Précis of the wrecks in the ship's graveyard, Rottnest.

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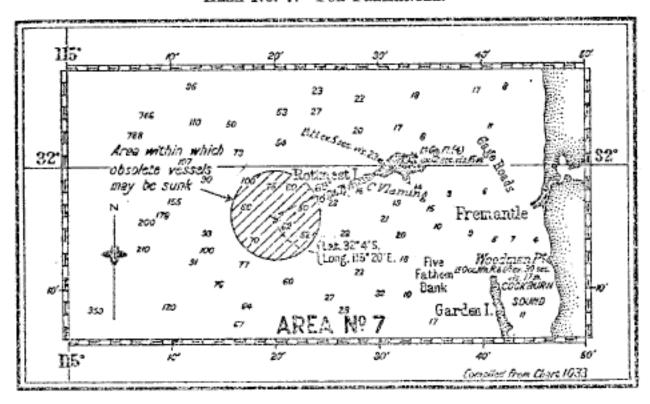


Preliminary Notes

Given the brief time allocated for this research, it was not possible nor practicable to view many original source documents. However, to insure the veracity of the entries, (in most instances), three references have been cited before including the information in the Précis.

Any measurements are given in the original imperial system. Ship's particulars are given in gross tons unless otherwise stated.

Better quality scanned images can be obtained from the original photographs in the Museum collections. There is no copyright on these images, however appropriate acknowledgements of the Museum would be required.



AREA NO. 7 .-- FOR FREMANTLE.

Within a circular area 7 miles in diameter with centre in latitude 32° 4′ S., longitude 115° 20′ E., with Rottnest Island Lighthouse bearing 68° distant 11 miles.

Précis of the wrecks in the Ship's Graveyard, Rottnest

Redundant vessels have been scuttled in the deep water SW of Rottnest Island since 1910. The ships graveyard is encompassed within the area of Lat. 32° 00'S to 32° 05'S, and Long. 115° 10'E to 115° 23'E at a depth range from 50 to 200 m. Seabed of sand and shell with scattered rocky outcrops.

The graveyard is host to a wide spectrum of material, from utilitarian, barges and dredges to the remains of graceful clipper ships ended their days as coal hulks in Fremantle Harbour before being scuttled.

Remains of historical significance include vessels intimately linked to the social and economic development of Western Australia, as well as the wreckage from two World Wars. Apart from ship remains, the graveyard was also used as in the 1940's as a dumping ground for aircraft and military machinery that had to be disposed of as a requirement of the wartime "Lend Lease" agreement.

Resource

There are 47 identified wrecks in the Rottnest Graveyard, with the position of some indicated in the Table below.

- 15 Hulks
- 2 Tugs
- 3 Dredges
- 6 Lighters
- 3 Whalers
- 4 State Shipping Service vessels
- 4 Naval vessels
- 2 Submarines
- 1 Trawler
- 1 Ferry
- 2 Other

Vessels of some significance

HULKS

Most of the hulks that operated in and around Fremantle were built as fast clipper ships to ply the lucrative wool and grain trade between the UK and Australia.

Lalla (built 1884; scuttled 1917). In 1913 the ship's bell was given to the Cottesloe Life Saving and Athletic Club (now Surf Life Saving Club) to be used as a shark alarm. To my knowledge, the bell is still there.

Thornliebank (Built 1886). In 1891, gutted by a fire that burnt for two days in Gage Roads. Scuttled 1928. Ships wheel and steering box presented to the Sea Scouts HQ at Pelican Point.

WHALERS

Norwhale (Built 1943). Used by the Nor-West Whaling Co. as a tender to carry stores and water to the company's whaling station at Pt Cloates and to store whale oil.

FERRIES

Duchess Wooden paddle steamer. Operated as a passenger ferry on the Swan river.

Tugs

Agnes (Scuttled 1955). Wooden vessel used to salvage K11 submarine.

STATE SHIPPING SERVICE VESSELS

These vessels were pivotal in the economic expansion of Western Australia in the years following Federation. They represented the only regular means of communication between the Perth and the outlying towns and communities of the south west.

Una (Built Fremantle, 1890). The State Shipping Service commenced operations with this graceful little 178 ton steamer, plying a route between Fremantle and Eucla via Albany.

Eucla (Built 1901). Ex. SS *Wexford*, a welcome replacement for the *Una*, which was too small to handle the growing volume of cargo and passengers between Fremantle and the States southern ports. *Eucla* suffered the same fate and was scuttled in 1933.

