

## Introduction

When I set out to research the original Coromandel I soon found there were many other later ships bearing the same name. This created some confusion, so it was necessary to delve into details of these other ships to be able to differentiate between them.

Research was carried out on records from Lloyds Shipping Registers, the British National Maritime Museum, the India Office in London, and various other sources in England, also from Mauritius, Bermuda, Jamaica, Australia, India and the USA

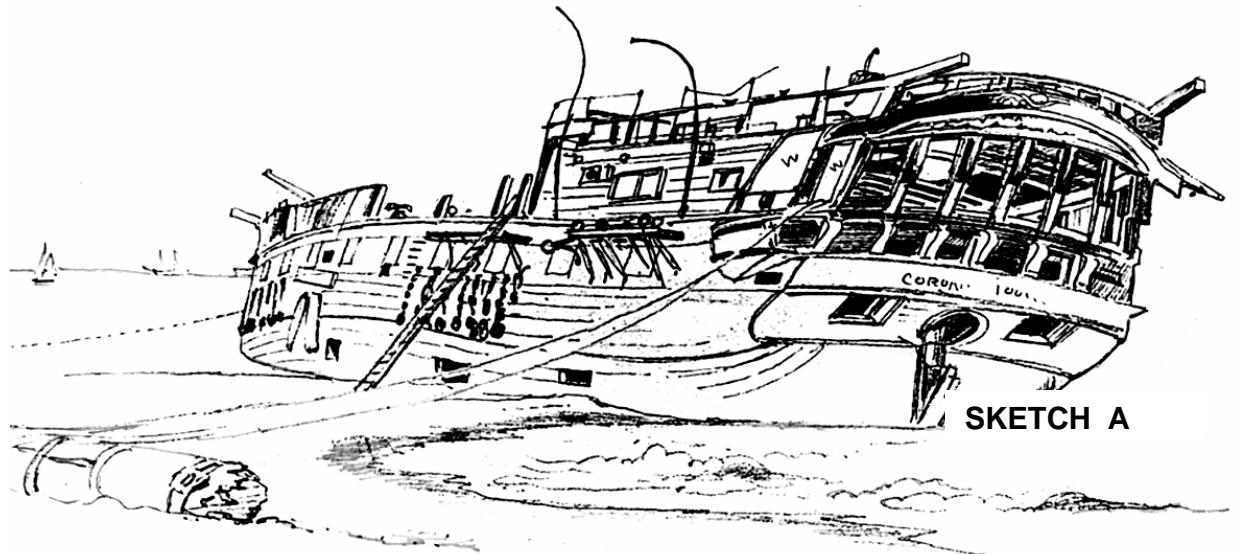
This document is a part result of many years of research. It deals with the ultimate fate of one of the ships named Coromandel as portrayed in four pencil drawings done by E.W. Cooke at Yarmouth, England in October 1856. This ship was wrecked when she drifted onto a beach during a storm. My conclusion is that this ship was formerly HMS Coromandel of the Royal Navy.

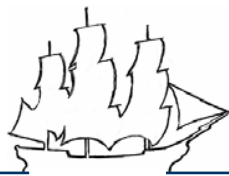
The document has been included here to give an insight of how I went about researching an item before including the result in my writings.

## The Sketches

There are four pencil sketches held by the National Maritime Museum at Greenwich, London of the wreck of a ship named Coromandel at Yarmouth, England, drawn by E.W.Cooke and dated October 22, 1856.

These are well executed sketches, allowing good comparisons when considering proportions etc. Notations, made on the back of the sketches by other than the artist, gives the name of the ship as 'CorAmandel' (with an A) instead of the spelling on all other documents I have studied which use 'CorOmandel' (with an O). The name shown on the stern of the wreck is incomplete.





