

Patron: Lord Cobbold DL
Ivry, Lady Freyberg
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THE STRETCH LIMO - NOT A NEW IDEA!

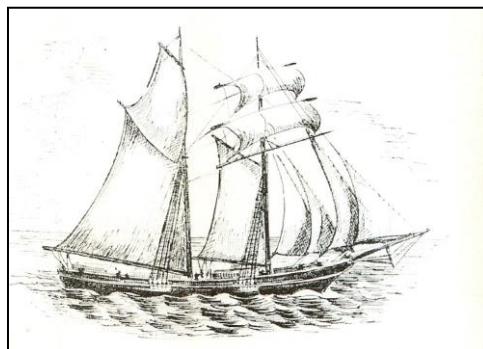
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We are indebted to John Bülow-Osborne for the story of the *John Cobbold* which is abridged from an article by John Whitmore with drawings by Macintyre.

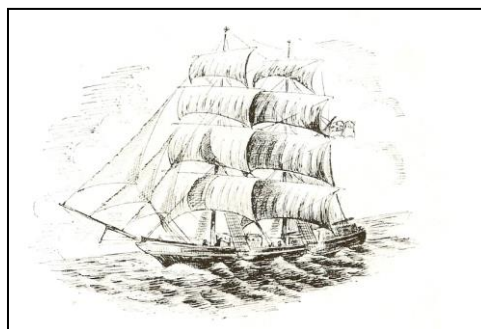
It is not generally known that up to the middle of the 19th century shipbuilding was one of the principal industries of the port of Ipswich. There were, at one period, four shipyards in

the port and between 1804 and 1813 vessels of war to the number of 39 were built at one shipyard alone. There were also many fine vessels built at these yards for the merchant service. I was reminded of this fact a short while ago when I came into possession of what is known in the shipping world as a disbursement book. On the cover of this book, printed in bold type, were the words JOHN COBBOLD. Inside was a detailed record of the disbursements of this vessel dating from the year 1847.

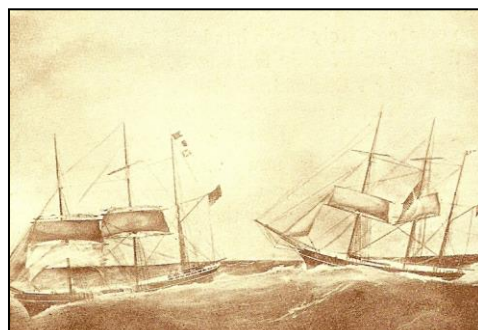
The *John Cobbold* was built at the shipyard of Wm. Bayley & Sons in 1847 and the first entry in the book reading "Disbursement of the Sch. *John Cobbold*, Wm. Jas. Handley, commander, on a voyage from London to Jaffa, thence to Alexandria, from thence to Gloucester, beginning April 20th and ended 17th Nov. 1847" is her maiden voyage. She commenced her career as a schooner but was later converted into a brig as evidenced by an 1851 entry "Disbursements



As a schooner



As a brig



As a barque rendering assistance to the *Derwent* in the Atlantic in 1874



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of the Brig *John Cobbold* on a voyage to Coquimbo". Further on there is a record of a heavy shipyard account which no doubt represented the extra cost of the spars, sails, etc. required to convert her into a brig.

Later on, in 1855 it is certain her rig was again altered and this time into a barque for the entry includes "Lengthening 26 feet in Midships as per agreement....£900 0 0". Henceforward she is described as the Barque *John Cobbold*. This is the only intimation in the book that the rig was altered but what a fine piece of craftsmanship! To cut a brig in halves and lengthen her 26 feet amidships, and fit another mast, spars and rigging, to make her into a barque was a wonderful achievement. And this was done over 150 years ago; so much for stretch limos!