Cape Ottway (Built 1931, scuttled 6 Sept.1968), lighthouse tender, 900 tons. (WA 5/9/68, p.9a)

DREDGES

Fremantle (1936) Governor (1956)

Premier (Scuttled 1938). Suction dredge employed in the construction of Fremantle harbour. All machinery, including brass cast iron and copper fitting were removed prior to scuttling, leaving only the shell of the vessel. Sunk 30 March 1938 carrying a miscellaneous cargo including old motor vehicle bodies.

NAVAL VESSELS

HMAS *Derwent* (Scuttled 21 Dec. 1994) The most recent naval vessel to be scuttled in the Graveyard. Prior to the sinking, the ship was used for a series of destructive tests, designed to determine the survivability of missile attacks on naval vessels. The location of the final resting place of the 30 year-old destroyer escort (commissioned 1964), caused an intense debate within the community, with conflicting interests forcibly expressed by the diving fraternity and naval history buffs. The eventual decision to sink the vessel in deep water pleased neither group.

HMAS *Adroit* (Sunk 8 August 1994) Sunk as a target by A-4 Skyhawk aircraft of the Royal New Zealand Air Force west of Rottnest Island.

Gunga Din MWL 251 (19) (Built 1944). Chartered from RAN by the WA Govt. to carry out a survey of the entrance to the iron ore ports of Dampier and Port Hedland.

SUBMARINES

Possibly 6 top secret WELLMAN Midget subs scuttled in 1947. British built WELLMAN one-man subs used for training exercises by Z Force operatives, based at Careening Bay, Garden Island. Specifications: 5 m long, battery-powered, payload-250 kg explosive charge.

KXII Royal Netherlands Navy submarine, scuttled Sept. 1946. 32° 04.5'S 115° 22'E *KXI* Royal Netherlands Navy sub, scuttled Sept. 1952.

AIRCRAFT

4 Catalinas

Black Cats. Background: Qantas Empire Airways Indian Ocean Flying Boat Service, 1943–45 operated jointly with the RAF. The service between Australia and the USA, used five US Catalina flying boats, leased to Britain. They were originally registered as Qantas Empire Airways aircraft. Names and serial nos:

G-AGFM, Altair Star (RAF Serial No. FP-244);

G-AGFL, Vega Star; (FP-221);

G-AGID, Rigel Star (JX-575),

G-AGIE, Antares Star (JX-577) and

G-AGKS, Spica Star (JX-287).

The USAF operated a Catalina base from neighbouring Matilda Bay. Achievements of the Black Cats: First flight -10 July 1943. The first leg of the journey is the longest, 6,800 kms over the Indian Ocean from Crawley Bay, Perth to Koggala Lake, south of Galle in Ceylon (Sri Lanka). Duration of flights 28 to 36 hours made under strict radio silence, navigated by sextant. Black Cats flew 271 missions, clocking up 4.6 million kms and carried 51,061 kg of official documents and mail, 6524 kg of freight and 648 high priority passengers. No aircraft were shot down, despite flying unarmed through enemy airspace. Four Catalinas were scuttled on 28 Nov. 1945. Under the terms of the Lend Lease agreement, the four aircraft were scuttled 13 kms SW of Cape Vlaming Lighthouse on Rottnest Is, bearing 293°. Spica Star (KX-287) scrapped off Sydney, March 1946. A further 168 Catalina served with the RAAF between 1941 and 1952. Most were scrapped.

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Contacts

Peet, Aviation Historian, 29 Beatrice Rd, Dalkieth. Ph: 9386 1240

Qantas Historical Collection, (Qantas Airways Ltd.)

Volunteer curators, George Roberts & Ted Malmgren

Centre Bldg, *QCAJ3*, 203 Coward Street, Mascot Airport, NSW 2020

Ph: 02-9691 3955, Fax: 02-9691 4187.

No moving images available but lots of photos.

Official records of all Qantas Catalina operations during the war.

**Memoirs of air crews, esp. Norman Roberts, Chief Engineer for operations at Crawley Bay.

Bill Bunbury, ABC Radio, Ph: 9220 2700

**Audio tapes of interviews with the aircrews of the "Black Cats".

Vic Jeffery, Navy Public Affairs Officer, HMAS Stirling. Ph. 9550 0415, (Ah) 9276 4779.

