

1863

Loss of HMS *Orpheus*

HMS *Orpheus*

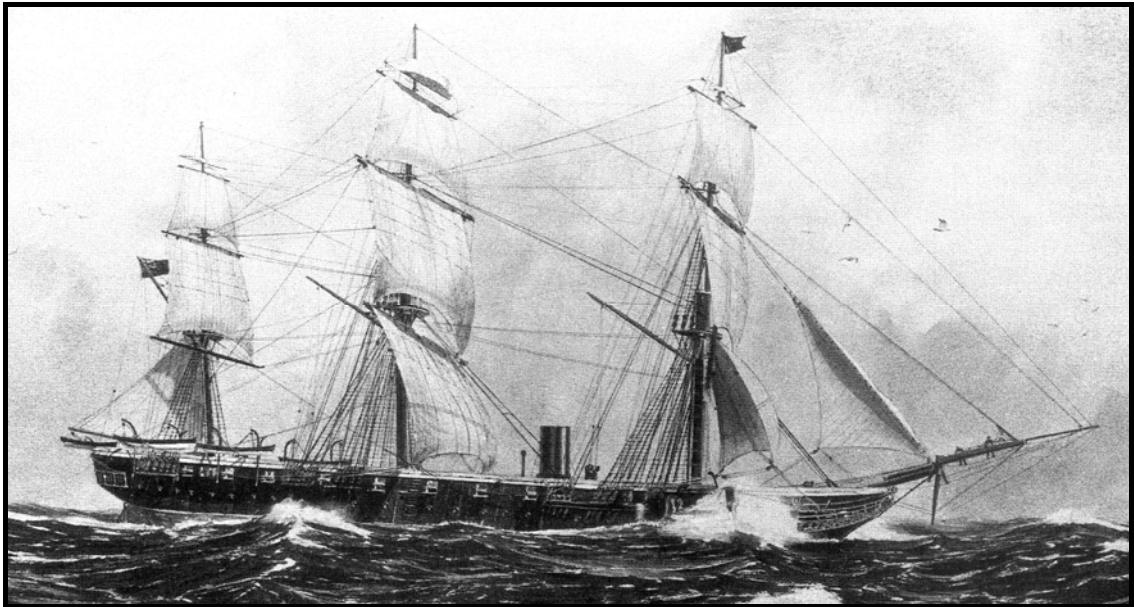
Son of CEagrus and Calliope. Presented with a lyre by Apollo, he enchanted with its music wild beasts and the trees and rocks upon Olympus which followed the sound of his golden harp.

Jason Class Wooden Screw Corvette, 2431t, 1333ihp, 21 guns.

Built at Chatham Dockyard, laid down May 1858, launched 23 June 1860, completed

October 1861, wrecked 1863

Complement 240.



HMS *Orpheus*

Captain; Commodore William Farquharson Burnett

Appointed Commodore Australia Station 28 July 1862

On the Australia Station 1861 – 1863

HMS *Orpheus*

It had been planned that HMS *Orpheus* would go direct to Australia, however with the illegal action of stopping the British Mail steamer *Trent* in the Bahamas Channel on her way from Havana to St. Thomas in the West Indies, it was decided to send British troops over to Canada. HMS *Orpheus* to act as convoy to the Transport ship *Melbourne*, carrying troops for the St. Lawrence River.

It would appear¹ that the *Melbourne* left Woolwich on 7 December 1861, and HMS *Orpheus* left Plymouth Sound with her on 10 December 1861. Apparently during the crossing the *Melbourne* was lost sight of, on more than one occasion, and when HMS *Orpheus* reached Halifax on 8 January 1862 it was without the *Melbourne*, but surprisingly the *Melbourne* had already arrived!

Leaving Halifax on the 15 January 1862, met HMS *Orlando* which had just arrived, reached St. John New Brunswick on 18 January 1862, and onto St. John's Newfoundland, arriving on 5 February 1862, left on the 7 February 1862 to Halifax, arrived 9 February 1862.

After completing the mission to Canada, HMS *Orpheus* proceeded to Australia where Burnett was to take charge of the Royal Navy Australia station, leaving Halifax on 16 February 1862.

HMS *Liffey* was at George Island, and HMS *Hydra* and the Transport ship *Calcutta* were at St. John's Newfoundland.

(see reference re accuracy of dates)

¹ I cannot confirm the accuracy of the dates shown, whilst the dates are as per Thayer Fairburn, who appears to have been very thorough with his research both primary and secondary, the dates are at variance with "ADM 38/8650" viewed at PRO Kew, and copied by my researcher

Letter from Boy I. J. Broadway *HMS Orpheus* at Halifax

Countersigned by Commander Robert H. Burton, countersigned the cover in order for the letter to qualify for the 1d concession rate.

