

Leaders and Larrikins
Great Australian Stories

Christopher Reynolds

Leaders and Larrikins: Great Australian Stores

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Reynold Learning

Published in 2023 by
Reynold Learning Pty Ltd., Australia
5 Rosebank Ct.,
Tallebudgera, Qld, 4228
Australia
Website: www.reynoldlearning.com
Phone: +61422467842

Title: Leaders and Larrikins: Great Australian stories
ISBN: 978-0-6489715-6-6

Illustrations sourced from the public domain. Special acknowledgement
to the State Library of New South Wales and the State Library of Victoria.
Text by Christopher Reynolds
First published 2024 in Australia

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Preface

Content

Introduction [to be rewritten]

Interesting Stories

Story 1 William Dampier

Story 2 James Cook

Story 3 The First Fleet

Story 4 The Secret Plan behind the Australian Settlement

Story 5 Arthur Phillip

Story 6 Henry and Susannah Kable

Story 7 The Settlement of New South Wales

Story 8 George Cribb

Story 9 John Macarthur

Story 10 The Rocks

Story 11 The Irish Rebellion of 1804

Story 12 Lachlan Macquarie

Story 13 Hamilton Hume

Story 14 Matthew Flinders

Story 15 Archibald and Caroline Chisholm

Story 16 Gold

Story 17 William Wentworth

Story 18 Thomas Wills

Story 19 Daisy Bates

Story 20 The BHP

Introduction

In 1786, the French were building their navy and preparing for war. The British East India Company was concerned that the French were planning to increase their interests in Asia and Southeast Asia and thereby threaten their enterprise. Captain Arthur Phillip, working as a British spy for the Secret Service of the Office for War and the Colonies, relayed information to Lord Sydney in 1785 that the French had sent two ships into the Pacific. Baron James Harris, Britain's Ambassador to The Hague in Holland, wrote letters from 1786 to 1787 expressing his concern for the French naval build up: Britain would have to take action immediately, he said. Prime Minister Pitt gathered a small group of friends at his home to discuss the matter.

A decision was made to establish a military base at Botany Bay in James Cook's New South Wales, New Holland. But, under international law, to claim land to be a British possession, the law required that a settlement be established: A military outpost was insufficient. Unlike the American colonies where a Royal Charter was granted to private joint stock companies to establish colonies, there was no commercial interest in establishing a colony in New Holland where no viable agriculture could be determined and where no foreseeable return on investment could be imagined. The government would have to pay for the creation of a settlement themselves. Further, people sentenced to transportation to be managed by accredited overseers would have to be reassigned to the oversight of a governor of the colony in order to populate and develop it.

People sentenced to transportation by the British courts were not criminals, as such, because 'transportation' was a judicial designation to give a person a 'second chance at life' - a determination to reform a person to find and build for themselves a better life. The law intended to get people out of their deprivation and transport them to another place, for their own good. Until otherwise dispersed, transportation effectively made offenders into something similar to 'indentured servants' of the governor of the colony. Transportees were treated by Governor Phillip in the same way as the marines; the transportees lived in barracks rather than prisons; transportees were allowed to live with their families; a transportee could bring a case before the New South Wales courts; transportees could start their own businesses; and even possible for families to travel with transportees to Australia and start a new life.

There were three kinds of people arriving in Australia with the First Fleet: The military officers and marines; the transportees and their families; and free settlers - people who came of their own accord. Within a decade or so there emerged a fourth cohort of people: the Caucasian, or White, native born. These people were nicknamed 'currency lads and lasses' (as to 'Sterling' which signified the English born). Aboriginal, or Indigenous, people began to live among the settlers from the second year of the settlement in Sydney and added to the montage of people who forged out a new society.

In consideration of the tribes of natives living in Australia, there could be no treaty with them as they were considered across the world as a divided war faring people with no national leadership: a collection of stone age societies and 'the most primitive people on earth'. However, Britain would make them all British subjects with full British benefits and services and protection under the law. They would take care of them.

The collection of interesting characters and stories in this *Leaders and Larrikins: Great Australian Stories* tell of people and the contexts in which they lived during the first 120 years of settlement in Australia.

The material here presented in this *Leaders and Larrikins* is taken from the primary publication entitled *What a Capital Idea – Australia 1770-1901*.

Story 1

William Dampier

Harold Underhill stepped from the coach at the docks of Plymouth Harbour, England. It was July, the summer of 1843. The sea air was fresh. The sun danced across the water providing a morning glow as seagulls circled the dock looking for scraps of food. Harold's trip down from Birmingham had concluded without incident, despite the condition of the roads being what they were. He was on vacation from his employment as a mathematics teacher at the Birmingham Public School and looked forward to spending time with his uncle at the seaside. His uncle was a retired naval officer, Captain George Underhill, and a veteran of the Battle of Trafalgar in the Napoleonic Wars, some 35 years earlier.

"There you are, young fellow," said Captain George enthusiastically. "Survived the coach trip, I see. Nothing broken?" he laughed.

Harold shook hands with his uncle, returned the laugh with "No, nothing broken."

"Now come along, I have our afternoon all planned out. James here, will take your bags up to the house and we will set off to look through the seaside markets. It only happens once a month. There's always some little treasure of interest. Then, we will head off for an early tea at a delightful public house along the way where we can catch up. That is, if you are up for it young fella'?"

Yes, Uncle, I'm up for it," replied Harold with a smile.
"Good, then off we go."

James nodded to his master, picked up the bags and strolled off towards the house.

The market was always of interest to the old sea dog. The two men casually wandered through the stalls looking at knickknacks.

"Look at this Uncle. An old Spanish sword. It must have seen some action," said Harold.
"Yes, it is an old one, all right. Not a naval issue but, still, a novel design," replied George. As he looked across the table at what he thought was useless old junk, George saw something that caught his eye – a ship's bell. Corroded and tarnished, there was still something fascinating about it. He rubbed away the dirt to read the name of the ship from whence it came. It read 'Duke 1795'. He turned to the woman who sold the wares. "How much do you want for this?" he asked.

The old woman looked at George's face, detecting his level of interest. "Oh, I couldn't be parting with that one for less than £2 (US\$300).

"That's outrageous," protested Harold.

George stared at the old crow, who had no idea what it was she had for sale. Their eyes, however, were locked in the bargain at hand. Neither spoke.

"Done," said George. "Here's ya' £2."

Come, laddie, I think we're finished with our shopping for the day. Let us depart for our tea," said George.

As Harold quickened his stride to keep up with his uncle's pace, he protested the purchase again. "Uncle, why did you pay that outrageous sum for that old bell?"

"Outrageous, you say," replied George. "Many would have called the man who sailed her 'outrageous'. And that he was, and, a lot more than that. But there never was a finer sailor or more adventurous pirate sail the seas."

"Pirate? Uncle, who are you talking about?"

"None other than the notorious pirate, Captain William Dampier. Never a ship crossed cannon with Dampier and came away the victor," said George as they reached the door of the public house. George strolled in, familiar with his surroundings, and chose a table near the front window where they could observe the human traffic on this fine evening. The men sat down. George placed the bell on the table and signaled to a waitress to come near.

"We'll have two pints of ale and two serves of your fine Irish stew with fresh bread, if you please."

The waitress nodded and departed to obtain their supper.

Harold looked at the bell as it caught the afternoon sun. Harold had never heard of Dampier but his uncle's enthusiasm for the pirate stirred his interest to know more. "Can you tell me about this pirate, Uncle?"

"Aye, he was the pirate's pirate. A master of the sea, an adventurer and an explorer. He circumnavigated the earth three times when other sailors still thought they would fall off the edge somewhere. He wrote three books about his explorations of New Holland. He inspired other authors and explorers. But, the great mystery was, and remains, where did he hide his treasure? Tens of thousands of pounds in Spanish gold disappeared when he was Captain of the *Duke*. You may not know of Dampier, but I am sure the Spanish are cursing him still."

The waitress returned with ale, stew and fresh bread and placed it all before her customers. The men lifted their putter mugs to clink as they touched across the table, with 'Cheers', as they acknowledged each other's friendship.

Having taken a swig of the ale and then lifting fork to mouth, Harold felt unsatisfied with hearing just a summary of the pirate's adventures, and, of hidden treasure. He had to know more. "Uncle, tell me the tale of William Dampier and his treasure."

George put down his mug. "Dampier was born in England in 1651. At age 22 he joined the British Navy for a short time and then went to sea as a navigator on a pirate ship called the *Cygnets*, under Captain James Swan. Swan plundered Spanish ships and ports in Panama and Peru on the west coast of South America. Other sea captains came to join Swan and at one stage they had 10 ships in their pirate fleet. On a trip across the Pacific, Swan decided to stay and live in Mindanao, in the Philippines.

This was in 1688, and Dampier, now the Captain of the *Cygnets*, along with the other pirate captains, decided to sail west in the belief they could reach Batavia (Jakarta) in Indonesia. They came through islands south of New Guinea and followed the coast of New Holland southwest for a time. The *Cygnets* needed repairs so Dampier pulled into the shore at a place he called Kings Sound. The other pirate captains would not wait for Dampier and so moved on, sailing north. It took three months to repair the *Cygnets* and Dampier made notes in his journal regarding the animals and vegetation he saw, as well as the Aborigine, or, indigenous people, – which means the same thing.

The repairs completed, Dampier sailed north towards Indonesia. But, a terrible, nah, ferocious storm blew up: A tornado.

‘Look smart ye swabs
Yelled the Captain from the wheel
The wind has changed
We swing about
This storm will test our keel

Ye scallywags
Climb up the mast
And tie the sails firm
Make all secure down below
We’re running from the storm’

And run he did. The storm raged for 12 days. Dampier could do nothing but drive forward. In the dark of the storm, he could take no bearing from sun nor stars. He knew not where he was nor where he was going. Three men washed overboard. The crew thought they would all perish as the ship climbed the mountainous waves before them only to fall into the valleys beyond. Time past, the crew spied land, the storm abated, but tempers remained high.

‘We’re pirates, not explorers’, declared the quartermaster. The parrot on his shoulder mimicked what he said: “Aye, we’re pirates. Pieces of eight. Pieces of eight.” The men had had enough of Dampier and his note taking and map making. In the early hours, men burst into Dampier’s cabin and hauled him on deck. ‘We’re taking over the ship and putting you and your mate, Moody here, ashore on yonder island. We’ll give you food and water and you can take ye’ swords with ye’, said the quartermaster. Dampier quickly sized up the situation. There was not a man to stand with him other than Moody. ‘You don’t value my notes, as you say,’ said Dampier. ‘If I can have my books I will cause you no trouble.’ The quartermaster considered the request, grunted, and said, “Aye, ye’ can have ye’ books, for what they’re worth to you on an island.” He laughed. The two men were marooned on the island and the *Cygnets* sailed away.

Dampier and Moody were left on an island north of Sumatra. There were natives on the island and Dampier befriended a young fellow by the name of Giolo. He was covered in tattoos from head to toe. He was a prince in his tribe.

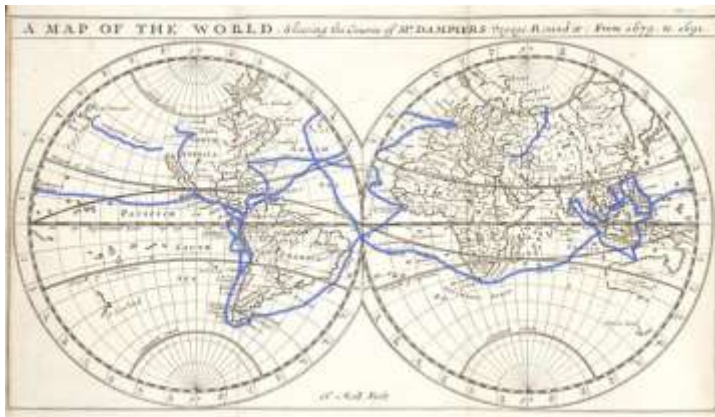
In discovering where he was, Dampier persuaded Giolo to travel with him back to England. The three men made their way to Sumatra and Dampier took work with a British East India Company outpost as a military gunner. Moody travelled alone further south. It was now 1691 and time to return to England. A ship, the *Defence*, came into the harbour. But the governor of the outpost was not about to let Dampier leave. He would be shot for



Giolo

desertion if he was caught. Dampier struck a deal with the ship's captain and he and Giolo stowed away on the *Defence* until it was safely out of the harbour and away from trouble.

On reaching England, Dampier had not a penny. Giolo was an instant celebrity because of his tattoos and Dampier made enough money showing him off to the public to keep him and the boy in reasonable comfort while he wrote up his notes as a book. In 1697, Dampier had his first book published: *A New Voyage Around the World*, for he had, indeed, sailed around



William Dampier's First Circumnavigation of the Earth

the world. Dampier himself, was now the celebrity. He found himself invited to dinners with the aristocracy. 'Now tell me Captain Dampier, do you enjoy being a pirate? I mean, all that cannon fire, bullets and blood?' went the conversations."

"Uncle, that is amazing. He sailed across the Pacific, faced mutiny and desertion, escaped from Sumatra and then wrote a

book!" exclaimed Harold.

"Aye, but the story is just getting started," said George.

"Dampier's new book was the first book written about New Holland. The Admiralty was extremely interested in Dampier's explorations. In 1698, they gave Dampier command of *Roebuck*, a 26 gun naval ship with the mission to go back to New Holland on a scientific expedition to explore the coastline and take further notes about the country, with particular interest in possible environments for defence."

"But all did not go well right from the start. You see, half the crew were navy seamen and the other half were of Dampier's choosing. The navy crew liked things done to regulation but the pirate had no care for regulations. Trouble



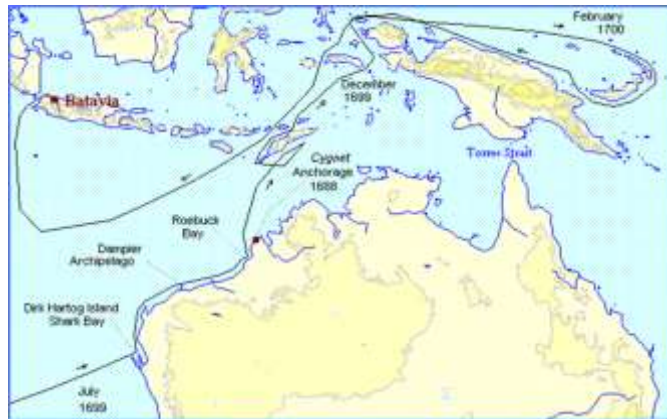
The Roebuck

was inevitable. Dampier sailed down the African coast then headed across the Atlantic to Rio de Janeiro, in Brazil. Seamen, whether merchant, naval or pirate, enjoyed the weather and the delights of this Portuguese party town and Dampier stayed there for a month."

"Dampier's second in command was a naval officer: First Lieutenant George Fisher. In Brazil, Fisher argued with Dampier to the point that it became a fight. Dampier beat Fisher badly and then had him thrown into the local prison. Dampier left port without him and sailed around Cape of Good Hope and across the Indian Ocean to the west coast of New Holland, stopping at a place he called Shark Bay. He spent months taking notes and making maps of the coastline. He sailed to Timor and around New Guinea and if it hadn't been for

the need of ship repairs, he would have managed to discover the east coast of New Holland, some 70 years before James Cook.”

“The *Roebuck* journeyed to Batavia and then headed home to England but the rot of the timbers of the ship was so bad that it had to be run aground on Ascension Island., 100 miles (200 kilometres) from the west coast of Africa. So there was Dampier and his crew sitting on the beach of an island waiting to be rescued. After five weeks, an East India Company ship came past and rescued Dampier and his men. Dampier was back in England in 1701. However, Fisher had made it back to England before him and had lodged formal complaints to the Admiralty. When Dampier arrived he was court marshalled and stripped of his pay for his journey. Again, he was penniless. But, again, he published. This time his notes were published in two volumes: *A Voyage to New Holland*, in 1703 and 1709.”



Dampier's Second Circumnavigation of the Earth

He was told by his publisher that they needed a portrait of him to put on the cover of the books so he was to clean himself up, comb his hair and get some new clothes. He looked good for the portrait but he didn't look at all like William Dampier, the pirate.”



William Dampier

“In 1701, to Dampier's good fortune, war broke out between England and Spain. The Admiralty could see an advantage in letting Dampier loose to plunder Spanish ships. So they gave him the *St George*, and licensed him as a 'privateer', which meant that he was an 'authorised' pirate and British ships would leave him alone. The *St George* was a 26 gun battleship with a crew of 120 men. The Admiralty also gave him a second and smaller ship, the *Cinque Ports*, to accompany him. The *Cinque Ports* was captained by the 23 year old quartermaster, Alexander Selkirk. Six months into the voyage, Selkirk complained that his ship was unseaworthy. Dampier would hear nothing of his complaints or stop for repairs. Selkirk argued with Dampier, refused to sail with him any further and asked to be put ashore. Dampier stopped in the Juan Fernandez Islands, off the west coast of South America and had Selkirk put ashore, with food and supplies. The *Cinque Ports* later sunk, by the way, and the eight survivors were captured by the Spanish.”

“Dampier had limited success off the South American coast and decided to sail for home via Indonesia. He journeyed around Cape Town and returned to England in 1707.”



The Duke and Duchess

“A year later, Dampier was off again. This time for a private consortium who would have Dampier as sailing master over two ships, the *Duke* and the *Duchess*, to plunder Spanish gold. And here lies the novelty of the bell that sits before you on the table,” said George to Harold, with a smile.

“But to continue. Dampier left England in 1708. The ships sailed around Cape Horn to the west coast

of South America to begin their conquest. In January, 1709, the ships were sailing through the Juan Fernandez Islands when the crew spotted smoke. Dampier drew to shore to take a look and discovered Alexander Selkirk, still alive, after four years. He was dressed in goat skins, including a goatskin hat and boots, and carried a crudely made umbrella. He could hardly speak, having no company for the four years. Dampier took him on board.”

This story is unbelievable, Uncle,” said Harold.

“Oh, it is believable, young Harold,” said George as he lifted his mug to finish his second ale. “While you are just now hearing of William Dampier, you may be familiar with stories that have been written with Dampier’s adventures in mind: Daniel Defoe’s *Robinson Crusoe*, and Jonathan Swift’s *Gulliver’s Travels*.”

“What, Swift and Defoe used Dampier’s stories to write their books?” asked Harold.

“Oh, and several other writers as well. Then Captain James Cook and Sir Joseph Banks were heavily influenced by Dampier’s writing, to mention just two. But here comes the best part of the story,” said George.

“The *Duke* and *Duchess* continued to engage the Spanish in sea battles. While sinking ships as they went, they captured two ships that remained in seaworthy condition and Dampier had them join his fleet. Now, in one of these battles with the Spanish, they crossed cannon with a galleon off the coast of Mexico. The battle went on for quite some time. The galleon was a taller ship so Dampier had get up in close so that its cannons were too high to cause him much damage. At the same time, being in close meant that he could fire directly into its hull, causing the lower decks to flood and slowly sink. The galleon may have been a larger ship with three levels of guns but Dampier had his victory and captured £147,000 (US\$40 million) of Spanish gold.”



The Buccaneers by Frederick Judd Waugh

“The ships returned to England in 1711 but there was no treasure to be handed to the consortium. They wanted not just their share, they wanted the lot. An argument ensued and Dampier left the ships and cargo to them but that wasn’t the last of it. There was no proof that Dampier had taken the gold. Aye, that was the point: while the consortium and captains alike suspected that Dampier had stolen the treasure, there was no evidence to the fact,” said George.

George stopped talking, drew a swig of his ale and looked at the passersby in the street through his window, and smiled.

“What do you think happened, Uncle?” asked Harold.

George turned and looked at his nephew. His eyes lit up with excitement. He leaned forward and whispered, “Dampier may have circumnavigated the world three times, drawn maps of New Holland, he may have been an explorer, an adventurer, and even a genius, but, laddie, he was still a pirate. He did what pirates do with treasure: He buried it. But where? On which island? You’re not the first to ask, and ye’ won’t be the last. Someday, someone will write a book about it all and call it ‘Treasure Island’, you wait.”

“To be sure, to be sure, me heartie, there’s a mystery to be solved yet,” whispered Captain George with a glint in his eye and the knowing smile of a pirate.

George put his hand on the bell as if it could speak and sound out a clue to the tale. “Where is Dampier’s treasure?”

Looking back to Harold, he said, “Wouldn’t ye’ like to know?”



Dampier hides his Gold

Story 2

James Cook

HMS Pembroke was off the coast of Newfoundland, Canada. It was the evening of a winter's day in 1758. The sun had set and a strong wind announced the coming storm. Waves were rising up to 9 feet (3 metres) high.

Captain John Simcoe sat at his desk in his room at the rear of the vessel. The ship's master stood in the doorway, bracing himself against the door, as the vessel rose and fell in the valleys of the raging sea.

"Get the main sail secure and anything not tied down below deck immediately," yelled Simcoe across the room. "This storm looks bad. And get that nutter Cook off the quarterdeck as well. I don't care if he says he can see the Archangel Michael himself in the heavens above. Cook and his telescope have got to get inside. He takes his job too seriously. Drag him if you must."

The ship's master nodded and slammed the door against the wind rushing through the cabin as he left.