Fax: 9480 9999 # 347933

List of dumpings

NAME	YEAR BUILT	YEAR SUNK	COMMENTS
HULKS			
Bankfields	1876	1950	Iron lighter ex-3 mast barque, 859 g, 807 n, ON74533, 195.4 x 32.1 x 19.7, Built: 1876, Osbourne, Graham & Co, Sunderland as <i>James Beazley</i> . Renamed in 1878. Acquired: Adelaide SS Co 1911 and hulked. Taken to Fremantle in 1918. Lyttelton register closed 1932. Towed, 7 June 1950 to a position south west of Rottnest Island and at 12.40 pm was attacked by Mustang aircraft of No. 25 City of Perth, RAAF, squadron and hulk disappeared at 1.10pm.
Clevedon	1876	1930	Iron coal hulk, ex-3 mast ship, 1860 g, 1714 n, ON69328, 261.6 x 41.8 x 23.8. Built: 1873, Potter & Hodgkinson, Liverpool and named <i>Chrysomene</i> . Owners: Fremantle Coal Co. Ltd. Register closed July 1922. Vessel scuttled Rottnest Gravevard Oct.1930.
Concordia	1890	1948	32° 01' 30''S 115° 19'E. Iron hulk, ex 3 mast barque, 1239 g, 1076 n, ON131643, 231.6 x 35.5 x 20.7. Built: 1890, J. Lange Vegesack, blown ashore at Balla Balla in a cyclone, while Norwegian owned, March 1912 and damaged, but salvaged and taken to Fremantle and sold to McIlwraith, McEacharn for use as hulk. Regestered: Fremantle. Towed to Rottnest graveyard and scuttled 20 April 1948.
Conference	1855	1904	Found: 31°40.2850'S 115°39.64'E. Iron hulk, ex-3 mast barque, 421 g, 399 n, ON25992, 164.8 x 26.3 x 15.9. Built: 1855 Tayleur & Co, Warrington, Lancs. When owned in Sydney sold to Adelaide SS Co and in April 1895 took a cargo of coal to Albany and converted into a hulk. Reportedly scuttled 20 miles north of Fremantle 22 April 1904.
County of Caithness	1876	1931	Iron hulk, ex-4 mast barque, originally 4-mast ship 262.0 x 38.8 x 24.4, Built: 1876, Barclay, Curle & Co. Glasgow. Acquired: 1914 by McIlwraith, McEacharn. Registered: Fremantle and made coal hulk. Scuttled at Rottnest graveyard 2 April 1931.
Glenbank		1928	

