

# HISTORY OF CASTLES SHIPBREAKING

## CONTENTS

### INTRODUCTION

A description of the origins and background to the Castles Shipbreaking History Project.

### CHAPTER 1

Information relating to the Castle family shipbuilding activities during the 17th century on the River Thames at Deptford and at Rotherhithe and of the claim regarding a direct family connection between Castles Shipbuilding with the 19th century firm of Henry Castle & Sons and Castles Shipbreaking.

### CHAPTER 2

Background history relating to the story of George Castle, Henry Castle's father, which explains the move to Rotherhithe from Hull and the development of ship repairing activities on the Thames up to 1832.

### CHAPTER 3

Describes the travels of Henry Castle to Sydney, New South Wales, Australia and subsequent business activities there between 1832 and 1837.

### CHAPTER 4

Describes the operations of Henry Castle after his return from Australia and during the period from 1838 up to 1860, first in Rotherhithe and then subsequently at Baltic Wharf, Vauxhall, including links with the Beatson family and the Temeraire.

### CHAPTER 5

Details the operations of the Henry Castle & Sons partnership and the partnership with William Philip Beech and covers the period from 1861 to 1869, including the historical background during which the business opportunity for the breaking up of wooden sailing ships of the line developed rapidly.

### CHAPTER 6

Explains the growth of the shipbreaking business under Sidney Nash Castle and Abercrombie Castle from 1870 through to 1877 and thereafter under Sidney Nash Castle's proprietorship up to 1904, including the formation of Henry Castle & Sons Limited in 1894 and the subsequent insolvency thereof in 1904.

### CHAPTER 7

Describes the formation of the company known as Castles Shipbreaking in 1906 and subsequent developments through to the sale of Baltic Wharf in 1913. Thereafter it traces the history through to 1942 and to the present day including the move to Plymouth, Devon.

### CHAPTER 8

Explains the recycling story regarding timber merchanting and the development of garden furniture and many other products.

### CHAPTER 9

Describes Castles involvement with ships' figureheads owned and displayed by the various Castle businesses between 1867 and 1941.

### CHAPTER 10

Outlines the scale of activities in shipbreaking throughout the Castles era including lists of ships known to have been broken up by Castles.

### CHAPTER 11

Explains the history, working conditions, contractual arrangements and methodology used in the breaking up of wooden sailing ships and of metal ships in the second half of the nineteenth century and early twentieth century.