The doors opened into a meeting room at the Admiralty. It was February 16, 1768. The room was rowdy as men from the Royal Society sat before the First Lord of the Admiralty, Edward Hawke. Hawke, with several naval commanders sat at desk in front of the crowd of 50 distinguished gentlemen listening to their petition as they waved their papers at him. Hawke stood up and banged down his gavel.

"Order, order," he commanded. "I realise that King George has given his assent to your expedition," he yelled over the agitated gathering, "to go off to Tahiti and watch Venus cross the sun but I will not have one of your own, by way of Alexander Dalrymple, take command of one of my naval vessels. I would rather cut off my right hand than give command of a navy ship to a noncommissioned captain."

With that the Royal Society of scientists sprang to their feet yelling abuse again.

"Order, order," Hawke said again. "This is how the matter is settled. You, because of the King's agreeance with your venture, can go off to Tahiti on one of His Majesty's ships but it will be commanded by James Cook. This is my final word on the matter."

The Society men slowly took their seats, turning to each other with but one question; who was James Cook?



The Admiralty, Whitehall, London

James and his younger sister ran through the grass on a Saturday evening in August, 1740 on Aireyholme Farm, on the slopes of Roseburry Topping, near Great Ayton. James was 12 years old and Christiana was nine. Their father was the foreman of the farm and this was

Saturday, a day off from school, when they could run and play and get out of the house in this fine summer weather. They had climbed up Roseburry Topping and James had brought his simple telescope with him.

Laughing as they ran, James threw himself down in the grass, looking up at the sky, and Christiana threw herself down next to him, still giggling.

Fiddling with a piece of grass between her fingers, and looking up at the clouds as they turned orange from the setting sun, she said, "Do you think we'll see anything?"

"Well, first, in a minute or two, we will see a star, which is really a planet, called Venus. It comes out at dusk before all the others. All the planets and stars are really out there anyway. It is just that we can't see them until it gets dark," said James.

Christiana had to think about this. "Father says you are doing really well at school and that one day you will grow up to probably be a mathematics teacher."

"Um, maybe, but I like solving practical problems and I like maps and I like astrology," said James.

"What's ast.. astronomy?" asked Christiana

"It's what we are doing now. Looking at the stars. Learning about the stars. And then learning about the movement of the earth by watching the stars," said James.

"And you can get a job doing this?"

"Oh, when I am good enough, I can go to sea and work for the Navy."

James and Christina lay back and watched the night sky emerge.

Lord Edward sat at his desk in the Admiralty. "Come in here will you Jones."

Harold Jones, Lord Edward's secretary, jumped up from his desk, pushing his chair back, and walked in to his Lordship's office to stand before the desk.

Without looking up, Lord Edward lifted two pieces of paper towards Jones. "Take these. They are the orders for Cook. One paper says he is to take that Royal Society lot over to Tahiti. The second paper are orders for Cook, once the Tahiti business is finished, to sail directly south and journey down to the 40th parallel south and see if he can find a continent or something. I believe there has got to be some land mass down there and I want Cook to make some use of his time in the Pacific and see if he can find it. After that venture, he can go off to New Zealand and map that for us. He can make his own way home after that. I don't care how. Oh, and you better mark the pages 'Secret' in order to make them official, I suppose."

Jones took the pages. "Will there be anything else, your Lordship?"

"Now that you mention it, yes. Have a directive drawn up to make Cook a lieutenant. If he is going to lead this Royal Society crowd anywhere he better have a rank they will respect," said Hawke.

With that, Jones turned and left the room.

It was the morning of August 18, 1768, six months after the meeting between Lord Edward and the Royal Society. Lord Edward sat at his desk with his chair turned slightly sideways so he could read the opened morning newspaper.

"Jones, could you come in here please," Hawke bellowed.

Jones entered the room and stood before the desk. Hawke closed the newspaper, but keeping his place in the paper with his fingers, turned his chair to face Jones.

“Jones, on August 5, I read in both the *Lloyds Evening Post*, and, the *St. James Chronicle* all the details of the Tahiti voyage as obviously provided by the Royal Society. By George, they even told the press who was included in the company to observe the Venus crossing. One might have expected as much from the Royal Society to blow their own trumpet. But this morning, Jones, I read in the *London Gazette*,” Hawke opened the paper found his place and read, “the gentlemen who are to sail in a few days for George’s Land with an intention to observe the Transition of Venus, are likewise, we are credibly informed, to attempt some new discoveries in that vast unknown tract, above the latitude 40.” Hawke closed his newspaper. “Now Jones, I expected those politically naïve buffoons at the Royal Society to splash news that promoted their self-interests. I mean, when I had you write ‘Secret’ on the commissions to James Cook, I suspected that the Royal Society couldn’t keep a secret even if their life depended on it. And thank goodness, their lives don’t, in this instance, depend upon it. But, Jones, the thing that is disturbing about this morning’s news story is that little phrase ‘we are credibly informed’.” Hawke lent forward on the desk, put his hands to his face, and slowly drew them down past his chin. “Jones, it would appear that this reporter believes that he has a more ‘credible’ source than any of the Royal Society fraternity and I am left to wonder who that might be. Given that the order to Cook was, after the Tahiti adventure, to sail directly south to the 40th parallel. And given that you, I, and James Cook are the credible sources for this information, am I to presume that Cook has been interviewed by a reporter at the *London Gazette*? Or, am I to presume that you have again said more than you should after a few drinks at your local tavern?”

“Yes, your Lordship, it was me, and not Cook, who talked with a reporter.”

“Hmmm, I did suspect as much. Well, I suppose there is no harm done except to your reputation. If French spies had approached the Royal Society for information I am sure they would have enthusiastically agreed to even take a cage of French courier pigeons with them for the voyage. You didn’t, as a credible source, also talk to the French, did you Jones?”

“No, Sir.”

“That will be all Jones, and, in your evening devotions you might pray that the French are not on the beach of a southern continent to greet Cook when he gets there,” said Hawke with a smile.

Jones turned, dropped his head in contrition, and left the room.



James Cook 1776

It was early on the summer morning of August 26, 1768, at Plymouth Harbour. Dawn was emerging from the eastern sky. The *Endeavour* was ready to sail having been stocked with provisions: 6,000 pieces of pork and 4,000 of beef, nine tons of bread, five tons of flour, three tons of sauerkraut, one ton of raisins and sundry quantities of cheese, salt, peas, oil, sugar, oatmeal, 250 barrels of beer, 44 barrels of brandy, 17 barrels of rum and a goat.

James Cook stood at the top of the gang plank of the *Endeavour* waiting for the company of scientists to arrive and board the vessel. His second-in command, Lieutenant Zachary Hicks, stood next to him. Both men were career naval officers and hardened seamen. Both had experienced war. Cook stood six

feet tall. He was of melancholy personality, curious, intelligent, particular, regulated, but a humane and gentle man. Hicks ran the ship and was also a stickler for cleanliness and regulation. He would not put up with nonsense or insubordination.

“This old coal transport has cleaned up rather well,” said Hicks, commenting on how the *Earl of Pembroke* had been transformed in recent months to become the HMS (bark class) *Endeavour*.

“Yes, I hear that young Joseph Banks spent as much money fixing it up as the Navy spent to buy it. Some £2,300 (US\$480,000) I understand,” said Cook.

“That, and along with his hefty donation to the Navy, the cost of his staff and equipment, I reckon is going to cost him £10,000 (US\$2 million) by the time he’s done,” returned Hicks.

“A lot of blasted junk, if you ask me. And what was it the Admiral called him, ‘a gentlemen of large fortune’. Let’s hope this 25 year old rich Cambridge boy is capable of intelligent conversation or we are up for a terrible couple of years at sea,” said Cook.

Three carriages came to a halt on the dock. Men stepped down and began to sort their luggage. Bank’s four servants hurried themselves as he maneuvered his two dogs out of the way. In total, there were nine civilians making the voyage. Apart from Joseph Banks and the astronomer Charles Green, there was Bank’s entourage made up of four servants, two artists, his secretary and a young botanist friend, and two greyhound dogs.

Joseph Banks, commanding his two dogs on leash, ascended the gangplank. Charles Green walked behind him.

“Good morning Captain,” said Banks.

“Good morning Mr. Banks. Good to see you again,” said Cook with a smile as he shook hands.

“May I introduce you to Charles Green of the Royal Society. He is with us to manage the observations of the stars in Tahiti. And these other two gentlemen, Daniel Solander from Sweden and Herman Spoöring from Finland, are to assist me in my work,” said Banks.

Cook moved forward to shake their hands.

“Doesn’t the ship look fine, Charles?” said Banks.

“Wait till you see what I had done to our quarters, and the main room at the rear of the ship has been made ready for our work.” Banks turned slightly to hand the dog leashes to an attending servant.

Turning back to Cook, he said, “I hope you are not put out too much by my taking the ship’s captain quarters for myself. I just have so much need of



The HMS Endeavour



Joseph Banks, 1776 by Joshua Reynolds

space. But I have fixed up the room adjacent, I anticipate to your satisfaction. It is my hope that the additional foods and supplies will compensate you and your crew for tolerating my presence,” said Banks with a smile.”

“I am sure my officers and crew will make every effort to accommodate your needs, within the confines of running the ship, of course.” Cook paused for a moment. “I am pleased with your punctuality Mr. Banks. Once your people are on board and stowed all of your luggage, we will cast off without any formality.” Cook looked back at Banks, not returning the smile. With that, Banks stepped across the deck and out of the way of his entourage who now all came aboard – with their luggage. The sun could just be seen rising from the east behind the port.

The *Endeavour* arrived in Tahiti on April 13, 1769. A fortified observatory was built for the observations to be made by Charles Green, James Cook and Daniel Solander in the first days of June.

“Are you there Joseph?” yelled Cook.

“Yes, I am in the main room, James,” replied Banks.

Cook walked into the room with charts under one arm and holding his telescope with the other.

As Cook put down his charts on a table and his telescope in a corner, Banks said, “That’s three days you gentlemen have been out looking into the heavens. How did you get on?”

“The weather was perfect. We could not have asked for a finer day to stare ‘into the heavens’, as you say. But the three of us have three different calculations. We will have to sit and go over our findings to understand the differentials. And you? How was your day?”

Lots of specimens for my team to go over, draw and pot.”

Cook sat down in a chair at the large table and folded one leg over the other. “I suppose it is time to quit this Venus observation and take up the second commission from the Admiralty.”

“Oh, the business of searching for a continent in the South Seas?”

“Yes. The Admiralty marked the commission ‘secret’, although I don’t know what for, except to keep our venture secret from the French, but everybody who reads in England, or France, knew where we were going and what we were up to before we even left port. I am highly suspicious of there being a continent in the southern seas but I will do what I am told. Cook paused. “I can’t fathom a reason for us not to set sail tomorrow.”

Banks fidgeted with his quill. “If there is no pressing reason to set sail, and from what you report I can ascertain none, I would like to stay here for several weeks and explore the Island, meet people and understand their culture, and of course, observe the animals and plants.”

“I would have no objection to such a plan. I am certain that the crew and all aboard would find enjoyment in our stay,” returned Cook.

“Great. I have met a young man, Tapaia, who is a priest of the local religion. He is also a man very acquainted with this island and the islands nearby. I think he will prove a great asset to our ventures and I would like to have him onboard on occasion, and with your agreeance, have him guide us south, as we must travel, to visit other islands in our journey, said Banks.

“With this too, I have no objection.”

“I will discuss the matter with my officers.”

With that Cook left the room to go find his officers. Lieutenant Zachery Hicks was on the quarterdeck. Cook sent a seaman to find Lieutenant John Gore and Ship's Master, Robert Molineaux.

When the three men had assembled, Cook explained the situation. "Gentlemen, we have now completed the duty of providing an opportunity for the observation of Venus across the sun. Our orders, as you are aware, are to now journey directly south to the 40 degree latitude in search of a continent, if there be one. And then to proceed west to New Zealand. I am ready to take up this directive, however, Mr. Banks has asked if we might stay on here in Tahiti for a few weeks and to look at other islands in our venture south. He would also like to have the native, Tapaia, who knows these waters, come aboard to aid in his discoveries. I can see no objection to his request.

"It is quite pleasant in these parts Captain," said Hicks.

"There is no problem with supplies and no problem with the ship," said Molineaux.

"Banks is paying for this holiday, so I have no objections to his request," said Gore.

"The matter is settled without dissent and we will act accordingly," concluded Cook in his quiet and reserved tone of voice.

A month after arriving, the *Endeavour* left Tahiti on July 13, 1769. The seas, at times, were rough and the further south they went, the temperature dropped. Animals on deck, brought from Tahiti, died of the cold. Cook reached the 40 degree latitude south in search of the continent but found no sign of land. [The 40 degree southern latitude is a little south of where Melbourne is today. If he had traveled to 60 degrees latitude south, he would have discovered Antarctica – the southern continent.]

Wind and sea swept across the deck and the *Endeavour* climbed then fell in the waves. Everyone was wet and cold but knew Cook must persist, under orders, to search for land. "James," Banks yelled as he braced himself against a wall outside Cook's cabin to steady himself, "it is now September. You have searched the ocean for months but for how long must you persist at the peril of all who journey with you?"

Cook, also with a hand out against the wall, responded, saying, "I have had enough of this search as well, we can find no land or even signs of land in this region. We will turn our sails west toward New Zealand and find some peace. I presume you will agree. I know the officers and crew will be relieved."

"The sooner the better," yelled Banks.

The *Endeavour* reached New Zealand on October 6, 1769.

For the next three months, Cook mapped the entire two islands. He was in his element with telescope, sextant and paper. Banks took Tapaia as often as he could, to explore, meet natives, and gather specimens. He had also found a friend in midshipman, James Matra, who accompanied Banks as much as possible ashore, showing a keen interest in subjects biological. [Matrville, in Sydney, was later named after him]



The Endeavour in New Zealand

James Cook sat at the desk in the main room and yelled for his attendant, "Henry."

Henry opened the door and waited for orders.

"Can you please go find "Lieutenants Hicks and Gore, Ship's Master Molineaux, and Mr. Banks and ask them to come here to me."

With that, Henry nodded his head and closed the door to do as he was commanded.

Gentlemen, it is now March 31st. We have completed, as far as I am concerned, all that we have been directed to do. And, Banks has gathered enough specimens and plants to open a museum. Some 250, I am informed, now fill the hull. It is time to head for home."

"Here, here," said Hicks.

"The Admiralty has left the decision of how we venture home to us. So here are the considerations," continued Cook. "The ship took a beating in the southern seas during the storms we suffered and could not now endure more battering adequately. Our supplies, while sufficient, are not extensive. To travel to England we can either go east and venture around Cape Horn or around the Cape of Good Hope. While both present perils, a choice has to be made."

The men stood thoughtful. They were all aware of their situation.

"I suspect, Captain, that you would favour sailing east toward Cape Horn in the hope of finding that land which alludes you," said Molineaux.

"That is correct."

"But if we go west and north-west, we could reach Batavia, replenish our supplies and get repairs for the ship, if need be," offered Hicks.

"I agree with Hicks," said Gore. "It would be a safer trip."

"If we go west we could get to the coast line of New Holland, which by Abel Tasman's calculations, should be somewhere about 148 degrees longitude," said Molineaux.

"It would be a safer way to travel, I must admit," said Cook, but, it would not be my personal ambition."

Cook stopped speaking and looked at the assembled company.

"If you are choosing to sail west to reach New Holland, I will have an opportunity to gather more specimens," said Banks with some enthusiasm.

"Joseph, I have no desire to go to New Holland, as I have stated. However, if we find the coast of New Holland to the east of the land which William Dampier has mapped to the west at the 112 east longitude, I will sail north and north-west to Batavia. I have no intention of spending time exploring New Holland, and, excepting for necessities and emergencies, we will not break our journey. I think the intention to return home directly is clear. Please do not be disappointed. Joseph. We have been at sea long enough," said Cook

Banks, in accepting Cook's reasoning simply nodded his head.

"So, if there are no other consideration in this matter than we will travel west and then northward to Batavia?"

The men's silence was their acquiescence.

"Thank you gentlemen," said Cook, dismissing the meeting.

"Land ho," yelled Lieutenant Hicks from the bow of the ship. It was 8.am on April 19, 1770. A strong squall came from the south and the seas were rough. By Cook's measurements, they had come to the land of New Holland at Latitude of 38 degrees 0 minutes South and in the

Longitude of 211 degrees 7 minutes West. They were some 150-155 leagues (180 miles, 307 kilometres) north of where Abel Tasman had left the coast to sail to New Zealand in 1642. Everyone on board came to the rails of the ship to look through the wind and rain at the distant coastline.

“Well Hicks, you’re the first to see the east coast of New Holland,” said Cook. “I will call this headland Point Hicks. This squall, however, will prevent us from either going ashore or sailing south to Tasman’s Van Diemen’s Land. Let’s see if the weather clears by tomorrow.”

“Mr. Molineaux, this morning reveals no sign that the gale will relent,” Cook yelled over the wind as he stood with Molineaux on the quarterdeck. “I am of a mind to now venture north along this coastline. So there are your orders. Sail us north and north-west as you follow the coast at two to three leagues (10-15 kilometres) off shore. I will be about the business of taking measurements and map the coast as we go.”

Cook moved down the stairs and Molineaux gave orders to the crew to make sail.

As the *Endeavour* sailed north, the weather cleared.

Banks emerged from the lower decks following his breakfast and saw Cook on deck. “James, hard at work with your sextant and quill, I see. I dare say, there is some truth in the title of ‘fanatic’ you have earned from your peers. But a quality I admire, and a title I am sure is said of me as well.” Bank paused to consider their similarity in disposition, if not in age. “I suspect you are pleased that the weather has cleared and you can see the coastline on this fine morning.”

“Fascinating landscape, Joseph. Gentle rolling hills, almost totally wooded, and endless white sandy beaches. It’s beautiful. I noticed smoke earlier which indicates there are inhabitants, returned Cook.

Banks turned his head from staring at the coast with a surprised look of anticipation toward Cook.

“No, I am not stopping unless we need to,” said Cook before Banks could even frame his question.

With that, Banks turned to continue his stare over the port side of the vessel. In feeling the warmth of the April sun on his face, he said, “What a lovely day to go sailing!” He smiled at Cook, touched the brim of his hat and walked away to leave Cook to continue his cartography.

On the morning of April 29, the *Endeavour* came to the entrance of a bay. The men had been at sea for a month and murmured their desire to go ashore on this fascinating land. The sight of the bay, stirred Cook’s interest. They would have their wish.

“Mr. Molineaux, make ready a pinnace and sound a passage for us into the bay we see before us,” commanded Cook.

On the morning of May 1, it was discovered that the seaman, Forby Sutherland had died in his sleep. He was buried ashore and Cook named the place Sutherland Point.

In the late afternoon of Sunday, April 6, 1770, James Cook stood with Zachary Hicks and Cook’s young nephew, Isaac Smith. The three men watch the pinnace returning to the ship with Joseph Banks, Daniel Solander and Tapaia among the company. It was a lovely clear afternoon.

When Banks had come on board, Cook said, sarcastically, “I see you have a boat load of more specimens there Joseph.”

Banks looked briefly at him then bent to brush off the sand of his trousers and boots.

“The men have caught and pulled up on deck a stingray weighing more than 240 pounds (110 kilos).

“I was wondering if you wanted to try and put that in a bottle as well!”

“You may have your little laugh, James, but the specimens we have collected here at this place, which must be called by no other name than Botany Bay, will prove of immense value to the Royal Society. Thank you very much for allowing us to stay here for this past week. But, no, I will pass on your offer to furnace up a bottle large enough to house the stingray, as generous as the offer seems to me,” said Banks, returning the sarcasm and joining in the joke.

“Then, Botany Bay, it shall be called,” said Cook.

Banks and Cook laughed and the other men present joined in.

“And young Isaac, here, gets recorded as the first Englishman to step foot on the east coast of New Holland, for it was he who first jumped to the shore from our pinnacle,” said Cook, as he slapped the lad on the back.

When the frivolity faded, Banks asked, “Did you have any luck with the natives today?”

“No. It has been the same all week. They throw darts at us, refuse to take up our gifts and mostly just run away. We have not been able to have any communication whatsoever.”

“I was reading William Dampier’s book of his journey on the west coast of this land. His description of the natives could have been written today,” said Banks. “He called them the most miserable, or primitive, people on this earth; no clothing, tools, transports or even constructions - bar rudimentary shelters. He said that they are cannibals, with mothers even eating their own babies. I believe they live in small tribes and are very violent toward other tribes. But here is an opinion to be advanced by much study at another time and by different observers,” offered Banks.

“I think on all accounts of what you say I would have to agree. And, yes, we have been here a week, and long enough. Tomorrow we sail north for Batavia. Tonight, we will feed on fish and stingray,” said Cook.

Again the men laughed.

On the morning of Monday, May 7, 1770, The *Endeavour* left Botany Bay and sailed north. Before noon, at two to three miles off the coast, Cook saw a bay of some size, although at that distance, he could not see the actual and vast size of the place. He called it Port Jackson, as they passed. Cook stood on deck every day calculating his position and drawing the map of the east coast of New Holland’ as they progressed north.

On the morning of May 24, Lieutenant Zachary Hicks knocked on Captain Cook’s door.

