

The Storeship St. Michael



Genesis of Business and Industry

Outline of St. Michael moored in the river,
in survey plan by GB White, July 1833.

NSW State Records



THE Inhabitants of this river are respectively informed, that they can be supplied with the undermentioned ARTICLES, on the most reasonable Terms, at the STORE SHIP, ST. MICHAEL:
Brandy, rum, and gin, in quantities of five gallons
Port, sherry, and Madeira wine
Lyon and byson skin tea
Tea of various sorts
Brazil and sugar-cane tobacco
English soap and candles
Salt, saltpetre, and Spanish salts
Pork and flour
Names of every description
Points, colors, drill, and hogging
Blankets and rugs
Curtains and awnings, rope of sizes
Woolpacks, bags, and sacks
Powder, shot, muskets, and fowling-pieces
Pig and cross-cut axes and files
Sling's, hammers, and jelling mills
Knives and forks, razors and saws
Tins, partitions, and metal tea-pots
Malt, vinegar, pepper, saucers and cups
Pipes, fish hooks
Blue and black cloth, thread and buttons
Black and white paint, oil and turpentine
Iron assorted, sundries, shovels
Rivets, steel, hoes, rakes
Bucklers, and tinware
Tins, crays, snuff, and toys
Broad sheaves, corks, and corkeraws
Stainers, &c.
Pitch, Stockholm and gualtar
For which gross will be taken in payment at a fair price.
Should any other Articles be required, they will be punctually forwarded every week, by the Lord Liverpool Packet.
RAPSEY AND MITCHELL.

Advertisement from Sydney Gazette, July 1828.

Travellers disembarked at E C Close's private landing place from the early 1820s but there were no amenities available for them until they reached Maitland.

St Michael was a sea going ship that traded between NSW and Pacific Islands in the early 1820s. In 1826 some Sydney merchants converted the vessel into a store ship and moored it in the river at Morpeth. Goods of every description were sold and farm produce stored until taken by other ships to Sydney markets. St Michael was the only such facility at Morpeth for several years.

By the 1830s Close had built a stone warehouse near this point and a hotel at the top of Tank Street near the wharf reserve. Many people wanted allotments for other commercial purposes. Not until 1834 did Close release a few sites. Meanwhile St Michael carried on a good business.

Commercial growth around the wharf was such that by 1840 the store ship was no longer viable. St Michael was advertised for sale in February 1841 but no one wanted to buy. Abandoned, the hulk capsized in the river in December 1841. Fittings of value were salvaged and in time the silt of many floods covered the hulk's remains.

When surveyor George B White prepared a plan of the river in 1833, he drew an outline of St Michael, moored a little east of the landing place not far from where you now stand.

View towards the former Morpeth Hotel (centre)
on the Tank Street corner, c.1910.

Courtesy of Helen Pankhurst