Gunga	1864	1912	Iron hulk, ex-steam ship 1257 g, 798 n, ON51415, 257.6 x 32.2 x 20.1. Built: 1864, C. & W. Earle, Hull. Compound engine. Built for Bombay & Bengal SS Co in 1877. Acquired: by Australasian S.N.Co which became AUSN in 1887. In mid-1890s converted to hulk in Fremantle and on station from at least 1897. Scuttled 1 Dec. 1912, probably in Rottnest graveyard.
Kirkudbrightshire	1884	1934	Iron hulk ex-3 mast ship 1582 g, 1482 n, ON89952, 250.0 x 38.3 x 22.9. Built: 1884, Russell & Co, Port Glasgow. Owners: June 1922 The Fremantle Coal Co.Ltd. Registered Fremantle and hulked. Scuttled 4 April 1934 ships' graveyard off Rottnest Is.
Knowsley	1864	1923	Iron hulk, 644 g, 603 n, ON51032, 167.7 x 29.0 x 20.2. Built: 1864, T.R.Oswald, Pallion. Later became German as <i>Euterpe</i> , then Danish as <i>Anna Maria Schwalbe</i> and under that name became a hulk at Albany before being acquired by McIlwraith, McEacharn in 1913. Register closed October 1923, vessel sunk. Reportedly scuttled 3 Oct. at Rottnest Is 'graveyard'.
Lalla	1874	1917	Wooden 3-mast barque, 1070 g, 991 n, ON118542, 183.7 x 37.1 x 20.9. Built: 1874, J. O'Brien, Maccan, NS. Owners: April 1904 (ex <i>Horten</i> , Norway) G.F. Gallop: Mar. 1906 sold G. & W. Chamberlain and cut down for a lighter = 180.2 x 37.1 x 18.8 and used in conjunction with Collie coal movements: Jan. 1912 owners The Melbourne SS Co. Vessel destroyed by gunfire from HMAS <i>Brisbane</i> on 18 Aug. 1917.
Loch Ness	1869	1926	Iron hulk 1203 t, ON60461, ex-3 mast ship 1258 g, 225.2 x 35.6 x 21.6, Built: 1869, Barclay, Curle & Co, Glasgow. Acquired Aug. 1908 by German-Australia Line for a coal hulk at Port Adelaide but enrolled there in Oct.1908 by Stevedoring & Shipping Co.Ltd. agents for the European operator. Reportedly taken over by RAN in WW1 because it was German owned, but this was not the legal position, however it remained in WA and officially registered as a British vessel until sunk by gunfire off Rottnest Island 18 Aug. 1926.
Maranda	1867	1933	Iron hulk, 1465 t, (Br, ON60038) ex-Norwegian 3-mast barque, 1518 g, 224.2 x 37.8 x 23.5. Built: 1867, T. Royden & Son, Liverpool as <i>Lord Canning</i> . Acquired by Adelaide SS Co. in 1910 and hulked at Port Adelaide. Taken to Fremantle April 1915, towed by ss <i>Lameroo</i> . Scuttled off Rottnest 16 June 1933.
Sesa	1869	1928	Ion hulk, ex-3 mast barque (Br. ON63289) 211.8 x 37.4 x 22.6. Built: 1869 Lune S.B. Co, Lancaster, UK and named <i>Mallowdale</i> , sold foreign and named <i>Adolphe</i> . Acquired 1904 by Adelaide SS Co. and hulked. Scuttled south west of Rottnest in 50 fathoms 10 June or 4 July 1928.
Tamerlane	1861	1926	Iron hulk, ex-3 mast barque, 795 g, 768 n, ON29820, 196.4 x 32.1 x 18.6. Built: 1861, Scott & Co, Greenock. Acquired c. 1896 by Adelaide SS Co for use;as a coal hulk in Fremantle. Sunk 23 Sept. 1918 when struck by ss <i>Dimboola</i> , only salvaged with great difficulty being refloated May 1919 to be repaired and resume duty. Towed to a position off Rottnest Island 10 Sept. 1926 and scuttled by explosive charges.

Thornliebank Topopilla	1886	1928	Iron hulk, ex-3 mast barque, 1363 g, 1311 n, ON93336, 240.8 x 36.8 x 21.9, 1492 g, 1405 n, 244.5 x 37.6 x 21.5. Built: 1886, Russell & Co, Port Glasgow for Andrew Weir & Co (Bank Line). Registered: Glasgow. Gutted by fire 6/8 Feb. 1891 while anchored Owens Anchorage, Cockburn Sound, WA. Declared a constructive total loss and sold for use as a hulk to J. Batman & Co. Mar. 1914 McIlwraith, McEacharn & Co. Registered: Fremantle. Register cancelled April 1928 'broken up'. Actually scuttled Rottenest Is, Graveyard by explosives 18 April 1928. Iron hulk, ex-3 mast barque, 478 g, 439 n, ON50442, 149.0 x 26.0
Торориш	1000	1,21	x 17.7, 496g, 449n, 156.3 x 26.9 x 17.5. Built: 1865, A. Stephen & Sons, Glasgow. Acquired: 1902 ex-Danish <i>Ribe</i> by McIlwraith McEacharn. Registered: Melbourne transfered to Fremantle 1907. Employed as coal hulk. Register closed Feb. 1924 'towed to sea and sunk'. Scuttled Rottnest Is Graveyard 26 Feb. 1924.
TUGS			
Gannet			Paddle steamer
Victoria			
DREDGES			
Fremantle	1907	1936	Wooden 2-mast schooner, 19 g, 15 n, ON125027, 42.5 x 12.5 x 6.4. Built: 1907, David Ferres, Broome, WA. Owner: (Jan. 1927) H. Sewell. Regestered: Fremantle. Register closed February 1928 'vessel derelict'. Reportedly scuttled Rottnest graveyard 1936.
Governor	1898	1955	Steel steam ship dredge 486 t, Built: 1898, in Holland for WA Government to use in construction of Fremantle Inner Harbour, but subsequently employed in Geraldton and Bunbury. Towed by tug <i>Yuna</i> to 'ships graveyard 11 miles south west of Rottnest' 7 Oct. 1955 and sunk by Meteor jets of the RAAF's 75 Squadron visiting WA from Williamstown, NSW.'
Premier	1872	1938	Wooden barge, said to be 69 t and scuttled in 1938 at Rottnest graveyard. The only registered vessel of that name was a riverine barge built 1872 at Echuca V. ON95997 and built for use by a sawmill operator. That register was closed in 1962 'no trace of vessel or owner'. It was not unknown to take riverine barges to seaports to work but there is no confirmation that this happened in this instance.
LIGHTERS			
Adventure		1945	Wooden lighter 46 g, ON120023, 69.7 x 19.0 x 7.0, Built year unknown by W. & S. Lawrence, Perth, WA. Owners: The Swan River Shipping Co.Ltd. Registered: Fremantle. Scuttled north of Rottnest Island during February 1945.
Enterprise	1896	1945	Wooden barge, 48 g, 44 n, ON120010, 73.5 x 19.5 x 7.0, Built: 1896, W. & S. Lawrence, Perth, WA. Owners: The Swan River Shipping Co. Registered: Fremantle. Scuttled north of Rottnest Is. during February 1945
Korda	1896	1945	Wooden lighter 83 t, ON140150, 84.7 x 20.5 x 7.0, Built: 1896, W.A. Chamberlain, Fremantle. Owners: McIlwraith, McEscharn. Registered: Fremantle. Scuttled west of Rottnest Island, February 1945.

