

Copied into  
Correspondence Book  
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Tokio.

October 13<sup>th</sup> 1874.

May it please Your Excellency,

I have the honour to  
acknowledge the receipt of Your Excellency's  
despatch of this day's date, informing me  
that Your Excellency has been pleased  
to appoint me as Pilot to the Marine  
service of the Japanese Government, and  
for me to take my orders from the Banchi-  
jimu-Kioku office, or its Agent: also  
that during time of peace, I shall receive  
at the end of every month, the sum of five-  
hundred and fifty yens (550 yens): but that  
should I be employed in warlike opera-  
tions, a special contract would, in  
that event, be concluded with me.

It

To His Excellency Okuma Shigamichi,  
Chief of Banchi-jimu-Kioku

8c                      2c                      8c

It only now remains for me to thank  
Your Excellency for the honour you have  
conferred on me by this appointment;  
and also to assure Your Excellency that the  
duties of my trust shall be performed  
with faithfulness, fearlessness, and secrecy.

I have the honour to sign myself,

Your Excellencies

Most humble and obedient servant,

Alfred Popper.

Master Mariner N<sup>o</sup> 7055.

I have ventured to enclose a Copy of some  
of the Testimonials I have received from those  
gentlemen who have employed me during  
the last twenty years — for Your Excellencies  
kind consideration.

A.P.

Alfred Hooper  
Soprano

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13<sup>th</sup> Oct 1874

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Accepting appointment  
of Pilot to the Marine  
Service of Government  
of Japan

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TESTIMONIALS.

*From Robert B. Sherrard, Esq., Merchant, Hong Kong.*

This is to certify that Mr. Alfred Roper has been in command of the British Schooner "Nina" from the beginning of November, 1855, to this date, and during that time he has given me entire satisfaction in that capacity.

*Hong Kong, 19th January, 1856.*

(Signed) ROBERT B. SHERRARD.

*From F. H. Block, Esq., Merchant, Hong Kong.*

This is to certify that Mr. Alfred Roper has been in command of the British Schooner "Nina" from 19th January, 1856, to 1st November, 1857, and we have much pleasure in stating that he gave us perfect satisfaction as Commander.

*Hong Kong, Feb. 6th, 1858.*

(Signed) JOHN BURD & Co.

*From John Darby Gibb, Esq., Merchant, Hong Kong.*

We hereby certify that Mr. Alfred Roper, when in command of the British Schooner "Neva," gave us perfect satisfaction.

*Hong Kong, 6th Feb., 1858.*

(Signed) GIBB, LIVINGSTON & Co.

*From John Dent, Esq., Merchant, Hong Kong.*

Captain Alfred Roper,

Dear Sir,

As you wish a certificate of service in our employ, we have much pleasure in complying. You have been connected with us over a period of seven years, out of which you have had command of one of our vessels for more than three. During same period we have had reason to be satisfied with your conduct, both in the management of the vessels, regularity of accounts, and strict sobriety.

We remain, Dear Sir,

Yours faithfully,

(Signed) DENT & Co.

*Hong Kong, 7th March, 1861.*

*From James Whittall, Esq., Merchant, Hong Kong.*

*Hong Kong, 25th April, 1866.*

We hereby certify that Captain Alfred Roper commanded the British Schooner "Salamander," under charter to us, on the coast of China, from the month of May, 1864, to the end of September, 1865, during which time he showed himself to be a perfectly sober, capable man, and an expert Navigator.

(Signed) JARDINE, MATHESON & Co.

From Douglas Lapraik, Esq., Merchant, *Hong Kong*.

Capt. Alfred Roper.

Dear Sir,

I have much pleasure in giving you these few lines to certify that you have been in my employ, and in command of the Steamer "Undine," running on the coast of China, and have given me every satisfaction.

I am, Dear Sir,

Yours faithfully,

(Signed) D. LAPRAIK.

*Hong Kong, 26th April, 1866.*

From John Lapraik, Esq., Merchant, *Hong Kong*.

This is to certify that Mr. Alfred Roper has served in our employ several years, and in that of the late Mr. Douglas Lapraik, and can be relied on for his sobriety and honesty, and for seamanship can be strongly recommended. He last served on the Coast of China, in command of the S.S. "Taiwan," from November, 1866, to March, 1868, and was greatly instrumental in disposing of the vessel to the Japanese.

(Signed)

JNO. S. LAPRAIK.

*Surbiton, July, 1869.*

From A. R. Tilby, Esq., Merchant, *Shanghai*.

