specific to long transports, as well as their ability to handle prisoners.¹⁷¹ Surgeon-superintendents' role on the high seas progressed as more convict transports left England. What started as amateur indifference for individual prisoners and a primary concern for the whole system, morphed into that of highly efficient, courageous professionals dedicated to the wellbeing of those under their care.¹⁷²

Dr. James Osborne was one of three brothers who served as surgeon-superintendents for the Royal Navy. His brothers Alick and John Osborne also served on numerous convict voyages and were all well respected for their medical capabilities.¹⁷³ Osborne entered service on October 2, 1813 and appeared as a Medical Officer for the Royal Navy for the first time in 1814.¹⁷⁴ He completed six known expeditions as a surgeon-superintendent. The doctor served on his first convict transport in 1829 aboard the *Layton*, followed by the *Palambam* in 1831, and the *Royal Admiral* in 1835, all of which were destined for New South Wales.¹⁷⁵ Osborne also made two voyages to Van Diemen's Land in the *Enchantress* in 1833 and the *Maria Somes* in 1844.¹⁷⁶ Coincidentally, James Osborne found himself in Bermuda

¹⁷⁰ Ibid., viii.

¹⁷¹ Bateson, *Convict Ships*, 276.

¹⁷² Pearn, "Surgeon-Superintendents on Convict Ships," 253.

¹⁷³ Bateson, *Convict Ships*, 277.

¹⁷⁴ Great Britain Admiralty Office, *The Navy List* (London: John Murray, 1814), 109.

¹⁷⁵ Bateson, *Convict Ships*, 348-353.

¹⁷⁶ Ibid., 362-367.

only seven years after the *Enchantress* sank there. He was on his final assignment aboard the convict ship *Baretto Junior*.¹⁷⁷

Conditions aboard convict transports were notoriously awful, and its likely that environment aboard the *Enchantress* was no different. One surgeon, Dr. John Campbell, even likened conditions aboard convict ships to those he witnessed aboard a slave ship in Cuba.¹⁷⁸ Dr. Osborne's medical journal detailed the patients he treated on *Enchantress* as well as the few he saw before and after the ship reached port. His first patient was thirty-three year old John Holeman who he treated prior to leaving Portsmouth. Osborne treated Holeman for pneumonia from April 1 until the patient was discharged on April 9, 1833. The doctor's second patient was Charles Deveril (correctly spelled Deverall), aged 19, who was treated for ten days at sea for calcium stones in his urine. His third patient John Lawrence aged 58, was the sickest for the longest period of time. Osborne treated Lawrence for scurvy in both of his legs, which appeared discolored and warm to the touch. Lawrence was discharged while still sick to the convict barracks on August 5, 1833.¹⁷⁹ Two convicts on the *Enchantress* shared the name John Lawrence, therefore it is impossible to determine which became afflicted during passage.

Tragedy struck when Osborne treated his fourth patient aboard the *Enchantress*. William Blackburn, aged 75, was treated for only five days before dying of

¹⁷⁷ Medical and surgical journal of HM convict ship *Baretto Junior*, 1845, Record Num. 101/7/6, Records of Medical and Prisoner of War Departments, Subseries: Convict Ships etc., The National Archives.

¹⁷⁸ John Campbell, *Thirty Years' Experience of a Medical Officer in the English Convict Service* (London: T. Nelson and Sons, 1884), 11.

¹⁷⁹ Medical and surgical journal of HM transport ship *Enchantress*, 1833.

dehydration and illness related to diarrhea (Fig. 3.3).¹⁸⁰ Osborne put Blackburn on sick list July 15, 1833 and his death was noted on July 20, 1833. Blackburn had boarded the vessel already in a sickly state, and the doctor seemed unsurprised by his death. Convicts were often bathed and dressed in fresh clothing to appear healthy and fit for departure.¹⁸¹ Exiling convicts remedied overcrowded gaols, sent away unruly prisoners, and even provided hope to weary prisoners who preferred the possibility of death at sea rather than in the disease-ridden prisons. Before embarking on the ship, convicts generally remained in gaols or hulks for months, even years, until the ship was ready to sail.

Osborne saw two more patients before his journal ends, including John Smith, age 50, and William Pitts, age 27. Smith was treated for diarrhea and discharged upon arrival to Tasmania. Pitts spent eleven days in the ship's infirmary for dysentery.¹⁸²

Bearing in mind the number of convicts aboard the *Enchantress* and the loss of only one individual during the 109-day voyage, Dr. Osborne considered the voyage a success. Given the age of William Blackburn and his condition aboard the long journey to Tasmania, it is no surprise that illness took his life.