Boy I. J. Broadway drowned in New Zealand on 7 February 1863
when *HMS Orpheus* was wrecked



Halifax c18 January 1862, Gosport 6 February 1862

Placed in the Navy bag and carried on the Transatlantic Cunard Line Packet *Canada*, trip No. 92, which left Boston 22 January 1862, arriving at Halifax on 25 January 1862, Queenstown 4 February 1862, Liverpool 6 February 1862. 1d GB red adhesive cancelled with the rare Mailboat obliterator “A91”

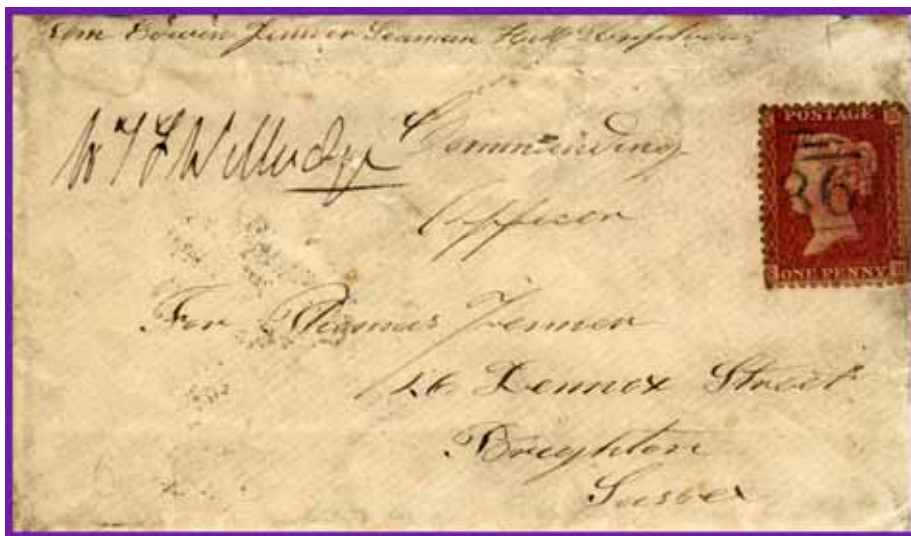
HMS Orpheus was at Bermuda [28 February 1862] and Simon’s Bay [14 May 1862], finally arriving at Sydney on 18 July 1862².

² Thayer Fairburn – The Orpheus Disaster

Letter from Seaman Edwin Jenner HMS *Orpheus* at Sydney, posted virtually immediately on arrival, at Sydney in order to catch the “*Homeward*” mail.

Lieutenant William J. F. Mudge, Countersigned the cover for the letter to qualify for the 1d concession rate.

Seaman Edwin Jenner drowned in New Zealand on 7 February 1863
when HMS *Orpheus* was wrecked.



Sydney NSW c21/22 July 1862, Brighton UK 18 September 1862

Placed in the Navy bag and carried on the P&O *Bombay*, left Sydney 22 July 1862, P&O *Colombo* from Galle to Suez, arriving on 4 September 1862. Mail transferred at Alexandria to P&O *Euxine*, and the 1d GB red adhesive cancelled with the Mailboat obliterator “A86” Mail again transferred at Malta to P&O *Pera* for Southampton, arriving on 18 September 1862.

HMS *Orpheus* left Sydney on 7 November 1862 for Tasmania, leaving Hobart Town on 25 January 1863, and returned to Sydney.

NEW ZEALAND BOUND

HMS Orpheus left Sydney for New Zealand on 31 January 1863, reaching the Manukau Harbour on 7 February 1863, in attempting to cross the bar at the entrance, was completely wrecked with a total loss of life amounting to 187; only 72 were accounted for out of a total complement of 259.

Ten Officers attached to the Military Branch were lost together with 10 Royal Navy Officers, 122 seamen, one Royal Marine Officer 34 N.C.O's, and Royal Marines. Also lost was Commodore William Farquharson Burnett. (*The actual numbers appear to be different in most publications*)



The wreck of HMS *Orpheus* on Manukau Bar, New Zealand
The Illustrated London News Supplement 18 April 1863

With the loss of the Commodore, Captain Robert Jenkins of HMS *Miranda*, became the senior Officer on the Australian Station, awaiting the arrival of Sir William S. Wiseman of HMS *Curacoa*.

Apart from a Maori boat which went to help the stricken boat, the only ship which was able to assist in the rescue of survivors was the Wellington Steam Navigation Company *Wonga Wonga*, a steamer of no great size, 103t, 30HP, built in 1854, which was engaged in carrying cargo and passengers from Onehunga and southern ports, and was at the time leaving the Harbour, with the Pilot and the Pilot's crew, and towing their whale boat astern. When they finally realized the fact that the *Orpheus* was in trouble it still took probably up to four hours to actually get to the *Orpheus*. (Note there were two ships of the same name, the other *Wonga Wonga* was much larger and was used on the regular mail service).

Lieutenant Charles Hill, was the only surviving Executive Officer, and after the Court Martial in Portsmouth he returned to New Zealand. Appointed to HMS *Curacoa*, he saw action during the Waikato campaigns and was killed in action at Gate Pah Tauranga on 29 April 1864.

INFORMATION SHEET

(REFERENCES)

HMS ORPHEUS

HMS <i>Orpheus</i>	Ref ADM 38/8650
14 November 1861	Portsmouth
14 December 1861	At sea
14 January 1862	Halifax
28 January 1862	St. John's Nova Scotia
14 February 1862	Halifax
John G. Broadway	No. 21
Entered 31 October 1861	Boy First Class
Discharged Dead* Born 3 June 1842,	7 February 1862 – Drowned Southampton, Hants residence Portsmouth

5ft 4in tall,

sallow complexion, hazel eyes, brown hair, marked with smallpox. Single, no trade.

