



Army Museum of Tasmania

Anglesea Barracks
HOBART

Information Sheet No 27

VISIT TO HOBART by Russian Naval Corvette Boiarin¹ 1870

Shortly before the departure of the last British Army Regiment² from Hobart a Russian naval corvette Boiarin arrived in Hobart on the 25th May 1870³. The Corvette was on a cruise and had previously visited Adelaide as part of her trip around the world.

This visit many years later brought about two connections with Anglesea Barracks.

The steam driven Corvette displaced 900 tons and was armed with modern breech loading guns⁴. During the Hobart stay the Officers and crew received a warm welcome and attended many functions and reciprocated by allowing Hobartians to visit the ship and inspect her.

The narrative of Russian Naval Lt. V. M Linden is very insightful as to his observations of Tasmania, Hobart and its people. Towards the end of its visit the ships Purser Grigory Belavin took ill and was hospitalised. He subsequently died and was buried at St David's cemetery. The funeral was attended by a large number of citizens who had contributed to supplying a head stone to the grave.

The Headstone was carved by Hobart stone mason John Gillon and includes a Cyrillic and English inscription. The Cyrillic inscription reads, "Servant of God, Gregorio Belawine, Paymaster's Mate of the corvette Boiarin. Died 25th May (6th June), 1870."

¹ The Russian spelling is as per the title, The spelling used by the press was Boyarin

² 18th Royal Irish, departed 18th August 1870 per Southern Cross

³ There are various dates of arrival and departure of the vessel. Lt. V.M Linden's narrative published in THRA P&P 50/1 by G R Barrett states 13th May 1870, The Mercury Shipping intelligencer states 25th May 1870. The confusion arises as the Russians use the Julian Calender and the west the Gregorian Calendar

⁴ Examiner newspaper 1 June 1870 for a description of the vessel



Headstone 2014
J Lennox

As a result of this expansive show of good will the Captain Lieutenant Serkov donated two mortars to the city of Hobart. It is these mortars and the headstone that brought about the connection with Anglesea Barracks.

At some point in later years the mortars were located at the Anglesea Barracks Officers Mess when that building was located at Beaumaris House on Sandy Bay Road.

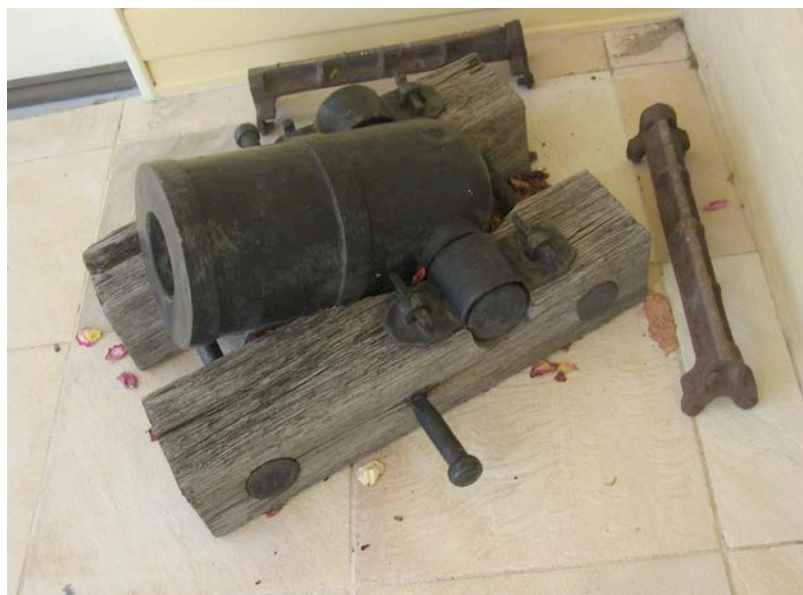
After the Department of Defence sold the property the two mortars were relocated to the Old Military Hospital at Anglesea Barracks which was being utilised as the Commandants residence. At some point in time one of the mortars disappeared. The surviving mortar is now located in the Australian Army Museum Tasmania.

There has been a suggestion that the two mortars at the front entrance to Anglesea Barracks are the Mortars in question⁵. These two mortars are English make and were issued to the Colonial Defence forces⁶

⁵ Doctoral Thesis by Marmion, Robert J. (2009). Gibraltar of the south: defending Victoria: an analysis of colonial defence in Victoria, Australia, 1851-1901. PhD thesis, School of Historical Studies, Faculty of Arts, The University of Melbourne.



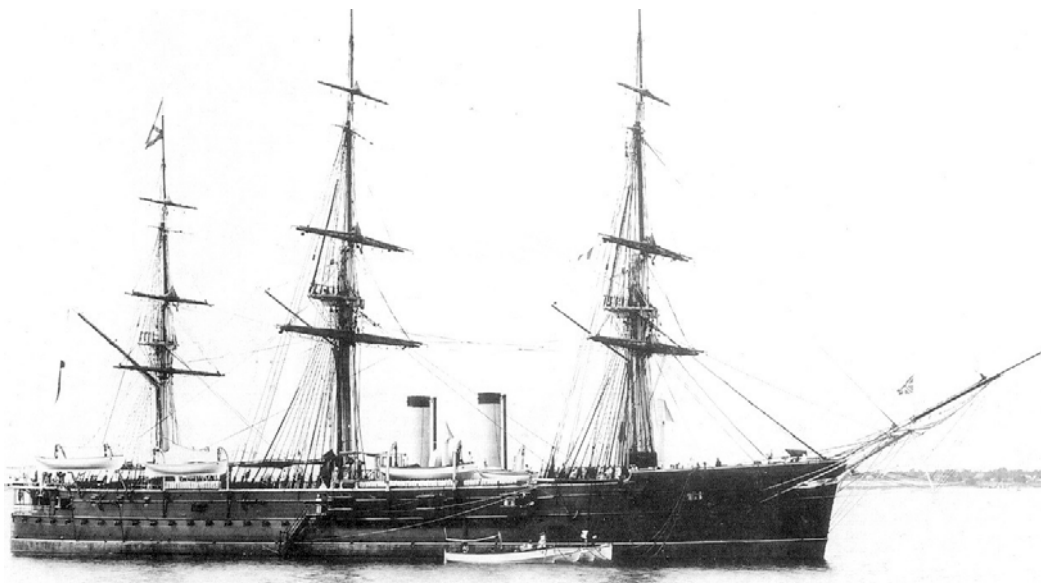
Beaumaris House
 Note the mortars on each corner of the front patio
 Image courtesy Dennison Heritage Collection



The Mortar when located at the Commandants residence.
 J. Lennox

⁶ Department of Defence, Anglesea Barracks, Historic Guns Collection HMP, John Wadsley and John Lennox 2008

The other connection arises from the interest Colonel P. H. G. Oxley took in the headstones at St David's Park. By 1972 the cemetery had long been converted to a park and the headstones relocated around the park boundary. Col. Oxley decided to save those that related to British soldiers who had died on Hobart and relocate them to a memorial wall at Anglesea Barracks. His interest led to a like project by the Hobart City Council and at this time to headstone of Purser Grigory Belavin was relocated to the Russian Orthodox Church in Augusta Road, New Town.



His Imperial Majesty's Corvette Boiarin
Military.wikia.com