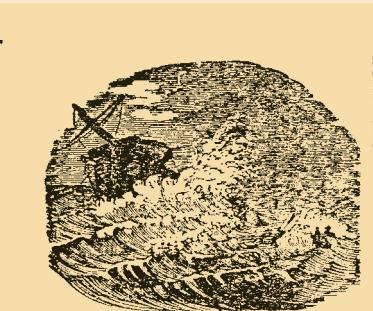


# S H I P W R E C K S & S A F E H A V E N S

# Neva 1835

**“... the women on board the doomed ship, seeing themselves thus abandoned, set up a great despairing wail.”**

CHRIS HALLS *Australia's Worst Shipwrecks*



*A full and Horrifying Account of a most dreadful*  
**SHIPWRECK**  
Of the Neva, Convict Ship, Which sailed from Cork, for New South Wales, in May last, containing 241 Souls on Board, consisting of 150 female Convicts, 9 free Women, and 55 Children, all of whom perished except 6; and 9 of the Crew; with an Account of the dreadful Sufferings of those who were saved, while staying on a desert Island, being altogether one of the most heart-rending Accounts of Human Suffering which has occurred for a very long Period.

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283 Shattock Mary  
10 Bullein Amy  
118 Drury Margaret  
119 Drury Ann Rose  
248 Hyland Ann Rose  
159 Galvin Eliza

The six surviving female convicts went on to serve their terms in Van Diemen's Land. The year after being shipwrecked, Margaret Drury married Peter Robinson, one of the surviving crew from the Neva.

## A human cargo

The Neva carried a human cargo of 150 female Irish convicts, 9 free women, and 55 children. Formerly used to transport stores, the ship had been refitted with a second deck to serve as a prison. According to all accounts, the voyage was uneventful: fair weather, little illness, three deaths and one birth. The prisoners were allowed up on deck during the day, and were then locked below at around 8 o'clock in the evening.

Transports carrying Irish prisoners were generally considered less troublesome, the prevailing opinion being that “the rigours of Irish life better prepared the prisoners for the hardships of the voyage ... a common point in their letters home was the novelty of having a blanket and a bed ‘to my own self entirely’, even if they had only eighteen inches of berth space in which to enjoy the luxury.”



## Facts and figures

Name	Neva	Date	13 May 1835	Location	Navarine Reef
Rig	Ship	Construction	Timber	Tonnage	327
Date built	1813	Place built	Hull, UK	Place of register	London
Length	104'4"	Breadth	27'1"	Depth	6'5" (between decks)
Owner	S. Masters, J. Lachlan			Master	B. Peck
Departure	Cork, Ireland	Destination	Sydney, NSW	Cargo	Passengers
Crew	26	Passengers	214	Casualties	224

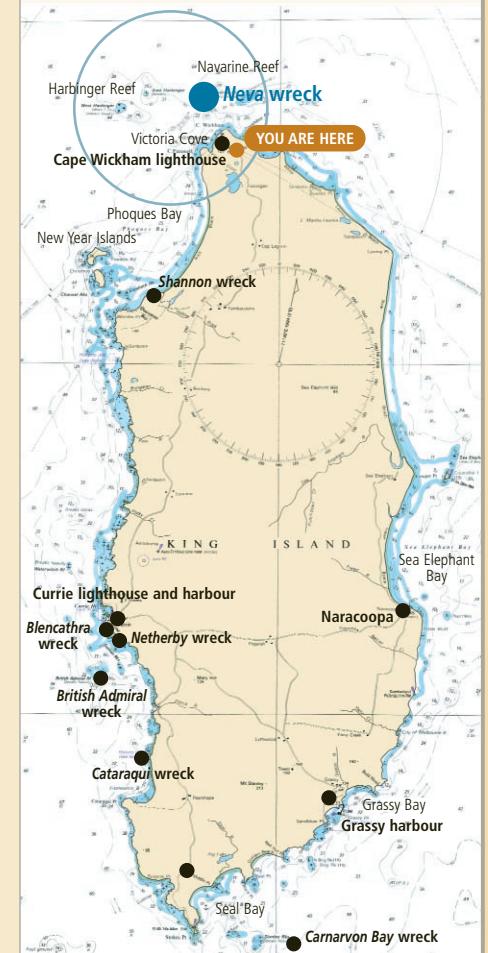
## Why did it happen?

No-one knows for certain why the Neva struck the reef—or even which reef she struck.

Captain Peck claimed his chart was incorrectly drawn, and the official enquiry blamed “the Extraordinary strength of the tide” as the main cause of the disaster.

While the captain claimed to have been wrecked on Harbinger Reef, it seems more likely from the way the survivors drifted to shore that it was in fact Navarine Reef, further inshore. With diving too dangerous in this exposed location, the wreck has never been located to settle the mystery.

Another mystery is that the captain’s behaviour in abandoning his passengers and crew in an effort to save his own life did not receive a single adverse comment from the board of enquiry.



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