“Come in.”

“Ah, Zachary, are we ready to go ashore?”

“Yes, Sir. And Mr. Banks and Tapaia are ready to accompany us.”

“Well, I better finish up here and join you.”

“Captain, we had an incident last night which I feel I must bring to your attention regarding severe mistreatment of your clerk, Mr. Orton.”

“Oh, really! Tell me”

Mr. Orton, last night, proceeded to get drunk. Indeed, I would say, drank himself to unconsciousness. And while I realise, Captain, that this is an offense aboard ship in itself, the matter does not end there. It appears that an assailant, or assailants, proceeded to cut off all his clothes from his body, and then, ... and then ... proceeded to cut off the top of his ears. All this while he slept," reported Hicks.

Cook put down his quill, sat back in his chair and folded his arms. "And do you have the name, or names, of the persons involved?"

"From the information I can gather, it appears that Mr. Orton has taken opportunities to have disagreements with Midshipman Matra. It appears, from ship's gossip, that Matra has even been heard to wish Orton dead. Mr. Orton, knowing of his own involvement in this affair and his violation of ship's orders in being drunk, is not wishing to pursue the matter further."

"But you feel young Matra may well be the man to have caused Orton this offense?" asked Cook.

"I can only report my speculations, Captain."

"Well, it may very well be that Mr. Orton was very much a party to this disturbance but I must see him as the aggrieved party and I cannot be seen to do nothing in this matter. I would have you dismiss Mr. Matra from the quarterdeck and suspend him from any duties. At least until, if ever, this matter might be resolved, or, for the period of one month. Now, let us away and go to examine the large open bay before us and therein go ashore."

"Captain, we have come a mile up the channel and the depth is only one fathom now," said the leadsman.

"Alright, I think we have gone far enough in this shoal. I have seen smoke rising in several places but at a distance. Over yonder, I see smoke not a great distance from the shore so let us put in nearby," said Cook.

Venturing into the woods, the group came across a deserted camp site.

"Mr. Banks, what do you make of this," asked Cook.

"It would appear the people have run off and left these several small fires burning. I see here some large pieces of bark and I cannot but imagine that they are used to keep people warm at night, although I fear that many people have nothing to cover their naked bodies."

"They taata eno's," said Tapaia.

"Yes, yes," said Banks. "They are very poor people."

Sitting in the pinnace on the journey back to the ship, Banks said, "I notice a lot of bustard birds, not unlike we have in England."

"Ah, well, at this point of Latitude 24 degrees, 4 minutes, and Longitude 208 degrees, 22 minutes west, I will call this place Bustard Bay," announced Cook.

For the next 16 days, the Endeavour sailed north without incident. Then, on June 11, after passing a place that Cook had named Cape Tribulation, "because here began all our troubles," the depth of water varied, becoming unsafe in places. With concern, Cook ordered the helmsman sail north-east and east. The crew were to sound a path into deep waters. At 8.00 pm, the depth of the water reduced to 8 and 10 fathoms. The main sails had come down. It was a clear moonlit night. All waited for the next sounding of the depth to be read. The ship had moved into deeper water at 21 fathoms. Cook thought they were safe and clear

of the reef. But just before 11.00 pm, on June 11, 1770, the *Endeavour* hit the reef. The ship was 24 miles (39 kilometres) off the coast.

With a thud and the grinding noise of the wooded hull hitting the reef, men, tables, supplies and equipment jolted forward. Everyone was quickly on deck and peering over the rails to assess the damage.

“Leadsman, get me the depth of water around the ship as quickly as you can,” Cook yelled.

“Take down all sails,” he yelled again. “Mr. Molineaux, order the men back to their stations and wait for my commands. Get men to several boats and sound the depth of water all around us as quickly as possible. Have several men go below deck and assess the damage and water leakage as quickly as possible.”

Men raced in several directions.

“Captain,” came the leadsman, “we have only 3 and 4 fathoms around the front of the ship. We have struck the reef where the water is only some 3 feet (90 centimetres) in depth. The ship has hit the reef at the port side of the bow. It looks like we have hit the south-east side of a large reef.”

“Captain,” said Molineaux, “we are taking in water very quickly. I have men plugging the damage but it won’t be long before we will have to pump water from the hull. If we don’t get free of the reef soon we will be in serious trouble.”

“Do what you must,” said Cook.

Molineaux turned to ‘do what he must’.

“Mr. Gore, can you please proceed to take charge of a team to help Mr. Banks get down there and help him move as much as he desires to upper decks as quickly as possible.”

“How is that sounding going out there?” Cook yelled into the darkness?”

“The reef surrounds the ship on port and starboard. We have deep water to the stern at 20 leagues,” came a reply from the darkness.

“Mr. Hicks, take two anchors in a pinnace and go out a stern, and see if you can winch us free,” ordered Cook.

Five hours later, the ship was still stuck firm to the reef. Water was streaming in and three pumps were in operation. Every man took a turn at the pumps, including Cook.

“Mr. Molineaux, it is time to lighten the vessel. Guns, anchors, extra sails, equipment, supplies, and whatever Banks can spare, all need to be jettisoned as quickly as possible.”

By 5.00 pm on Tuesday, June 12, more than 50 tons of equipment and supplies had been jettisoned. With time to position two anchors to the stern and then to position the winches into place, everyone waited for the tide to rise. The officers and crew were calm under Cook’s command.

At 9.00 pm, the tide was high. Ship lifted and straightened. However, the flow of water into the hull was now dangerously quick. Cook, knew the ship was in danger of sinking. He resolved to risk all in his attempt to get free of the reef.

“Mr. Molineaux, give the order for the wrenching to begin. The time is right for our only chance,” ordered Cook from the quarterdeck.

Molineaux moved to the rail just behind him and gave the signal. The wrenching started. The pumping continued frantically below.

At 20 minutes past 10 o’clock, the ship came free and floated in deep water. A cheer went up among the crew. Cook smiled with relief and shook hands with Molineaux, Hicks and anyone nearby.

“Set sail Mr. Molineaux and make for shore, sail quickly but carefully. We are taking in a lot of water. Time is of the essence,” said Cook. “Send two pinnace in front of the bow to guide us.”

“Captain,” said Molineaux, “midshipman Jonathon Monkhouse has an idea that you might want to hear.”

Cook turned his gaze to Monkhouse.

“Captain,” said Monkhouse, “I used to work on a merchant ship and we once experienced a situation such as this and we took sail and sowed oakum, um, old rope stands, and wood into sail and then wrapped it under the ship with the intention that water pressure would force the material into the hole, Sir.”

“This is called ‘fothering’, is that right?” asked Cook.

“Yes Sir.”

“Then do it. As quickly as you can. You can take charge Monkhouse. I need your best efforts as quickly as possible,” responded Cook with a smile.

On Wednesday, June 13, all was ready for the fothering. Cook gave the order and the exercise was successful. The ship was safe, for now. Again the men cheered.

On Thursday, having passed by Hope Island, which Cook thought was an appropriate name, they came near a river and harbour, which would be called Endeavour River, and later, Cooktown. However, gale force winds and rain kept the ship off shore until on the morning of Sunday, June 16, when they were able to enter the river. During the 55 days the crew worked to repair the ship, Cook was able to converse and befriend Aborigines. On August 4, 1770, The *Endeavour* set sail to travel north to Batavia.

After carefully navigating the journey north through and past, what Cook called the Great Barrier Reef, and facing the danger of the ship sinking yet again, the *Endeavour* reached the top of the mainland on August 22, 1770. Cook rounded the cape of the land, which he called Cape York, and came to an island just off the mainland, he called Possession Island, which lies in Endeavour Strait, just south of the Prince of Wales Island.

“Mr. Molineaux, lower the pinnace and the yawl into the water and invite Mr. Banks, Lieutenants Gore and Hicks, Mr. Green, Mr. Solander, Mr. Spoöring to join me in crossing to this island we see before us. Oh, and have young Isaac join us. I will need a few men at arms, and a flag please. Today is a day to remember,” said Cook.

Within 30 minutes, all were in the boats and moving to the island.

Everyone alighted the vessels and stood upon the shore.

“What a fine day, said Hicks.

“It is a fine day in more ways than one,” replied Cook. “I am certain that we have now reached the norther point of the east coast of New Holland and discovered a passage between New Holland and New Guinea, and in doing so, have proved that the two land masses are separated. While the Dutch, and that disreputable but brilliant navigator, William Dampier, have discovered and mapped the west coast, I am certain that we are the first to discover and traverse the east coast of this continent.”

“You honour us, Captain James Cook, by including us in this outstanding achievement,” said Joseph Banks. “I know I speak for all present and every man who has sailed with you in the journey that we owe you our lives.”

The men gave Cook three cheers.

“The discovery and the cartography is yours and may you take all honours for it,” said Banks.

“Well, let us complete the task and claim the coast and all that we have seen for our King. Sailor, hoist the flag. Mr. Gore, why don’t you do the honour of marking a tree with the King’s name and date for which this day we take possession of this coast?”

“With pleasure, Sir,” responded Gore.

When all was ready, Cook stood before the gathering and said, “I, Lieutenant James Cook, Captain of His Majesty’s Ship, the *Endeavour*, on behalf of His Majesty, King George III, take possession of the whole Eastern coast from the Latitude 38 degrees South down [to] this place [at 10.6 degrees latitude south and 142.5 east Longitude] by the Name of New South Wales, together with all the Bays, Harbours, Rivers, and Islands, situated upon the said Coast.”

With that, the marines fired three volleys of small arms. The ship returned the salute with a responding three volleys.

“I think I will call this place Possession Island,” said Cook.

On Thursday, October 11, 1770, the *Endeavour* limped into the port at Batavia. By naval letter of credit, which he carried with him, Cook was given all that he asked for by the Dutch to repair of his ship. The *Endeavour* did not depart for the journey to England via the Cape of Good Hope until January, 1771. Many of the crew and passengers got sick with malaria, dysentery and typhoid. Thirty members of the crew and passengers died, which included Herman Spoöring and Tapaia. Banks was quite sick but survived.

The *Endeavour* left Batavia on January 16, 1771 and arrived in Plymouth on July 12, that same year.



James Cook’s map of East Coast of New South Wales

While the venture by Cook to find a continent east of New Zealand was of no real importance and wishful thinking, the accidental discovery of the east coast of New Holland was of considerable significance and was made all that more remarkable by Cook’s attention to detail, his abilities as a cartographer and as a ship’s captain - in fine weather and in foul.

Story 3

The First Fleet

On the morning of Saturday, August 19, 1786, Prime Minister William Pitt, 1st Earl of Chatham, had called a meeting for 10.00 am at his home, Holwood House, just 16 miles (25 kilometres) from London. As it was the summer session, the Parliament had risen for the season and most Members of Parliament had left London.

The men summoned to the meeting were Thomas Townshend –1st Viscount Sydney, and the Secretary for War and the Colonies; Henry Dundas, 1st Viscount Melville and a Scottish evangelical Christian; William Grenville, 1st Baron Grenville and cousin to Prime Minister Pitt; Henry Phipps, 1st Earl of Mulgrave and First Lord of the Admiralty, and a Catholic; Charles Jenkin, Lord Hawkesbury, 1st Earl of Liverpool.

The coach, with its gold crest of the House of Townshend on the carriage door and pulled by four white horses, drove up the path to Holwood House and came to a halt the bottom of the front steps.

Smithers, the doorman, had already descended the steps and was standing, waiting, with two footman. The footmen quickly moved to the coach, opened the door and dropped the carriage steps. Baron Sydney, Thomas Townshend, stepped out, walked forward, and as he began to ascend the steps said, “Have the others arrived?”



Holwood House

“Yes, Your Lordship. The butler, Mr. Higgins, is waiting for you to escort you to the summer room,” responded Smithers.

Thomas quickly climbed the steps and once inside turned to Smithers, who had raced up the steps behind him, and handed him his coat and broad black hat. He then looked at Higgins. Higgins, with arms dangling at his sides, gave a slight bow. “If Your Lordship pleases, would you follow me into the summer drawing room where the other guests have assembled.”

There was no need for comment. Higgins turned and moved to the drawing room, opened the two large impressive doors and stepped aside for Lord Sydney to enter.

The room was large with bay windows reaching up almost to the ceiling allowing the warmth of the summer to penetrate the room and a view down into the gardens that stretched forth for a mile. The curtains were, of course, tied back. The blue sky and greens of the garden became a feature of the room painted in paschal yellow and white trims. The chairs and lounge furniture was of light-tone fabrics. It was, indeed, a pleasant morning room.

“Ah, there you are Thomas. Thank you ever so much for coming out on a Saturday,” said William Pitt. Come and meet the others, all of whom you know,” said William as he placed one hand on the back of Thomas’s shoulder and turned with his other arm open towards the group of men.

As Thomas stepped forward the other men put down their drinks and cigars and stood up from their seats to greet him.



Thomas Townshend
– Lord Sydney

“Thomas,” said Henry Dundas, as he shook Thomas’s hand, “keeping well? Has your father’s flu dissipated in this warmer weather?”

He is on the mend, thank you. I hope we will see him out of the house soon,” returned Thomas.

Thomas in turn shook hands with William Grenville, Henry Phipps and Charles Jenkins.

As the men took their seats, William Pitt said, “Now, Thomas, there is coffee, tea, and scones and cream, or if you prefer, French wine and cigars, depending upon your tastes for this time of day. Please let young Mary, here, know what you desire.”

Thomas asked for coffee with milk with two scones and sat down.

“Now, gentlemen I have asked you here today as we have something of a pressing issue and one that is not going to

be easily solved and will take our time, wisdom and Christian conviction to satisfactorily resolve. Well, that is my intention and my hope, said Pitt, still standing.

“As you are aware, since the end of our last bout with the French ending in ’83, it has been my desire and the desire of our government, to remain committed to commercial expansion. I believe that the expansion of British trade is paramount to the longevity of the Empire. Accordingly, we need to secure shipping routes, strategic bases and access to naval supplies in order to advance British trade and commerce. Our future lies in looking East and in this endeavour, the security and advancement of the British East India Company - their investments in India and business ventures across Asia and the Pacific are paramount. But this is an imperative we remind ourselves of daily,” said Pitt. He went on.

“Although we have been in negotiation with the French for these past several years to create a trade agreement, with the purpose of serving both our financial interests, the news from our spies tell us of another plot afoot. As early as ’84, we have received news of the rebuilding of the French naval fleet. However, from recent communique from our British Ambassador to The Hague, Baron James Harris, whom you all know well, stating that the situation with French naval expansions has become concerning. Thomas, would you care to take up the issue for us?”

Thomas put down his cup, still chewing on a scone – quickly trying to swallow it, and then wiping cream from his mouth with a napkin, reached into his coat pocket, pulled out several folded papers.

“Yes. Thank you, William. Hu-u-um. It is, as William says, a situation that needs our attention. I have here for your review, gentlemen, several of James’ letters. Thomas leaned across and gave the letters to Charles to read and pass around.

“On March 4, last year, James wrote to Francis Osborne, the Marquis of Carmarthen and our Foreign Secretary, saying, ‘Our wealth and power in India is France’s greatest and constant object of jealousy and they will never miss an opportunity of attempting to wrest it out of our hands’.

In February of this year, James wrote, saying, “...intentions of France in forming a connection with the Patriot movement of the United Provinces of the Netherlands are too evident to admit of doubt’.

On August 1 past, James wrote that France intended to send troops to the Dutch bases in India.

And last week on August 8, Harris wrote saying that the crisis is growing nearer and nearer every hour.” Thomas paused to look at the men present. “It is clear to me that James has reached a point of desperation with us in our lack of resolve to respond to this urgent situation. The directors of the British East India Company have, I must add, expressed similar concerns and urged us to action. I gathered facts from our spy in France, Arthur Phillip, on the size of naval forces in Brest and Toulon and then met with William. We then went to see King George to present him with information on these affairs, just three days ago on August 16. The King recognised that the French will soon collect a considerable naval force to send to the East Indies. He said that while the French were negotiating a commercial treaty with us, they were, at the same time, preparing for commercial expansion by other means and in far off places. They have been talking to us out of both sides of their mouth. The King has given his full support for us to come up with a plan that will protect our interests. And so, we find ourselves here this morning,” concluded Thomas.

“I presume that we are not here for you to propose a naval engagement in the Asia-Pacific,” said Henry Phipps., “for you would have come to see me before holding this meeting. So, what other plan are you considering?”

“Yes, Henry, you are right. Thomas and I have been going over some options,” said Pitt. “French naval vessels, of themselves, do not create commerce. They either take possession of existing settlements and enterprise or protect colonial enterprises. The build-up of the French navy can only signal that the French plan a conquest in the East, to our detriment We think that establishing a British military base in the region is essential to not only signal the French that we are willing to defend our interests. However, we feel we should also establish a permanent settlement and presence in the. While Britain has till now left it to joint stock companies under Royal Charter to plant colonies and manage their business, the lack of British business interest in New Holland and the imposing French naval threat to the British East India Company bring the issue of establishing a colony back to us. Indeed, this current and pressing situation requires that the British Government take in hand the establishment of a colony.”

“And!” said Henry.

“Without going over the conversations that have already taken place” said Thomas, “our conclusion is to take up the option of creating a military base at James Cook’s Botany Bay, on the east coast of New Holland. It appears to be the only reasonable location for a port in that vicinity as the northern east coast is unusable because of a reef running down the coast and the west coast of New Holland offers no alternative.”

“But a military base would not, of itself, give us a claim to the land. We would need a settlement, a colony,” interjected Charles.

“Yes, we are aware of the issue and the further issues of how to entice free settlers to go out to the other side of the earth when all reports can determine no viable commercial



William Pitt, (the Younger)
1st Earl of Chatham

opportunities,” said Pitt. “Thus, we feel we should consider James Matra’s suggestion for a settlement at Botany Bay which he wrote up in ’83. Remember, he sailed with Cook. Although contrary to other opinions, Matra proposes that Botany Bay has good soil, available timber and opportunities for flax cultivation. He proposes that transportees, sentenced to a time in exile, be sent to the colony as ‘assigned labour’. Our task here, today, gentlemen, is not to argue the viability of the proposal but to determine the details of how such a scheme might actually work.”

“But let us take a break,” continued Pitt. Have some lunch. Talk amongst yourselves and resume again at half past the hour of 1 o’clock to devise a plan. At your leisure, gentlemen, let us move across to the dining room.”

With that, the men shuffled in their seats, with ‘ums’ and ‘ahs’ and few a quips, before slowly getting up to follow Pitt towards the dining room.

After a casual lunch, with some men sitting on the back veranda taking in the warmth of the sun and others walking in the gardens, the men assembled back in the summer room.

With everyone seated, young William Grenville, raised his hand slightly to signal his cousin that he would like to say something. Pitt nodded consent.

“Gentlemen, I have talked to all of you over these past hours and have written up some notes. If you don’t mind, I will read out the concerns and issues as they emerged.”

“First, it is presumed that this settlement will involve both military personnel and transportee convicts, and that there will be a need to entice free settlers to the colony. It is presumed that this colony will come under the auspices of the Office of War and the Colonies and not the Navy. Accordingly, will you seek to acquire the service of an existing regiment to defend the colony or will create a special regiment? Will the colony have a governor or a commander in chief to command the arm forces?

Second, as ‘assigned’ labourers, who will they be assigned to for oversight and care? Who will supervise the work and discipline of the convicts?”

“May I offer a few words at this point, please William,” said Thomas. “It is not our intention to send men and women to a colony where they work and wither away their lives in isolation. The fundamental principle in establishing a colony is to see convicts emancipated to build a settlement. While it will be a military base, at the same time, the endeavour is to create a civil society. I think a proposal from James Matra is pertinent as he suggests that if people are given land, human rights and the means to survive, it is very possible that they will have no need for crime and, indeed, naturally work to create a society.”

Grenville pondered the comment. He then lowered his head to continue reading his notes.

“Third,” said Grenville, “as James Cook did not give a western perimeter to his claim to the east coast of New Holland for Britain, will Britain be claiming all of New Holland or part thereof?

Fourth, will King George be issuing Letter Patent to detail out the nature of and the claim to, the land for the colony of New South Wales?

Fifth, will the governor or a member of the bar take responsibility for courts and legal proceedings?

Sixth is the issue of slavery. This is a reasonable issue for discussion as ...”

“There can be no slavery,” interjected Henry Dundas. “John Wesley and William Wilberforce have made numerous dissertations on the subject and we, here today, have the opportunity to put into action something refreshingly civilized and ban slavery in this colony.”

“Here, here,” said Charles.

“Alright, let’s settle on that. To continue,” said Grenville;

“Seventh, is the issue of the natives. From all reports of from British sailors as well as Dutch, French and Spanish, the natives live in small tribes, speak many different languages, are a violent people - especially toward other tribes, have no sense of a national identity nor have a national, or even regional, leadership by way of a king, to speak for them. Accordingly, what is to be done by way of a treaty? And under what legal reasoning are we to assume the ability and right to take possession of the land we claim?”