Figure 3.3 Dr. Osborne's medical journal noting the death of William Blackburn.

¹⁸⁰ Ibid.

¹⁸¹ Bateson, *Convict Ships*, 60.

¹⁸² Medical and surgical journal of HM transport ship *Enchantress*, 1833.

Of the 200 convicts, 55 had life sentences, 98 served seven years, 46 served fourteen years and only one convict had a twenty-one year sentence. The full list of *Enchantress*' convicts and their places of conviction can be found at the end of this chapter (Table 2). Unfortunately, the crimes committed by these individuals could not be found, although almost all criminals sent east committed petty crimes compared to today's standards. Theft, robbery, political dissent, larceny, burglary, pickpocketing, and sheep-theft are often cited crimes for which individuals might receive lengthy sentences.¹⁸³ Convicts accused of more serious crimes such as murder and rape were generally punished in Great Britain.

After *Enchantress*' only convict transportation voyage in 1833, she plied general trades in the Far East. She is recorded arriving in Bengal May 11, 1834 under Captain Canney's direction and sail.¹⁸⁴ She must've then returned to England. Beyond this voyage, it is unclear where the *Enchantress* sailed and under whose direction until her final voyage across the Atlantic and loss off Bermuda on February 5, 1837. By this time, she appeared to have been sold by William Drew and was captained by a new mariner to sail west towards the Americas instead of her usual route east. This shift from the Far East to the Atlantic is likely because the East India Company's monopoly in the east had dissolved by September 1834.

OTHER CONVICT SHIPWRECKS

The *Enchantress* discussed throughout this paper is not to be confused with another convict-turned-emigrant ship named the *Enchantress*, a 376-ton ship sailing

¹⁸³ Steve Thomas, "Convict Facts," *Convict Records*, <http://www.convictrecords.com.au/facts> (accessed March 1, 2016).

¹⁸⁴ Society of Gentlemen from India, *Alexander's East India and Colonial Magazine* (London: R. Alexander, November 1834), xxxiii.

from London under Captain Roxburgh that sank on July 17, 1835.¹⁸⁵ Just as many emigrant vessels sank on the arduous voyage across the Atlantic to North America, a number of convict ships were lost sailing to and from Australia. The wreck of Captain Roxburgh's *Enchantress* occurred in the D'Entrecasteaux Channel just off the western coast of Bruny Island, an island located in southern Tasmania. *Enchantress* carried emigrants, not convicts, when she foundered, taking with her many passengers and crew.

In the same treacherous portion of the Strait, another convict ship, *George the Third*, struck a rock and sank on April 12, 1835 taking with it 97 of 200 convicts.¹⁸⁶ The year 1835 was characterized by no less than sixteen wrecks in the waters around Tasmania and Australia, three of which alone resulted in a loss of 406 lives.¹⁸⁷ *George the Third* had already experienced hardship before sinking as twelve convicts died of scurvy early in the voyage. An additional 50 were stricken with the disease and bedridden as the ship sank.¹⁸⁸ While many government vessels came to rescue the drowning convicts aboard *George the Third*, only one local steamboat came to the aid of *Enchantress*.¹⁸⁹

A number of other convict wrecks occurred around the penal colonies and the shores of England and Ireland. British ships were lost at an average of six or more per

¹⁸⁵ *Lloyd's Register of British and Foreign Shipping* (London: J. L. Cox and Son, 1834).

¹⁸⁶ "Wreck of George III: Tragic Story Retold, Early Tasmanian History, Great Loss of Life," *The Mercury* (Hobart, Tasmania), April 12, 1928.

¹⁸⁷ "Australia's Maritime History," *The Central Queensland Herald* (Rockhampton, Queensland), October 27, 1932.

¹⁸⁸ Bateson, *Convict Ships*, 252.

¹⁸⁹ "Van Diemen's Land: Loss of the *Enchantress*," *The Sydney Herald* (New South Wales, Australia), August 3, 1835.

week during this time, thus the chance of a disaster seemed unreasonably high.¹⁹⁰ One of the most famous convict wrecks is that of the *Hive*, which Australia's Heritage Office successfully located in December 1994 off New South Wales' appropriately named Wreck Bay. This wreck is the only known convict ship wreck in the waters of mainland Australia, though there are undoubtedly many more waiting to be discovered.