Captain A. Roper,

Dear Sir,

In reply to your letter of this date, we beg to confirm—  
"That under agreement with Mr. James Beazley, of Liverpool, you, in November last, took command at Lowestoft of the small Screw Steamer "Rocket," of South Shields—of 17 tons register—and brought her safely to this Port, where you gave up charge, the above agreement being completed. We further certify that the voyage was attended with more risk, both to life and property, than is ordinarily incurred even by, and on board, such small crafts; and that during a lengthened passage of six months, all difficulties as they arose, whether as regards navigation or otherwise, were skilfully overcome."

We are, Dear Sir,

Yours faithfully,

(Signed) A. R. TILBY & Co.

*Shanghai, 11th July, 1870.*

*After the opening of the Suez Canal the following Steamers were piloted by me from Hong Kong to Shanghai, against the N.E. Monsoon.—A.R.*

From Captain Robinson, *Shanghai, Dec. 1st, 1870.*

I hereby certify that the bearer, Capt. A. Roper, has piloted the Ship, S.S., "Lord of the Isles," from Hong Kong to the Light Ship, making the passage up a little under four days; and I can highly recommend him to any one requiring his services.

(Signed)

RICHARD ROBINSON,  
Master S.S. "Lord of the Isles."

S.S. "Cleator," (*Holt's Line*),

*Yokohama, 4th Jan., 1871.*

Mr. Alfred Roper,

Dear Sir,

I have much pleasure in bearing testimony to your skill and local knowledge as Pilot on the Coast of China. I confess that at first I felt alarmed at the freedom made with several places along that intricate Coast, but having minutely watched your proceedings, and tested them by my own method of navigating, my fears became entirely obliterated, and I felt the greatest confidence in your abilities.

It was not, however, on the Coast of China that I found your services as Pilot so valuable, but also on entering this Port on a dangerous night, when no local aid was procurable, you displayed great tact in conducting the above vessel through a tempestuous sea safely into port.

Trusting that the important service which you can render to Captains on these dangerous coasts may be better known, and fully appreciated in future, and wishing you that prosperity your abilities so well deserve,

I remain,

Faithfully Yours,

(Signed) J. WOLFE, Master S.S. Cleator.

From Captain Lund, *Danish Royal Navy*.

*Fregatten "Tordenskjold,"*

*20th of February, 1871.*

On the request of Captain Roper, who has been Pilot with the Danish Screw Frigate "Tordenskjold," from Hong Kong to Shanghai, it is pleasure for me to certify that he, on this voyage, has shown himself to be thoroughly acquainted with the passages and harbours on the China coast, as also to be an excellent seaman; and can recommend him strongly to anybody who wishes his services as Pilot.

(Signed)

F. LUND,

*Captain of the R. D. Navy.*

From Captain Berryman.

Certified, that Captain Alfred Roper has piloted the S.S. "Glendarroch" from Hong Kong to Shanghai, including the river. He has given me every satisfaction, and I believe is thoroughly acquainted with the tides and coast of China. Would have no hesitation in recommending him to any one who may require his services.

My ship came up inside the Islands, and in consequence had smooth water all the way.

*Shanghai, April 11th, 1871.*

(Signed)

E. W. BERRYMAN,  
Master S.S. "Glendarroch."

S.S. "Emblehope,"

*Foo Chow Foo.*

Captain A. Roper,

Dear Sir,

You having piloted my vessel from Hong Kong to Shanghai, and thence to this port, I feel much pleasure in bearing testimony to your great local knowledge and skill as a Pilot on the China Coast, as well as to the strict and undivided attention you paid to my vessel whilst in charge.

I beg to remain,

My Dear Sir,

Yours faithfully,

(Signed) JOHN JOSS,

Master S.S. "Emblehope."

*June 13th, 1871.*

From John Lapraik, Esq.

7, Fenchurch Street, London,  
9th Dec., 1872.

My Dear Captain Roper,

I have much pleasure in stating that I have known you as a Commander on the Coast of China from 1854 to present date, and during the latter part of that time you have commanded several steamers of which my firm in Hong Kong, Messrs. Douglas, Lapraik & Co., were the managing owners. I have also pleasure in adding that I have found you always correct and punctual with your accounts; and your general conduct as Commander has given me entire satisfaction.

Wishing you every success,

I remain, My Dear Captain Roper,

Yours very truly,

(Signed) JNO. S. LAPRAIK.

*Government Certificates.*

Colonial Certificate of competency as Master by the Government of Hong Kong.  
Dated April 4th, 1861.

Board of Trade Certificate of competency as Master, dated London, July 26th, 1866.—  
No. 7055. Passed in steam at London, Aug. 15th, 1866.

First Class Government Pilot License for New Harbour, Singapore.—Dated  
Dec. 29th 1871.

First Class Government Pilot License for Penang.—Dated January 9th, 1872.

*Personal reference can be obtained from*

JOHN McLAREN, Esq., Senior Partner of Messrs. JAMES MORRISON & Co.,

4, Fenchurch Street, London, E.C.