For ease of understanding I have labelled these four sketches:

- (A) The sketch of the stern close up (on page 1).
- (B) The sketch of the broadside- the closer version.
- (C) The sketch of the remnants of rigging on the beach.
- (D) The distant broadside sketch (similar to the closer view of B).
- (E) Sketch of the original Mizzen Mast

## ***Which Yarmouth ?***

There are two Yarmouths in England. The larger one is a seaport in Norfolk, sometimes referred to as 'Great Yarmouth', at the mouth of the River Yare. This is a fishing centre and has shipbuilding yards.

The second Yarmouth is a small Isle of Wight seaport on the Solent. Those familiar with both areas indicate that from the backgrounds in the sketches they consider this is most likely the Yarmouth where the hulk was beached.

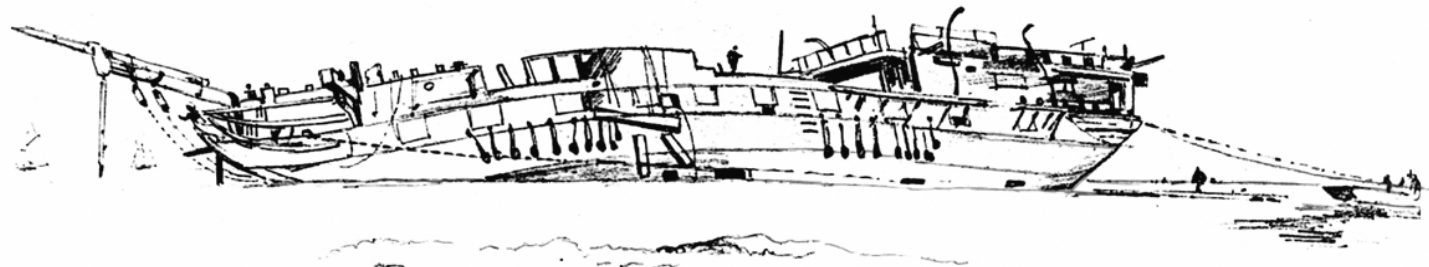
Considerable marine activity has always been associated with the Portsmouth, Solent and Spithead region, and convict hulks were maintained in this area until transportation ceased in 1868.

However, the exact location of Yarmouth has only minor bearing in the determination of which ship named Coromandel is portrayed in E W Cooke's fine drawings.

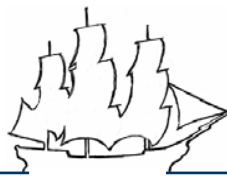
## ***The Beached Hulk***

The drawings depict a 'hulk', which literally means "the body of an old vessel", and describes a ship considered no longer seaworthy and totally or partially stripped down and it's masts removed.

It is obvious from the sketches that the foremast and main-mast had been removed prior to the beaching, note the shroud chains for these masts are hanging down. Note the mizzen-mast shroud chains are still in place.



