REMEMBERING SEAFARERS

The (Missing) History of New Zealanders employed in the Mercantile Marine during World War 1

A thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

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ABSTRACT

The story of the New Zealand men and women who were employed in the Mercantile Marine during World War 1 is absent from the historiography. This thesis contends that this workforce of New Zealanders existed, was substantial in number and that their human stories are missing from historiography despite there being extensive wartime stories to tell.

A workforce of New Zealand merchant seafarers existed during World War 1 and is definable and recognisable as a group. Each individual within this group is not easily identifiable because detailed and completed records of their identity and service were never centrally maintained.

New Zealand maritime and World War 1 histories have not addressed the seafarers’ intimate human stories and have instead focus on either Naval or industry stakeholder’s organisational history of the war period. This is clearly evident from a detailed review of relevant material published during the century since the declaration of World War 1 in 1914.

The crew employed on the Union Steam Ship Company’s twin screw steamship Aparima provide a small but enlightening example of the human stories that are absent. Their individual stories encompass many aspects of everyday experiences such as the ever present danger of enemy attack and the impact of the war on the crew and their families and loved ones. A microhistory of New Zealanders employed on Aparima refutes by example, the argument that World War 1 New Zealand merchant seafarers did not have a unique story to tell and therefore they are absent from historiography.

The history of New Zealand maritime and World War 1 historiography provides possible reasons for the missing history, as does the demographics of this workforce. The primary rationale identified include government and military editorial influence, a sense that merchant seafarers belonged to the British rather than New Zealand Mercantile Marine, and a belief that they did not fit alongside the ANZAC legend of the heroic soldier sacrificing all for King and Country.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Firstly, my sincere thanks go to my supervisor Dr Kerry Taylor for his input throughout this project. Undertaking this thesis remotely has been challenging and I am therefore especially thankful to Kerry for being readily accessible to provide support, advice and guidance when needed, often by email and remote meetings.

Dr Gavin McLean of Ministry for Culture and Heritage has a longstanding interest in the history of the Mercantile Marine and the Union Steam Ship Company. I am very grateful for the time he provided to share suggestions and observations regarding my thesis proposal. His generosity is much appreciated.

Writing a thesis on a history that is missing has required searching a significant amount of primary material. I am particularly appreciative to the team at Wellington City Archives for their efforts in guiding me through the Union Steam Ship Company Archives. I especially wish to thank Team Leader Adrian Humphris for his, guidance and search effort, and archivists Avon MacDonald, Rachael Manson and Anna Monson for making requested material available to me, often at short notice.

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I contacted many descendents of Aparima’s final crew and am very grateful to those who generously replied with information and their time. I am especially grateful to Roger Wilson of Wellington (Captain G.J.S. Doorly), and also Keith Mackie of South Africa (Chief Steward James Mackie), Elaine Hunter of Melbourne (Cadet Sydney Newton); Paulin Voice of Auckland (Cadet William Millward), Marjorie Harris of Canada (Cadet Oswald Every-Clayton) and Nils Enrum of Denmark (Cadet William Cadwallader) for sharing what they knew of their ancestor with me.

Most importantly, I am extremely grateful to my dearest Wendi for everything. Thank you for listening, understanding, supporting, sacrificing, proof-reading and the innumerable other kindness you have generously given.
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Allies / Allied  Countries that fought against the Central Powers in WWI.
Bark or barque  Type of sailing vessel with three or more masts.
Bhandary  Cook.
Black Gang  Trimmers, Stokers and Firemen work in the engine room. They were called ‘black’ because of soot and coal dust in the engine room made everything black.
Bosun (Boatswain)  Oversees maintenance and deck activity over the entire ship.
Butler  Saloon Second Class Steward.
Cassab or Kussab  Lamp trimmer.
Deck Serang  Deck Bosun.
Deck Tindal  Bosun’s Mate.
Donkeyman  Oversaw the operation and maintenance of any and all assorted machinery and assisted with the maintenance of ship’s main engines.
Engine Room Serang  Engine Room Donkeyman.
Engine Room Tindal  Donkeyman’s Mate.
Fireman  Boiler Stoker.
Greaser  Monitoring and lubricating the engines.
Lamp trimmer  Leading hand on deck under the Boatswain.
Military Age  Males not less than twenty years and under forty-six years of age who were unmarried were mandated under the National Registration Act, 1915 and the Military Service Act, 1916 to enrol for Military Service.
Officer Commanding  Commander of the army formation.
Commanding Officer  In the merchant service, this is the ship’s master or captain.
Prize Crew  A group of men placed aboard a captured vessel in order for it to be sailed to a friendly port.
Prize  A captured merchant ship that was captured and taken to a friendly port for sale, rather than destroyed. Prize money obtained from the sale was distributed amongst those involved in its capture and return.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Punkha Boy</td>
<td>Fan Cord Puller Boy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rating</td>
<td>An articled member of a ship’s crew but not an officer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Red Duster</td>
<td>Ensign flown specifically by British Merchant Seamen.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stern</td>
<td>Rear or aft-most part of a ship.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stem</td>
<td>Most forward part of a boat or ship’s bow.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stokehold Grating</td>
<td>Exhaust ventilation from the engine room stokehold.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topas</td>
<td>Sweeper, cleansed the “heads” (on board lavatories), washed utensils, scrubbed the decks.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trimmer</td>
<td>Supplies the coal from the bunkers to the stokers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>War Grave</td>
<td>Burial place for members of the armed forces or civilians who died during military campaigns or operations. They are provided by the Commonwealth nation-state and maintained by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission.</td>
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## Abbreviations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AD</td>
<td>Army Department, New Zealand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AJHR</td>
<td>Appendices to the Journal of the House of Representatives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ANZ</td>
<td>Archives New Zealand, Wellington</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ATL</td>
<td>Alexander Turnbull Library</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AWA</td>
<td>Amalgamated Wireless (Australasia) Limited</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AWMM</td>
<td>Auckland War Memorial Museum, Auckland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BT</td>
<td>Board of Trade, United Kingdom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CWGC</td>
<td>Commonwealth War Graves Commission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HMNZHS</td>
<td>His Majesty's New Zealand Hospital Ship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HMNZT</td>
<td>His Majesty's New Zealand Troopship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IWW</td>
<td>Industrial Workers of the World, also called Wobblies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NA</td>
<td>The National Archives (of United Kingdom), London</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NFSA</td>
<td>National Film &amp; Sound Archive (of Australia)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nhp</td>
<td>Nominal horsepower</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NLNZ</td>
<td>National Library of New Zealand, Wellington</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NZDF</td>
<td>New Zealand Defence Force</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NZEF</td>
<td>New Zealand Expeditionary Force</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P&amp;O</td>
<td>Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RN</td>
<td>Royal Navy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RNR</td>
<td>Royal Naval Reserve</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SS</td>
<td>Steam Ship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SY</td>
<td>Steam Yacht</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TSS</td>
<td>Twin Screw Steamer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USSCo</td>
<td>Union Steam Ship Company of New Zealand Limited</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WCA</td>
<td>Wellington City Archives, Wellington</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WWI</td>
<td>World War 1</td>
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