HMS *Excellent*

Boy 2nd class. 16 April 1860 – 31 October 1861 V. Good conduct

* Also drowned

William Bridle Boy 1st class, William Hartfield Boy 2nd class
Robert Heard Boy 2nd class & James Spencer Ship's boy
William Orchard and John Kingston

Also 44 others, inc Captain Burnett, senior Lieutenant + 9 other Officers + 10 civil branch officers.

HMS Orpheus

Deserters

Notice dated 13 August 1862

Henry Brown	Quartermaster	
George Warn	Quartermaster	
Jesse Bignell	Leading Stoker	3 men

Notice dated 27 August 1862

James Lerner	Ship's corporal	1 man
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Notice dated 10 September 1862

Alexander Falconer	AB Seaman	
Edward Wardell	Caulker's Mate	
Daniel Malloy	Shipwright	
Samuel Cullen	O Seaman	
Thomas Herbert	AB	
Thomas Smith	Sailmaker	
John McDonald	Stoker	
William Tierney	OS	
Robert Barker	OS	
Bernard Holden	Gunner RMA	10 men

Notice 8 October 1862

William Oakstrol	Captain of the Fore top	
Alfred Ledell	Leading Seaman	2 men

Notice? October 1862

STRAGGLER

Joseph W. Wilson	Captain of the Hold	1 man
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Deserters

Notice 24 December 1862

Left the HMS *Orpheus* 14 September 1862

William Clews	Stoker	
Thomas Ambrose	Captain Main Top	
William Hutson	OS	
John Davy	Captain Mizen Top	
William Ball	Captain Forecastle	
Thomas Russell	AB	

George Marks AB
James Gallop Private RM 8 men

Notice 4 February 1863
J. Higham AB
M. Mahoney Ropemaster 2 men

26 Deserters and 1 Straggler

Depending on whether or not they returned to their ship, they were the lucky ones!!

The following extracts from the Daily Southern Cross, after the Disaster

Reference DAILY SOUTHERN CROSS Newspaper
9 February 1863

DREADFUL CALAMITY. LOSS OF H. M. S. *ORPHEUS* and 206 LIVES. 7th February 1863

At an early hour yesterday (Sunday) morning it became rumoured in town that H.M.S. *Orpheus*, 21 guns, carrying the broad pennant of Commodore Burnett, C.B., was a total wreck on the Manukau bar, and that many lives were lost. On taking steps to learn the particulars, we found that the report was, unhappily, but too true, and the loss of life understated.

The '*Orpheus*' left Sydney on Saturday week, and made the Manukau bar at about one p.m., on Saturday last. The day was fine, with a fresh sea breeze blowing. Steering by Drury's chart, the ship was kept too far to the northward, and at half-past one she struck on the sand-spit. She immediately heeled over and the sea at once made a clean breach over her. The first wave earned the main-mast by the board, and all who were on it perished. The guns

were knocked from their carriages and maimed several, besides lulling one man instantly. Those who were in the after-part of the ship were swept off, among whom were Commodore Burnett, C.8., Commander Burton, First Lieut. Mudge, and Mr. Strong, master.

When the vessel struck, the pinnace, launch, and cutter were hoisted out, and the Commodore directed Paymaster Amphlett to save the ship's papers and money, which Mr. Amphlett succeeded in doing. The launch filled and went down with from CO to 80 officers and men, all of whom were drowned. The Commodore refused to go off in any of the boats, and died with his officers, at the post of duty.

Those in the fore part of the ship were principally among the saved. When she struck and heeled over a rush was made to the rigging, and those on the main and mizen masts were washed off almost immediately into the surf and drowned. The foremast soon followed the other spars, and as it fell, many of the men jumped off and swam to the bowsprit, from which they dropped either into the boats, or into the sea, and made their way to the boats as best they could. Many were drowned in the attempt. The pinnace and cutter succeeded in landing their men. While all this was going on, 26 miles from Onehunga, a seaport town, in broad daylight, and in full view of the pilot station, no signal of the disaster was given. Her Majesty's ship '*Harrier*,' 17 guns., Commander Sullivan, was lying at her moorings at the Bluff, within 23 miles of the disaster; the Colonial steamer '*Avon*' was also unemployed at the Onehunga wharf; and the '*Moa*,' Admiralty tender, was available in such an emergency at the Bluff.

We do not blame the pilot, for he was doing his duty on board the '*Wonga Wonga*,' which sailed at half-past twelve on Saturday, and we suppose there was no one to telegraph for assistance. The noble ship was left to her fate, and her gallant crew to the mercy of the waves, without a helping hand being stretched out to save a life, although help in such abundance was at hand.

We have not been able to ascertain the exact number of officers and men on board the '*Orpheus*.' We have been informed 275 souls, all told, and of these only 69 have been saved. The rest have perished, victims of official neglect. It has been for a long time known to nautical men that the channel laid down in Drury's chart has shifted considerably, and that to steer strictly in accordance

with the directions would ensure the destruction of any large vessel. Commodore Burnett and Master Strong —(than whom a more efficient mariner did not hold a commission under Her Majesty) —were strangers to the Manukau harbour, and as the change in the channel had never been officially notified, the ship's course was kept in accordance with the Admiralty chart. The fearful calamity, which has cast such a gloom over this community, and inflicted such a heavy loss upon the nation, was the result.