When the *Hive* sank on December 17, 1835, she was on her second convict voyage. Driven ashore onto a sandy beach, the loss was attributed to miscommunication and poor judgment on the part of the captain and crew. With 250 Irish male convicts aboard from Dublin and Cork, all passengers survived except for the boatswain who drowned during an attempt to save a younger crewmember. News of the wreck became widespread because of the number of individuals saved and the valuable cargo *Hive* carried. Although salvors successfully saved the cargo and £10,000 worth of specie, the ship could not be refloated. Coincidentally, the small salvage schooner *Blackbird* sank right next to *Hive* after a sudden gale capsized her. Archaeological investigations, including a magnetometer survey, revealed the main body of the wreck remains in the surf zone along the beach.¹⁹¹ Archaeologists also detected magnetic anomalies on the beach and found several glass artifacts and pieces of coal. Scientific analysis of the coal found at the site determined it came from coalfields in Great Britain.¹⁹²

¹⁹⁰ Andrew C. A. Jampoler, *Horrible Shipwreck!* (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 2010), 17.

¹⁹¹ David Nutley and Timothy Smith, *2nd Report on the Maritime Archaeological Investigation of the Convict Transport Hive and the Schooner Blackbird* (New South Wales: NSW Department of Urban Affairs and Planning Underwater Heritage Program, 1995), 13.

¹⁹² *Ibid.*, 2.

The *Amphitrite* is another historically well-studied convict wreck. She was lost in 1833 off the coast of Boulogne, France. She grounded on a sandbar within sight of the shore. Many bystanders watched from shore as the vessel broke apart. Despite local attempts to save the victims, all but three of the crew perished. Of the 136 people aboard *Amphitrite*, 106 were female prisoners and twelve were their children, all of whom drowned in the stormy surf.¹⁹³ The tragedy and fascination surrounding the loss of the women and children aboard the vessel outraged many, and even inspired a painting by J. M. W. Turner titled *Fire at Sea* (Fig. 3.4).¹⁹⁴ Even more horrific than watching the women and children drown, locals noted many naked bodies washed ashore in the days after the wreck. After her loss, it was suggested that the *Amphitrite* had been unseaworthy at the time of the wreck with rotting timbers and loose fastenings, and a crew unfit for service.

Loss of the *Amphitrite* resonated with the common people, likely because individuals

witnessed the scene and could recount the horrors that happened that day. Another wreck, the barque *Neva*, also carried women and

Figure 3.4 J. M. W. Turner's unfinished *Fire at Sea*, which was inspired by the wrecking of the *Amphitrite* in 1833.

¹⁹³ Bateson, *Convict Ships*, 246.

¹⁹⁴ Jampoler, *Horrible Shipwreck!*, 3.

children but sank out on the open ocean. The ship did not receive the same publicity of *Amphitrite*, although passenger and crew losses were greater. *Neva* set out from Cork, Ireland on her second convict voyage on January 8, 1835. This year was perhaps the worst year for convict ship losses. Unlike *Amphitrite*, *Neva* had undergone recent repairs and seemed fit for the long journey to Port Jackson, Sydney. She carried 150 female convicts and 55 of their children when tragedy struck in Bass Strait off King Island, Tasmania on May 13.¹⁹⁵ *Neva* struck the shallow reef after violent winds and strong currents pushed the vessel off course. Of the 240 individuals on board the vessel, only six of the convicts and nine crewmembers survived. The few survivors remained on King Island with shipwrecked passengers and crew from other convict ships for several weeks until a rescue vessel saved them.

The story of the *Enchantress* during her service as a convict ship, and the many other stories of convict transport wreck events, speaks to the ways in which the world was changing in the mid-19th century. In the less than ten years that the *Enchantress* sailed, she made multiple voyages to the East Indies, transported convicts banished from their home country, and suffered a catastrophic wrecking. The world had become a place easily accessible by sail by 1837, and the *Enchantress*' history attests to a vessel's capability to reach the far stretches of ocean and encounter many different people. The history of the *Enchantress* also illustrates the relationship between Britain, Ireland, and the rest of the world during this time period; desires to remove people, and for poor and destitute to seek or be required to establish new lives overseas, drastically altered the way the world looked in the 19th century.

¹⁹⁵ Bateson, *Convict Ships*, 251.

