

## T W Bremner

Another of the "Class of 1908" of Squadron members from the portfolio of L. Herbert Beecroft is the then Rear Commodore, Thomas William Bremner. In fact, Mr. Bremner had 2 terms as Rear Commodore: 1905-1906 and 1910-1919.

The painting once again demonstrates Beecroft's accuracy and skill. Compare it to the photo I found in "Sydney Sails": the bushy moustache, the set of the eyes and the pointed chin. No doubts about it; that's T. W. Bremner! The yacht could only be the "Scotia" which Mr. Bremner launched in 1902 but there may be a mistake in the painting. The Sail number is 18 whereas the photo I located of "Scotia" displays 19 as her sail number. Is it possible I have found a mistake by Beecroft or did Mr. Bremner change the number at some point?



By the expression on Mr. Bremner's face, it looks like he is not amused. "Where-is-that-Buoy"? he is asking, clearly reference to an important race when a buoy has moved. The most unusual feature of the painting is the pink silhouette of Mr. Bremner on his mainsail, maybe a suggestion of the frustration felt late in the day when a buoy has gone missing. On the top left hand side of the painting is a flag with a symbol on it which mystifies me. It could be a symbol which signifies the Bremner clan, an old Scottish family.

**Tuesday, 14th October, 1902 - Sydney Morning Herald**  
**SAILING.**

*ROYAL SYDNEY YACHT SQUADRON.*

*Mr. T. W. Bremner presided at the monthly meeting of the Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron held at the Club room, Pitt-street, last evening. Mr. Bremner's motion - "That the time during which new members be admitted without entrance fees be extended from October 1 to include all nominations up to the monthly meeting in December for election at the January (1903) meeting," was carried. Dr. C. MacLaurin brought before the*

meeting the matter of the military authorities refusing to allow visitors to land at Obelisk Bay. It was decided to leave the matter in the hands of the committee to see what could be done. Messrs. Arthur W. Tooth, E. R. Taylor, J. W. Adman, T. Raine, L. Wallace, T. Lawry, R. M. Pitt, and Arthur Pitt were elected members of the squadron.

Here is a press report of the launch of the "Scotia."

### **Wednesday, 24th December, 1902 - Sydney Morning Herald**

#### **SAILING.**

#### **A NEW 30ft. FAST CRUISER.**

Yesterday there was launched from H. T. Green's yacht building yard, Lavender Bay, a handsome specimen of the popular 30ft. fast cruiser class. She was designed under the present Y.R.A. rule by the renowned William Fife, of Fairlie, for **Mr. T. W. Bremner**. Cruising qualities called for first consideration, so she is strongly built, gun metal floors being used fore and aft. The planking is of cedar in two thicknesses laid longitudinally, her grown frames are ti-tree with bent elm timbers between, keel and sternpost are of spotted gum, and stem of ti-tree. The deck is laid with sugar pine and canvas covered. The deck-fittings are of teak. She has the most modern form of profile, the long raking keel extending right to the sternpost, which is the deepest point. Her appearance quite justifies the general opinion that she will be one of the speediest of her class, and this is pretty well assured when the recent successes of her designer in this class of craft are considered. On deck there is a neat low coachhouse fitted with two ports; aft is the steering well, separated from the companion by about 2ft of deck, which allows the deck beams being carried right across, giving great strength where it is much needed. Forward of the mast is a hinged fore-hatch. Below the arrangements are very convenient, right aft under the steering-well is the sail locker, on each side of it are two fixed berths. The cabin itself is about 11ft long, and has some 5ft 2in head-room, and is fitted with sofa beds, drawers, lockers, shelves, etc. The forecabin is completely shut off from the cabin by a bulkhead, and contains a platform for stove and the usual galley appurtenances, besides a cot for a man.