As we have said, help was available if a proper pilot establishment had been at Poponga to make known the disaster. But although the '*Orpheus*' struck at half-past one o'clock on Saturday, it was ten o'clock at night before intelligence was communicated to the '*Harrier*.' About ten p.m., the pilot boat, with four men, came alongside the '*Harrier*,' and reported the loss of the '*Orpheus*.' Commander Sullivan at once despatched an officer to Auckland, to report the event to the senior naval officer on the station, Captain Jenkins; and at one a.m., on Sunday morning, the fact was reported to Captain Jenkins, who left for Onehunga, after apprising his Excellency the Governor.

The Inter-provincial mail steamship '*Wonga Wonga*,' Captain Renner, was fortunately in time to save several lives. As soon as intelligence of the disaster was reported to Commander Sullivan on Saturday night, he took measures to have the little steamer '*Avon*' despatched to the wreck in the hope of saving life; but a piece of the machinery was in Auckland, undergoing repairs, and the '*Avon*' was, consequently, not available for the time being. A messenger was despatched to the engineer in Auckland and in an hour and a half he returned with it. Meanwhile steam had been got up on board the '*Harrier*,' but it was found that the tide was too low for her to turn, and she did not get under weigh till near noon yesterday (Sunday). When it was found that the '*Harrier*' could not proceed to the scene of the wreck, steam was got up in the * '*Avon*,' and she left the Wharf at three o'clock on Sunday morning, and reached the heads at daylight, when she met the '*Wonga Wonga*' returning with the survivors, who were transferred to the '*Avon*' and fetched up to Onehunga.

One poor fellow was picked up inside Poponga yesterday by the * '*Matilda*,' schooner, after being eight hours in the water. He had floated with a piece of

a spar, but his life is in danger. The constant friction of a piece of copper which was attached to the spar cut his chest completely open. He was placed in an ambulance cart that had been sent from Auckland for the use of the survivors. John Davy, captain of the foretop, met his death by hanging. When descending from the maintop to the foretop, the stay was carried away, and the coil caught him round the neck and strangled him.

The following is the list of officers lost, so far as we could ascertain yesterday:

—

COMMODORE BURNETT, C.B.

Commander BURTON,

FIRST-LIEUTENANT MUDGE.

Lieutenant JYKIL..

Mr. STRONG, Master.

Lieutenant Hill, Royal Marine Artillery.

Rev. Mr. Hazlewood, Chaplain.

Mb. Gillham, Commodore's Secretary.

Mb. Johnston, Assistant Paymaster.

The Surgeon, .

Chief Engineer,

Mr. Hudson, Gunner.

Mr. Verner, Midshipman.

Mr. Broughton, Midshipman.

Mr. Mallock, Midshipman.

Mr. Tozer, Master-assistant.

Mr. Aylan, Assistant Clerk.

Mr. Vickery, Engineer

Mb. Miller, Engineer

Mr. Adams, Engineers

The officers saved are —

Second Lieutenant Hill.

Lieutenant Yonge.

Paymaster Amphlet.

Mr. Barclay, Midshipman.

Mr. Fielding, Midshipman.

Mr. Hunt, Midshipman.

Mr. Mason, Boatswain.

Mr. Beer, Carpenter.

The survivors were conveyed to Auckland yesterday evening, by the military — all being put on board the '*Miranda*.' Several -were rather severely injured. Dr. Mouatt, V.C., was in attendance at Onehunga, to render the necessary surgical aid.

His Excellency Sir George Grey, attended by his Private Secretary, Capt. Bulkeley, rode out to Onehunga yesterday, and remained until the survivors came up in the 'Avon.' Among these was Mr. Barkly, son of Sir Henry Barkly, X.C.8., Governor of Victoria, who rode into Auckland with his Excellency. General Cameron, C.8., Colonel Gamble, Assistant Quarter-Master General, and other military men were likewise out to learn the extent of the disaster, and render what assistance lay in their power. The public likewise manifested their sympathy with their ship-wrecked countrymen on the melancholy occasion.

H.M.S. '*Miranda*' and the guns at Fort Britomart fired minute guns in the evening. The flag was hoisted half-mast at the Fort yesterday evening. The '*Harrier*' was still at the scene of the wreck, when our reporter left Onehunga last night. None of the dead bodies had been washed ashore.

Allusion was made to the shipwreck in most of the pulpits of this city last evening.

We are enabled to give a slight sketch of the performance of the '*Orpheus*,' through the kindness of one of the officers who come out from England in her. She was put in commission on a Friday (an unlucky day with seamen), for the Australian station; but, owing to the Trent affair, was ordered to America. She left England in December, 1861, and conveyed the '*Melbourne*,' transport ship, with troops, to Halifax. Encountered very severe weather in the Atlantic, having nearly foundered in a gale. When at St. John's, N.B., she went ashore. After peace had been assured between England and America, the '*Orpheus*' made the passage to Sydney by way of Bermuda and the Cape of Good Hope. Since her arrival on the Australian station, Commodore Burnett and his officers and men appear to have been favourites both in Sydney, Melbourne, and Hobart Town, where they touched. She was, the largest and finest man-of-war we have ever had on this station, and her

loss is a public calamity, quite apart from the greater one of so many valuable lives being sacrificed. We cannot vouch for the accuracy of all the details in this report, as it was impossible to obtain precise information yesterday, owing to the confusion ; but in the main it is right. We will publish a detailed narrative, if practicable, to-morrow. We have been informed that "a meeting will be held at the Mechanics' Institute this morning at ten o'clock, to raise a subscription towards relieving the immediate want of the survivors from the shipwreck, before their departure for England at twelve o'clock. The poor fellows have lost all their personal effects.

