

WHO CAN SOLVE COAST MYSTERY?

MAY BE BOMBORA OFF TERRIGAL FORESHORE

No marine mystery of the Australian coast has baffled theorists more than the loss of the collier *Galava*.

With her hatches securely battened down, her coal apparently well trimmed (as the hatches were on), in a practically smooth sea way, with little or no wind, she suddenly turned turtle.

No fault could be found with her construction or state of repair.

Only a week ago she was reclassified by Lloyds, the highest of nautical testimonials, and passed a rigid survey by experts of the State Navigation Department into the bargain.

A sum of £3000 is said to have been expended in preparing the vessel for the said qualifications.

Consequently, although an old ship, she was probably one of the most seaworthy on the coast when she met her doom.

No one knew her better than her crew—and Captain Pearson, her skipper, served in her for 11 years; one of the surviving firemen over four years.

NOT AN EXPLOSION

No signs of a sudden explosion of the coal cargo were witnessed—and no abnormal tidal wave swooped aboard and suddenly swamped her.

Only one solution of the mystery appears to be left. Will it decide, not



Where previous wrecks occurred.

only the fate of the *Galava*, but also of the coaster *Myola*, which foundered off Long Reef in 1919, and the *Astral* in 1924?

DANGEROUS REEFS

Between Catherine Hill Bay, where the *Galava* loaded, and Terrigal, the coast abounds with dangerous reefs and patches.

The Tuggerah bombora, more treacherous than the rest, carried three fathoms of water, without allowing for the ocean 'scend (swell), which rises and falls considerably, although the sea be comparatively smooth.

The *Galava* and other vessels before them may have touched one of these patches, or the bombora, and, without bumping very heavily, started a plate in the ship's bottom.

In such a case the holds would fill gradually, and cause the vessel to capsize with a rush at the last as the *Galava* did.

Unfortunately the officer of the watch, and the only person who could verify the ship's movements, was not spared on any of the vessels lost so mysteriously.

But Captain Pearson and the four hands rescued from the *Galava* may throw more light on the baffling subject at the inquiry, which opens on Monday.

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