The finish of the boat is excellent, every little detail being perfectly attended to, and, as a whole, better work could not be wished for. The sails are by Messrs. Ratsey and Lapthorne. The rigging was made locally by J. Wrixton, of Careening Cove, and is, as usual, of the best. The launching ceremony was performed by Mrs. Petherich, a daughter of the builder, who broke the customary bottle over the bows and gracefully named the new craft Scotia. After the launch an adjournment was made to the building shed, where success was drunk to the new craft. The following dimensions, &c., will be of interest: - L.O.A., 43ft 7in, L.W.L., 28ft 7½in, beam., 7ft 9½in, draught, 5ft 4¾in, sail area, 974 square ft, lead keel, 3½ tons.

The photo of "Scotia" on Sydney Harbour, near Neutral Bay, comes courtesy of The Australian National Maritime Museum.



### **Wednesday, 10th February, 1904 - Sydney Sportsman**

#### **ROYAL SYDNEY YACHT SQUADRON**

#### **SCOTIA HOLDS THE GASCOIGNE CUP.**

The final destination of the Gascoigne Cup is again undecided, for on Saturday last Scotia notched her first win for the 'pot,' and **Bremner** will now hold it until beaten. Petrel has already won it upon two occasions, but she did not sail at all well, and Dempster will have to wait next season to try and prove his ownership to the cup by



notching a third win. The starters were *Petrel* (S. M. Dempster) and *Culwulla* (W. M. Marks) scr, *Heather* (N. H. Murray) 1 min, *Isea* (Dr. Nathan) 3min, and *Scotia* (T. W. Bremner) 9min. *Fleetwing* was also entered, but as there was more than a thimbleful of wind, *Brockhoff* as usual was afraid to take his fair-weather toy into deep water. *Scotia* showed a liking for the strong breeze, and during the reach to Long Reef greatly increased her lead, and rounded the mark over 15min ahead of *Petrel*, which yacht was very closely followed by *Culwulla*. *Scotia* maintained her long lead until the harbour was entered, when *Culwulla* and *Heather* began to bring her back. But *Bremner* was never troubled, and crossed the finishing line a winner by about half a minute. A splendid race took place between *Culwulla* and *Heather*, Marks coming out on top by 29sec. *Petrel* finished fourth, 2 ½ min behind *Heather*. Dr. Nathan drew the *Isea* off after rounding the Long Reef mark.

## Tuesday, 12th December, 1905 - Evening News

'TORN SAILS.'

### HARBOUR RACING INCIDENT.

A case of interest to yachtsmen, and others who take their pleasure on the waters of the harbour, was commenced in the Sydney District Court today, before Judge Murray and a jury of four. The basis of the action was a collision which occurred between a sailing boat and a yacht, while the latter was taking part in a race.

The plaintiff was **Thomas William Bremner**, an actuary, of 'Othrys,' Bennett-street, Neutral Bay, who was represented by Mr. Windeyer (instructed by Messrs. Asher, Old and Jones); and the defendant Orlando Taylor, engineer, of M'Mahon's Point, North Sydney, for whom Mr. J. C. Gannon (instructed by Messrs. J. Williamson and Sons) appeared. The plaintiff set out that the defendant so negligently and unskillfully managed and navigated a sailing boat, the '*Keriki*,' as to run foul of and into collision with plaintiff's yacht the '*Scotia*', damaging her, and so injuring her mainsail as to render it utterly worthless. Plaintiff claimed £30. In reply the defendant gave a denial of any negligence causing the accident. In opening to the jury, Mr. Windeyer explained that on October 28 last, the *Scotia* was competing in the Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron's Commodore's Race. While on a starboard tack, near Clark Island, and in an excellent position to win the race (in which she eventually sailed into second place), a collision occurred with the *Keriki*, which had been just under the lee of Clark Island. The result was the ruin of an expensive suit of sails obtained for the *Scotia* from England. Plaintiff was examined in support of his case, giving particulars of the circumstances under which the collision occurred. (Proceeding.) The jury, after a lengthy retirement, returned a verdict for plaintiff, with damages £15.

From "Sydney Sails":

"At the Squadron's annual meeting in September 1911 the flag officers — Sir James Fairfax, A. J. Milson, and **T. W. Bremner** — were re-elected, and thus would hold office during the Squadron's Jubilee Year (1912), a year which would be made all the more memorable by the fact that in its fiftieth year of existence the Squadron had acquired the freehold of its superb harbor-side home."