Table 2. Transcribed list of all convicts aboard the *Enchantress* on her voyage to Van Diemen's Land in 1833.¹⁹⁶

Name	Where Convicted	When	Term
William Jeyes	Bucks Assizes	July 19, 1830	Life
Richard Briggs	Cambridge (Town) 2 nd session	Oct 15, 1832	7 years
James Peachey	Cambridge (Town) 2 nd session	Jan 4, 1833	7 years
Charles Deverall (alias Deberall)	Chester Assizes	Mar 31, 1832	Life
Joseph Stockton	Chester Assizes	Mar 31, 1832	Life
James Sharpe	Essex Assizes	Mar 9, 1829	Life
William Wood	Essex Assizes	Mar 9, 1829	14 years
Thomas Freeman	Essex Assizes	Mar 9, 1829	14 years
Daniel Coe	Essex Assizes	Mar 9, 1829	Life
Hextell Stain	Essex Assizes	Mar 5, 1832	14 years
John Chapman	Essex Assizes	Mar 5, 1832	14 years
William Finch	Essex Assizes 2 nd session	July 3, 1832	7 years
Richard Howard	Essex Colchester Assizes	July 9, 1832	7 years
John Boutell	Essex Assizes	July 23, 1832	Life
James Lazell	Essex Assizes	July 23, 1832	Life
Charles Dyson	Essex Assizes	July 23, 1832	Life
Thomas Morley	Essex Assizes 2 nd session	Nov 20, 1832	7 years
James Bailey	Essex Assizes	Dec 1, 1832	Life
George Carter	Essex Assizes	Dec 1, 1832	Life
Thomas Weald	Hereford Assizes	Mar 23, 1831	Life
James Parlour	Hereford Assizes 2 nd session	July 3, 1832	7 years
John Stanaway	Kent Assizes 2 nd session	Oct 19, 1830	7 years
John Gowland	Lancaster Assizes 2 nd session	Oct 22, 1832	Life
Henry Markin	Liverpool Assizes	Oct 22, 1832	Life
Richard Watkinson	Liverpool Assizes	Oct 22, 1832	Life
Richard Murray	Liverpool Assizes	Oct 22, 1832	Life
Henry Cavannah	Liverpool Assizes	Oct 22, 1832	14 years
Jonathon Marland	Liverpool Assizes	Oct 22, 1832	14 years
William Thomas	Liverpool Assizes	Oct 22, 1832	14 years
James Harrison	Liverpool Assizes	Oct 22, 1832	14 years
William Murray	Liverpool Assizes	Oct 22, 1832	14 years
Thomas Jones	Liverpool Assizes	Oct 22, 1832	14 years
James King	Liverpool Assizes	Oct 22, 1832	14 years
William Jones	Liverpool Assizes	Oct 22, 1832	14 years
Archibald Hadwen	Liverpool Assizes	Oct 22, 1832	14 years
John MacNally	Lancaster Assizes 2 nd session	Oct 22, 1832	7 years
Richard Lockwood	Lancaster Assizes 2 nd session	Oct 22, 1832	7 years
James Farren	Lancaster Assizes 2 nd session	Oct 22, 1832	7 years
John Pritchard	Liverpool Assizes	Oct 22, 1832	7 years

¹⁹⁶ Transportation register of convicts bound for Van Diemen's Land on the convict ship *Enchantress*, April 6, 1833, Record Num. 11/9/47, Records created or inherited by the Home Office, Ministry of Home Security, and related bodies, Subseries: Home Office Convict Transportation Registers, The National Archives.

