Ghost 1: Dr Alexander Collie

I was petrified; silence was all I could hear; the ship was gone.

The vast expanse of sea, sky, rocky mountains and blue ice stretched out in front of me.

Two years ago, in May 1825, we left familiar comforts of home in England and set sail from Spithead just off Portsmouth on the HMS Blossom.

We’d travelled so far since then on this Royal Navy ship, stopping at many places, including Rapa Nui Easter Island in the Pacific Ocean – where we arrived on 16th November 1835.

And then we sailed to one of the most northerly places on earth – a place you now call Alaska – where I met someone belonging to the local indigenous Inupiat people. Their hands had carved a knife and fork out of animal bone; they reminded me of cutlery we used at home and decided to bring them back for display at the Haslar Hospital Museum.

I gave something useful to the owner in return but I can’t remember what – red cloth or iron nails perhaps?

I am long gone from this earth, now, but the objects I collected on my travels have a life of their own – once at a famous museum in Haslar Hospital and now at the British Museum in London.

Come with me to discover a few more ‘ghosts’ from the past who will share their own stories of how Haslar Hospital was connected with people and places across the world.

Ghost 2: Torres Strait Arrow Maker

My name is unknown. I am stuck here on the deck.

I lived on a small island called Erub in the Torres Strait just north of Australia.

It was here that I collected the reed which I used to make my arrow shaft, where I carved the wood to make its point, and where I tied them both together with grass.

Our weather is hot and humid all year round.

*We had hot summers and cold winters*

My arrow was collected by a surgeon doctor called Frederick Whipple who arrived in my home from Britain on board the Royal Navy ship HMS Fly.

He became a doctor in the town set up by the British Royal Navy to take control of our land. He sent my arrow to the Haslar Hospital Museum in Gosport.

My people suffered from the diseases brought by British settlers and our numbers dwindled. Today my descendants are a proud community.

Today my arrow is at the British Museum.

Ghost 4: Arctic Inuit Fish Hook Maker

It was freezing as I hammered this iron nail and tooth together.

I lived in the icy vast expanse of the Arctic at the northern most tip of the American continent.

We were very used to living in this cold world where we hunted for seal and fish to give us food.

When strangers in large ships began arriving in our world, they gave us new materials we could use.

We loved the iron nails they gave us in return for food and objects. I could make this great fish-hook from our walrus tooth and their iron nail. Brilliant!

These strangers never looked comfortable in our world though – you felt that living in the Arctic was the worst time of their life, especially when their ships were iced in that winter of 1846.

Eventually I traded my fish-hook. When I was alive, I didn’t know where it went. As a ghost, I know it came to Haslar Hospital Museum. Today I visit it at the British Museum.

Ghost 3: Dr Stephen Stanley

Nothing left, just splintered wood and ice; the ship rusted and my spectral apparition is fading.

I have watched so many times these images in my mind; heard their echoes ring in my ears.

I left my job at Haslar Hospital to travel on the infamous HMS Terror and Erebus Arctic Expedition in 1845.

We left London and journeyed up the east side of the UK and arrived in the north of North America.

For a time we explored the cold and barren islands during the short Arctic summer.

My time on the ship was very nerve wracking. I had all the weight on my shoulders as I was saving lives.

And then our ships were caught by the ice, stuck fast and crushed.

We all died. I never returned to my old job at Haslar…

Ghost 5: Captain Robert Fitzroy

Being stuck on board ship on the open sea can be so boring. Cold, icy waves like those in the Baltic Sea crashing up onto the deck.

This was my second voyage on HMS Beagle and this time, when we left British waters in 1832, I was the captain of the ship!

My friend William Burnett at Haslar Hospital asked me to collect animal specimens for study during my travels.

We travelled to many places including the Galapagos Islands where I collected a finch that helped Charles Darwin come up with his theory of evolution.

Our journey around the world was a great adventure but sometimes was exhausting – we stopped a lot and it often smelt bad.

When we arrived home, I visited Haslar Hospital and its museum and gave my collections to the Natural History Museum in London.

**Ghost 6: Tahitian Stone Carver**

Search for Tahiti on the British Expeditions of Empire C18th – C19th map and use the information you find and the examples above to write this story