

THE T JETTY AND "THE CONQUEROR"

While seeking information on Wollongong Harbour in connection with the building and launching of the Dumaresq, Bill Bayley's index to the Illawarra Mercury led me to a Mercury entry of 22/8/1882. This item helps to explain the origin of that peculiar post, supported on a masonry base and surrounded by water, which these days serves only as a perch for sea-birds. Here is what the Mercury said:-

The recently erected crane on the new jetty at the lighthouse was finally tested yesterday afternoon prior to being tested and accepted by the Government. The crane lifted and lowered upwards of fifteen tons of iron

rails quite readily, and swung them around most admirably. The whole machinery worked so smoothly that it made little more noise than an ordinary sewing machine. Altogether the crane, which is of sixteen horsepower, and cost slightly over three thousand pounds, reflects great credit on Mort's Engineering Establishment, where it was constructed to order of the Harbours and Rivers Department. Mr W J Gray, of Mort's, who erected the crane here within the last six weeks, also has done his work splendidly. In fact, the ease with which the whole thing works either way intended appears to be perfection. Mr M H Moriarty who represented the Government in connection with the official test of the crane, expressed himself well satisfied with its working. We may add that this steam crane is exactly similar to some such articles manufactured by Mort and Co. for Newcastle Harbour, and are now in use there. Mrs M H Moriarty, who was present on the occasion, named the new crane "The Conqueror."

Actually The Conqueror was not the first steam crane at Wollongong Harbour. An earlier issue of the Mercury (27/4/1880) tells us that two other steam cranes, each of seven tons capacity, were set in motion by the same Mr Moriarty on the preceding day. Built for the express purpose of handling seven-ton coal trucks, these two cranes were situated along

the northern wall of Belmore Basin. Those readers with good eyes will be able to detect all three cranes in the accompanying diagram, published with acknowledgement to Gifford Eardley's book Transporting the Black Diamond, Traction Publications, 1968.

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