

The Prussen of Hamburg

Length 437 ft., Breadth 53-6 ft.,
Depth 33-8 ft., Displacement 12,000
tons; Deadweight cargo capacity
8,000 tons; N.R.T. 4,765 tons. Sur-
face of sails 59,000 sq. ft.

*The Prussen's first voyage from Ham-
burg to Iquique in Chile and back to
Hamburg with nitrate occupied 156
days.*



who had probably never seen a large sailing vessel before bowling along under storm canvas. The anchors we now brought on to the forecastle head by the fish tackle and secured with heavy clamps and the cable ends lowered down the chain locker and secured to a cross beam. The windlass was in the forecastle where the A.B.s. were accommodated, hawse pipes were plugged and secured from inside the forecastle.

We were now on fresh water ration. The Second Officer and Carpenter would issue the water and two-thirds of each person's ration would go to the Cook. After a few days all fresh meat and vegetables were exhausted and so it was on to salt beef and pork on alternate days, with an occasional day on tinned meat (Harriet Lane to old sailors). It was now that a daily ration of lime juice was issued to all hands at noon in the presence of the Captain. Fresh bread was served out once a week, otherwise it was ship's biscuits (Liverpool Pantiles).

We were now nearing the Northern edge of the Tropics and I was quite used to going aloft to the Royal yards; it was the apprentice's job when Royals were furled to handle to Mizzen Royal some 125 feet up. Now was the time that all gear aloft was examined; the preventer footropes on all yards were rigged, whilst the steel footropes, with stirrups attached, were sent down and tested on the capstan and replaced in position. All blocks were stripped down, sheaves black-leaded and roller races examined for easy running. All the heavy weather No. 1 sails were changed for No. 2 suit because in tropics with very light winds and calms with heavy swell and the ship rolling sails are very liable to chafe.

With good N.E. Trades we soon reached the Equator, where King Neptune put a few of us through the usual ritual. We had few calms hereabouts and were soon picking up the S.E. Trades and making good progress on the Port tack and soon reached a point about 25° S, where the No. 1 suit of sails replaced to light weather suit. From well South and West of the Cape of Good Hope we shaped a course for Australia, "Running the Easting down" in Latitude 45°, with strong fair wind with Royals furled, sometimes the Fore and mizzen top-gallant sails, with the decks awash most of the time. That's where the lifelines came in very useful, heavy seas coming up from astern and coming over the bulwarks on both sides. On nearing the Australian coast nothing had to be made, and so, after an uneventful voyage, we reached Port Adelaide after first sighting Cape Borda,

the first to be seen since leaving the English Channel, a voyage of 96 days. There were quite a few large sailing ships in port—*Muskoka, Owene, Pimmore, Alice A. Leigh, Andromeda*. We were glad to be in Port after days of "four hours on and four hours off duty" and to enjoy fresh food once again and a free fresh water pump. We two apprentices, in brass-bound uniform, soon made good friends in Port Adelaide with the family of the head stevedore who was responsible for the discharge of our cargo; their house was like a home from home to us.

After the discharge of our dirty cargo the holds had to be thoroughly cleaned as we were to load a cargo of seed grain, we hoped back home to the U.K., where most of the ships in port were bound, but, after we were part loaded, our hopes were dashed. We were, on completion, to sail for Coronel (Chile) and so, after a happy spell of six to eight weeks in an Australian port, we were ready to sail. On the night before our departure our kind friends loaded us two boys with a large cake each and several jars of jam—we had seen nothing like this since leaving our homes.

The passage across the Southern Pacific to Coronel was without any special event with the exception of gales to the South of New Zealand, which were fortunately fair, and driving us on to our destination on the 37° Parallel. We crossed more or less on the 45° Parallel as there would be more wind, also it affords a better approach to a Chilean port coming up from a S'ly point. As we approached Coronel the wind was falling light, just about enough to keep all sails drawing. Our berth in the anchorage was indicated by the "Captain of the Port" (Harbour Master), but as we drew near, the light wind fell away, we lost storage and, in drifting, went foul of a small Chileano barque, the *Los Ganelos*, damaging her jibboom. Eventually we reached our berth.

Most of the sailing ships I have sailed in have carried one or two spare spars in case of accident aloft and so, after we had furled all sails and were snug, the Captain and Carpenter went aboard the Chileano barque to inspect the damage and ascertain if she had a spare spar. This proved to be so and for several days the Carpenter and we two boys used to drag the spar about while he cut and shaped it ready for rigging. When this was completed some of our crew rigged it in position, finally setting up the fore raft stays, a first class job well executed.

Naturally the first thing we boys looked for at this outlandish place was letters from home. The "home"