“Forget writing a treaty with the many and diverse tribes. They will no concept of such a proposal anyway,” offered Thomas. “Treaties are for ending wars. There will be no war with the natives and, accordingly, no treaties. We could, like the British East India Company, pay a stipend to rulers for land use and trading rights but we can envisage that no trade agreements are to be possible. Further, we will not be taking the land by conquest but by the international law of possession by *terra nullius*. As you point out, there is no civilisation, apart from tribal life and customs, and no authority able to represent more than a few hundred people in a tribe. I propose that we seek to actually care for these people and, indeed, to make them full British subjects with full rights to life as any other British subject.”

“Here, here,” came Charles, again.

There was silence

Grenville continued. “Eighth, there is the matter of religion. How open will the colony be to the diverse positions of faith and the growing evangelical movement, and, to the Catholic Church? Will we send out chaplains?

Ninth, there is the logistics of putting together a convoy of ships to transport both marines and convicts, and any families and free settlers to this place. There is the question of who will be eligible, and what animals, and supplies will be compiled to accompany the band of travellers.

Tenth, will the British East India Company be anyway involved?

“And lastly, do you have someone in mind that has both the disposition to take up the task of managing this colony, and, at the same time, the skills to manage the development of the colony and carry out discipline and order?”

“Well, thank you for your very concise rendering of the issues we need to resolve,” said his cousin. I can see Thomas and I have quite a bit of work to do.” Pitt looked across at Thomas, who just stared back and smiled. “Let us as quickly as possible address the issues and we will get back to you. Thank you gentlemen,” concluded William Pitt, feeling that it was a meeting with resolve and accomplishment.

“Good morning, Evan,” said Lord Sydney as he swept past Evan Nepean’s desk. “Could you come into my office, and bring paper and pen. We have a lot to discuss this morning. Oh, and have Samuel bring us some coffee, and, um, some scones and cream, if possible.”

Evan Nepean was the Under Secretary to Lord Sydney and the manager of the British Secret Service. He managed British spies to France, Spain and Holland. Arthur Phillip had been in his employ since 1784.

Sydney chose to sit in one of the leather lounge chairs fronted by a coffee table and signalled Evan to be seated in the other.

“Evan, there is spectacular news arising from a meeting at Prime Minister Pitt’s home on this Saturday last. While there is little we can do about the many spies lingering around our doors just waiting to hear gossip, what I am going to discuss with you should, as much as possible, remain between us. I think we could try the ‘not let the right hand know what the left hand is doing’ principle for this one,” said Sydney.

“On Saturday, Prime Minister Pitt, met with me and several esteemed gentlemen to discuss a plan to counter the possibility of French interest growing in the Asia-Pacific. The Government is going to sponsor the establishment of a settlement at Botany Bay in New South Wales, New Holland. It will be both a military post as well as an emerging civil society. It will involve the use of people sentenced to transportation to initially create the settlement. Now, Evan, make a list of things to do, oh, ah,” said Sydney, interrupting himself. “Thank you Samuel. Just there on the table will be fine”.

“Shall I pour, Sir?”

“Yes, please, Samuel.”

“Now, Evan, where was I? Oh, yes, a list. First, get a message to Arthur Phillip immediately, to stop whatever he is doing and get on the earliest ship back to London.”

Evan scribbled on his paper.

“Next, draft up a letter to go to the Lord of the Admiralty, Henry Phillips asking him about assigning or creating a regiment to go off to Botany Bay for a few years. He is aware of this task already but we better formalise it”

Sydney lifted a scone to his mouth.

“Contact the Prime Minister’s office,” said Sydney while munching on his scone at the same time, “and ask for someone to be assigned to help us draft up a Letters Patent for the King. We will also need to get legal advice on creating a British court in a place other than Britain. I suspect that we will need legislation.”

Evan wrote furiously. Sydney lifted his cup to drink his coffee.

“Logistics. Logistics is next, and our main task. We have to design what is needed for a convoy of ships to go to Botany Bay. We need to start with the number of marines and their families, and, the number of convicts, and, their families who will be in the convoy. There are sure to be a few others, such as chaplains, doctors and who know who else that will join the venture. With those rudimentary figures, we will need to plan how many animals, supplies, cloth, seeds, tools, bricks, stationary, books, and even letters of credit for the governor and sea captains to use. Oh, and how many ships we will need from the navy as well as to lease. There will also be the cost of the fit-out of the ships for purpose, and, comfort. With all that done, we will have to cost it.”

Evan continued to write as fast as he could. He hadn’t touched his coffee. Watching Evan write gave Sydney a chance for another cup of coffee, and, a second scone with cream.

“When Arthur Phillip gets here,” continued Sydney, “give him the task of going over to the hulks, and other places, to find transportees that have some trade skills, cultivation experience, and he should look for young people, and, families who want to join their husbands in this venture.”

Oh, I almost forgot, I need to write to the British East India Company and inform them of our plans and get their permission to proceed.”

Sydney watched Evan write and sat back in his chair, coffee in hand. There was silence.

“That should get us started, I think,” said Sydney. I think we should have daily reports and thinking on the run. I can’t see that we can get all this done in any other way.”

“Yes, Your Lordship,” said Evan. “I can foresee that there will need to be decisions made every day. But it is marvellously exciting, if I may say so myself.”
Sydney smiled slightly, “Yes, yes, marvellously exciting. Well, get to it. Let’s talk first thing tomorrow.

On the morning of May 12, 1787, Arthur Phillip knocked on the door of Lord Sydney’s office. Evan Nepean stood beside him.

“Come in.” yelled Lord Sydney

“Ah, there you are Arthur.” Lord Sydney came around his desk to shake his hand. “Sit, sit. Over here near the coffee table will be comfortable, said Sydney as he moved from behind his desk towards the sofas. “Would you care for some coffee and scones, by any chance?”

“Yes, Your Lordship. That would be pleasant,” responded Arthur.

Looking up at Nepean,” Can you ...

“I have already asked Samuel to bring in the coffee, Sir,” said Evan.

“Oh, good.”

“Now, Arthur, are you already for tomorrow?”

“I believe so, Sir,” said Arthur. “I am pleased that my friend of 20 years, Lieutenant Philip Gidley King will be by my side and I think young Captain David Collins’ appointment as Judge Advocate and Secretary for the Colony will be an added asset. As you know, it has taken these past nine months to put this convoy together. I have visited the three ports where the ships are docked but spent most of my time at Plymouth. It has not been a long trip south from London and I have been there several days a week. I have gone through the entire list of people on the hulks in the Thames River, and then through quite a few county prisons in order to find suitable transportees for the venture. It has been a bit disappointing, although I suppose it was to be expected, that I was not able to find more tradesman among the transportees. I was able to find at least one third of the cohort of convicts travelling with us to have some useful skill or a trade. I will plan to have them train others.”

“Ah, there you are Samuel. Just here on the table would be fine,” said Sydney.

“Shall I pour, Sir?” asked Samuel.

“Yes, please.”

“Now, Arthur, the fit-out for the marines and families?” asked Sydney

“It is my opinion, and I have acted upon it, that these people are travelling with us to be the foundation of a new society. They are being given a second chance at life and I wish to treat them with as much dignity as possible. I have had the living quarters for the marines and transportees alike fitted out the same. Although there has been some disquiet among the marines about the convicts being treated as their equals. There are some 700 marines in the newly formed New South Wales Regiment assigned to the Colony. They will be accompanied by their families, including the families of some convicts. And some 700 felons. “

“Evan, do you have exact figures for personnel and supplies?” asked Sydney.

Evan looked down at his papers and began to read. “Of Britain’s 100 colonies established over 300 years, the New South Wales settlement is Britain’s most expensive colonial venture. There are eleven ships in the fleet, which included two Royal Navy ships; *HMS Sirius* and *HMS Supply*. There are six convict transports, and three store ships. Among the 1,420 people leaving Britain for the journey, there are 15 officers, 323 crew and 247 naval marines, as well as 46 marine’s wives and children. In addition to 754 male and female convicts, there are 13 convict’s children. The ships have enough supplies to last the colonials for two years, there are

7 horses, 29 sheep, 74 pigs, 6 rabbits and 7 cattle, oh, and the Chaplain's cats, various dogs belonging to officers and Arthur Phillip's 2 greyhounds. And, there are other items: 10,000 bricks, Surgeon Worgan's piano and 4,200 Bibles, prayer books, catechisms and psalters. Among the convicts there are 141 Irish, 9 Welsh, 33 Scots, 12 black Africans, 14 North Americans and 15 others from places including Holland, France, Germany, Jamaica and India."

"I estimate that we have also loaded 26,000 pieces of pork and 24,000 of beef, twenty nine tons of bread, forty five tons of flour, twelve tons of sauerkraut, nine ton of raisins and sundry quantities of cheese, salt, peas, oil, sugar, oatmeal, 450 barrels of beer, 84 barrels of brandy, 77 barrels of rum, and, the convoy will pick up sufficient wine for the colony at Cape Town. I am waiting for the final invoices to come in before I can verify that these are the correct amounts for the supplies."

"Everything but a kitchen sink, ah!" said Sydney.

"Now, for my part, I have worked quietly to gather support for the venture among our Members of Parliament with the result that the British Parliament, just four weeks previous, passed the *New South Wales Courts Act*. The long title being, "*An Act to enable His Majesty to establish a Court of Criminal Judicature on the Eastern Coast of New South Wales, and the Parts adjacent*". This was passed in conjunction with the issue of the King's Letters Patent of the same date. In addition, Arthur, in the colony, you will be ranked as a Vice Admiral in order to convene a naval court if necessary." The three men sat in silence. Sydney sipped his coffee.

"Well, I think we have got it all covered. What a job. May I strongly recommend that the pair of you, along with your friend Gidley King, go off somewhere outstanding and have a wonderful last dinner, on me. I recommend the Brooks Club in St. James Street, Westminster. Brooks has some outstanding wines."

Sydney stood up and the other men responded to stand likewise. Sydney put forth his hand and took Arthur's hand in both of his own. "Arthur, you do a great and marvellous thing for Britain and our prayers and best wishes go with you. Please write to us as often as possible. We will await your correspondence. Any problems that you have or if you are in need of anything, please just ask. Now, off with you and please take up my suggestion of dinner at the Brooks Club."

"Cast off" yelled the Ship's Master. Ropes were thrown to the dock. *HMS Sirius* drifted from the dock as sails were opened to push her into the deep water. Other ships for the convoy in Plymouth Harbour followed the lead. A crowd of more than one hundred people stood on the dock that morning of May 13, 1787. Evan Nepean stood with the crowd on the dock to wish all well in the journey



"Good bye, my Lads", by Fred Roe
First Fleet leaving Plymouth 1787

and to make sure that there were no last minute problems. Arthur Phillip stood near the rail of the ship with his two greyhounds and in his new clothes to suit a man of his office, and gave Evan one last wave goodbye.

“Ship master,” Phillip called.

“Yes Sir,” said the man as he came close to Phillip.

“Set a course due south for 20 miles and there hasten slowly to allow the other vessels to catch up. The coordinates for the rendezvous have been sent to the ships’ captains in the other two ports and we should be able to assemble with a few hours.”

Yes, Captain,” said the ship’s master and ran to the quarterdeck to speak to the navigator.

Two hours later, Phillip stood on the quarterdeck with Gidley King.

“Gidley, now that the convoy has assembled and the ships are in sight could you please take charge of communicating with the ships’ captains and have them release all the convicts from below decks and allow them to move freely around the decks as we continue our journey. I want no harassment of the convicts, their wives and children, by marines or sailors. And would you ensure that this message is fully understood by ships captains and officers alike,” said Phillip.

“That is very generous of you. Are you sure that they should not be restrained in some way or other?” asked Gidley.

“I want them treated with all dignity. These people are to help us build a new society and I want them happy and enthusiastic about this coming opportunity.”

“Consider it done, Arthur,” said Gidley, and turned to find the signalman.

“Ah, there you are Gidley. I can see that everyone has been suffering from this heat as we cross the equator. I am of a mind to change course and head to Rio de Janeiro where we can all get a rest and refresh for the remaining trip. I hope you will see no objection to this idea,” said Phillip.

“Oh, it is indeed a splendid idea. I will have the ships know of the change of course and your generous offer,” said Gidley with a smile.

Phillip returned the smile and Gidley moved off.



On board the First Fleet

August 5, 1787, Don Lewis de Varconcellos, the Portuguese Viceroy for Rio de Janeiro, and the brother to the Marquis of Castelo Methor of the Court of Portugal, sat in the garden of his palatial manor house with his wife and daughter for breakfast. A servant crossed the yard to bring Don Lewis a letter. The servant stood waiting to be acknowledged.

“Your Lordship, it is reported that there is a fleet of 11 British ships at the entrance of the bay. The commodore of the fleet has sent forward this letter to you,” said the servant, who handed it to Don Lewis on a tray. “eleven ships you say. My goodness.” Don Lewis took the letter while wiping his mouth with a napkin.

Don Lewis opened the sealed letter and read it.

“Que maravilhoso,” (*this is wonderful*) he shouted as he stood up and knocked over his chair behind him. Capitao Arthur Phillip, the famous British sailor who fought with us against the Spanish, is here, with his fleet, on his way to New Holland and wants permission to enter the port,” Don Lewis said to his wife and daughter, who smiled back at him to reflect his excitement. “Que maravilhoso,” he shouted again. “Send a carriage to the port,” he said to the servant, “and have one of the officers, a harbour master or whoever is there, to send word to Capitao Phillip that he is most welcome to harbour his ships, and, and, have the carriage bring him and his officers immediately here to meet us. He is to be honoured. He is to be our guest. Go quickly.”

Three hours later a carriage arrive at the home of Don Lewis. Footman ran down the steps to open the carriage door and lower the carriage step. Arthur Phillip, Gidley King, David Collins and John Hunter stepped from the carriage.

At the doorway, at top of the steps, Don Lewis and his wife and daughter suddenly appeared. Don Lewis let go of his wife’s hand, and moved quickly to the bottom of the steps to greet his guests.

“Oh, Capitao Arthur Phillip, you honour us with your presence,” he said, with one hand raised heavenward. He then lowering his arm, he stepped forward to shake Phillip’s hand with both of his own.

“Viceroy Don Lewis de Varconcellos, it is you who honour us by allowing us to stay for a short time in your city to refresh before we continue our journey,” said Phillip, while holding onto his hat to keep it from falling off from the excitement of the handshake.

“This is nonsense. You must call me Don Lewis, Arthur Phillip. You are not just to be our guest, but the honoured guest of the city. We have not met, of course, but your reputation proceeds you. I will issue a proclamation to the city, to everyone, that you are to be treated as my equal while you are here. You have my keys to the city. Whatever you desire is yours. Whatever you command, will be done. I will not accept your refusal to my bidding for I, Rio and Portugal itself, would take your refusal to be with as an insult. No, no, we are here to celebrate. You and your officers will stay for lunch, of course. There are a few people joining us. And tomorrow night, we will hold a ball here in your honour and all of Rio’s society will be with us. Now, please introduce me to your wonderful officers.”

Phillip, as well as King, Collins and Hunter, could see that trying to qualify the invitation with alternative plans or suggestions would have been paramount to starting a war with the Portuguese.

After meeting the Officers, shaking their hands warmly, Don Lewis said, “And you gentlemen will not return to your smelly crowded ship but stay here with us for the duration of your stay. Send word to your ship to send whatever you need and give orders to your ship’s captains via my messengers. All will be well. Please come. Enjoy our Rio de Janeiro.”

“Don Lewis,” said Arthur, as we to be with you for, it would seem, a few days, could I please have my two greyhounds brought to enjoy your gardens and gain the exercise they will cherish?”

“Of course,” said Don Lewis emphatically.

With that, Don Lewis led the British sea farers up into his home.

The quartermaster of *HMS Sirius* stood reading a letter he had received from Captain Phillip to the junior officers. “Captain Phillip says that the marines of the various ships are allowed to wonder the city and enjoy themselves for the duration of our stay. Further, that the convicts are free to wander the ship decks but are not permitted to leave the ships. What the seamen do is up to the ships’ captains who are to organise their schedules.” He dropped the

paper with both hands to his waist and turned his head slightly to look at one of the officers. “Well, ye couldn’t argue with themes orders!”

One month later, on September 4, Phillip was finally free from the garden parties, trips into the country, Brazilian celebrations, social dinners and drinking all that rum, to softly persuade Don Lewis to let him return to his ship and the command of his fleet. “We must be on our way!”

The four men, returning to their ships dressed in local flamboyant and colourful clothing, quickly exchanged their clothing for more naval and dignified attire.

“Now, um, Gidley, can you have the officers check to see that everybody is aboard their respective ships and we are thus able to cast off, please,” said Arthur as he climbed the steps to the quarterdeck..

“Yes, of course. I hope to have clearance to cast off within the hour.”

“Hm, you are quite optimistic this morning, I see,” returned Phillip with a smile. How did we get on with acquiring extra supplies, by the way?”

“We have done well,” said Gidley, “We have taken on board large quantities of food -coffee, oranges, bananas, cocoa, and lemons, seeds and plants that might flourish in the new land, as well as a large quantity of rum.”

“We will plan to acquire wine, as His Majesty has directed, in Cape Town. Enough for two years is my expectation.” Arthur thought for a moment as he took in the lovely cool morning breeze.

“Can you also inform the harbour master of our time of departure, please?” said Arthur. “I am sure Don Lewis and all our new friends will want to come down to bid us a fond farewell. Maybe we should give ourselves two hours before we cast off.”

The Convoy arrived in Cape Town on October 13, 1787.

“Captain, we have now been here one month and completed loading extra supplies as well as seeds, plants and animals and 400 barrels of wine. I think we have nearly 500 animals on the ships, Sir. We are starting to look a bit like Noah’s Ark, if I may say so, Sir,” said the quartermaster.

Phillip allowed himself a little chuckle.

“I am pleased to say that the Cape Town harbour master was very accommodating in accepting our letter of credit,” reported the quartermaster.

“Good,” said Phillip. “Then have the convoy make sail.”



First Fleet voyage map

Thirteen days later on November 25, 1787, Phillip stood on the quarterdeck watching the wind in the sails. “Ship’s master. Could you please inform the other ships that I wish to sail ahead of the convoy and arrive in Botany Bay ahead of them to have some time to reconaissance the area to determine the most suitable place to establish the settlement,” said Phillip. “Have the three fastest ships *Alexander*, *Scarborough* and *Friendship* join the

Supply to sail ahead. Lieutenant King I will cross over to the *Supply* and Captain Hunter will come here to the *Sirius* and take command and lead the rest of the fleet.”
“Yes Sir.”

Captain Arthur Phillip and the *HMS Supply* arrived at Botany Bay on January 18, 1788. The other three ships came into the Bay on January 20.



Botany Bay – Arthur Phillip’s Diary 1788

While Phillip was meeting with the Aborigines and examining the Bay, the rest of the Fleet arrived off the coast but the strong winds and rough seas prevented the ships from entering the Bay. On January 20, the ships sailed into Botany Bay. This concluded one of the greatest sea voyages ever undertaken with a fleet of 11 ships travelling 24,000 kilometres half way around the world with some 1400 people, without losing a ship

Eight days after Arthur Phillip had arrived, on January 26, 1788, Rear Admiral Jean-Francois de Galaup, the Comte de La Pérouse, also sailed into Botany Bay. But Phillip and the convoy were gone, having sailed north to Port Jackson. La Pérouse and Arthur Phillip would never meet.

Story 4

The Secret Plan behind the Australian Settlement

Two coachmen drove their four white house carriage around the corner to enter St. James Street, Westminster. It was 10.00 pm. A spring Saturday evening in late May, 1787. A warm mist filled the London streets. The coach, with its gold crest of the House of Townshend on the carriage door, pulled to an abrupt halt outside the exclusive Brooks Club. The coachmen kept their seats.

A footman quickly descended the front steps of the Club with a lantern held high in one hand and opened the carriage door. Viscount Sydney – Thomas Townshend, alighted the coach and followed the footman up the steps and in through the front door. A porter quickly came around the counter of the front desk to take Lord Sydney's heavy black coat and his broad hat.

"Have the others arrived?"

"Yes, your Lordship. They are in the Fox Room at the rear of the Club," was all the porter said as he stood with coat and hat in hand and then lowered his head in a slight bow.

Lord Sydney moved past the staff and the few lingering patrons toward the Fox Room. A waiter followed along behind him. While Parliament had been in session for several weeks, there were but a few members in the Club on this cool evening – which is what Lord Sydney and his friends had hoped for.



Thomas Townshend 1st Viscount Sydney 1886, by W. Macleod

Lord Sydney, who was the Secretary of State for the Office of War and the Colonies, paused at the entrance of the room to evaluate his setting.

There was no one in the room but his three friends, seated in large brown leather lounge chairs separated by a small table. The room was illuminated by the glow of smoldering wood in the fireplace. Several candles provide background light. The three men, with cigars in hand, were the Foreign Secretary Francis Osborne – the Duke of Leeds and Marquis of Carmarthen, the 1st Earl of Chatham - Prime Minister William Pitt, and the 1st Earl of Malmesbury, James Harris – the British Ambassador to The Hague. While dukes, marquis and earls are a little higher up the aristocratic ladder than viscounts, the Townshend family had been a primary influence on the business of kings from George I to George III. With two earls, a marquis, a viscount and Jack - the waiter, in the room, it was a winning hand in any game.

Thomas stepped into the room. The seated men immediately stood up.

