

## Mackwoods Limited.

This is one of the firms which, ever since its inception in 1841, has retained its name with only a few minor alterations, but always associated with the Mackwood family. The earliest record that can be found of the Mackwoods coming to Ceylon dates back as far as 1831, when the well-known ship-owners, Tindall & Co., built and owned the "Iris," and Captain William Mackwood was her first Master, and F. Mackwood was shipped as Second Mate. In August, 1833, the "Iris" was at Trincomalie and at Colombo in the same month. In 1837 F. Mackwood was Mate, but in 1839 he ceased to be so, and in 1840 W. Mackwood was no longer Master.

It would seem, both from the records of Captain James Steuart and Captain William Mackwood, that apart from carrying a certain number of passengers, they also brought merchandise of all sorts for sale at the various ports at which the ship called, and the following advertisement which appeared in "Ceylon Herald" of Tuesday, 18th February, 1840, indicates the nature of the goods:

Sale of the Stores &c. of the

SHIP IRIS

TO BE SOLD BY AUCTION

by Mr. J. W. Venn

On Wednesday the 19th of February and following days:

A quantity of Oilmanstores in very excellent condition including very fine York' and Westphalia Hams—fine Durham Mustard Salad Oil, real Cheddar and Wiltshire Cheese, Tart Fruits, Jams and Jellies, Pickles and Sauces of every description, 1 Cask of fine Pork—1 do of Currants, very fine biscuits and Ginger Nuts—1 Firkin of Butter—Pigs' Tongues, Barley, a case of Crockery &c. &c.

ALSO—A very excellent and choice investment of Goods belonging to Capt. Wm. Mackwood—consisting of Hosiery and Millinery of all descriptions, very good black silk Handkerchiefs and Stocks of the best quality Gentlemen's Cotton Socks, Ladies' Hose, elegant Children's dresses, Gauze, Scarfs, Braganza Do, Lace edging, best French Lace, very beautiful worked Muslin and Net Shawls trimmed with Lace, Mousellin de Laine Dresses &c. &c.





FRANCIS MACKWOOD.



A quantity of Hardware including Metal Coffee and Tea Pots, Penknives, Table knives and Forks, German Silver Dessert Forks and Pruning Knives, Corkscrews &c., &c.

ALSO—An excellent Gold Watch and Lever Do with lever and all the improvements.

J. W. Venn begs to direct the attention of Messrs. and Families to this choice investment, as there is scarcely an article, but which is of the first and finest quality.

N.B.—Terms—Cash—in all cases.

Colombo, February 18th, 1840.

The author of an interesting monograph on R. E. Lewis, a well-known figure in the early "Coffee Days," who arrived in Ceylon in 1841, says: "At the time of Mr. Lewis' arrival, there were only two vessels in the Colombo roadstead and both belonged to Mr. Tindall whose ships carried nine-tenths of the cargo and nearly all the passengers to and from Europe during the early forties..... Their commanders were well known men, well received everywhere."

Incidentally it may be noted that William Tindall, the ship-owner, was a purchaser of Crown lands in Ceylon in 1840 and 1843 and from that time onwards he and his family have remained the owners of a number of Ceylon Estates, in the local agency of which the Mackwood firm has maintained an unbroken connection. Amongst his other associations with Ceylon it may be mentioned he was an early, possibly an original, member of the Ceylon Agricultural Society (1842) and a Director of the projected Ceylon Railway Company (1845).

When Captain William Mackwood next came to Ceylon, he travelled as a passenger and he brought his wife. He had evidently made up his mind to settle in the island and set up in business. On the 18th July, 1841, there arrived and anchored in the roadstead—not for the first time—the ship "Symmetry" of 382 tons (Abel Mackwood, Master), owned by Tindall & Co. (Abel Mackwood was a cousin of William and Francis.) The "Symmetry" was a regular visitor to Colombo and it had brought out many well-known Ceylon residents including, in 1838, Joseph Steuart, the brother of the Master Attendant. The arrival of the ship on this occasion excited more than usual attention and a disproportionate share of both newspapers is given up to an account of the exchange of civilities between the departing passengers and Captain Abel Mackwood who



had brought them safely to their destination. Here is a portion of the editorial comment of the "Colombo Observer": "This is only another instance of similar tokens which Captain Mackwood has received from those who had the same favourable opportunities during the four months' voyage to judge of his kindness and attention to his passengers." The letter from the passengers is given at length. The Captain with natural courtesy acknowledges the compliments of the passengers and his acceptance, "with feelings of pride and gratification," of the silver cup "which I shall ever esteem as the most valuable of my possessions." In the same issue of the newspapers there appears the following notice, bearing the date 22nd July, 1841:

The undersigned has this day commenced business as

Merchant and Agent.

Wm. Mackwood.

This notice fixes the date of the foundation of the business, which was privileged to survive the many vicissitudes of the intervening years and to hold what is probably a unique record in Ceylon Mercantile history, in having been carried on for nearly a Century by successive generations bearing the family name.

For some years William Mackwood conducted his business from No. 16, Baillie Street—where he probably also resided—but later moved to No. 20, Baillie Street, which he and his successors occupied until 1916—a total period in Baillie Street of 75 years.

The passenger list of the "Symmetry" for the voyage referred to shows that amongst William Mackwood's fellow-travellers were Mr. and Mrs. Temple. The reference is undoubtedly to Christopher Temple who was to become Deputy Queen's Advocate and later a Puisne Judge of the Supreme Court of Ceylon. It is easy to imagine a close friendship springing up during the long voyage from England to Ceylon between Judge Temple and Captains Abel and William Mackwood, and when we find very shortly after their arrival in Colombo that Temple and Mackwood were passengers by the mail coach to Kandy, it comes as no surprise that the Crown Grant (dated 3rd November, 1842) of Cottagalla Coffee Estate should be in the joint names of William