Nirimba	1895	1945	Wooden lighter ex-steam lighter 1906 59 g, 55 n. ON120021 92.5 x 26.2 x 6.5. Built: 1895, W. & S. Lawrence, Perth, WA. Owners: The Swan River Shipping Co.Ltd. Registered: Fremantle. Scuttled north of Rottnest Island, during Feb. 1945.
Rockingham	1903	1948	Wooden barge 182 g, 167 n, ON120040, 138.0 x 26.8 x 8.25, Built: 1903, Millar's Kauri & Jarrah Co. (1902) Ltd., Rockingham, WA. Owners: The Swan River Shipping Co.Ltd. Registered: Fremantle. Scuttled 2 Jan. 1948 Rottnest 'graveyard'.
Dragon	1906	1948	Lighter 164 g, 158 n, ON120024, 118.7 x 24.7 x 8.7, Built: 1906, W. & S. Lawrence, Perth, WA. Owners: The Swan River Shipping Co.Ltd. Registered: Fremantle. Scuttled in permit area 2 Jan. 1948. 32° 03'S 115° 23'
Ex Fishing vessels			
Ben Dearg	1876	1950	Steel steam ship trawler 280 g, 109 n, ON144518, 125.5 x 23.5 x 12.7. Built: 1920, Beverley. Engine: 86 nhp. Owners: Anglo-Australian Trawlers P/L, Perth, WA. Registered: Fleetwood. Scuttled off Rottnest <i>c</i> .1951.
Ex WHALERS (later	used as lighter	rs)	
Kos VII	1929	1968	Found: 32°04.93002'S 115° 22.46802'E. Steel lighter ex-steam ship whale chaser, 253 g, 108 n. ON191411, 116.0 x 24.2 x 12.75. Built: 1929, Smith's Dock Ltd, South Bank on Tees, 3X 850 ihp EB. Last official owner Cheynes Beach Whaling Co.Ltd. Registered: Fremantle. Scuttled off Rottnest Is, 22 June 1968.
Norwhale	1943	1968	Found: 32°02.98098'S 115° 18.609'E. Lighter ex-tsmv 365 g, 306 n, ON140216, 184.7 x 30.1 x 7.1. Built: 1943. Redpath, Brown & Co. Glasgow. 2 x diesel Davey Paxman & Co. (believed to have been built as an L.C.T. for British Army). Registered: 1950 by the Nor-West Whaling Co. Fremantle and employed conveying water and stores to the whaling station. July 1966 sold to J & M Franetovich. While supplying oil to a vessel in Fremantle Feb. 1968 sank and raised with difficulty 6 April. Taken over by Fremantle Port authority who sold to Goldfields Metal Traders who scuttled her off Rottnest Island 20 June 1968.