Henry Harwood	Liverpool Assizes	Nov 5, 1832	Life
Henry Simpson	Liverpool Assizes	Nov 5, 1832	14 years
Thomas Higgs	Liverpool Assizes	Nov 5, 1832	14 years
John Hollis	Lincoln (Kesteven) Assizes 2 nd session	Jan 15, 1829	14 years
Edward Russell	London Gaol Delivery	Jan 15, 1829	Life
Henry Miller	London Gaol Delivery	Sept 16, 1830	14 years
Charles Woodman	London Gaol Delivery	Oct 28, 1830	14 years
Jacob Simmonds	London Gaol Delivery	Dec 1, 1831	7 years
John Wilson	London Gaol Delivery	Feb 16, 1832	7 years
John Webb	London Gaol Delivery	Feb 16, 1832	7 years
George Dewell	London Gaol Delivery	Feb 16, 1832	7 years
Thomas Wilson	London Gaol Delivery	Apr 5, 1832	7 years
Henry Jackson	London Gaol Delivery	Apr 5, 1832	7 years
Charles Northfield	London Gaol Delivery	Sept 6, 1832	Life
William Bull	London Gaol Delivery	Sept 6, 1832	Life
John Wilckes	London Gaol Delivery	Nov 29, 1832	Life
Kenneth Campbell	London Gaol Delivery	Nov 29, 1832	7 years
Thomas Green	London Gaol Delivery	Jan 3, 1833	Life
John Lawrence	London Gaol Delivery	Feb 14, 1833	7 years
Charles Casey	London Gaol Delivery	Feb 14, 1833	7 years
Charles Tosante Brown	Middlesex Gaol Delivery	May 29, 1828	7 years
Richard Ellis	Middlesex Gaol Delivery	Jun 11, 1829	Life
William Squires	Middlesex Gaol Delivery	Sept 10, 1829	14 years
William Jones	Middlesex Gaol Delivery	May 27, 1830	7 years
William Andrews	Middlesex Gaol Delivery	Jan 6, 1831	7 years
William Jones	Middlesex Gaol Delivery	Jun 30, 1831	Life
Charles Favell	Middlesex Gaol Delivery	Sept 8, 1831	14 years
John Drover	Middlesex Gaol Delivery	Sept 8, 1831	7 years
Thomas Lisinia	Middlesex Gaol Delivery	Sept 8, 1831	7 years
Robert Finch	Middlesex Gaol Delivery	Dec 1, 1831	7 years
Benjamin Seth	Middlesex Gaol Delivery	Jan 5, 1832	Life
George Nash	Middlesex Gaol Delivery	Feb 10, 1832	7 years
Henry Green	Middlesex Gaol Delivery	Feb 10, 1832	7 years
John Allen	Middlesex Gaol Delivery	Feb 10, 1832	7 years
William Jones	Middlesex Gaol Delivery	Apr 5, 1832	Life
John Whitehall	Middlesex Gaol Delivery	Apr 5, 1832	Life
William Crofts	Middlesex Gaol Delivery	Apr 5, 1832	Life
Charles Head	Middlesex Gaol Delivery	Apr 5, 1832	7 years
Charles Parson (alias Thomas Pain)	Middlesex Gaol Delivery	Apr 5, 1832	7 years
William Carpenter	Middlesex Gaol Delivery	May 17, 1832	14 years
John Hampton	Westminster Assizes 2 nd session	Jun 28, 1832	7 years
Stephen Wilmot	Middlesex Gaol Delivery	July 5, 1832	14 years
James Smith	Middlesex Gaol Delivery	July 5, 1832	7 years
John Almeroth	Middlesex Gaol Delivery	July 5, 1832	7 years
John Lawrence	Middlesex Gaol Delivery	July 5, 1832	7 years
George Wilkinson	Middlesex Gaol Delivery	July 5, 1832	7 years

William Willis	Middlesex Gaol Delivery	July 5, 1832	7 years
William Evans	Middlesex Gaol Delivery	July 5, 1832	7 years
James Young	Middlesex Gaol Delivery	July 5, 1832	7 years
John Jones	Middlesex Gaol Delivery	July 5, 1832	7 years
John Richards	Westminster Assizes 2 nd session	Aug 30, 1832	7 years
John Wilson	Middlesex Gaol Delivery	Sept 6, 1832	Life
Robert Elliston (Died Aug 19, 1846)	Middlesex Gaol Delivery	Sept 6, 1832	Life
Thomas Brookery	Middlesex Gaol Delivery	Sept 6, 1832	Life
John Holeman	Middlesex Gaol Delivery	Sept 6, 1832	Life
William Davis (alias) Brian	Middlesex Gaol Delivery	Sept 6, 1832	14 years
John Wright	Middlesex Gaol Delivery	Sept 6, 1832	14 years
Edgar Bullock	Middlesex Gaol Delivery	Sept 6, 1832	14 years
John Jones	Middlesex Gaol Delivery	Sept 6, 1832	14 years
Sydney Harris	Middlesex Gaol Delivery	Sept 6, 1832	7 years
George Dixon	Middlesex Gaol Delivery	Sept 6, 1832	7 years
William Langley	Middlesex Gaol Delivery	Sept 6, 1832	7 years
John Poulett	Middlesex Gaol Delivery	Sept 6, 1832	7 years
Joseph Nicholls	Middlesex Gaol Delivery	Sept 6, 1832	7 years
Joseph Plummer	Middlesex Gaol Delivery	Sept 6, 1832	7 years
George Saunders	Middlesex Gaol Delivery	Sept 6, 1832	7 years
Joseph Clark	Middlesex Gaol Delivery	Sept 6, 1832	7 years
Thomas Manning	Middlesex Gaol Delivery	Sept 6, 1832	7 years
James White	Middlesex Gaol Delivery	Sept 6, 1832	7 years
Richard Sheldrick	Middlesex Gaol Delivery	Sept 6, 1832	7 years
Charles Bolton	Middlesex Gaol Delivery	Sept 6, 1832	7 years
George Brentley	Middlesex Gaol Delivery	Sept 6, 1832	7 years
John Ward	Middlesex Gaol Delivery	Sept 6, 1832	7 years
James Radford	Middlesex Gaol Delivery	Sept 6, 1832	7 years
Joseph Blackburn	Middlesex Gaol Delivery	Sept 6, 1832	7 years
George Baldry	Middlesex Gaol Delivery	Oct 18, 1832	Life
George Ryder	Middlesex Gaol Delivery	Oct 18, 1832	7 years
James Murray	Middlesex Gaol Delivery	Oct 18, 1832	7 years
Thomas Mumford	Middlesex Gaol Delivery	Oct 18, 1832	7 years
John Hayes	Middlesex Gaol Delivery	Oct 18, 1832	7 years
John Jacobs	Middlesex Gaol Delivery	Oct 18, 1832	7 years
John Boulter	Middlesex Gaol Delivery	Oct 18, 1832	7 years
James Carney	Middlesex Gaol Delivery	Nov 29, 1832	Life
William George	Middlesex Gaol Delivery	Nov 29, 1832	Life
John Grigg	Middlesex Gaol Delivery	Nov 29, 1832	Life
Robert Thompson	Middlesex Gaol Delivery	Nov 29, 1832	14 years
Richard Bowman	Middlesex Gaol Delivery	Nov 29, 1832	7 years
Charles Dunn	Middlesex Gaol Delivery	Jan 3, 1833	14 years
Robert Sutton	Middlesex Gaol Delivery	Feb 14, 1833	7 years
Samuel Crane	Norfolk (Norwich) Assizes	Aug 7, 1827	Life
Henry Watson	Norfolk (Norwich) Assizes 2 nd session	July 14, 1829	14 years