"Ah, there you are, Thomas," said William. "Come and join us. Take a seat."

As Thomas took a seat beside his colleagues, he signaled Jack to come closer.

Just before you order a drink, Thomas, I have a little surprise for our evening meeting," said Sir William. My young cousin, William Grenville, has just returned from a trip to Ireland. Now I know that William Brooks has some fine wines here in his cellar but Grenville believes that this whiskey from a recently new distillery called Bushmills is quite exceptional. I have



Fox Room, Brooks Club, London

asked young Jack here to open a bottle from the crate Grenville has delivered so we might sample this 'breath of life' as the Irish call it."

Sir James shifted in his seat in anticipation as Jack poured the nectar into four glasses on the table. The men in turn lifted the whiskey to take in the vapour rising from their glass. Nobody spoke.

Then lifting his glass to the middle of the table, Thomas said "To your good health", as

the four glasses touched together. They sipped the whiskey and savoured the flavour.

"Oh, yes," said James, "that is nice." William lifted the glass up and into the light to look at the colour of the fluid. "Yes, it is as Grenville expressed, exceptional. Should sell well."

Putting down his glass, William looked up at Thomas, "How did the convoy's departure go? Any problems?"

"The 11 ships with marines, transportees, supplies, 500 animals and Reverend Johnson's 4,000 bibles and prayer books, got away safely on May 13 past," said Thomas.

"Do you think Phillip is prepared for the job?" asked Francis.

"Our meeting at Holwood House on August 19 past with Henry Dundas, William Grenville, Henry Phipps and Charles Jenkin was most rewarding for setting out the plans for the New South Wales colony. Arthur Phillip scoured the prisons for suitable transportees to be assigned to his service as per our recent legislation enabling transportees to be assigned to 'the service of the governor'. I think it was also a good idea to have passed legislation for governor of the colony to be an admiral pro tem so he can oversee military courts as well as civil in the new colony," said Sir Thomas.

"But do you think he will cope? Does he have the fortitude?" pressed Francis.

"Well, having brought him back from France and duties with our Secret Service as a spy last August, I put the proposal to him of being appointed governor of the new colony. He said he wasn't keen to go off and sit in a forest on the other side of the world with all those flies, snakes and dangerous natives without a promotion in rank. He wanted to be promoted to the rank of admiral." Thomas crossed his arms, lifted his head slightly and chuckled. "I sent him off to see Henry Phipps, First Lord of the Admiralty, to try his luck. Phipps basically kicked him out of the office and said he wouldn't even promote him to be a commodore."

The other men laughed.

"So, on his return to my office, I offered to pay him a low-ranking admiral's salary while he is living in the forest," chuckled Thomas.

Again, the other men laughed.

"Anyway, he settled down and got into the job. He did a lot of work in preparation. Ships were fitted out for bunks for marines and transportees equally. Some felons took wives and families with them, which is a good thing. Of the 700 or so marines assigned to protect the colony against the French, there were 43 wives and children travelling with them. As the marines are travelling with Phillip in readiness for a war with the French in the Far East and not to guard the felons, there is a foreseeable problem with convict discipline and oversight. Phillip has said he will introduce a scheme of reward and punishment and have good

convicts oversee the rest. Sounds dubious, but it will be his problem. But, yes, I have every confidence that he is the right man for the job,” said Thomas.

The three men pondered what Thomas had said.

“I think this issue with the French needs some discussion,” said James. “I realise that we have signed this Commercial Treaty last September with them but I think King George is right when he said the French are talking out of both sides of their commercial mouths. They talk to us of trade agreements but at the same time, prepare for war with us in Asia. As you know, I have over this past year been frantically concerned about Dutch money going into France to build up the French navy. You have all received my letters and warnings of the build-up of French ships but also of French support for the Dutch Patriot republicans.”

“Yes, the Dutch East India Company has proved an exceedingly successful operation in Asia and this alliance between the French and Dutch Patriots has allowed Dutch business houses to invest into France and the French Government,” said William. “As this money keeps flowing and the French navy keeps growing, it will soon bring us conflict, and as you suggest, in spite of the Commercial Treaty. I hate to think of the growing French indebtedness. When last I looked, it was up over £255 million (US\$47 billion) and rising rapidly.”

“Well”, said James, “what if our enemy’s friends become somebody else’s enemy and the friends had a falling out?” That is ‘our enemy’s friend’s enemy became our friends?’ said Harris.

“I’m glad we’re not playing you in chess,” said Thomas.

“But perhaps we are talking chess and strategy. Let me put names to the chess pieces. Dutch money going into France is the fundamental problem – our problem. However, I am aware that Prussia could be urged to invade The Netherlands if they knew we would not interrupt their excursion, and France could not afford to go to their aid,” said Harris.

The men sat in silence.

“Tell us more,” said Francis.

“As you know, our friend, William V of the House of Orange, is currently the Stadtholder of the United Provinces of the Netherlands and Captain-General of the State Army. He is also cousin to our King George III. But the United Provinces are not so united these days with the rising patriot movement, which is causing William great distress. I think supporting William by setting up a ‘British’ party, to support him is the first step. I thought I would call the Orangist Party, and this organisation would provide a channel for funds to support William but also a cover for a campaign of subversion,” said Harris with a smile.

“Go on, James. You have our attention,” said Thomas.

“I believe the link in bringing trouble to the French lies with William’s wife, Princess Wilhelmina. She is not only the wife of William V of Orange in the Netherlands, but the daughter of Prince William II of Prussia and Duchess Louise of Brunswick and another cousin of our King George III. She is the sister to young King Frederick II of Prussia, who has recently replaced his uncle, Frederick the Great, as you are aware. If Wilhelmina was seen to be in danger from the Dutch patriots, her brother would not hesitate to act,” said Harris, his smile widening, “as would our own King.”

“How certain are you of such a plan?” asked William.

“Very.”

“You are suggesting that you could be the sleuth to bring about this foment?” asked Thomas.

“Yes.”

All three men pondered the idea. Thomas signaled Jack to refill his glass. Jack topped up the four glasses.

“So, you are proposing that the New South Wales venture become the visible ‘Plan A’ and that you, or we, go about a secret ‘Plan B’,” said Thomas.

James smiled again and nodded his head.

The men took another drink.

“But how does defeating the Patriots affect business investments flowing into France?” asked Thomas.

“Dutch business houses, particularly from Amsterdam, have aligned themselves with the Patriots believing they are better off under a localized democratic system than under the eye of the Stadtholder. It is the investment flows from the business houses that is the basis of the French support of the Patriot republican movement. Without the Patriots and their alliance, William would bring commerce back under his control and stop their relations with the French,” said James.

Again, the men were silent.

“There can be no word whatsoever of this,” said William. “No one must know in England, France or Holland what you are up to. There are spies everywhere. How long before such an invasion might occur?”

“Conversations with my Prussian friends suggest they will easily be provoked and could react to circumstances within weeks,” replied Harris.

Thomas, Francis and William wriggled in their chairs at this startling suggestion. Thomas took another sip of his dram.

“If King Louis couldn’t service his debt repayments without his Dutch borrowings, he would want to take on the Prussians on Dutch soil, but, as France is a collection of 36 provinces, his Court would not unanimously agree to engaging in yet another war. Without Dutch investments, Louis and the Court would be left with little alternative but to raise taxation, which would spell devastation,” said William.

“Checkmate,” said Sir James with a smile.

The men took another drink. “This whiskey is nice stuff,” said Thomas. As the four men looked at each other, they all smiled, and not over the whiskey. William laughed.

“By George, let’s do it,” said William.

They stood up. Again, the glasses touched as they repeated together “By George,” and laughed that such a Plan B could actually succeed. “You know,” said Pitt, “This could cause a French revolution.” The men laughed some more.

“How much money do you need, James?” asked William, turning his gaze directly at Harris.

“£70,000 (US\$14 million at today’s value),” replied Harris.

“Return to The Hague. You will have the money by the end of the week.”

James Harris, dismounted his horse in the courtyard of the palace of William V in Nijmegen, Holland – close to the German border. He had travelled from The Hague, some 135 kilometres away from the Dutch coast. After handing the reins of his horse to an attendant, he wiped the dust off his riding boots, adjusted his coat and hat, and moved toward the steps leading up into the stately rooms of the palace.

As Harris entered the lovely morning room, William put down his cup of tea and rose to greet his friend as Princess Wilhelmina stayed seated.

“James, my friend. How nice of you to travel all this way from The Hague to come to visit us,” said William as he moved from behind the Italian rosewood inlay coffee table to shake his hand. Wilhelmina stood up and moved to the side of the table.

“Always a pleasure to see you both, my friends,” said James as he smiled and returned the energy in the hand shake. He moved to the side of the table to greet Wilhelmina.

“And Wilhelmina,” he said, as he took her extended hand to gently kiss it.

“It is always our pleasure to have you as company,” she replied.

William and Wilhelmina returned to the lounge behind the table and James sat in a chair opposite. A servant placed a cup in front of him and another poured coffee.

“Do you have any news?” asked William.

“Yes, I do, but you may want to hear it without concern for ears other than your own,” said James.

William took the hint and signaled for the six servants to leave the room. With doors closed, James continued.

“I have returned from England with finance for the creation of an English party to support your efforts against the Patriots. To ensure the funds are channeled directly towards your support and not to other people and provinces, I suggest we call the organisation, the Orangist Party,” said James.

“And how much money can the Orangist Party channel to me?” asked William.

“£70,000”.

“And I can use this money to buy troops and supplies?”

“Yes. And to bribe troops to stay loyal to you. The money will be supplied to you as you request it.”

“This is wonderful news,” said William. “I am afraid my country is so near to civil war. There are these republican Patriots recruiting people to their beliefs all over Holland. Already three of the seven Provinces have fallen under their spell. People everywhere are listening to the stories of a new government. Troops are deserting their regiments. Factions are fighting in Amsterdam and the city may completely come under Patriot control soon. It is the business houses, the nouveau riche, gaining money and power from their Eastern trade but seek to evade my laws and taxes. It is they who drive this democratic mob,” said William. “Your help and the help of my cousin George at this time will be indispensable. I hope you have a plan because persuasions and diplomacy are providing nothing.”

James listened to William’s distress but said nothing to these matters, or of his plans.

“While I will provide funds for your expenditures, I will carry out some subversion activity of my own and I may need your full cooperation to any requests I have, within reason. Can you both agree to this?” asked James.

“Ah, James, you are a wise man and we are to trust your judgements. We will do all that you ask and know you have our interests at heart,” said Wilhelmina.

William smiled in agreeance and nodded his head.

“Will you stay and dine with us this evening?” asked Wilhelmina. “You must have set out very early from The Hague to have reached us by this hour!”



Prince William V of the House of Orange

“Yes. Thank you,” said James, “and maybe, Your Highness, might show me some of your beautiful gardens before we dine?”

“It would delight me to walk you around our gardens for a time,” she replied.

As James and Wilhelmina strolled among the hedges and trees in the warmth of the spring afternoon, James took the opportunity to put the second phase of his plan into action.

“Wilhelmina, I wanted to talk to you in private as I have a request of you that William might take objection and may wish to interfere,” said James.

“Go on,” said Wilhelmina.

“William may see my suggestion as dangerous, and maybe it is, but I want you to trust me without knowing all the details. I request a simple act that will restore your authority over all of the United Provinces. And, indeed, affect the course of history for all of Europe, said James.

“I will trust you, James, and willingly risk my life if such a sacrifice might bring down these Patriots.”

“In a couple of weeks’ time, I want you to journey by carriage to visit me in The Hague. It will be a long journey so I want you to organise two stations to change horses along the road, and you are to bring no escort. I will let you know of the day you are to travel.”

“This is all you want of me?”

“It may seem a simple task, but it is extremely important that you follow my request to the letter.”

“Will not the Patriots be guarding the road? And, will not the stations with fresh horses for my carriage alert the Patriots of my journey?”

“Yes. This is my hope.”

Wilhelmina stopped walking. She considered what James had asked of her. “I can see why William would have objected to this plan. But I am tired of just sitting and listening to the concerns and arguments of the men who come before William. You present me with danger but also an opportunity to play a part in whatever your larger stratagem is. I will do it. And leave it to me to persuade William to this course of action.”

In the early morning of June 28, 1787, Wilhelmina took a carriage to journey on the road from Nimeguen to The Hague. With her were her maid, Starenljerg, Colonel Rudolph Bentinck, Count George Randwyck, and a Prussian officer called Stampfort. She had dressed simply and comfortable for what may be an arduous experience.

James Harris sat in his private men’s club, Sociëteit De Witte, in The Hague, that day playing cards with the French Ambassador.

As the coach approached the village of Haestricht, near Gonda, a detachment of Free Corps belonging to that town, blocked the road.

“Stop,” yelled the leader of the horseman, who was dressed in black.

The coachman immediately pulled upon the reins to stop his horses.

One of the rebels dismounted his horse and approached the carriage. The insignia on his coat told Wilhelmina he was a Patriot.

The Patriot stared at the five occupants, immediately recognising that they were aristocrats “Who are you and where are you going?” he demanded.

“This is Princess Wilhelmina and I am Count Randwyck,” said the Count. “Her Highness is travelling to The Hague with the sole motive of promoting a conciliation, as far as should be in her power, between the contending parties in these troubled times.”

“German, ah?” said the Patriot with a grin, “I have orders to prevent all suspicious persons from coming into the Province of Holland and you look pretty suspicious to me.”

He walked back to his horse. As he climbed into his saddle, he looked at the coachman. “I am commandeering this coach and its passengers in the name of the Free Corps regiment of the Dutch Patriots. Follow my men, and do what you are instructed.”

Within an hour, Princess Wilhelmina and her company found themselves locked in a room of an old farmhouse. After several days of pleadings, they were transferred under a strong guard to the small town of Schoonhoven, where they remained. From this confinement, Wilhelmina wrote letters to her husband informing him of the situation.



Arrest of Princess Wilhelmina at Schoonhoven

“Come in Francis and Thomas and please close the door,” said William Pitt as he rose from his desk and came around to greet his friends. “Please take a seat. What news?”

“He’s done it. He has caused a commotion across all of Europe. King Frederick is beside himself and sees the arrest of his sister as a direct insult. He is rumoured to be readying troops for an invasion.”

“And Harris? Does anyone suspect his involvement?” asked William.

“He reports that he was sitting in his club playing cards with the French Ambassador when the arrest was made. He sent no messages and received none. Any spies watching for our response would not have gotten a lead from Harris.”

“Another good move on his chess board,” said Thomas.

“And what of Princess Wilhelmina?” asked Pitt.

“My spies report that she is being held and restrained in her movement in the village of Schoonhoven. She is well, as are her companions. The Patriot forces are thinking they have made a wonderful catch of the Princess and believe they will force Prince William to concede defeat and abdicate his position of Stadtholder of Holland,” said Thomas.

“Excellent. Now, to avoid any prying eyes on me and communiques from this office, I want you, Francis, to take the lead in this matter. Can you write a letter to King Frederick assuring him of our support and, and, say in the letter ‘His Majesty will be extremely ready to enter into a most confidential communication with His Prussian Majesty’. Get Harris to deliver the letter and confirm our warmest regards,” said William.

“Timing is important. Our pieces need to be in position ready for six straight moves. The fourth move will involve my cousin, William Grenville. Have him in France ready to visit the French Court, bypass the French Ambassador here, and inform them of our support for the

Prussian invasion and that ‘Britain will see any attempt by the French to interfere as a motivation for our resistance’,” said William. “But he must wait for Harris to give us the date of the Prussian invasion before he knocks on their door.”

“We had better get ready to make good on such a threat,” said Francis.

“Yes. Thomas, can you speak to Henry Phipps and bring him into the circle. Have him ready 40 line-of-battle as a convoy at Plymouth so French spies can report of our readiness for war. But he is to wait for a date from Harris before assembling a fleet.”

“Is this your diversion, to keep French eyes away from our dealings with the Prussians?” asked Thomas.

“Diversion? No doubt French spies will report of ships being readied but when we have news of the Prussian invasion I want Grenville outside of Louis’ door waiting for an audience with the French Court and I want, on that same day, news to reach the Court of our battle fleet. I want disarray and argument. I want division in the Court with a King unable to move and certainly unable to send troops into Holland.”

Pitt thought for a moment. “Francis, have James inform the Prussians not to be too hasty with an invasion. We will want to get a Convention drawn up with the Prussians with terms for the Patriot’s surrender in place, which should include some phrases about the French, before the Prussians start firing off their guns. I am sure that James, if he were here, would be reminding us that getting the Patriots across all the Provinces to back down is our rook to bishop four on our way to checkmate with the French king. With the Patriots and the Dutch entrepreneur bourgeoisie, as the French would call them, on their knees before the Stadtholder and the Prussian King, we will cut Louis off at his knees and dry up Dutch money flowing into France.”

William looked at his friends for a moment, wondering if he had missed anything and waited for any suggestions.

“Thomas, any news of Arthur Phillip?” asked William.

“Yes, he has had the fleet pull into Rio de Janeiro. The governor there has awarded him special privileges – the keys to the city, it seems, and the marines have been allowed to wander the town at their pleasure. The convicts, apparently, remain restricted to the ships,” said Thomas.

“What is the man thinking?” asked Francis.

“Apparently, it is good for, um, morale,” said Thomas.

“One happy little convoy, ah?” laughed William.

“Back to the business at hand. If this all seems good to you,” said William, “I will visit King George to inform him of what is happening with his family and seek his assent to our plans, or Harris’, before anything is undertaken,” concluded William Pitt.

“What a bugger of a game Harris has got us into, ah!” sniggered Francis.

“Was it cards or chess he was playing in his club?” asked Thomas.

“Cards in the club and chess across Europe,” replied William.

The men laughed again.

Baron James Harris arrived at the palace of King Frederick II in Berlin. It was July 14, 1787. (circa). King Frederick, The Great, had died in 1786 and his nephew had ascended the throne as Frederick II.

Come this way, my Lord. King Frederick is waiting for you,” said an attendant who opened doors leading to a stately but comfortable private room.

“Oh, James, I am so glad to see you. Come in. Please sit with me. I have been waiting for your visit and prepared myself by obtaining some of your wonderful Irish whiskey which I thought we might need for our conversation on important matters. I hope this is to your liking,” said Frederick.

“Yes, Your Majesty, a wonderful refreshment after my long journey,” said James.

James Harris was a tall man and nearing the age of 40 years. Frederick at 44 years. Their similarity of age made them easy friends and had socialized on several occasions in years past.



1st Earl of Malmesbury, James Harris

A servant stepped forward and poured two glasses of whiskey into crystal glasses.

“Leave the bottle,” said Frederick. “That will be all.” The servant put down the bottle, bowed his head slightly, and then withdrew, closing the door behind him.

“I am angry, James, with the indignity shown to my sister by these Dutch rebels,” said Frederick. He rose to his feet. “They have insulted me. I will not tolerate it. Their action is unmanly and spiritless. I am determined to have complete satisfaction for the insult they have given to my sister. It is only your pleadings for patience that has caused me hesitation in sending troops to destroy them,” said Frederick.

“Your Majesty, I know you must be anxious with the situation and concerned for your sister, but let me start with this,” said James. He lifted his soft leather satchel from the floor, opened it, and handed

Frederick a letter.

Frederick put down his glass and took the letter with both hands, reading the seal. The stamp read ‘Foreign Secretary Francis Osborne – the Duke of Leeds and Marquis of Carmarthen’. He opened the letter and started to read.

“To Your Royal Highness, King Frederick II of Prussia, as Foreign Secretary of His Majesty, King George III of Great Britain, I send you greetings on behalf of your cousin who is most pleased to have you receive this communication. His Majesty will be extremely ready to enter into a most confidential communication with His Prussian Majesty

Signed:

Francis Osborne,

Lord Carmarthen

On behalf of His Majesty

King George III of Great Britain.”

Frederick lifted his head to look at James. “Have you read this?”

“No, Your Majesty, this letter is for your eyes only, but, I have an idea of what is in it.”

Frederick handed James the letter and proceeded to lift his glass to take another sip.

“Oh, James, this is wonderful news. I have so longed to do what my uncle would not, to unite our two kingdoms again in friendship as well as blood.”

“So, what news of Wilhelmina?” continued Frederick. “What does my brother-in-law, William, think of all this? What should I do next?” asked Frederick.

“Of Wilhelmina, I am sure your spies are as good as mine but I hear that she is comfortably housed as are her companions, and they are being treated well, if not with respect. It is my hope that the leaders of the Patriot forces will come to their senses soon and return her to her home with William. But this is wishful thinking for the Patriots believe they have gained a bargaining chip to force William’s hand. William, of course, is worried for her health and safety, as are you, I am sure, Your Majesty,” said James.

“I will not forgive them, these, these, pompous peasants with guns. They have insulted me, as well as Wilhelmina.”

“And, rightly so, Your Majesty,” returned James, happy to fan the fire.

“I will have 25,000 troops march to the Dutch border. They are ready to advance. This letter from Francis Osborne gives me the assurances I wanted that Britain would not interfere with my invasion,” said Frederick.

“May I suggest that you hasten slowly as there are other pieces to move on this chess board if we are going to successfully finish the Patriots altogether,” said James. “Baron William Grenville will be sent by Prime Minister William Pitt, on behalf of King George, to deliver a letter to the French Court when the time is right. In that letter are words that inform the French of Britain’s support for Prussia’s invasion of Holland and that any attempt by the French to interfere will lead to British resistance,” said Harris.

