

A WELL-KNOWN YACHT.

Under the heading "Australia's Yachting History," The Harbour, a Sydney magazine, contains the following reference to the genesis of what has long been one of the best-known yachts in South Australia:—In the years between 1871-3 the number of new yachts launched was very small, though a few fine boats, notably Magic, came forward to replace the old fleet of racers, which had practically vanished from these waters. . . . Nereid, which between the seasons of 1898 and 1873 had sailed in 23 races and won 15, carrying the aggregate prize money of £555, had been sold as a pearler, when Mr. Fairfax transferred his flag to the Magic. . . . The great event of the '73-74 season was the launching of Mr. Alfred Fairfax's Magic, at Langford's at Millers Point. It was so long since anything in her class had been built in Sydney that her appearance was looked for with the greatest interest, and when she left the yard, in December, 1873, she came well up to the most favourable anticipations. Magic's tonnage, by the club measurement, was 28 tons, her length from stemhead to taffrail 55 ft., and from stem to sternpost 48 ft. by 12-ft. beam. Her cabin was 6 ft. high, and she also possessed two staterooms hardly less lofty. She was built of wood carefully selected by Langford's, who were excellent judges of timber; her sails were from Laphorne's, while her spars, rigging, and other fittings were by White, of Cowes. Her ballast when she left the yard was 12 tons of lead, but another 6 tons was added later. . . . The Anniversary Regatta of '75 was based on the best programme for years. Once again there was a race for first-class yachts, and there naturally intense interest in the meeting of Mistral and Magic, with Alick as the only other starter, for a £75 trophy. Mistral was fitted with new English spars and a new racing suit for the occasion, and carried a full crew of professionals; Magic's crew were half professionals and half amateurs. The course was from moorings in Laven-der Bay, round the flagship and Goat Island, then round a boat off Curl Curl, round the flagship again, and then round Shark Island, and home. Mistral got the best of the start, and, rounding the flag-ship, she eased away for Goat Island with Magic's bowsprit almost over her rail, and Alick close behind. Magic then set a jib-top-sail, and tried to pass to windward, a manœuvre which Mistral prevented by getting closer to the wind, and forcing Magic to go to leeward. The pair held round Goat Island almost abreast. The breeze freshened after passing Blue's Point, and the two yachts kept together until a schooner lying off Farm Cove sepa-rated them at last, Magic running to sea-ward of her, while Mistral, unable to

weather her, had to go about. Magic then holding on towards Garden Island. By the time the Heads were reached Magic, hav-ing been slowly gaining, was four minutes ahead. On the sea the breeze fell lighter, and Mistral crept up until at Curl Curl they were only one minute apart. At the turn her balloon jib was more smartly set than that of Magic, which enabled her to draw up, but when both had their jib-topsails fairly drawing they kept an equal distance apart. When off Bluefish, on the return, they met Alick on the way down, the smaller vessel then giving up the race to accompany them back to Sydney. At North Head Mistral was only about two lengths astern, and by skilful manœuvring she managed to get the lead round South Reef by about a length, with Magic close up on her weather; but as Magic shifted her balloon jib to the starboard side for a gybe, she got a breeze which fairly lifted her, into the front position, and when Bradley's was passed she was leading by three lengths, both yachts with the water foaming at their bows, doing a good 10 knots. Magic was passing the forechains of the flagship—Hydaspee—as Mistral rounded her stern, where she ran up on the Iris, which was starting in another race, and nearly ran over her. By the time she got clear again Magic was hold-ing down the harbour, and it seemed that the race was hers. Magic made a short northward board before she could weather Shark Reef, whereas Mistral was able to get round without tacking, and was just reaching the north end as her rival gybed at the south end homeward bound. Thus Magic reached the flagship an easy winner.