William Lake (Elder)	Norfolk (Norwich) Assizes	July 23, 1831	14 years
Mark Skeet	Norfolk (Norwich) Assizes	July 30, 1832	Life
Robert Gymer	Norfolk Assizes	July 30, 1832	7 years
James Tillett	Norfolk (Norwich) Assizes 2 nd session	Jan 1, 1833	7 years
William Mason	Northampton Assizes	Mar 9, 1829	Life
George Kendall	Northampton Assizes	Feb 27, 1830	Life
Thomas Samborn	Oxford Assizes	July 13, 1831	Life
William Maynard	Oxford Assizes 2 nd session	Dec 31, 1832	7 years
Thomas Mills	Southampton Assizes 2 nd session	Jan 12, 1830	14 years
William Barton (alias) Shaw	Portsmouth Assizes	July 12, 1830	7 years
William Dean	Portsmouth Assizes	Feb 25, 1832	Life
Edward Hayter	Portsmouth Assizes	Feb 25, 1832	Life
George White	Portsmouth Assizes	Feb 25, 1832	Life
Jacob Spratley	Portsmouth Assizes	Feb 25, 1832	Life
John Fair	Portsmouth Assizes	Feb 25, 1832	Life
Francis Purday	Portsmouth Assizes	July 16, 1832	Life
James Warner	Portsmouth Assizes 2 nd session	Oct 15, 1832	7 years
Richard Hexler	Portsmouth Assizes 2 nd session	Dec 31, 1832	7 years
Richard Colling	Portsmouth Assizes 2 nd session	Dec 31, 1832	7 years
John Marhill	Portsmouth Assizes 2 nd session	Dec 31, 1832	7 years
Samuel Bridle	Portsmouth Assizes 2 nd session	Dec 31, 1832	7 years
John Cull	Portsmouth Assizes 2 nd session	Jan 1, 1833	7 years
William Dodd	Suffolk Assizes 2 nd session	July 20, 1829	14 years
John Parker	Suffolk Assizes 2 nd session	July 6, 1832	7 years
James Ward	Ipswich Session, Peace Gaol Delivery	July 24, 1832	7 years
Edward Smith	Oxford Session, Peal Gaol Delivery	July 24, 1832	Life
George Feetham	Oxford Assizes 2 nd session	Oct 23, 1832	7 years
Henry Mundy	Surrey Gaol Delivery	Dec 11, 1827	Life
William Bennett	Southwark 2 nd session	July 2, 1832	Life
John White	Southwark 2 nd session	July 2, 1832	7 years
William Earle	Southwark 2 nd session	July 3, 1832	14 years
Richard Fulmer Paice	Southwark 2 nd session	July 3, 1832	7 years
William Russell Gullaway the Elder	Southwark 2 nd session	July 3, 1832	7 years
John Bennett	Southwark 2 nd session	Dec 3, 1832	7 years
Samuel John Smith	Southwark 2 nd session	Feb 18, 1833	14 years
Thomas Hayes	Southwark 2 nd session	Feb 18, 1833	7 years
Henry Pithouse	Southwark 2 nd session	Feb 18, 1833	7 years
Joseph Simmons	Sussex Assizes 2 nd session	Oct 20, 1831	14 years
Edward Williams	Sussex Assizes	Aug 4, 1832	7 years
Thomas Morris	Sussex Assizes 2 nd session	Oct 15, 1832	14 years
William Jackson	Sussex Assizes 2 nd session	Oct 15, 1832	7 years
George Jackson	Sussex Assizes 2 nd session	Oct 15, 1832	7 years
Samuel Howell	Sussex Assizes 2 nd session	Oct 18, 1832	Life