Frederick poured more whiskey into the two glasses sitting on the table then sat back in his chair and lifted his glass to his lips and thought of his good fortune.

“James, since you seem to be the conductor of this orchestrated affair, what would you suggest I do?”

“Prime Minister Pitt will assemble 40 line of battle war ships as a symbol of our readiness to take on the French if they show any signs of entering Holland after your invasion. We would like to see you now set a date to invade Holland and sweep aside these Patriots. But it is important that I meet with intelligent men that you trust to draw up an agreement between Britain and Prussia confirming Britain’s support for your invasion, and, agreeing to the terms of a settlement to be put to the Dutch Patriots. A Convention that William of Orange will insist the Patriots sign to negate all their legislation across the Provinces and pledge allegiance, at penalty of death, to the Stadtholder. Your agreement with Britain must be done in secret and signed in secret. I have been sent to create this document,” said James.

“And when we have these rude and arrogant rebels defeated, I will see them on their knees to apologise to Wilhelmina and to sign this Convention,” said Frederick, “Yes?”

“Yes, and we will happily wave the surrender and the Convention in the face of the French to bring them embarrassment,” said James.

Frederick thought for a moment.

“With all this manoeuvring in the affairs of the Dutch and Prussians, I wonder to what benefit this is for the English. I suspect that you, my friend, have an even bigger game you are playing against the French, perhaps, with bigger stakes. You are a very clever man.”

James made no immediate response.

“Your suspicions may prove founded in time,” said James, “but there is work to do now.”

“Today is July 14. And two months, I propose, should be time enough for us to have our agreements, and some content for William’s convention in place, and, for the British fleet and Prussian troops to be in place. The plan is for it all to come down on the Patriots and the French on the same day. Does September 14 sound like a date you can agree on? The weather will be fine and the ground dry for your troops.”

Frederick sat looking at James from across his glass in hand. The impact of the stratagem of Wilhelmina’s arrest was now made plain. It was a dangerous plan but he was feeling the thrill of planning a battle and being part of a chess game with the British that had

coordinated moves to bring down the French, help William and Wilhelmina and create an alliance with Britain. He also felt anger and a desire for revenge.

“You will have what you ask, James. Your plan is most noble and yet cunning. I am excited,” said Frederick. “But you have given me much to ponder on my own role in the conflict, for which you have my earnest support. We will talk once I have received advice from my brother-in-law, the Duke of Brunswick – he is married to my sister Charlotte but he is also the brother-in-law to George III, and the brother-in-law to Wilhelmina. I have recently appointed the Duke to the position of Field Marshall of the Prussian Army. He is a brilliant military strategist and I will have you communicate directly with him on these matters as we proceed. You can trust him as I myself trust him. I do, however, in saying that, appreciate the secrecy of our conspiracy and nothing will be said of it. We will play our part.”

James smiled. He lifted his glass to touch Frederick’s. “To good plans and conspiracies,” said James. “And to prosperity and family,” responded Frederick.

Putting down his glass, Frederick said, “Come, you must be tired. I will have a steward show you to your room. We will meet again at dinner. Before then, I will converse with my General on the logistics of our plan. Tomorrow, you will meet with trusted men who will draft this agreement to suit your persuasions. You have certainly brought excitement to my palace, James,” said Frederick. “I presume that your next visit will be to my brother-in-law to inform him of what is afoot.”

“You honour me and I feel you exaggerate my humble role in these affairs, Your Majesty.” Frederick laughed, ‘humble role in these affairs’”, he said, and laughed some more as he patted James on the back. “Come James, I do not believe for a moment in your pathos and I fear I have not laughed enough at all your shenanigans which are yet to be revealed. But take a rest before dinner where we will talk of other things before delightful company.”

On July 23· 1787 (circa) James Harris arrived at the palace of William V, in Nimeguen.

James ascended the stairs, came along the passage behind an escort and into a lounge room to meet William. The ceiling was high and the curtains tied back to let in the summer morning light.

“James, come in. So much is happening. I hear rumours and words of spies but it is you with whom I long to converse. But forgive my manners. How are you my friend? You must be tired with your travels and schemings,” said William, as he strolled across the room to meet James and shake his hand.

“Please come and sit down,” said William. “You must take some coffee, or would prefer to have something stronger? I have had lunch prepared and food will be brought to us shortly.”

“Perhaps some wine would suit me after yet another long journey from Berlin. I stayed in an inn overnight so that I might be fresh to talk with you this morning,” said James.

William immediately signaled for some wine to be brought to his guest. When the wine was poured and the servants departed, James began his explanations.

“I must first commend you for your trust of me and your patience in these matters. I wish to assure you that all is proceeding well. Wilhelmina, as you no doubt know, is not in any immediate danger. The plan of the Patriots, consumed by their fortune in capturing Wilhelmina, is to have you give up your office as Stadtholder,” said James.

“Yes, their forces are growing stronger, as is their arrogance. I feel that even The Hague will fall to their designs at any moment,” said William.

“But we will lay waste to such plans, William. I have come from Frederick’s palace where I delivered to him a letter from Britain’s Foreign Secretary, Lord Carmarthen, on behalf of His Majesty, King George. The letter gives Frederick assurance of support for a Prussian invasion of The Netherlands to rescue Wilhelmina and return all authority to you, the Stadtholder of Holland. Wilhelmina’s bravery is to be rewarded,” said James.....

“And what role do I play in this, my friend?”

“The date for the Prussian invasion is set for September 14. On this same day, Lord Grenville will arrive at the French Court to announce a warning of Britain’s intended reprisals for any French movements into Holland. The Duke of Brunswick, Wilhelmina’s uncle, is the new Field Marshall of the Prussian troops. You need to communicate with him to coordinate your activities. I propose that on the night before September 14, you might lead your forces directly to Schoonhoven and rescue Wilhelmina. Then, return here leaving the Prussians to sweep the country. Amsterdam will be the hardest battle, I fear, but the predictable cowardice of the business houses will lead them to desert their alliance with the Patriots, and the French, when they see Prussian warlords and troops moving on their gates. Let them surrender to the Prussians then run to you for their relief,” offered James.

“Is there anything you have not thought of, James?” asked William.

“I hope not. But when the business houses come to you, as will the Patriot leaders, for your mercy, it will be up to you and Wilhelmina to determine the cost of your forgiveness. But you must cripple them.”

On September 14, 1787, Prussian forces of 25,000 troops invaded Holland and swept across the country toward Amsterdam. Wilhelmina was rescued by William and he returned with her to his palace. On Thursday, September 20, as William was coming into town with Wilhelmina, ‘the streets through which he passed were lined with the troops of the garrison, and he was literally borne on the shoulders of the people when he arrived at the Stadtholderian palace. Harris met His Serene Highness at the bottom of the stairs’ (wrote Harris in his diary), and was overcome with the thrill of the moment to see William and Wilhelmina so honoured.

“James, James, look at this reception,” said William, as he came up the steps to greet James. William then turned, descended the steps to escort his wife from her carriage up the steps to greet James herself.

“Oh, James Harris, what you have done for us is, is, astonishing,” she said.

James bent low to kiss her hand. “My lady, it is you who is to be commended for your part and your bravery for which nothing else was possible,” returned James. Looking at both of them he said, “Now, there are already deputations awaiting your attention inside. I have every confidence that you will seek apologies but take this opportunity to cement your rule in this country.”

“It will be the pleasure of the season to deal with these vermin,” said William.

James turned aside to let them pass through the doorway and to business.

Inside, a deputation from the States General, attended by their Greffier and President of the Week, another from the States of Holland, the Council of State, the Equestrian Orders, the Gecommitteerden, the Courts of Justice, and all the different Colleges, waited on him, each

in a body, and he was invested by them all with every right and privilege which had been suspended or taken from him. All the Foreign Ministers, except the French, Spanish, and American, in the course of the day, went to compliment His Highness, as did the Clergy and Magistracy of The Hague. No single point was wanting to make his reception as complete as possible. "I have this evening been with the Prince alone for half an hour, and His Serene Highness, in the strongest terms words could express, repeatedly charged me to say he considered he owed everything which passed to His Majesty's support and protection, and that nothing should ever efface this obligation [to Britain] from his memory." [Diary of James Harris, 1787, p. 379].

News of the Prussian invasion had travelled fast to Paris. The French Court had assembled to discuss the situation.

"Silence, silence," yelled King Louis. "We must ready our forces to conduct a counter force to the Prussians."

Men were on their feet again yelling over each other.

"How can we afford another war?" "We must honour our alliance with the Patriots and the business houses." "We must have their money." "I will not pay for this war or send my forces to aid you."

"Silence," yelled Louis. "Britain has readied 40 war ships yesterday. They must have got word of the Prussian invasion and are ready to fight them in Holland."

"Well, leave it to the British to do the fighting. Why should we get involved?" yelled a count "But we must." "What about allies? Have you sent letters to the Austrians?"

Over this commotion, a steward approached King Louis to inform him that a deputation from King George of Britain was waiting for an interview.

"Silence, take your seats. Baron Grenville from Britain seeks an interview. We will hear what he has to say. It may be good news," said Louis.

The doors opened for Lord Grenville to enter the room. He came close to the throne, bowed, stepped forward and handed a letter to a steward to hand to the King. "Your Majesty, I am pleased to deliver to you this message from King George III of Great Britain," said Grenville. King Louis took the letter and opened it. The counts stood in silence.

Louis rose to his feet in front of his throne. "King George is threatening us. He has prepared his war ships not for the Prussians but supports the Prussians and says that if we interfere he will declare war on us," said Louis with alarm.

The counts yelled at each other again. The room was in disarray.

"We must fight." "Forget the alliance."

Lord Grenville smiled, bowed to the King, stepped backwards slowly, took his leave of the desired commotion.

On October 26, 1787, delegates from the Patriots were brought before Prince William and Princess Wilhelmina. Discussions had taken place with the Duke of Brunswick and King Frederick as well as James Harris, along with correspondence from Lord Carmarthen in

London. Britain and Prussia had agreed to the terms to be put to the Patriots. The Austrians had declined King Louis' invitation to join him in war against the Dutch, Prussians and British. As the insult was imposed upon Wilhelmina, she was given the task of reading the Convention with its terms of surrender and subservience to the Patriots.

Prince William and Princess Wilhelmina sat on thrones in a stately room in their palace in Nijmegen. Delegates from the Patriot rebels were brought before them. The room was lined with Dutch aristocracy.

A spokesman for the delegation stepped forward, went down on one knee. The other delegate behind him did the same. "Your Royal Highness, Princess of Orange, we express, in the name of the States of the Netherland, our deep regret at your arrest by our forces on October the 28th June past. We do humbly apologise for this incident and ask Your Royal Highness what kind of satisfaction you seek."

Prince William sat enjoying the moment and lifted two fingers of his hand as he smiled at Wilhelmina, a signal for her to proceed and savour the moment fully for herself.

"After consultations with our Prussian and British allies, these are the terms you will consent to in this Convention that is now being handed to you," announced Wilhelmina.

"We declare the Rhingi-ave of Salm and all who follow him to be traitors and a rebels. We call to account the judicial proceeding of the Gecommitteerdeu, since it has taken the administration of justice out of the hands of the Courts of Holland, and We hereby rectify all the allures the French faction have introduced into the rebellious Dutch republic within these last seven years. We will remit any punishment upon the Provinces for the insult against me on condition the offenders who have brought about this rebellion, and as mentioned in this Convention, are stripped of all position and are forbidden from holding any office of any kind in any part of the Netherlands in perpetuity," read Wilhelmina.

"But how will they live? Where would they go?" protested the Patriot, still down on one knee.

"They can leave the Netherlands and go off to their precious America for all I care," interrupted William.

The Patriot bowed his head in silence.

"All alliances," Wilhelmina continued, "between these rebels and business houses with the French are herewith cancelled with penalty of death or exile for offenders who violate this command." She paused to let the impact of her words sink in.

"While His Royal Highness, King Frederick of Prussia, has desired a yearly stipend from the Provinces, as well as a payment for his troubles since September 14, you will only pay Him 400,000 florins (£200,000 /US\$ 40 million at current rates) to be dispersed among the Prussian forces. Further, the Provinces will rescind all legislation adherent to the rule of the Stadtholder, and all laws repugnant to the rule of the Stadtholder are to be abolished. The Patriot movement is herewith dissolved, its leaders disengaged, and rebellious pamphleteering forbidden. There is to be no consideration of the terms of this Convention, only the need for your submission and signatures."

The delegates of the Patriots needed no consultation. They rose to their feet and only looked at each other with relief. No one was to be executed. No one was to be imprisoned. The spokesman turned to Her Majesty: "We are most pleased with the terms of this Convention and will sign the document as You command." The Convention was published and dispersed across Europe that very day.

The following day, October 27, 1787, France published a declaration renouncing any intention to intervene in Dutch affairs and agreed to a disarmament measure with Britain. The French declaration also stated that France no longer held any “hostile views toward any Dutch or British possessions”, anywhere – including, Asia and the Pacific. This was a complete turnaround of French aims over the previous four years and a complete victory for Harris and Pitt, and, an admission of French impotence to protect their interests and policies, which was terribly humiliating for them.

Following the Stadtholder’s Convention, many people of the republican movement left for France and America. Both French diplomats and Dutch Patriots took quite some time to realise that it was Harris who had maneuvered for Wilhelmina’s arrest as a provocation. Harris’ plan to bring the French-Dutch alliance to a dramatic end and cut off Dutch financial flows into France, and thereby curtail the expansion of the French navy, had been accomplished in a matter of just six months.

On November 27, 1787, Baron James Harris had a reception at his manor house and home in The Hague with some 400 guests. It seemed, as he says, the whole of The Hague were in the streets outside for the festivities of the fete in his yards. At dinner, his guests of honour were His Royal Highnesses the Prince and Princess of Orange. But quietly, Lord Sydney, Lord Pitt, Lord Grenville and Lord Carmarthen were in attendance.

While standing with drinks in hand and inconspicuously on the side of the ball room, Prince William and Princess Wilhelmina were introduced to the British attendees.

“So, gentlemen,” said Prince William, “you are my coconspirators. It is my great pleasure and honour to meet you.”

“Oh, Prince William, it has been to our own convenience to rid you of the pestilence of these rebels and the French,” responded Prime Minister Pitt with a smile.

“May I introduce you to my wife, Princess Wilhelmina?”

As the Prince stepped slightly to the side of his wife, she extended her hand to Pitt.

As he lifted from slightly kissing her hand, but still holding it, he said, “It is our great honour to meet such a brave woman.”

“Prime Minister, we will be forever in your indebtedness for your activity. And we commend you for having such a trustworthy and faithful servant as Baron Harris.”

“We have so many people to converse with this evening,” said the Prince, “but I look forward to the opportunity to cement the relationship between us which has proved these months to be so fruitful.”

“We look forward to such an opportunity as well,” returned Pitt.

With that, their Royal Highnesses moved to converse with other guests.

“Well, Harris,” said Francis, “you have changed Holland.”

“Oh, and dealt a blow to the French,” added Pitt. “The withering of Dutch money will bring devastation to the French, let us not forget that.”

“And what of the New South Wales venture? Shall we recall Phillip to home?” asked Francis.

“I believe we may have solved our immediate problem with the French,” said Thomas, “but the republicans are growing in number and vigour in France. There is trouble brewing, I fear, for others in Europe as well. Time may very well prove that the colony in New South Wales is

of immense value to Britain and a capital idea.” He lifted his glass to touch the others. “Here’s to a Capital Idea.” “To a Capital Idea,” returned the others, and they laughed.

On January 18, 1788, Arthur Phillip and the Convoy arrived in New South Wales

In 1788, the French Council raised taxes in an effort to raise money to service their debts.

In July 1789, French revolutionary forces stormed the Bastille.

In January, 1793, King Louis XVI was beheaded.

In 1793, French revolutionary troops invaded Belgium and threatened Holland. Britain and Spain then declared war on France.

And today, we can still drink Bushmills whiskey.

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Story 5

Arthur Phillip

British Naval Captain, Arthur Phillip, stood against the wall in the lane beside the tavern facing the docks at Brest, in France. It was still dark at 3.30 am, August 1, 1785. Phillip was a spy working for the British Secret Service of the Office of War and the Colonies. He had come to Brest to investigate newspaper reports of a voyage by the French into the Pacific.

Dawn would come soon enough for this summer morn and with it hundreds of men preparing two ships to sail on the afternoon high tide.

For the past two weeks, men had worked to fit out the ships with new ropes and sails and timbers to make the ships ready for a long voyage. The ships had been brought to dockside the previous afternoon in readiness for the loading of food supplies, water and equipment. When this was complete, crew and passengers would board the vessels. Rumours in the tavern suggested that these ships were not being readied for yet another merchant venture but that King Louis XVI himself had commissioned the voyage. Arthur's task was to discover the purpose of the voyage, who was leading it, the names of the vessels and the number of crew.



Port of Brest, France, 1785

This morning, Captain Arthur Phillip was not a British naval officer but, as his papers stated, he was Pierre Leaud, a French dock hand from Toulon, in the south of France. His plan was to wait until the food supplies arrived by cart to the wharf and then approach the foreman - the *contremaitre*, and ask him for a mornings work. Arthur, with the persona of the Frenchman, 'Pierre', was dressed for the part with his hair pulled back in a ponytail and wearing neck scarf and beret. Arthur was shorter than medium height and had olive skin – features he had inherited from his German born father. Arthur spoke four languages: English, German, Portuguese and French. He was a perfect fit for his assignment in France.

In the twilight of the dawn, the first of the supply carts stopped at the dock. Men were close behind. The *contremaitre* started to give orders as more carts and more men appeared. Pierre saw his chance and stepped from the lane and strolled toward the *contremaitre* with one hand in his pocket.

“Monsieur, je cherche un travail” (Sir, I am looking for work), said Pierre.

The *contremaitre* stopped what he was doing and looked Pierre up and down. Pierre looked the part of a dockhand, and, he was on time to start work while other men were late. There was a lot to do in just a few hours. “Have you done this work before?” asked *contremaitre*, Raphael.

“Oui,” (yes) answered Pierre.

“Show me your papers”

Pierre pulled his papers from the inside pocket of his jacket and handed them to the Raphael. The papers said that Pierre was born in Hyeres, just north of Toulon and that he had worked as a dock hand at the port of Toulon since 1775. All was in order.

“Why have you come to Brest?” asked the Raphael.

I have come north for the summer to escape the heat of the Mediterranean. But, I still need to work, yes?” answered Pierre.

“All right, you can work today. If you work as hard as the other men, I will pay you the same wage,” responded Raphael.

Pierre accepted the offer of work with a touch of his beret and a nod of his head. He then stepped aside to pick up a sake of grain from the cart. He followed other men down the wharf, passed the guards who stood watching the morning melee begin.

As the morning proceeded, Pierre had discovered the names of the vessels to be *Astrolabe* and *Boussole*. They were 450 ton store ships. There were 220 men in the crew.

“Off the docks. Off the docks. All you men come away. The King is coming. Off the docks,” yelled Raphael.

Men stopped what they were doing. Pierre ran alongside the other men off the dock and to the wall of the tavern where he had waited earlier in the day. Three coaches arrived and well-dressed gentlemen and ladies ascended their carriages. Then, the coach of King Louis XVI arrived. As he alighted the carriage, his onlookers bowed to their majesty.

“Now, Jean-Francois, are you ready for your wonderful voyage?” asked the King as he approached the docks to inspect the ships from a safe distance.

“Oh, yes, Your Highness. Sailing to the other side of the earth to retrace Cooks voyages has us all very excited,” responded Jean-Francois.

As the group of people moved onto the dock beside the ships, Phillip could hear none of their conversation. He could see a youth among the group. There were also two Englishmen, who had arrived by separate coach, presenting Jean-Francois with a small wooden box, which he opened, inspected, then bowed slightly, as, Phillip presumed, was a sign of thanks. A priest had arrived on foot and, with everyone’s attention, said prayers over Jean-Francois and several others and then blessed the ships with holy water.

With proceedings concluded, King Louis walked back along the dock toward his coach on the street. Before stepping into the coach, Louis looked over his shoulder at Jean-Francois. “I will pray for you every day. You will always be on my mind and I will wait impatiently for your reports. Bon Voyage.”

And with that, his coach drove away. The other coaches soon followed.



King Louis XVI and to Comte de La Pérouse

With the coaches gone, Phillip returned to the work of loading the ships. In the next six hours, Phillip counted 8,000 pieces of pork and 7,000 of beef, twelve tons of bread, eight tons of flour, three ton of raisins and sundry quantities of cheese, salt, peas, oil, sugar, oatmeal, 100 barrels of beer, 50 barrels of brandy, 97 barrels of wine and four goats. There were 24 cannon on the two frigates, no soldiers or marines, no slaves and no convicts.

By half an hour past noon, the ships were fully loaded. Ship's masters gave orders, sailors ran back and forth, and ropes were cast to the docks. The ships slowly made their way into the deep water and out to sea.

It was time to be paid for the work of the morning and the dockhands made their way into the tavern for their rewards and refreshment.