Robert Moore	1939	1968	Steel lighter ex-steam ship whale chaser, ON196896, 138.4 x 26.4 x 15.0, Built:1939, Smith's Dock Co. Ltd. Middlesbro'. 3X 136 nhp EB. Owners: J. Franetovich & Co. Registered: Fremantle. (formerly the Norwegian vessel <i>Tern</i> , renamed Feb.1958). Scuttled 10 July 1968 Rottnest Island 'graveyard'.
STATE SHIPPING SERV	ICE		
Agnes	kį	1955	Workboat. Supposedly scuttled at Rottnest ship's graveyard in 1955. No trace.
Cape Ottway	1931	1968	Found: 32°03.58998'S 115° 22.35198'E. Iron steam ship 996 g, 341 n. ON157597, 197.1 x 34.1 x 15.1, Built: 1931, Commonwealth Shipping Board, Sydney (Cockatoo Dock). 3X Eb. built for Commonwealth Govt as lighthouse tender. Sold out of service April 1963 to J. Krasnostein & Co, Scuttled west of Rottnest Island 7 Sept. 1968.
Eucla	1901	1933	Found: 32°04.61598'S 115°20.72898'E. Steel steam ship 574 g, 292 n, ON115233 187.9 x 28.0 x 14.5 Built: 1901, G. McKnight & Co, Ayr and named <i>Wexford</i> . Renamed 1912. 3X 700 ihp Ross & Duncan, Govan. Owners: State Shipping Service. Registered: Fremantle. Register closed March 1931 'vessel dismantled'. Reportedly scuttled Rottnest graveyard March 1932.
NAVAL VESSELS			
Adroit	1968	1994	Attack class patrol boat. 146 t disp. 107' x 20' 2 x diesel engs. Built: 1968, Evans, Deakin, Brisbane. Obsolete and sunk in naval exercise off Rottnest Island 8 Aug. 1994.
Derwent	1961	1994	Located: 32°3.47748'S 115°12.28884'E. River Class frigate. 2100 t displ. 370' oa x 41' Built: 1961/64 Williamstown Naval Dockyard, VIC. Taken out of service early 1994 and used for experiments at HMAS <i>Stirling</i> before remains scuttled 21 Dec. 1994 position 32° 02.55'5S 115° 12'E

Gunga Din MWL 251	1944		Chartered to survey iron ore ports, Dampier & Pt Hedland
			chartered to survey non-ore ports, Bumpler & Terrodiana
Junee TRIP TO THE GRAVEYARD	1943	1968	Found: 32°03.39498S 115° 22.78902'E Ex-HMAS <i>Bathurst</i> Class as/ms 790 t disp. S tss 186'oa x 31'. Built: 1943, Poole & Steele, Sydney. 2 x 3X 1800 ihp. Sold out of service 1962 and remains scuttled Rottnest graveyard 7 Sept. 1968.(or 6th?).
Loch Ness OLF 1206	1869	1926	Iron hulk 1203 t, ON60461, ex 3-mast ship 1258 g, 225.2 x 35.6 x 21.6. Built: 1869, Barclay, Curle & Co, Glasgow. Aquired Aug. 1908 by German-Australia Line for a coal hulk at Port Adelaide but enrolled there in Oct. 1908 by Stevedoring & Shipping Co. Ltd. agents for the European operator. Reportedly taken over by RAN in WW1 because it was German owned, but this was not the legal position, however it remained in WA and officially registered as a British vessel until sunk by gunfire off Rottnest Island 18 August 1926.
K XI (submarine)	1924	1952	Former Netherlands vessel, Submarine mv 611 t disp. 218'oa x 19'. Built:1924, Fijenoord, Rotterdam. Reported scuttled in Rottnest Is 'graveyard' in 1952.
OTHER			
Caravan		1970	Reported scuttled at Rottnest graveyard 30 Sept. 1970. Not identified.
Commiles	1918	1953	32° 03'5 115° 22'E Iron steam ship trawler, 264 g, 105 n, ON143943, 125.6 x 23.4 x 12.6. Built:1918, South Shields named <i>Daily Herald</i> . Steam. engine 61 nhp. Owners: Anglo-Australian Trawlers P/L, Perth, WA. Registered: Fleetwood. Commissioned RAN Minesweeper. Scuttled 15 May 1953 Rottnest graveyard.
Duchess	1899	1945	Wooden paddle steamer, 71 g, 39 n. ON119043, 73.1 x 18.1 x 5.8, Built:1899, W. & S. Lawrence, Perth, WA as a ferry. Last owner: (1935) A.E.Tilley & Co.
Swan	1962	1972	A vessel of this name scuttled Rottnest Graveyard 13 Oct. 1972 Possibly motor vessel ferry 19 t, Built: 1962; Owners: Fremantle Harbour Works.