The above transcript taken from both the original article and the computer produced copy.

Computer Generated Copy Daily Southern Cross 10 February 1863

WRECK OF H.M.S. 'ORPHEUS'.

Yesterday we published a report of the loss of 11. M. s.s. 'Orpheus,' 21 guns, carrying the broad pennant of Commodore Burnett, C.8., at the Marmkau bar. As we anticipated, some errors crept into our report, and these we now proceed to rectify. The number on board was given at 275 souls, and of the saved 99 souls. We have since learned that the total was 256 officers, men, and boys, of whom 99 were saved, making the actual loss 187 souls. Of these, seven officers were lost from the gun room, ten from the ward room, five from the engineers' mess, one warrant officer, and the Commodore. The names of the officers who lost their lives and those who were rescued were accurately given by us, so far as the list went. We mentioned the surgeon as among the drowned, but omitted his name as we could not learn it ; but it turns out that Dr. Clarkson, formerly of H.M. s.s. 'Fawn' was the surgeon in charge. The assistant surgeon was not drowned, as our contemporary stated, having been left behind in Sydney, being too ill to come on the cruise. The chief engineer was likewise mentioned as lost ; yesterday we ascertained that his name was Mr. W. Stephens. We regret we must add to the list of drowned Mr. Gossage, engineer's assistant, who came on board the 'Orpheus,' with the view of joining the { Miranda ' at Auckland. The following were saved :: — • Lieutenant Hill Lieutenant Yonge Mr. Ampilett, Paymaster Mb. Fuilmno, Midshipman Mu. Hunt, „ Mn. Bvhkiy, „ Mr. Beer, Carpenter Mr. Mason, Boatswain Stokehs .. . 5 MvHINER 1 Drummer .. „ 1 Pi:rry Omecits 12 Men 35 Boys 7 Making in all a total of G!) officers and men. Of the total number of men saved 33 were picked

up by the boats, and the remainder were the boats' crews. From inquiries we learn that the 'Orpheus' left Sydney at half-past four on the morning of the 31st January for this station, and that the Manukau heads were sighted on the morning of Saturday, February 7th. The A'essel had been under sail up till noon. She was steering an east course till her bearings were taken, when she was steered N.E. by East, keeping the Nine Pin rock on -with Paratutai, in accordance with Drury's directions. At about 1.20 p.m., she touched astern ; but it was of no consequence. Steam had been got up before this, simply as an auxiliary, and to keep the full command of the vessel, but the wind was sufficient to carry her in, and she proceeded for about ten minutes without anything particular occurring. She then got among the breakers, and stuck fast by the head. The Commodore gave the order "full speed astern" when she touched, but the vessel had too much way on her, and the screw, if it acted, was powerless. She could not have been going at less than eight knots an hour, under all plain sail and weather foretopmast studding sail. The wind was then on the starboard quarter. When she struck the second time, she broached too. The men were aloft at the sails, and the topsails were lowered, the other stils being clewed up. The foretopmast stay sail was retained to keep her steady. Some of the weather guns were hoisted over to lighten her, as was also shot and other heavy matters, but all to no purpose. The noble ship was firmly grounded, the sea soon making clear breaches over her. The situation was now most critical, but it was not then apprehended that the terrible calamity which overtook the officers and men of the 'Orpheus' would ensue. She struck at half-past one — mid-day ; the weather was fine, and being in sight of the pilot station which had signalled her, there was the likelihood of a message being communicated to the 'Harrier,' which was in the Manukau, and relief being sent to them. So long as the ship held together, all would be well. But unhappily events did not happen as they might have happened. No message was communicated to the 'Harrier,' and no boats were launched for their assistance. The signal "take the bar" was observed on board the 'Orpheus' as early as 11.30 a.m., and the vessel was kept in-shore in consequence, and in conformity with Captain Drury's sailing directions, and those by Mr. Veitch, master of H.M. s.s. 'Niger.' After she had touched the first time, and when among the breakers, immediately before touching the second time, the danger signal was hoisted ; but it was too late. In a few seconds the 'Orpheus' struck, and one of the finest frigates in her Majesty's navy was totally lost. We understand that "the person in charge at the flagstaff, in the absence of Captain Wing, who was on board the 'Wonga Wonga' mail steamer, did not exhibit the danger signal until the very late period indicated, imagining that the 'Orpheus' was a vessel for the North, skirting the reef; but when he saw that she was actually making an entrance across the bank he signalled the danger. The order to keep her to port was given, by the master, when the danger signal was hoisted at the flagstaff. The ship stuck fast on the western end of the

