

New Australian Author Book Release

# DEATH SHIPS

## DOUG LIMBRICK

**This is the account of what took place on the Death Ships during the journey to the colonies...**

In 1851, the discovery of gold in Australia had a huge and almost immediate impact on the colonies, as many went to seek their fortune. Shiploads of gold seekers sailed in from the United Kingdom and from around the world. Melbourne was inundated and thus became the world's busiest port...

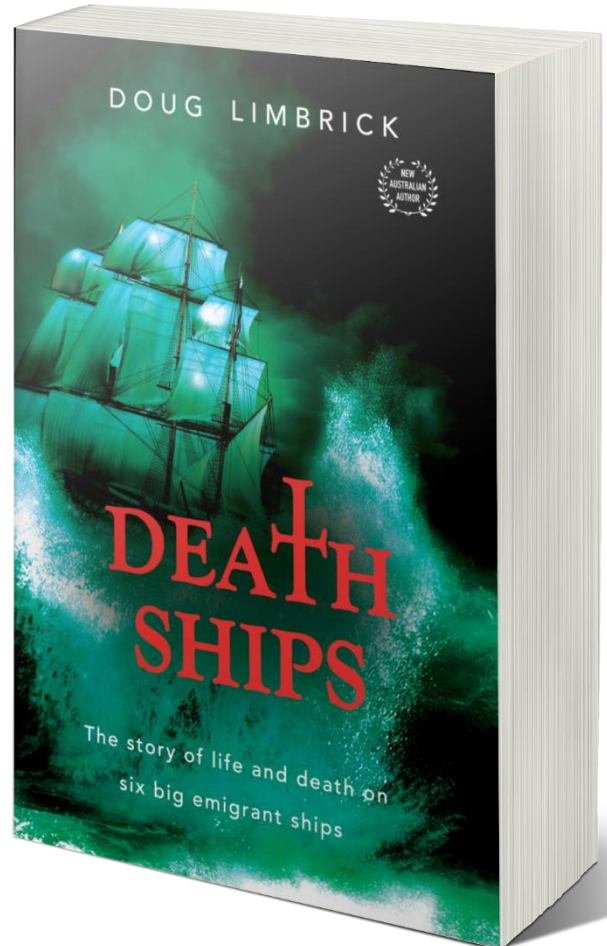
In the colonies, industry and commerce came to a halt. The mills in Lancashire were forced to close due to a lack of Australian wool. And a desperate call was made to Britain for replacement labour...

British authorities located suitable emigrants, but normal transport ships were no longer available. Many ships were engaged in making money transporting gold seekers to Australia, while others lay abandoned in Port Phillip following desertion by the crew.

Out of Liverpool, the solution emerged.

Six very large North American-built ships became accessible; *Wanata*, *Beejapore*, *Marco Polo*, *Shackamaxon*, *Ticonderoga* and *Bourneuf*.

They were quickly commissioned and departed in 1852 with nearly 5000 passengers on board. This is the account of what took place on each vessel during the journey to the colonies...



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## About the Author: DOUG LIMBRICK



A graduate of the Australian National University, Canberra (geography, political history, economic history, economics). Worked for many years in the broad area of social policy (developing options, providing advice, monitoring and evaluation). Authored many papers, reports, monographs and journal articles on social policy issues in areas such as poverty, disadvantage, housing and homelessness including international comparisons.

Over the last 20 years have focussed particularly on nineteenth-century Australian history with an emphasis on emigration to the colonies, including exploration of the reasons why people emigrated with a focus on disadvantaged groups.

A special research interest has been the social and economic changes in Britain that prompted so many people to emigrate to the colonies and in looking at the impact of the emigration process, the passage, the vessels and the arrival in the colonies.

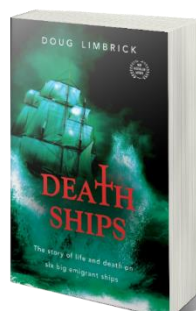
*“A work of veritable integrity and valued history that needed to be recorded concisely and honestly. A great piece of work...”* **Richard, Indiebook Reviewer.**

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# A Conversation with Doug

## **Why did you write this book? What were your inspirations?**

*The story of each of the 6 ships gradually emerged from research for previous books and it suddenly became clear that they were different to the many ships I had written about. With each ship there was also a story of the people transported halfway around the world, seeking a new life in the Australian colonies.*

## **What research did you do to support the facts within your title?**

*Research extended over about 12 months and involved significant time in libraries in NSW, Victoria, South Australia, and Canberra as well as contact with several Canadian and British museums and libraries.*

## **For whom did you write this book and why?**

*There is a growing interest in emigration history particularly regarding those people who came in the nineteenth century, what the process was, how they got to the colonies (what ships), what they found on arrival etc. This seems to be an increasing trend as more and more people get involved in tracing their families. During my research, I have discovered that there are individuals and historical societies that have an interest in several of the ships that are featured in the book.*

## **How long do you spend researching before beginning a book?**

*At least 6 months and the duration usually depends on how successful the research has been. I took 8 years to research and progressively write one book.*

## **What did you edit out of this book?**

*I often find that as a result of my research, I have lots of material and sometimes I try to use too much. Hence the writing process can involve editing out some of the detail or examples.*

## **What literary pilgrimages have you gone on?**

*I am not sure if I have had a literary journey. I started with classics at school and read selectively as an adult according to broad interests. For example, as a young adult I had a fascination with Japan, so I read about Japanese history and culture. Later I had an interest in Russia, so I read all of Solzhenitsyn's books. I did move more and more towards history writing beginning with North American Indians, then colonial Australia.*

## **As a writer, what would you choose as your spirit animal?**

*Perhaps an elephant who does not forget because that is important for a history writer.*

## **What was your hardest scene to write?**

*Given that the book involves death of many people, particularly children, being able to fully express the depth of feeling within a family and the long-term impact was the hardest to write.*

## **What is the most difficult part of your artistic process?**

*Adding a nineteenth century voice to my writing about people and events of that period in a way that takes current readers back to that time.*