**SKETCH B**



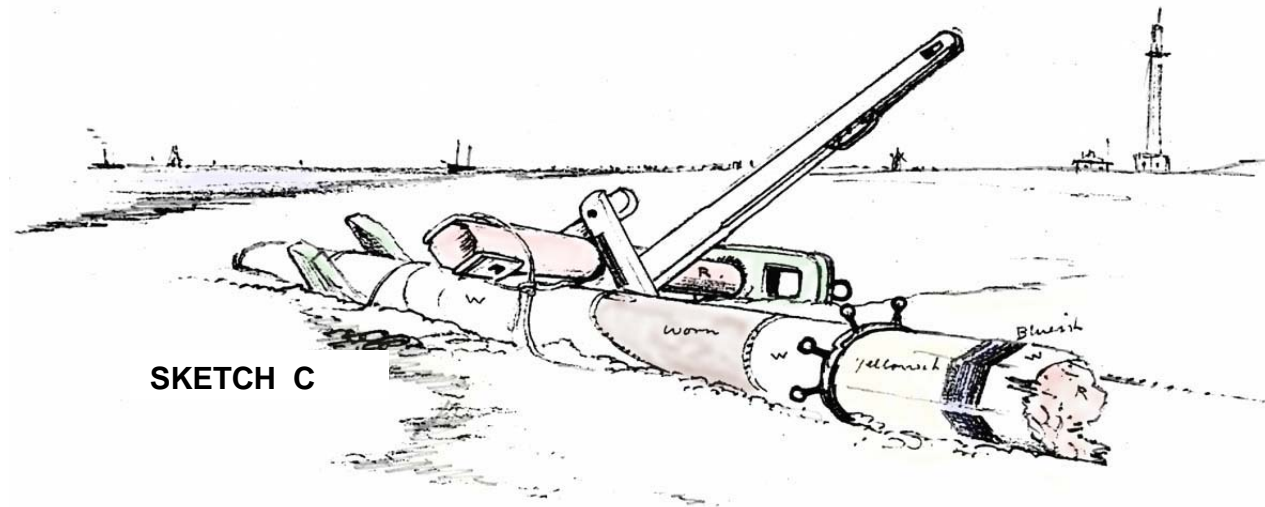
The only pieces of wreckage showing on the beach, apart from the hulk, are some remnants of rigging. Sketch 'C' shows good detail of this rigging, with the lower portions of the broken mizzen-masts closest to the artist. The end closest to the artist still has some binding on it, and a metal holder (for belaying pins?) still attached. The pieces lying over the mizzen-mast are part of the mizzen-top-mast with a crosstree attached. Note the artist has indicated some colours on his drawing.

This part of the wreckage could have been removed some time earlier and left on deck and washed overboard when the hulk beached. Conversely, the mizzen-mast could have existed on the hulk and been broken off in a recent storm or the beaching.

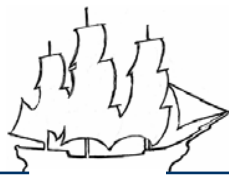
### **Reasoning From Sketches:**

I do not think this hulk has been on the beach very long. There are numerous reasons for this assumption:-

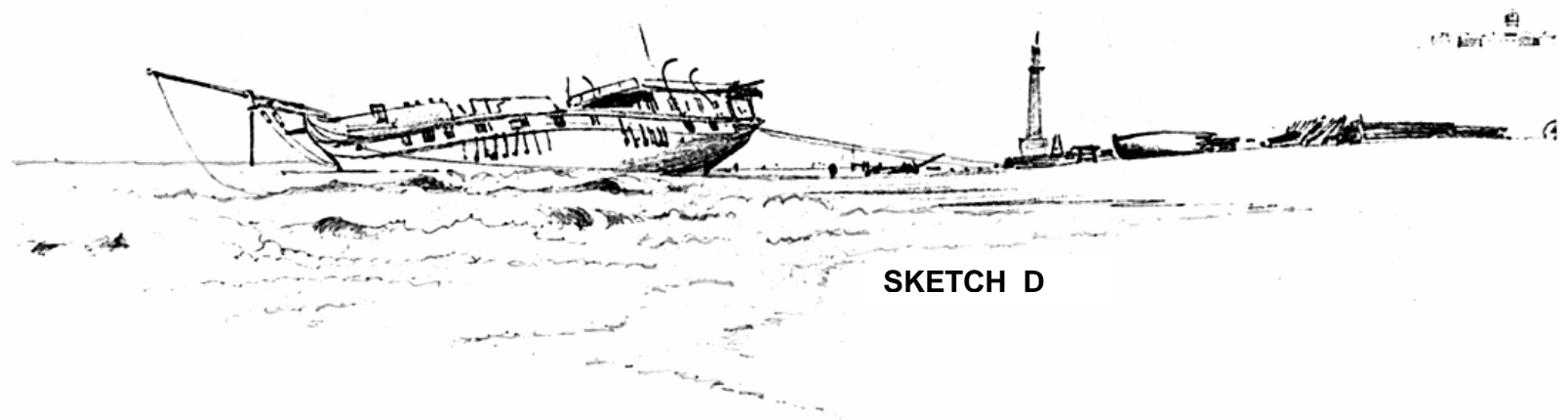
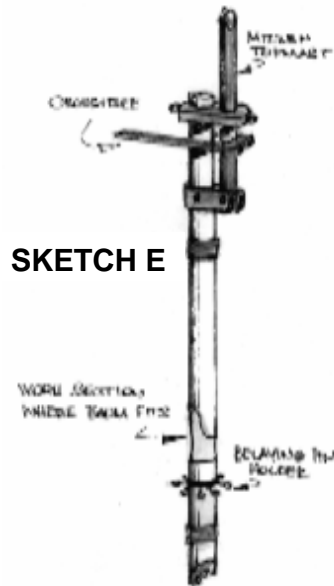
1. There are 2 rope (or chain) lines running ashore from the stern and another rope (or chain) line running ashore from the bows. There are 2 loose ropes hanging from the bowsprit into the water. There is rope around the rigging on the beach, and part of the rope is lying on the surface of the beach. The ropes or chains would not be expected to remain on a beached hulk for very long as rope and chain were valuable.
2. There are 2 fenders and what appears to be a beam suspended by ropes from the gunwales just forward of amidships on the port side. These could have been used to separate this hulk from another hulk when they were moored together. Such fenders would not last long on a beached ship.
3. The hulk itself does not look like it has been beached long, and is creating a lot of interest from locals. Although it would appear (from sketches 'A' & 'B') that she may have broken her back at about the point where the fenders are located, this could have happened when she beached. One would expect a wreck like this to be broken up rather quickly even if only left to the mercy of the elements and local scroungers.