Middle Bank, which has shifted full three-quarters of a mile since Captain Drury's sailing directions were published. At the time she struck the Commodore and Master were on the bridge, and orders for steering were given by the Master through the second quarter-master, who repeated them to the quarter-master engaged steering. Shortly after she struck and broached to, the second cutter was stove in on the davits. A man fell overboard forward, and a life buoy was thrown to him, but this he failed to reach, and he was drowned. The life-buoy was broken up by the violence of the waves. The Commodore, about this time, ordered the first cutter to be manned, and Mr. Fielding, midshipman, and a crew of eight men were put on board, to go ahead of the ship. About half-an-hour after the ship broached to the order "boats out" was given; and the pinnace was the first launched. She was in charge of Lieut. Hill and Mr. Paymaster Amphlett, with instructions to pull ashore for assistance, especially to procure whale boats. Mr. Amphlett was sent in the pinnace with Lieut. Hill, because he knew the place, and was most likely readily to obtain the requisite help. The launch was then got out, Lieut. Jekyl in charge, with a crew of thirty hands. She was made fast, bow and stern, but unfortunately the hawser was twice let go abaft, and on the second occasion she forged ahead and swamped, drowning the Lieut. in charge, the boat's crew, and eight men who had jumped in, all but three men. It was now nearly five o'clock, and no appearance of succour. The pinnace and first cutter were out; the launch had been swamped, and nearly forty men met a watery grave. The

evening was setting in, and although the weather was fine the wind was freshening. Owing to the heavy seas which now broke freely over her, it was impossible longer to remain on deck, and the men had permission, if they chose, to save themselves by swimming. The rigging was almost instantly maimed, and a sharp look-out was kept for a steamer or other vessel coming to their relief, but this was in vain. The 'Wonga Wonga,' which left the Bluff at about half-past twelve, had been seen from the wreck steaming down harbour at 1.40 p.m., but she made no sign of coming to the relief of the sufferers, if her commander knew what had happened. She was seen to go out by the South Channel, and make as if for sea, then turn and come up round the bank, in a line with the wreck, where she remained for some little time; and afterwards steamed round the bar, taking the South Channel, and making as if for Onehunga. As might be expected this was torturing to the poor fellows, clinging for life to the rigging, who looked in vain to her for help. It will be recollected that the pinnace, with Lieut. Hill and Mr. Amphlett on board, was sent to the shore to procure assistance. When at the Orwell bank the pinnace met Captain Wing in his boat going out to their assistance; that was shortly after four. The pilot pulled off to go to the 'Wonga Wonga,' which he reached about five o'clock. She was hailed with difficulty, being then far inside the heads; took the pinnace in tow, and made for the wreck. Mr. Amphlett proceeded in the whaleboat to report the casualty to the 'Harrier,' which he (succeeded in doing about ten

o'clock, the tide being against him. The 'Wonga Wonga,' with the boats in tow, made the wreck about seven o'clock, p.m. The pinnacle came within a few yards of the jibboom end, and men jumped off and swam to it and were picked up. Others were drowned in the attempt. The 'Wonga Wonga,' still with the boats in tow, steamed off to nearly a mile distant, and anchored for the night. Up to that time, however, except the men who were drowned in the launch, and one man who fell overboard, together with a few who perished in the attempt to reach the boat, no lives were lost. The stern posts and port bulwarks had been long gone, but the decks and spars were standing good. It was flood tide, however, and things were becoming more and more critical. No help, that we can learn, was rendered by the 'Wonga Wonga,' beyond what we have stated, and affording shelter to such men as were picked up by the boats, and put on board of her. At about eight o'clock the guns broke loose, and the deck began breaking up. The crisis was at hand. In another halfhour the maimna&t went, carrying with it the foretopmast, and hurrying to an untimely end Commander Burton, Lieut. Mudgc, Mr. Strong master, Mr. Broughton, midshipman, and about fifty of the men. Mr. Hunt, midshipman, was almost miraculously saved, having been washed away from the foretop and, afterwards supported himself on a capstan bar for several miles floating in shore. lie was picked up by the first cutter, along with Mr. Barkly, midshipman, and a man named Hall. This boat's party was taken on shore to the pilot station. The fate of Commander Burton, as we have been told, was most tragic. He was in the foretop when it went ■nith the main-mast, and his head -was caught between the shrouds, as the ship lurched, killing him instantly. The mizen-mast went shoitly after the main-mast. Commodore Burnett Avas between the top and futtock riggftig of the main-mast. The top fell upon him and stunned him, and he went over-board He lose at once, but immediately sunk without making an effort to save himself. An affecting incident occurred when the mainmast went, hurling its living incumbrance into the water. The men, as they fell, with one voice, hailed the 'Wonga Wonga,' which rode at anchor within sight. It was a ciy for help ; a thiilling appeal to the best sympathies of man's native, and not a cheer as is ciurcntly stated. The men died like brave men, as they were ; but there was nothing of bravo in this final scene of the acted drama of their lives. The surviving men, who clung to the fore and mizen rigging echoed the death cry of their companions, and in a few minutes most of them slept, with their fellows, the still sleep of death. The boats, as we have said, managed to pick up thiity-three men; one was picked up next morning by the 'Matilda,' schooner, floating on a spar inside Poponga, many hours after the wreck. The loss of life was fearful. The vessel has entirely disapj^eared. Our readers are already aware of the particulars connected with the dispatch of the 'Avon' and 'Hsimer' to the scene of the wreck ; and we need not repeat them. We should add that Dr. Neadles, of Onehunga, went down in the 'Avon' on Sunday morning, to see if he could render any assistance. Up to 4.30 p.m., yesterday, there

had been no communication nor boat up from the wreck. The little steamer ' Avon ' left for the Heads at 1 1 a.m., yesterday, to render assistance in disposing of any of the bodies that might be found. As we have a reporter on board, on her return we hope to give a detailed narrative of the proceedings.