Phillip lined up with the other men to be paid by Raphael, who sat beside a bookkeeper. With payments complete, it was time for refreshments. Phillip joined the afternoon's frivolity but drank little. He would wait till the men were drunk before engaging in conversation.

"Who was this Jean-Francis fellow who was in such a hurry this morning?" Phillip asked one man, he thought might know the answer.

"Oh, that was Rear Admiral, Jean-Francois de Galaup, Comte de La Pérouse. He is sailing into the Pacific to retrace the Englishman James Cook's three voyages. He will be gone for four years," came the reply.

Raphael came over and sat beside Phillip at the long table. He laughed, banged his putter jug against Phillip's, spilling some ale, drank some, and wiped his mouth with the back of his hand.

"Pierre, you have worked well today. I thought for a man of 45 years you would have trouble keeping up. You surprised me. You can come any day to work again. I always have something happening on the docks," said Raphael. "Yes, there was a lot of work today. I was surprised to see King Louis come to farewell the captains. It was quite a show. I noticed a boy with him, and, I thought I could see Englishmen as well," said Pierre.



Tavern Scene by David Teniers

"Ah, yes, the boy. Monsieur Napoleon Bonaparte. He wanted to go with the Comte on this voyage but the King he say that Napoleon is only 15 years and too young for this long trip. Maybe some later time. And the Englishmen, they were from the British Royal Society and come especially for today to give to the Comte two of James Cook's compasses and wishing him well for his endeavours. This was thought very nice. Very special. But this is enough talk between us. Let us amuse ourselves now with talk to the women, yes!" said Raphael.

With the men now engrossed in their frivolity with the tavern women, Phillip slipped away unnoticed back into the allies and narrow streets of the town which spread back from the hive of activity of the docks. While often changing his name and papers, Phillip, the spy, often stayed in back-street rooming houses or tavern rooms.

Arthur Phillip was, officially, on leave from the navy and supposedly on holiday in France. But, in reality, his task for the past three years had been to move around the ports of France watching for naval activity and ship building. He would occasionally send reports back to Evan Nepean who then passed them on to Thomas Townsend - Lord Sydney, Secretary of State for War and the Colonies. He, in turn, would send information on to Prime Minister William Pitt, and then to King George III, if need be. Not even the British Admiralty knew that Phillip was a secret service operative. As a British spy travelling in France, if he was caught, he would feel just a moment the blade of the guillotine , with no questions asked in France or Britain.

In his room, Phillip quickly wrote his report for Nepean. He made his way back to the docks, past guards who checked his papers, and on to a small trading vessel out of the way of public traffic. His note was passed to his contact and with that he disappeared back into the town. He would wait for further instructions.

Two days later, the note was handed to Evan Nepean in the Home Office in London. Nepean pushed back his chair and quickly went in to see Lord Sydney.

“Good morning, Lord Sydney. I have an important message from Arthur Phillip who writes from Brest in France.

Looking up from his desk, “Oh, our friend Arthur. Great map maker, you know, and a brilliant naval strategist. I don’t think we could have done without him in that last bout with the Spanish. What’s he been up to?” said Lord Sydney as he sat back in his chair and put his fingers in his waistcoat pockets waiting for some news.

Evan Nepean read the letter to Lord Sydney. Sydney took his fingers out of his pockets and stood up at his desk. He moved to the window and stared out across the Thames. He put his hands behind his back. Still looking out the window, he said, “Tell Phillip to carry on with his assignment of watching the docks and thank him for his quick report.”

“You don’t think the matter is urgent, Your Lordship?” said Nepean.

“No, it is not an urgent matter. The French exploring the Pacific is only to be a repeat of Cook’s voyages. There appears to be no threat to our British India Company in their venture.”

Evan nodded his head, although Sydney didn’t see him, and left the room.

On the morning of August 22, 1786, Lord Sydney arrived at his office at White Hall. As he strolled past Evan’s desk he said, “Have you got a minute, Evan, I need to talk to you.

Evan jumped up from his desk and followed Sydney into his office and closed the door behind him.

“Take a seat, Evan.”

Evan moved toward the desk as Sydney sat down behind it in his leather chair. Sydney lent forward on his desk and folded his fingers together under his chin.

“I have an interesting, indeed, important, project underway at the direction of the Prime Minister. I think our friend, Arthur Phillip might play an import role in this project and I am wanting to know more than I do of his background. Can you help me with this inquiry, Evan?” said Sydney.

“Yes, I think I can Your Lordship. Let me quickly go and get his file.

Evan, got up and walked to the door and was gone for but a minute before he returned and took his position seated before Lord Sydney.

Evan opened his folder. “Captain Arthur Phillip is now 48 years of age. Arthur Phillip was born October 11, 1738. His father, Jacob Phillip, was of no noticeable social standing as a London merchant of German heritage. His mother, Elizabeth Breach, was of a different social class and a relative of Lord Pembroke. Jacob Phillip died in 1739 and it is believed that Elizabeth and her two children lived modestly thereafter. Arthur responded well to education and first went to sea in 1753, at age 15, aboard a whaling ship in the northern seas. A year later, he enlisted in the Royal Navy at age 17 and served on the *HMS Buckingham*.

During the Seven Year War with France, (1754-1763) Phillip saw action in the Battle of Minorca and the Battle of Havana. When the war ended, Phillip returned to England. He married Margaret Denison in 1763, a wealthy widow who was 16 years his elder. They moved to Lyndhurst, Hampshire to establish a farm. Their marriage was not happy and they divorced after six years in 1769. Margaret kept the farm and Phillip returned to the Navy to serve as Second Lieutenant aboard the *HMS Egmont*.

Arthur Phillip speaks four languages: English, French, German and Portuguese. With 30 years of service in the Navy, he has also served, with permission, with the Portuguese in their war with Spain. He has sailed on board 16 ships in several wars. He is a brilliant military strategist and a map maker and it is generally thought that his knowledge was indispensable in our conflicts with Spanish off the coasts of America. For the past four years, Captain Arthur Phillip has been on half-pay from the Navy but has quietly gone to work for me in the Secret Service with the directive to spy on French naval developments.”

“In recent years, since 1784, he has sent us reports from Toulon, which is not far from Marseille informing us of an escalation in French shipbuilding. Timber has come from Albania, shipwrights have been recruited from other ports. He reports that line-of-battle ships and frigates have been refitted. France, he says, is preparing for war. Brest, on the coast of Brittany, is France’s major naval base on the Atlantic and Phillip has reported of the building of new jetties.”

Evan looked up from reading his notes.

“And, your personal opinion of the man?” asked Sydney.

“I have every confidence that Arthur Phillip has the maturity, the experience, the ability, and, dedication to our cause, as well as a dislike for the French, to serve our interests well”

“The Prime Minister is considering establishing a colony in Cook’s New South Wales and I am looking to appoint a governor general for the task.”

The men sat in silence for a moment gazing at each other.

“Well, he is not of the aristocracy, and there will some noise about a low-ranking sea captain being given the job of King’s Viceroy, even if it is out in no-man’s land. The advantage, I suppose, is that if the venture fails, for some unforeseen reason, no notable family will be

embarrassed by the episode. If the truth be told, I don't think we could find an aristocrat with Phillip's abilities to do the job anyway, even if we looked for one," pondered Sydney.

I will speak to Pitt and make the recommendation that Phillip be appointed governor general of the colony and in the meantime, get him back in London immediately," said Sydney.



Arthur Phillip, by Francis Wheatley, 1786

"Come in Arthur. I am so pleased to see you again," said Lord Sydney. "Oh, yes, Evan, come and join us. Sit down gentlemen." The three men sat in the leather bound lounge chairs in front of Lord Sydney's desk. Tea was brought in and placed on the table. "So how did your meeting with Admiral Lord Phipps turn out yesterday?" asked Lord Sydney.

"Not to my liking, I'm afraid," responded Phillip. "I stated my belief that if I was to abandon life in England for a time and take on the responsibility of commanding this new settlement then I wanted to be promoted to the rank of admiral. He laughed at me."

The men sat in silence for a moment.

"I then said, well what about commodore? But he refused to entertain the idea of even granting me this rank. Consequently, I don't feel able to take on this responsibility for the new settlement. I mean, I would need the respect of both marines and navy officers, as well as civilians and convicts, and I would be forgoing life's pleasures in order to live in an outpost swarming with flies, violent natives, and who knows what else, without

some incentive to do so."

Lord Sydney brought his hand up to his chin as he slightly lifted his head in thought. He could here Phillip's dissatisfaction and this was certainly not the way to start off a venture with so much politics riding on its success.

"Arthur, I have told the Prime Minister of our friendship and my unwavering trust in your ability to carry out this exceptional task. So, let me make you this proposal. How about I arrange for you to be paid the equivalent to a base-level admiral and have you report directly to me instead of the Admiralty. I mean, this is not a naval venture anyway and I will acquire your release from the Navy for this project. I will organise for you to receive £1,000 a year, five times your salary as a naval captain. You would act as the King's Viceroy in the colony. That would solve a number of issues, I believe, and you would continue to communicate with Evan and myself directly."

Arthur Phillip didn't have to think long about this proposal. He certainly wasn't going to get a better offer. "Lord Sydney, I would be most pleased to accept the appointment of Commander in Chief of the military and Governor General of the Colony of New South Wales under the conditions you suggest."

'Splendid. I will inform the Prime Minister. He will draft up the Letters Patent for the King to present to you in due course. I want you to work with Evan on organising your convoy as quickly as possible. Among the many things that will need to be done, you will need to scour the hulks and prisons for suitable transportees for the venture. Consider both men and

women. Find as many young adults with trade skills and of a good nature as you can find. The transportees should not be locked up anyway, but since they can't be shipped off as assigned labourers to the Americas, they will be assigned to your oversight as governor general. Once we inform the parliament of the venture, we can converse regularly on all the logistics for the voyage and the settlement. How does that sound?" asked Lord Sydney. It sounds marvelous," responded Phillip.

On May 12, 1787, the day before the convoy of ships was to leave for Botany Bay, Arthur Phillip stood with Lieutenant Philip Gidley King, his second in command and friend for some 20 years, on the deck of the *HMS Supply*. They stood next to the rail watching the commotion of dock workers, marines and passengers, getting ready for the morrow's venture.

"It would appear we have found fine weather for our sailing south tomorrow," offered King. "Yes, and I want to thank you for accepting my invitation to accompany me in this expedition, Philip. It means a lot to me to have you, a man I have the fullest of confidence, by my side," said Phillip.

"Well, going off to start a colony on the other side of the earth beats sitting at home on half-pay waiting for another war to begin. But, yes, I am pleased to be with you in this exciting venture, my friend. I am also glad that you persuaded you former farm manager, Henry Dodd, to come with us. I know he is going to prove a valuable asset to the colony."

"There is no doubt about that. I will rely on him heavily to get the project under way, said Arthur.

The men stood in silence for a moment.

"Have you managed to get the final numbers of passengers and stock," asked Phillip.

"Yes, I have been compiling numbers as people and animals arrive here, and at the final count we have 1,420 people leaving Britain for the journey. There are 15 officers, 323 crew and 247 naval marines, as well as 46 marine's wives and children. There are 754 male and female convicts and there are 13 convict's children. Oh, and we have 500 animals going with us." said King.

"Has there been any trouble?" asked Phillip.

"It has been quite a task getting everyone in their right place and quietening the convicts and their complaints about leaving England but they have been reminded that they have forfeited their liberties and will do as commanded."

" Phillip was quiet for a moment.

"If you stay on board the *Supply* with me, and Captain John Hunter commands *HMS Sirius*, I presume you have had communication with the nine transport and supply ship's captains regarding our departure in the morning?" asked Phillip.

"Yes, all is in hand," replied King.

On the morning of May 13, 1787, the Convoy of Ships left Portsmouth for the open sea.

The *HMS Supply* came into Botany Bay on January 18, 1788.

“Ship’s master, organise for a pinnace to be lowered into the water. Lieutenant King and I are going ashore. And have a dozen men at arms go with us,” said Captain Arthur Phillip, standing on the quarterdeck.

The ship’s master turned to do what he had been commanded.

The pinnace pushed up into the golden sands of the shore. Phillip, King and the marines jumped into the shallows and walked up the beach. They hadn’t got far before a band of Aborigines emerged from the trees to confront them.

“Everybody stand quite still. Do not move and certainly do not raise your guns or point them at the natives. Just be calm,” said Phillip.

Phillip took his sword from his belt and placed it on the ground in front of him. As he stood up, he opened his hands in front of him to show that he was unarmed. He then took two steps forward. The Aborigines stood watching him.

Then, Phillip said a few words of greeting and smiled.

The Aborigines took a step back in surprise. They began to speak among themselves. The chief stepped forward and put down his spear. Then stood in front of Phillip and smiled. The men behind him, also smiled.

“King, what is happening,” Phillip said softly over his shoulder.

“It appears, Captain, that all the men are missing a front tooth, just like you. It appears to me that your missing tooth means something to them. I recommend that you just keep smiling,” returned King.

“Have the men put their guns on the ground and bring forth the presents we have for the natives.”

The chief signalled for his men to come forward and look at the trinkets laid out before them. While some of the men looked at the knickknacks, the chief and others moved close to Phillip to touch his cloths and his white skin, talking about him the whole time.

“It seems to me,” ventured King, “they think you are from some foreign tribe, although they think you dress funny, and are happy to make your acquaintance.”

After an hour, Phillip his men, and the natives, proceeded to walk around the Bay. Phillip was looking for a stream with sufficient water for a new colony and a deep water site to build a dock to moor ships. He could find neither stream nor deep water. Turning to the chief, Phillip sat on the sand and the chief joined him. Over the next hour, Phillip tried to communicate with chief explaining his needs. After conversing with his men, the chief started repeating a phrase and pointing north.

“I think the chief is telling us that we should try looking north for a better harbour,” said King.

“Yes, I agree with you. Then that is what we will do,” said Phillip.

Phillip and the chief got to their feet and returned along the beach to the pinnace. At the boat, Phillip put out his hands to touch the hands of the chief – a new experience for the chief. He laughed. Phillip and all the toothless natives smiled and laughed as well. Phillip, King and the marines then returned to their ship.

Over the next two days –January 19 and 20, the rest of the convoy arrived in Botany Bay. King let the captains of the vessels know of Phillip’s plan to look for a better harbour for the settlement a little further north and they were to wait for his return in a few days. On the morning of January 22, Phillip and King took three pinnaces to journey out of Botany Bay and to venture north to examine the bay Cook had called Port Jackson. As Phillip came into Port Jackson and veered southwest into the harbour, Phillip stood up in his boat and looked around him.



Port Jackson - Sydney Harbour, 1790

“Here, gentlemen, all regret arising from the former disappointments of Botany Bay is extinguished for I am satisfied to find myself in one of the finest harbours in the world, in which a thousand sail of the line might ride in perfect security,” announced Phillip.

The pinnaces moved further into the harbour and came to a place where the distance from shore to shore narrowed to about a mile (1.6 kilometres) and they rowed

into a little golden sand cove where they could see a stream.

As the men alighted from the boats, again, natives came out of the trees to confront them. Phillip repeated his actions from the earlier meeting at Botany Bay, and, again, smiled at the group. And, again, the British were well received. Phillip then spent the next two nights sitting and eating with the Aborigines on the beach. On the evening of the first night – January 20, the marines sat around a fire cooking their beef in a pot. The chief of the natives came close to investigate what was happening.

The chief stepped towards Phillip, yelled words at him, wave his spear, pointed to his men standing behind him and then pointed at Phillip.

Phillip followed the chief’s gaze to the pot boiling over the fire.

“Chief, everything is calm. You don’t need to worry. Please come to look at the fire,” said Phillip calmly, and smiled. He pointed to the fire and said, “It is alright. Please come and take a look.”

While the chief couldn’t understand the language, he could read the gestures and emotions. The chief laid down his spear and confidently walked over to look at the meat boiling in the pot. The chief spoke, not that the men could understand him, but they got the gist of his enquiry.

“Well, we are boiling meat in hot water to cook it,” said one of the marines. He then lifted the meat out of the pot, put it on a plate, cut a slice and handed it to the chief. “Mind, the meat is still hot,” said the marine as he blew on it to cool it before handing it to the chief. The chief tasted the meat and was duly impressed. He then said a few more words, smiled at the men and went off with his meat to tell his people.

“What do you think he said?” asked one marine of another. “Oh, I think he first said, “what are you boiling in the pot?’ And then when he tasted the meat, he said ‘that’s a really good

idea. It tastes great. I don't know why we have never thought of it. I am going off to tell the others'."

Everyone, including Phillip, had to laugh at the marine's interpretation of events. "I will have to put that conversation in my diary," laughed Phillip, "but I think you got it right. Oh, and give the chief one of the pots in the morning. I am sure he would appreciate it. You might show them that using large shells will serve the purpose just as well."

Phillip returned to Botany Bay on January 24.

"Gidley, send a message to the officers and ship's captains of the convoy that we have discovered a suitable harbour and cove for their settlement in Port Jackson. Inform them that I will take a continent with me tomorrow to Sydney Cove to make ready for the convoy to arrive a day later.

On January 25, 1788, Phillip returned to the cove he now called Sydney Cove. When the rest of the fleet arrived on January 26, officers and marines came ashore. A flag was raised to mark the place of the British settlement – as a statement of their presence and their successful arrival as well as a sign to the French. Mugs of the cheap wine from Cape Town were handed out and all stood and watched the sun set over the trees and then toasted the King's health.

"Quickly, bring him in here and lift him onto the table," said Assistant Surgeon, William Balmain.

Midshipman Henry Waterhouse, Judge Advocate David Collins and convict, James Squire, lifted Arthur Phillip onto the table in the operating room at the hospital. Phillip was unconscious. Squire had broken the spear that had hit Phillip but the rest of the shaft remained lodged in Phillip's shoulder. Phillip groaned in pain as he hit the table. Balmain felt Phillip's pulse. It was weak. He noticed his shirt was covered with blood.

"What happened," asked Balmain as he began to strip away Phillip's shirt.

"We went with Governor Phillip over to Manly Bay at the request of Bennelong to share in eating some whale meat. A stranger that we had not met before was with the group of Aborigines. He got frightened when Phillip approached him and threw his spear at Phillip hitting him in the shoulder. In the excitement, more spears were thrown. Squire fired a gun into the air and the natives all ran off," said David Collins.

"Dr. White has gone on a trek to Broken Bay, so I will perform the operation to remove the spear. The wound is deep but the Governor will be well as long as we can resist infection. I notice there is another spear injury to his hand. Thank you gentlemen. Now, if you please, could you leave me to my work," said Balmain. "I will inform you of his condition in due course."

Ten days later, on September 17, 1790, Phillip had recovered enough to journey, at Bennelong's request, back across the harbour to the northern shore. With the help of James Squire, Phillip got out of the boat and walked up the beach to meet Bennelong.

"I am sorry," said Bennelong, "for what happen to you. I very worried."

Phillip sat down on a log on the beach and, with one arm in a sling, he waved his free hand back and forth to indicate there was no need for the apology.

“Me and friend Colebe, we catch Willemering, who did this to you. We give him beating. This man, he was scared of you. He think you want attack him. Do you want me revenge killing?” asked Bennelong, as he stood in front of Phillip.

“Please don’t. I do not want you to harm him anymore. Tell him I forgive him for what he did. I hold no bad feelings toward him.”

Bennelong stood silently. Forgiveness was not a consideration in his culture.

“Bennelong, I want you to tell your people they can come into the settlement freely. If they want, they can come and live with us, eat with us and sleep with us,” said Phillip.

For Bennelong, this was more generous than even forgiving his assailant. Bennelong just grunted to signal his understanding of the offer. He stood there in silence.

“I looked forward to seeing you again. I was planning to have a house built for you near mine for you and your wives, if you would like that,” said Phillip.

Again, Bennelong was speechless, but then managed, “I speak to my people. I tell them of what you say. I happy to be near you.”

Bennelong returned to the settlement several weeks later in October with a group of friends to renew his friendship with Phillip, who was glad to receive him. The Colony was opened for general intercourse with the Aborigines who freely moved among the settlers with some living in the Rocks area and others among the houses around the Cove. Phillip kept his promise and had a hut built for Bennelong at the place that became known as Bennelong Point, where the Opera House sits today.

When Bennelong’s first wife died the following year, he approached his friend Arthur Phillip.

“Govna,” said Bennelong, “my wife, Barangaroo, has died.”

“Oh, Bennelong. I am so sorry to hear of your loss,” said Phillip.

“I have my child-daughter. She is baby. Her name in Dil-boong. I cannot care for her. I do not want to take her to tribe. I do not think she would live well and probably die. I want you to become her be-anne: her father. I know you can care for her.”

“You give me a great honour to ask me to care for your baby. I will find people to help me do this for you,” said Phillip.

Bennelong nodded his head and disappeared out the door. He returned that evening with others and lit a fire outside behind Phillip’s house. He then brought Phillip to sit with them near the fire. The men sat singing. They spoke of their customs and Bennelong translated for Phillip.

“Now, Govna, I give you a new name, Wolawaree, which is like my own name, Wollarawarre. You are no longer a stranger but one of my tribe. I will no longer call you Govna, but father and I will be called your son. You are an elder among your people and mine. You have responsibilities now to your new family as well as your British family,” said Bennelong.