GARDEN PARTY IN THE JUBILEE YEAR (1912)

I found in a book called “**Sydneyites As We See ‘em 1913 – 14 - 15**”, the following summary of Mr. Bremner.

**BREMNER, THOMAS WILLIAM**

*Fellow of the Faculty of Actuaries, Associate of the Institute of Actuaries, Consulting Actuary and Accountant. Born, Edinburgh, Scotland, April 2, 1865. Son of the late Doctor Bruce Allan Bremner, and Mrs. I. Bremner, of Edinburgh. Came to Sydney, January 1897. Was with the Standard Life Office, Edinburgh, 1882-1886, Mutual Assurance Society of Victoria, Melbourne, 1887-1897, Mutual Life of New York, 1897-1907, and has been engaged in his present occupation since 1907. Is rear Commodore of the R S Y Squadron.*

*Club – R. S. Y. Squadron*

*Recreations – Yachting, Golf*

*Home Address – “Othrys”, Bennett Street, Neutral Bay*

Members of the Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron have been serving on the governing bodies such as the yachting Association of NSW and Yachting Australia for as long as they have existed and here is an example in 1930 of Mr. Bremner serving as Vice President of the Sydney Yacht Racing Association. It is amusing to me that the item of discussion reported relates to the inevitable wrangle about handicapping. The Y.R.A. scale referred to is the same concept as the Yardstick Rating System used, for example, in 2015 for Sports Boats.

**Thursday, 25th September, 1930 - Sydney Morning Herald**

**SYDNEY YACHT RACING ASSOCIATION.**

**A RULING FROM THE Y. R.A.**

*The annual meeting of the Sydney Yacht Racing Association was held on Tuesday evening, when the following office-bearers were elected for the 1930-1931 season: - President, Mr. L. C. Waterman; vice-president, **Mr. T. W. Bremner**; hon. treasurer, Mr. R. H. C. Down; hon. secretary, Mr. S. D. Wenborn; delegates, R.S.Y.S., Messrs. T. W. Bremner, W. J. Creagh, D. S. Carment; R.P.A.Y.C., Messrs. J. Alderton, F. F. Buchanan, L. C. Waterman; S.A.S.C., Messrs. R. H. C. Down, F. Lomer, W. D. M. Taylor; P.E.Y.C., Messrs. J. L. Milson, P. Ross, and C. Mack Walker.*

*During the 1929-30 season three council meetings were held, and the main points dealt with during the year were the question of ownership of last year's Forster Cup candidates, upon which a ruling was given, the Interpretation of Rule 43 (Y.R.A.), on an Inquiry submitted by the S.A.S.C., and an Inquiry as to the application of Y.R.A. rule 4, paragraph 2, which was submitted to the Yacht Racing Association.*

*The reply to the question submitted is interesting and summarised the Y.R.A. Interpretation is as follows; - In a pure class all yachts would sail level, that is, if in a pure 8-metre class race yachts, although rating differently, perhaps 8.0, 7.9, and 7.7 metres would give and receive no time allowance. In races between classes, e.g., 6 and 8 metre classes, the time allowance would go between classes and not between individual boats. Thus, if boats rating respectively 8.0, 7.7, 6.0, and 5.9 metres were racing class against class the first two would sail level and would allow the latter two (also sailing level), the allowance laid down between the 8 and 6 metre classes. When boats of a number of ratings are racing in the one race and it is well understood that there are no classes, time allowance is found by taking the actual ratings of the competitors and determining the time according to the Y.R.A. scales.*

Thomas Bremner died in 1948.

**September, 2015**

**Postscript - 23rd January, 2017**

I was sitting randomly reading the Beecroft Book. Today I noticed you mentioning not knowing about the flag in the left hand corner. It is a Scottish thistle. Google Scottish thistle illustrations and up it pops. Probably related to the name of the boat and his heritage. Loving reading this at breakfast. It's a great start to the day  
Lv Barbara Tapp (the author's sister)