And now a word about the pilot station, and other matters connected therewith. A life-boat has been lying there useless for several years, without a crew to man her ; and when Mr. Wing was asked by one of the officers of the ' Orpheus ' if she was available, he was told that twelve men, in two days, might succeed in launching her, or words to that effect. No message was sent to the ' Harrier,' although the 'Orpheus' went ashore at halfpast one, and did not begin to break up until near eight o'clock. The reason was that Captain Wing, the pilot, and his Maori crew were on board the ' Wonga Wonga,' and there was no one to send. We do think these are points deserving of serious consideration, for it is manifest that many valuable lives would have been saved if the ' Harrier ' had been communicated with early on Saturday. We shall express no opinion regarding the part the ' Wonga Wonga took until we see her master's statement. It does seem, however, to us that immediate steps should be taken to make the Manukau as safe a harbour as possible. For this purpose the life-boat must be efficiently equipped, and a regular semaphore telegraph established to communicate any shipping disaster to the town, and vessels in the harbour, as soon as they occur, and so render a calamity like the loss of life in the ' Orpheus ' impossible. We believe his honor the Superintendent, shortly after he took office, ordered the buoys from Sydney, for which the General Assembly had made an appropriation of £600, and they will be ready to buoy the south channel in about a couple of months. These alterations will necessitate considerable expense, but it is far better that this cost should be gone to than that one life should be lost* The Manukau harbour is already a loss to the revenue, but the loss must be increased to make the harbour safe. We should state, in conclusion, that those who survived the shipwreck, and who were put ashore at the flagstaff, speak in the highest terms of the kindness they received from Captain Wing's family. The Maoris at the station also behaved remarkably well. Two men who were picked up in the pinnace, — Butler, quartermaster of the 'Harrier,' and Johnston, captain of the niizen-top of the ' Orpheus,' distinguished themselves in saving life after their own rescue. Lieut. Hill did all that man could do with his means to rescue the men from drowning. Twenty-five of the men volunteered to the ' Harrier,' and have been sent out to Onehunga ; the same number have volunteered for the ' Miranda,' and the remaining men and officers go home to England.

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Southern Cross 11 February 1863

WRECK OF H.M.S.S. 'ORPHEUS.'
FURTHER PARTICULARS.

As stated in yesterday's issue we, at the earliest opportunity, despatched a reporter of the staff of this journal, to the scene of the late terrible catastrophe, to ascertain the fullest particulars in reference to it, and also to possess us of correct information of the subsequent events. Through the kindness of Captain Hunt, our reporter was enabled to go down to Paratutai in the steamer ' * < on.' Yesterday we published the particulars of the wreck and the way it occurred. It therefore, now only remains for us to chronicle such events as have not before been published. Upon visiting the scene of the wreck but little was to be observed to indicate that such a catastrophe as that which has cast a gloom over this city, and which will spread pangs of anguish in many homes and in many lands, had so recently occurred. Pieces of painted timber floating by now and then were the only indications of a wreck which for a long time could be observed. The weather was fine, nevertheless the waves lashed violently upon the fatal shoal, forming an almost unbroken semi-circle of foam, broken only by the channels through which the harbour is entered at the north and south. To some it may seem strange that so strong and powerful a ship as the 'Orpheus' should so quickly go to pieces, but if they could see the spot whereon she struck they would wonder how she held together so long. Nothing of any value has been recovered, nor is the recovery of anything valuable a likely possibility. That part of the bar whereon the ship struck is about 2 miles from Paratutai, the nearest point of land, and a very strong current runs between. Inside this there is an excellent life-boat by which, if brought into use, many lives might have been saved; but alas! the appliances for launching it (if there are any) are so deficient that several ships and crews might be lost ere the life-boat could be brought to their assistance. Several rumours were afloat in town yesterday to the effect that a number of bodies had been recovered; but for these rumours there was no foundation. We are enabled to give an authentic account of the proceedings of the 'Harrier,' from the hour when the sad intelligence was received on board of her, up to the time of our writing; from which it will be seen that every effort was made by Commander Sullivan and his officers to render assistance and save life. Unhappily the will must, in this case, be taken for the deed. It is to be regretted that the 'Harrier' should have taken the ground, but even if she had not, so late was it when the first information was received on board, that it is a question whether any more lives would have been saved. At half-past ten o'clock on Saturday night, Paymaster Amphlet, of H.M.S.S. 'Orpheus' came on board the 'Harrier' by the pilot boat, and reported the total loss of the ship 'Orpheus' on the Manalcan bar. Midshipman Jerningham