John Barlow	Sussex Assizes 2 nd session	Oct 18, 1832	7 years
Patrick Fannan	Sussex Gaol Delivery	Dec 15, 1832	Life
William Thurgood	Sussex Gaol Delivery	Dec 15, 1831	14 years
John Jones	Warwick Assizes 2 nd session	Mar 8, 1831	7 years
Frederick Bellfield	Warwick Assizes 2 nd session	Apr 5, 1831	14 years
John Davis	Warwick Assizes 2 nd session	Mar 24, 1832	Life
Philip Farrington	Warwick Assizes 2 nd session	Mar 24, 1832	14 years
Simeon Forster	Warwick Assizes 2 nd session	Mar 24, 1832	14 years
Joseph Hartland	Warwick Assizes 2 nd session	Mar 24, 1832	14 years
Joseph Barnett	Warwick Assizes 2 nd session	Mar 24, 1832	14 years
William Pitts	Warwick Assizes 2 nd session	Mar 24, 1832	14 years
William Rogers	Wilts Assizes (New Sarum Session)	July 8, 1832	7 years
Isaac Bailey	Wilts Assizes	July 21, 1832	7 years
Joseph Audrey (alias Joseph Audry)	Wilts Assizes 2 nd session	Jan 1, 1833	Life
John Hutchings	Wilts Assizes 2 nd session	Jan 1, 1833	21 years
Henry Williams	Wilts Assizes 2 nd session	Jan 1, 1833	14 years
Worthy Hunt	Wilts Assizes 2 nd session	Jan 1, 1833	7 years
John Mitchell	Wilts Assizes 2 nd session	Jan 1, 1833	7 years
George Potter	Wilts Assizes 2 nd session	Jan 1, 1833	7 years
Thomas Few	Wilts Assizes Devizes Session	Jan 5, 1833	7 years
William Kimberly	Worcester Assizes 2 nd session	Oct 17, 1831	14 years
John Marpole	Worcester Assizes 2 nd session	July 2, 1832	7 years
John Poultney	Worcester Assizes 2 nd session	July 2, 1832	7 years
William Smith	Worcester Assizes	July 21, 1832	Life
John Rice	Worcester Assizes	July 21, 1832	Life
William Blackburn (Died on voyage July 20, 1833)	York Assizes West Riding 2 nd session	Jan 15, 1829	14 years
Robert Robertson	Ayr Court of Justiciary	Sept 22, 1825	14 years

CHAPTER 4

CONCLUSIONS

In the nine short years that the *Enchantress* sailed across the world's oceans, she carried cargo to India, sailed the southern hemisphere to bring convicts to Tasmania, and almost completed a voyage across the Atlantic. Some merchant vessels could expend as many as twenty or more years afloat, but the shallow reefs of Bermuda claimed the *Enchantress* before she became one of the hundreds of derelict merchant vessels ferrying emigrants across the open ocean during the peak years of emigration to North America. It is likely the *Enchantress* would have continued to carry emigrants while transporting cargo if she had not sunk on February 5, 1837. Despite a relatively short sailing career, the wealth of information in both the historical and archaeological records for the *Enchantress* provides a unique case study for archaeologists and historians interested in early to mid 19th century emigration from Great Britain and Ireland.

The history and archeology of this previously unknown wreck on the outer reefs of Bermuda, and the attempts to identify it, have led to a deeper appreciation of the plight of immigrants and exiled convicts. The *Enchantress* is connected to bigger historical processes and events that occurred during the 19th century, including the mass migration of people from England and Ireland to the far away shores of North America, Australia, and Tasmania.

