

1816 & 1817

Part of Toast given to HMS Trincomalee



1816

One year after the Battle of Waterloo, when the country was finally released from the threat of Napoleon.

1816 is noted as the Year without a Summer. Spring arrived, and then everything seemed to turn backwards as cold temperatures returned, and the sky seemed permanently overcast. The lack of sunlight became so severe that farmers lost their crops, and food shortages occurred in Ireland, France, England and the United States. The cause of this was the dust from an eruption of Mount Tambora, on a remote island in the Indian Ocean in early April 1815 that had blocked the sunlight.

On 25th April 1816, at Bombay Dockyard, the keel of our ship was laid down.

Dark events continued.

On 1st July the French frigate Medusa was wrecked, inspiring Gericault's painting "Raft of the Medusa".

On 28th June Luddites attacked mills in Loughborough, smashing 53 frames. Six of these Luddites were subsequently executed, and three were transported.

During this Year without a Summer, Lord Byron, Mary Wallstonecraft, Percy Bysshe Shelley and John Polidori gathered at the Villa Diodati by Lake Geneva. The rainy weather made them pass the time telling each other tales. This gave rise to two classic Gothic novels, **Mary Shelley's Frankenstein and Polidori's The Vampyre.**

1816 was the year Charlotte Brontë was born who was to write darker novels than Jane Austen, who died the next year.

1817

This was the year that the first sword swallower performed **in the United States**, and the New York Stock Exchange was founded.

In 1817 the German inventor, Karl Drais, could be found in Mannheim driving his **dandy horse**, the earliest form of bicycle.

In Scotland, 1817 was the year that the **second Lagavulin Distillery was founded** on the Isle of Islay.

But arguably more important than these events, with the passing of the Year without a Summer, **in 1817 our ship HMS Trincomalee was launched.**

Remarkably our ship has survived 199 Springs, and 198 Summers. We all trust that she will make it to her bicentennial in October next year.

Part of Chairman's Toast to HMS Trincomalee Summer 2016

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