was at once sent to Auckland for Captain Jenkins, of H.M.S. 'Miranda,' and with a letter to General Cameron, also to desire the colonial steamer 'Avon' to get Tip steam and come to render assistance, and also to recall the pinnace. At 50 minutes past midnight Mr. Hunt, master of the 'Avon,' came on board the 'Harrier' for orders. At one o'clock the ship was unmoored. The accommodation ladder was taken in; the spanker bent, &c, preparing for sea. At halfpast 2 a.m. the pinnace returned. The anchor was then weighed, and the 'Avon' took the ship in tow to assist in paying her bow off; the ship took the mud in turning. Depth of water — 3 fathoms astern ; 2-i fathoms forward; 2\$ in port chains. At 3 a.m., Captain Jenkins came on board; Major McNeill, A.D.C., also came on board with the information that tents, victuals, &c, were already provided at Onehunga for 250 men. Tho stream anchor was got out, and an attempt made to get the ship off. Chain taken out astern, aud forotopsail set aback. Hove on chain, but the ship continued fast. Finding it useless to attempt to get the 'Harrier* off, as the tide had ebbed considerably, some provisions (consisting of bread, pork, and rum) wore got out of the 'Harrier,' and placed onboard the 'Avon' ; whiclivessel, with Captain Jenkins was then despatched to the wreck, as was also the pinnaco. On board the 'Harrier,' tho guns were secured, and top-gallant masts taken down. At 10. 45 a.m., Sunday, weighed stream . anchor, and at 11 steamed down the Wairopo channel, proceeding under steam to the Manukau Heads. At 11.35 a.m. colonial steamer 'Avon' came alongside with the survivors from the wreck of the 'Orpheus.' At 12 o'clock tho 'Avon' was cast off, and the 'Harrier' proceeded. At half-past 12 boats were sent out to pick up pieces of the wreck, which were observed floating by. She cruised about xintil 3.45 p.m., wheu_she arrived off Paratutai, aud sent a boat ashore for the harbor mastor. She was kept cruising about, and a good look-out kept, but no aid appeared necessary as the poor souls whom they went to help were then far beyond aid of man. At half-past 6 p.m., she came to off tho Huia banks, in 8£ fathoms water. Next morning she steamed across tho entrance, and having again anchored, the boats were manned and sent owfc to search along the beaches. The 'Avon' left the Wharf shortly beforo 12 o'clock on Monday, and steamed down to the 'Harrier,' which, was anchored on the southern side of the harbour, opposite the Huia, and reached her at 2 p.m. Her boats had then been sent out to search along tho shore on either side of the harbour. In tho evening the 'Harrier' steamed aoross the entrance oloso to Parntutai, and the boats roturued. Tho officers in command reported that the beach and rocks had boon carefully Bearchedforaconsidorablodistanco, but no bodies were to be neen. Many pioces of the wreck were found along the shore j a portion of the lower dock and a broken topmast were lying near Pnrntutai ; also a lot of shell boxes with the shells in them, and thousands of splinters of wreck. A part of the chaplain s pulpit, some documents belonging to the assistant-paymaster, and a part of a chest of drawers were also picked up here.

The last-named article was recognised as the property of first Lieut. Mudge, through the clothing the drawers contained. They were taken into the cutter, and put on board the 'Harrier.' A powder case was likewise found; and as it was one of those which would be kept in the lowest part of the ship, some idea might be formed of the way in which the ill-fated vessel was broken up. When the boats were taken in, the 'Harrier' steamed a short distance up from the heads, and anchored in shelter for the night. After nine o'clock 25 of the survivors of the 'Orpheus' were received on board, having been despatched to her from the 'Miranda.' The 'Avon' remained by the 'Harrier' during the day, and anchored a short distance from her when night came on. Commander Sullivan intended proceeding by the 'Avon' to the bar yesterday, if possible. "We believe the 'Harrier' will remain about the heads for 8 or 10 days to save anything that may be cast up and approached. When our reporter left the scene, yesterday morning, only a portion of the main mast was visible from Paratutai, when the waves would break on the bar. No bodies had then been recovered or seen. From the direction of the wind at the heads since the wreck, the probability is that most of them will be carried seaward; or at least such as may reach the shore, will be found a considerable distance to the northward. The cutter 'Thistle' from Kawhia came through the south channel, and nothing more than a few small pieces of wreck were met with. We learn that a notice was issued from the Hydrographic Office on the 11th October, 1861, notifying that the outer South Bank had worked North three-quarters of a point in the bearing from Paratutai and that a part of the outer South Bank had cleared away since 1853. This notice was received by the 'Harrier' on the 26th March, 1862, but it appears the 'Orpheus' had not received it. Bishop Pattison went down to Onehunga on Monday evening to take passage to the Heads, to which his ministrations be required. However, he was unable to go, there being no time at the time available. By the first notice of the wreck which we published, it would appear that the engineer of the 'Avon' was in Auckland, when her master received orders to get ready. Such was not the case; he was on board the 'Avon' at the time, and before proceeding to town for the piece of machinery, he ordered steam to be got up as quick as possible which was done. The engineer referred to in the account was the one to whom the piece of machinery had been sent for repairs. A seaman, named Butler, who had been quarter-master of the 'Harrier,' and who deserted in Sydney, was being brought on in the 'Orpheus,' to join the ship he deserted. He was acquainted with the entrance through the channel, and states that he was looking through the bow ports a few minutes before the dread calamity, and saw that the vessel was not far enough north; he mentioned it to some of his mates, and they desired him to go aft and tell the officers. He refused to do so, being only an able seaman. His mates drove him aft, and he informed the first lieutenant that the channel was further north. Lieut. Mudge asked him why he did not mention it before; he was making some

apology for not doing so, when seeing the danger increase, he ran up ou to the bridge and informed the master (Mr. Strong) of the circumstance. Lieit. Mudge went to the Commodore, and the man Butler was pointing out the j>osition of the channel when the ship struck. His information was too late. This is Butler's own story, but is corroborated by some other sun ivors. Up to a late hour last night, no further information, than is above given, had reached Auckland.

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