The Iron Plate Wreck, which is now referred to as the *Enchantress*, will likely be a site for many more field schools. While further archaeological excavations must take place in order to better understand the overall design and construction of the ship, initial work on the site has already revealed a plethora of information pertaining to the vessel's size, construction, date, and cargo. This includes artifacts that correspond to the *Enchantress* cargo descriptions such as coal and sheet iron, the size of the wreck in relation to *Enchantress*' dimensions, and the general location and orientation of the wreck relative to the historical account of the *Enchantress*' sinking. With this data, conclusions can be drawn that help identify the Iron Plate Wreck as the *Enchantress*.

From 1830-1837, only one *Enchantress* of 401 tons is recorded in the *Register*. Although the *Enchantress* was not listed during her first two years afloat, she disappeared from *Lloyd's Register* after its 1837 publication.¹⁹⁷ With Thomas Canney listed as the last captain and London as the inspection and home port, her final entry in the 1837 edition is likely because she had been surveyed late in the year 1836 prior to her November departure for New York City. However, no survey date is provided. This fact strengthens the evidence that the *Enchantress* documented throughout this thesis is the only possible candidate for the *Enchantress* that sank in Bermuda in 1837. Although many vessels went by the name *Enchantress*, no others meet the criteria for the *Enchantress* wrecked off Bermuda.

The *Enchantress*, like many other merchant vessels during the 19th century, served a variety of purposes throughout her career. Coincidentally, she made two voyages that were likely very similar; she transported convicts in 1833 and emigrants

¹⁹⁷ *Lloyd's Register of British and Foreign Shipping*, (London: J. L. Cox and Son, 1837).

in 1836. Although the *Enchantress* held 200 convicts during passage from Liverpool to Van Diemen's Land, she transported 66 emigrants alongside her densely packed cargos when bound for New York City in 1836. While the *Enchantress* transported half the number of people aboard the ship in 1836 than she did in 1833, onboard ship conditions for both voyages were probably comparable.

In many ways, the convict voyages of the 19th century bore striking similarities to emigrant voyages of the same time period, and sometimes, convicts were treated better and provided with more than emigrants. Both emigrants and convicts were forced to emigrate, whether physically enforced to by law or required by desperate circumstances. Tightly packed onto small, leaky ships, convict and emigrants likely felt similar emotions during these long voyages destined for far away places that were unfamiliar.

The emigrants aboard the *Enchantress* were fortunate to travel in a relatively newer vessel compared to aged passenger transport ships that sailed contemporaneously with the *Enchantress*. Convict ships were usually at least second-class vessels, though emigrant ships were often taken from any class of vessel.¹⁹⁸ Many of these ships were not fit to carry dry cargo due to their leaky states and susceptibility to sea damage, yet they still carried passengers.¹⁹⁹ While the government could not transport convicts to penal colonies in unlisted ships, such restrictions were not placed on emigrant voyages.²⁰⁰ Additionally, convict transports were generally properly provisioned for the voyage with food and water, whereas emigrants were

¹⁹⁸ Laxton, *Famine Ships*, 101.

¹⁹⁹ Coleman, *Passage to America*, 85.

²⁰⁰ Laxton, *Famine Ships*, 101.

usually expected to provide their own stores for the length of the voyage. There was rarely a doctor on board emigrant vessels, however, a surgeon was present on every convict voyage to ensure the health and well-being of the convicts. Given such circumstances, it was likely easier to be a convict aboard the *Enchantress* rather than an emigrant.

Using historical and archaeological evidence to support the wreck's identification, the most complete story to-date of the *Enchantress* has been told from her earliest years as a merchant ship for the East India Company to her final moments before sinking. However, this study of the *Enchantress* raises many questions that have yet to be answered. Despite pouring over online records of the *Enchantress'* movements throughout the 1830s and finding pertinent information, *Lloyd's List*, the weekly journal of maritime activities and news, would have likely provided the ordinary weekly movements of the *Enchantress*. These records do not exist in any form in the United States, and can only be found in the United Kingdom. Inclusion of this information would strengthen what is already known of the early history of the *Enchantress*.

The archaeological remains and primary source documents pertaining to the *Enchantress* tell a story long forgotten. The historical narrative of the *Enchantress* will strengthen what is already known about emigrant and convict voyages, and further aid archaeological studies on ships of this kind. Rather than a study strictly archaeological or historical in nature, this thesis incorporated both fields of study to present new information on the *Enchantress* that has not yet been published. By marrying archaeological fieldwork with historical documentation, a clearer picture has emerged

of the *Enchantress*. Her history can now be told among other emigrant vessels that wrecked during this tumultuous time, and can be used to study sweeping changes that happened in regards to emigration throughout the 19th century.

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