



s.s. "Merkara"

Built by Messrs. Denny Bros, Dumbarton 1875, and operated by the British India Steam Navigation Company (BISN) the s.s. *Merkara* left London on February 12, 1881, inaugurating the direct Queensland mail service between London and Brisbane via Torres Straits.

Quarantined at Peel Island January 1887

The ss *Merkara* captained by JE Withers with 100 crew and 423 passengers. They sailed to Queensland from London via Malta, Port Said, Aden, Batavia, Cooktown, Townsville and Rockhampton.

The *Merkara* was quarantined for typhoid fever and tuberculosis. However, not all passengers and crew were detained in quarantine.

Mary Isabella Wilson 13 yrs, died of tuberculosis 12 Jan, and her older sister Elizabeth died at the age of 17 yrs, 5 months of typhoid fever.

They were both buried on the island, probably in the second cemetery, later used for the lazaret.