SKETCH C



4. The sketches 'B' and 'D' show a number of people on the beach (to the right of the wreck) Sketch 'A' shows a ladder against the port side but this ladder does not show on the broadside sketches 'B' & 'D'- sketch 'B' does show a person on board about midships. This activity leads me to think the curious (and perhaps the light-fingered) were out and about in force.



I believe this ship had been out of commission for some time before she ran onto this beach. Most probably she was located somewhere near to this beach, and could have broken free, most probably during a storm, and been washed ashore.

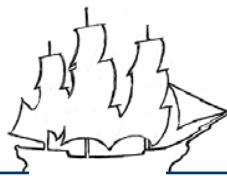
The cabin windows have been stripped, as have the roundhouses, and there are patches over where the roundhouse had been on the port side (sketch 'A') The artist has marked these patches 'W' for white - they could be bits of canvas.



### ***Which Ship Is It ?***

There were numerous ships named Coromandel, however, only the following five qualify for consideration here:

- (1)'*Coromandel*: 522 tons. Built at Chittagong 1793. 125'.05" long X 32' beam. She had one lower deck with a 16' deep hold under. This is the ship our historical research is mainly about, and we know for a fact she was captured by the French in 1805 and taken to Mauritius.
- (2)HM Storeship '*Coromandel*': 936 tons. Built Calcutta 1798 as an East Indiaman. Length on the gun-deck 168'6" with a maximum beam of 37'2". Originally named '*Cuvera*' but later renamed '*Malabar*' she was acquired by the Royal Navy in May 1804. She became a store ship and Navy transport. Renamed '*Coromandel*' by the Navy on March 3, 1815. Under the command of Capt. James Downie R.N. she made a voyage to NSW departing Portsmouth November 1, 1819 and arriving at Hobart on March 12, 1820. She carried 300 male convicts. At Hobart she disembarked 150 convicts and then proceeded to Sydney Cove where she arrived April 4, 1820 and disembarked her remaining 150 convicts. She lost no convict lives on the voyage. In October, 1827, she went to Bermuda where she and several other ships became floating accommodation for convicts working for the Crown at the dockyards. She is shown on the Royal Navy List of 1843 as a Convict Ship and based at Bermuda. She was broken up at the dockyards of Bermuda in 1853.
- (3)'*Coromandel*': 639 tons. Built at Shields Yards-London 1820. Same owners as the original, Reeve & Green, of London. From her tonnage her length is estimated to be approx. 135' 0". Under command of W. Loader she made a voyage to the colony commencing June 27, 1838 from Sheerness, reaching Hobart on October 26, 1838 - the surgeon being J Tweeddale. According to Bateson's records she embarked 340 male convicts and disembarked 338 at Hobart. This was a direct voyage (non-stop) and took 121 days; which duplicated the original Coromandel's voyage of 1802. Lloyd's Shipping List show she was one of two ships named Coromandel wrecked in 1856 - the same year the drawings were done of the hulk on Yarmouth Beach, but she was a much smaller vessel than the one shown in the drawings.
- (4)'*Coromandel*': 662 tons. Built at Quebec, Canada 1834. Owned by Ridgeway of Liverpool. She made two voyages to the colony- the first to Kangaroo Island South Australia, departing Gravesend, Kent September 4, 1836, W. Chester (Master). I have a drawing dated January 12, 1837 showing her at anchor at Port Adelaide. She was a clipper type hull, not the type of hull depicted in the sketches of the hulk on Yarmouth Beach. She made another voyage to the colony in 1840 when her Master is shown as James French.
- (5)H.M.S. '*Coromandel*' - built Perry, Blackwall, 1795, 1340 tons, Length 169' 0" with a beam of 42' 5". Originally named the '*Winterton*'. Used for Harbour Service, England in October 1807. She was sold at Jamaica by the Royal Navy in 1813. Records show she returned to England circa 1847, and this is significant because National Maritime Museum (Greenwich) records tell us two ships named Coromandel were wrecked in 1856 (the year of the sketches) - one was built 1820 (see 3) and the other was associated with the year 1847 (when this ship returned to England).



## ***Process of Elimination:***

- (a) It cannot be No.1 which was captured by the French in 1805. In any event the original had only one lower deck - also the wreck is well over 125' 0" in length.
- (b) It cannot be No.2 because records tell us she went to Bermuda as a convict ship in 1827 and was eventually broken up in the dockyards there in 1853.
- (c) It cannot be No.3 because we know she was a much smaller vessel than that on the beach - she was registered at only 639 tons burthen. She was one of the two Coromandels lost in 1856, but she could not have been this particular wreck.
- (d) It cannot be No.4 as an illustration exists of this Coromandel due to her association with the history of South Australia, and she is depicted as a completely different hull shape to the wreck on the beach, and in any event she is much smaller (662 tons)
- (e) No.5 is what was once H.M.S. Coromandel (originally "Winterton") and all evidence points directly towards her as being the ship shown in E W Cooke's drawings on the beach at Yarmouth in 1856.

## ***Additional Notes:***

On sketch (B) there is a figure of a person shown standing on the main deck amidships. As this view is practically broadside it is possible to compute an approximate length of the ship by programming from the estimated height of the figure on deck. I have computed this and find the approximate overall length to be in the range of 165' 0" to 175' 0" and the beam computes to be in the range of around 37' 0" to 42' 0".

It becomes obvious the stern of the wreck had 4 decks-- the top enclosed one having the main deck as it's floor and the quarter deck above as it's ceiling.

The first deck below the main deck is the gun deck, which runs practically the full length of the ship. The lower deck is in line with the 2 gun ports shown either side of the rudder.

Careful checking of the stern sketch (A), and the other sketches, with an authenticated plan of an East India Ship of 1200 tons built circa 1800 indicates the hulk on the beach at Yarmouth is around 1200 tons or more. This means the ex Royal Navy's HMS Coromandel (No.5) is the right size at 1340 tons.

Lloyd's Shipping Lists indicate two ships named Coromandel were wrecked in 1856, one dated 1820 (which could be No.3 on our list) and the other dated 1847. There is no record of any ship named Coromandel which can be dated 1847 except the ex 'H.M.S. *Coromandel* which was sold by the Royal Navy in 1813 and returned to England in 1847 (No.5 on our list above).

[end document]