Bennelong

The Second Fleet arrived in 1790 and the Third Fleet in 1791. The ship's human cargo were ill-fed and mistreated and many people died in the voyages. The prisoners were no longer just transportees but included political prisoners Britain wanted to get rid of. Phillip was disheartened in realising the original vision for the colony had faded under the new Secretary for War and the Colonies, William Grenville who took up the office in June 1789. In 1793, Britain declared war on France. King Louis XVI had been beheaded and French Revolutionary forces had invaded Holland. Britain's attention was now on managing the war, with little regard to the New South Wales colony.

“Come in Bennelong,” said Phillip. “I have decided that my shoulder is still very sore from the spear I took three years ago. I am returning to England. I want you, and your friend Yemmerrawanne, to come with me. We will leave in a couple of months in December. I very much hope this is agreeable to you”

On December 11, 1792, Governor Arthur Phillip, Bennelong and Yemmerrawanne sailed for England.

“My Lord, may I present to you my friends Wollarawarre, known to me as Bennelong, and Yemmerrawanne,” said Captain Arthur Phillip to Lord Sydney.

“Come in gentlemen. Please sit down. Thank you for coming all this way to see me at my home in Dundas. Yes, yes, please sit there on the sofa,” said Sydney.

“Your name is the same as our Sydney town,” offered Bennelong.

Sydney laughed, “Yes, I afraid you have Arthur here to blame for that. He thought it was a good name for the town as I had sent him all the way across the seas to you. Do you drink tea? Arthur, do they drink tea?”

“Yes, Your Lordship.”

“James, bring us some tea would you, and can you bring in some wood for the fire. Our guests must be feeling the cold of our dreary country,” said Sydney.

“And tell me Arthur, how is your shoulder coming along? You must be feeling the cold yourself! And I hear you have brought four, um, kangaroos to England with you. Please tell me all your news.”

Arthur Phillip had, indeed, brought four kangaroos with him. He put two of them on display in the Lyceum Museum and people swarmed to see these strange animals, paying a one shilling (US\$7) entry fee.

In due course, Arthur Phillip was awarded a pension, which was half of his current salary (equal to that of an admiral) at £500 (US\$82,000) a year, in addition to his naval pay, as a captain – which continued to rise year-on-year while he remained in the navy. And of course, there was the income from his kangaroos.

Now, a distinguished naval officer with a reputation as the Governor General of New South Wales, and with money in the bank and a handsome income, the eligible bachelor moved to Bath, north of London, to convalesce from his injury. He spent his time preparing his diary notes for publication. He went for walks and enjoyed the hot springs of the baths of the town. Arthur decided to join the local library.

A Miss Isabella Whitehead was 43 years of age, unmarried, and the daughter of a 'gentleman of affluent means' from the cotton weaving industry. She had recently moved into the neighbourhood. Having seen Arthur in the local library before, she was aware of his reputation.

"Oh, sorry," said Arthur, having bumped into Miss Whitehead at the corner of the isle causing her to drop her books.

As Arthur knelt down to retrieve the fallen books, Isabella, put her hand to her chest and make a little noise of alarm. "Oh, it was my fault," Isabella said. "I was so absorbed in this book by Mr. Defoe about Robinson Crusoe I did not look to where I was going.

Arthur picked up Robinson Crusoe, looked at the cover and handed it to Isabella. "That is a good choice of reading material, Miss Ah?"

"Isabella Whitehead," said Isabella, as she put out her hand to be received.

"Again, my pardon, Miss Whitehead. I take full responsibility for the collision. I am Arthur, Arthur Phillip.

"Oh, Captain Phillip. I have heard mention of you in the tea house. So sorry to hear about your greyhounds."

Arthur tried to hide a frown as he remember the loss of his dogs in the colony. "Ah, yes, well Perhaps I could redeem myself for my carelessness and invite you to take some tea with me this afternoon?"

Isabella smiled. It was exactly what she was hoping for.

Sometime later, Arthur and Isabella were married. In 1805, at age 65, Phillip retired from the navy. He and Isabella lived in Bathampton, not far from Bath. He bought a splendid house for the sum of £2200 (US\$300,000).

Phillip had moved through the naval ranks over 20 years to eventually become a full Admiral with a higher rank than even Lord Nelson had attained. He was now accommodated with the immoderate remuneration he had longed for. He and Isabella lived in Bathampton until his death at age 75, in 1814.

Although much of Phillip's good works were to be undermined by poor administration by the marines he left behind, his progressive ideas and his belief that Australia could become a substantive colony, proved that Phillip was the right man to start the development of an economically successful civil society in Australia.



Admiral Arthur Phillip's home in England

Story 6

Henry and Susannah Kable

“Quiet!” whispered old Henry to his son. “It may be dark, aye, but shadows have eyes and ears. When Abe and I get inside, I’ll shine a light at the window and that’ll be ye’ signal to bring the horse and dray around to the side of the house. You stay with the dray and keep the nag quiet. Abe and I will do the job.”

The two men, Henry Keable and Abraham Carman stood against a wall in a lane across the road from the house they were about to rob in Alburgh, Suffolk, England, just seven miles from where they lived in Laxfield. Carmen was Keable’s brother-in-law. Their families waited anxiously at home.

It was February, 1783. The weather was warm. The sky was clear. Twilight lingered till after 9 p.m. This job had to be done late. The men crossed the road, certain that no one was home and no unwanted persons lingered nearby. Young Henry, aged just 19, waited nervously for his father’s signal.

There it was: A light in the window, briefly. Young Henry drove the dray up the alley beside the mark. A door opened. “Here,” said his father, “I’ll pass out the booty and you load it. Got that? No noise. And keep that horse still.” Keable slipped back inside. The men found wine. A bottle each while they worked. They would take everything that wasn’t nailed down, even the hangings from the bedsteads and the meat from the pickle jars.

The job done, they made their escape. Once home, the booty was carefully taken inside. Keable and Carman continued to drink and celebrate their night’s winnings with the women and song.

At discovering the crime, a hue and cry went out across the districts. Thievery in Britain was a ‘hingin’ offence. The local Constable, Mr. Triggs, was on the case. Questions were asked and soon the culprits of this ‘grisly affair’ – as the newspapers would describe it, were discovered. Triggs, with three assistants, approached the Keable house. But they were spotted before they arrived.

“Quick, burn it all,” yelled Carmen. People ran. Goods were piled. A flame struck. “Open up. This is the Constable.” But there was no response. “Break down the door,” yelled Triggs to his men. Triggs barged in, only to be met with violence. A fight engulfed the house. Women and children screamed. Triggs went down with a terrible blow to the head – reported the newspapers. But blood or no, Triggs would make his arrest. Keable, Carman and young Henry were taken away.

Henry Keable and Abraham Carman, for their part, were sentenced on March 18, 1783 to be hanged by the neck until they were dead. For young Henry, while he was also sentenced to death, his age and his menial part in the crime - which had gained him no profit, were considered and the judge relied on the provision called Benefit of Clergy to commute his sentence to seven years transportation to the American colonies. He was taken from the courts to Norwich Castle county prison to await an opportunity for transportation.

Transportation to the colonies had ceased in 1776 with the revolt of thirteen British colonies in America and Henry would wait sometime yet for his punishment of ‘transportation’ to be carried out.



Bow Street Court, 1808, from *The Microcosm of London*

In British law, ‘Benefit of Clergy’ was originally a provision by which clergymen arrested for an offence could claim to be tried for a felony by an ecclesiastical court rather than a secular court. Eventually, ‘benefit of clergy’ evolved as a concept to cover first-time offenders and misdemeanour crimes whereby the offended could receive a less severe sentence by way of transportation.

Laws “... for the punishment of Rogues, Vagabonds, and Sturdy Beggars – to be banished out of this Realm ...” had existed since 1597 with the passage of the *Elizabethan Act*. In 1717, King George I gave his assent to *An Act for the further preventing Robbery, Burglary and other Felonies, and for the more effectual Transportation of Felons...*” The law sought to deter crime against the theft of property and to improve the management of transportation as a form of punishment.

In the 1700s, theft of property across Britain had become endemic and beyond social tolerance. People moving into cities in the hope of finding work and employment led to overcrowding, destitution, squalor and crime. People living in poverty and crime, needed to be removed from their wretchedness, wickedness and the pestilence of society, thought the government. The idea behind the transportation scheme was to give the offender work in an effort to help them reform and claim a second chance at life. In the 1770s, 80% of people sentenced to transportation had committed an ‘offense against property’ – theft.

When Henry arrived at Norwich Castle prison, he found it to be damp, insanitary and overcrowded. It was like so many other old prisons across Britain.

Various kinds of people were mixed together. Not only people of various criminal severity but also a mixture of men, women and children, the insane, people awaiting trial, debtors and lifers. People paid their gaolers (jail guards) for food and services, including an occasional nightly visit from a girlfriend. People gambled, drank alcohol and bartered for food. The inmates were left to run their own internal communities. For a fee, the guards would let a prisoner have his family come and visit or even stay with them.

In the 1780s, there were some 5,000 new inmates per year entering the 300 prisons in England and Wales. Transportation was very expensive, and as Members of Parliament would claim, ‘a ridiculous exercise’ if convicts were not sold on as pro tem labourers. There were no ship’s captains wanting to buy convicts to resell them in the 1780s as was the earlier experience in the American colonies. People were left to wait, in the hulk ships or prisons, although they had not been sentenced to imprisonment.



Inside Newgate Prison

In the Norwich Castle prison, Henry had to create a life for himself as he waited.

Later that same year of 1783, Susannah Holmes, found herself in trouble. Susannah was an illiterate servant girl who came from Surlingham, a village of only 200 people. She gained employment with Mr. Jabez Taylor in a nearby village. But, in November, 1783, young Susannah foolishly stole clothing, silver spoons and linen to

the value of £2 (US\$350 at today’s value). On March 19, 1784, Susannah was sentenced to death but her sentence was commuted, under Benefit of Clergy, to transportation for 14 years in the American colonies. She was taken to the Norwich Castle prison.

Susannah sat, cold and damp, against a wall in a cell, feeling sorry for herself.

‘Good evenin’ me lovely. What brings you to this fine place?’ asked Henry.

“I stole some spoons and cloth,” replied Susannah in a low voice, peering up from her seat on the floor.

“Ha, is that all? You should hear my story. But that can wait. Would ye’ like a cup of tea to brighten ye’ up?” asked Henry with a smile.

And so began a relationship that led to love and the birth of their son, Henry, three years later in 1786.

Unknown to Henry and Susannah, plans were afoot by the Government to establish a military and civil colony on the other side of the world in a land known as New Holland. The French were building their navy. They had sights on expanding their interests in Asia and had sent ships into the Pacific to claim New Holland for themselves. In response, the British Government was about to undertake the most expensive colonial venture ever undertaken. A military settlement was to be established at Botany Bay and transportees were to be taken from the prisons and sent to Cook’s New South Wales to build a colony and forge out a new life for themselves: However, the venture didn’t sound all that exciting to the transportees who much preferred to stay in cold-old England than be sent elsewhere. They didn’t realise that once in the colony, they could receive a pardon at any time from the governor, and, in addition to the requirement that they work, they could be granted land, supplies and food to start a farm or permission to start a business of their own.

Susannah, as a young female, was on the list for transportation to New South Wales. Henry’s name was not on the list. The couple were distressed: Would Henry ever see his new family again?

The Norwich Castle prison turnkey, or warder, John Simpson, took Susannah and the baby to the south-west of England to Plymouth, where she was to be placed on the *Dunkirk*, an old Hulk of a ship, under the oversight of Captain Bradley, until the ships for the convoy to New South Wales were ready.

“Right, you lot, come out,” said Simpson to the three women sitting in the prison wagon. The women stepped from the wagon onto the dock beside the *Dunkirk*.

“So, these are the women from Norwich Castle,” said Captain Bradley to Simpson. “But what’s this? A baby?” said Bradley. He studied his document again. “I cannot take a baby. I only have these three lassies on my paper. There’s no mention of a baby.”

But the baby is Susannah’s newborn. The baby goes where the mother goes,” responded Simpson.

“You’ll have to take the infant, Mr. Simpson. I cannot receive that which I am not authorised to receive. Take the baby away from her. I have to load these women and there will be no baby on board,” demanded Bradley.

Simpson lifted the baby from Susannah’s arms. Susannah screamed. And with that all in attendance at the dock turned to see what was going on. Susannah continued to scream and howl as she was dragged up the gangway. The Norfolk Chronicle later reported that “The frantic mother was led to her cell execrating (cursing) the cruelty of the man and vowing to put an end to her life.”

Simpson was left holding the baby. There was only one thing for it, he thought. He would ride to London with baby Henry and plead with Lord Sydney, the Secretary for War and the Colonies. And rode he did.

Simpson arrived at the palatial offices of the Home Secretary. Simpson, a man out of his depth and out of his class, was determined to do right by the child. Slipping through a side door, he approached a clerk at a desk to the Lord’s offices but was told that Lord Sydney was busy and would have no time to see him. Simpson was turned away. Simpson, however, was not to give up. He would wait for his chance.



Susannah Kable

The Norfolk Chronicle tells the story:

Not long after, he saw Lord Sydney descend the stairs and he instantly ran for him. His Lordship shewed an unwillingness to attend to an application made in such a strange and abrupt manner. But Mr. Simpson described the exquisite misery he had been witness to and expressed his fears that the unhappy woman in the wilderness of her despair should deprive herself of existence.

Lord Sydney was moved by the appeal. He ordered that the mother and child be united and gave instructions that the father be allowed to join them in the voyage to Botany Bay. After expressing much gratitude, Simpson set off with papers in hand to first fetch Henry and then deliver both father and child to the *Dunkirk*.

“Come in Mrs. Jackson. How lovely of you to come at such short notice,” said Lady Cadogan. “Oh, I have come straight from theatre rehearsals on receiving your note and left the cast to carry on without me. It is such a heart rendering story to read in the newspapers how could I not come immediately on your invitation?” replied Mrs. Jackson as she handed her coat to the servant at the door of the Cadogan’s Mayfair residence. “Please come into the drawing room. Of course you will have some tea with me as we talk.”

As the women sat near the window enjoying the morning sunshine, Lady Cadogan moved from pleasantries about the theatre and her husband’s health to the subject at hand.

“Mrs. Jackson, I know you were just as horrified as I to read about this young couple and their distress and then to hear of how that marvellous Lord Sydney allowed them to be reunited with their child. I do so hope that they can make a new life for themselves in this pioneering venture to New South Wales. But my dear Mrs. Jackson, I was wondering if you might aid me in launching an appeal to help them in their new land.”

“Oh, Lady Cadogen, I would be most pleased to join you in such a wonderful undertaking. I will contact a newspaper reporter and, of course, mention it to all my theatre patrons.”

Lady Cadogan, wife of Charles Cadogan, 1st Earl Cadogen, along with her friend, Mrs. Jackson, a well-known actress from Covent Gardens, organised a public appeal for the Kables (Henry’s surname appears to have changed slightly from pronunciation to print at this stage). They raised some £20 (US\$3,300) with which they bought a parcel of books and clothing for the Kables to have on their arrival in New South Wales. The goods were placed in a hessian sack on the store ship, *Alexander*. The Kables travelled on a different ship, the *Friendship*.

On arriving in Port Jackson, Henry went looking for his hessian sack. It was ripped open with remnants of the consignment strewn across the floor. He found Captain Duncan Sinclair on the beach, drinking with sailors and marines.

“Captain, I’ve b’in aboard ye’ ship and was lookin’ for my sack. But it has been ripped open and a lot of my goods are missin’”, announced Henry.

“Oh, I’d be knowin’ nothin’ about any of that. It could have b’in anyone. I would ne know. Maybe one of ye’ convict mates has taken ye stuff,” replied Sinclair, as he lifted his mug to his mouth once again, dripping fluid from chin to shirt. The small group of drunkards laughed.

“Those goods were a gift from people in London and her ladyship. I want you to search the ship for my stuff,” replied Henry.

“I’ll be doin’ no such thing. Now, be off with ye,” retorted Sinclair, angrily.

As Henry walked away, a marine who had heard the conversation ran after him. “Listen young fella, go see the new Judge Advocate, Lieutenant David Collins. He is only 34 years old but a naval officer who will not tolerate the unscrupulous behaviour of these merchant seamen.”

So Henry did just that: He found the Judge Advocate and explained what had taken place. David Collins was aware of Henry and Susannah’s story and the public gift. He was outraged. “This is an offense not just against you because you have no means to defend yourself but an offence against public good will and public trust, not to say against the government itself which has taken your goods, on trust, to deliver both you and your goods safely to this place,” responded Collins.

With that, Collins put out an order to prevent the *Alexander* from leaving port and for Sinclair to stand trial. The first case on Australian soil of *Kable vs Sinclair* was listed and heard and to everyone's surprise Henry Kable won and was awarded compensation of £15 (US\$2,500).

So here it was: Not only had the liberal minded Lord Sydney allowed a family to travel together to his new colony but Henry Kable was awarded the rights of a free man to sue his adversary. The Kables, like all the other transportees, were treated as human beings with equal rights under law and in society. There were no prisons for the transportees: They were not incarcerated convicts in this new land. Indeed, the Kables, along with everyone else, were assigned tents to live in.

Two weeks after arriving in Sydney, Henry and Susannah, along with three other couples, were the first to be married by the chaplain in the new colony.

“Do you take this woman to be your wife ... do you take this man to be your husband...” They were together, in this strange new land with the sea, the blue sky and unimagined possibilities stretched out before them. They were alive. They were free. And here was their ‘second chance’. Henry was aged 25 and Susannah was 24 years.

After Henry and Susannah Kable successfully sued the captain of the ship for the loss of their property on the outward voyage, Henry Kable gained the Governor's attention. Phillip thought it both amusing, and just, to see Kable get compensation. “But perhaps there's some mettle in this young man”, he thought. Phillip called young Kable to come and see him and after an interview decided to give him a job to oversee other convicts.

Within six months, he and his wife, Susannah, had a small garden of their own, supplying themselves with cabbages, turnips and peas. They sent their son to school.



Henry Kable

In 1790, Kable's sentence as a transported labourer expired. In 1791, the Acting Governor, Francis Grose, appointed Henry to Constable with the duty of Night Watchman for the town. Henry distinguished himself with making arrests of people intent on stealing from the government stores. Governor Phillip then appointed Henry to the position of Chief Constable of New South Wales, following on from John Harris. As Chief Constable, he was in charge of the Colony's lock-up for criminals, drunkards and troublemakers: An ironic turn of events.

With his appointment came a grant of land and by July 1798, he was able to send money back to his mother in England. Henry bought a tavern, calling it Ramping Horse, probably after Rampant Horse Street in Norwich.

Henry found an opportunity to partner in business with one James Underwood, and Simon Lord. Lord led the way with ship building and an import-export business. But in 1802, Kable

was dismissed from the position of Chief Constable for breaching port regulations by illegally buying pigs off a visiting ship.

Liberated from public office, Henry dedicated himself to his merchant business, and then built and owned his own ship, which he called after his daughter, the *Diana*. The *Diana* was one of several ships that now traded across the Pacific.

In 1794, and 1795, Kable was granted lands at Petersham and four other places. By 1807 he owned 170 acres. By 1809, he had an additional five farms up on the Hawkesbury River and 300 acres west of Sydney on the Cowpastures.

In 1810 he handed over his Sydney businesses to his son, 'baby Henry', and Henry and Susannah moved to Windsor where Henry opened a store, and, a brewery.

Henry and Susannah had 11 children. Henry died in 1846, aged 82. Susannah had died in 1825 at age 61. Ten generations later, the Kable dynasty still meet on occasion in the Kable's Restaurant in Sydney, which sits on land that their ancestors, Henry and Susannah, once owned.

Story 7

The Sydney Settlement



First Fleet at Sydney Cove 1788

It was eight o'clock on the summer morning of Thursday, February 7, 1788. There had been a violent storm the night before but the weather was clearing and promising a warm, and probably hot, day for the celebrations about to begin.

Arthur Phillip sat at his desk in the great cabin of the captain's room at the stern of the *HMS Supply* when his friend of 20 years and second in command, Lieutenant Philip Gidley King, approached the open doorway

and gave a gentle knock.

"Oh, good morning, Gidley. Come in," said Arthur.

"Yes, good morning, Arthur, or should I call you 'Governor', now?"

"Governor-in-Chief is to be the title from this afternoon," Arthur chuckled as Gidley crossed the floor and sat in the seat in front of the desk. He was dressed in full uniform in preparation for the day's pending events.

"Must be time for breakfast," said Arthur. "Clerk," he yelled out the door, "Can you get cook to provide us a wonderful breakfast on this magnificent of days, please?"

"Now, how is everything proceeding?" asked Arthur. "I could hear the music and laughter of last night's party even out here on board ship. But I am suspicious that that violent storm drove people under cover and put out the fire."

"Yes, well, there were a lot of very happy people last night. Men tidied up their tents and tidied up themselves to greet all the women coming ashore. The women, it would appear, had also been anticipating coming ashore and, as ship's surgeon Arthur Bowes Smyth remarked, looked generally very clean and some even well dressed. There was an amazing huge fire, a band played, as you mentioned, and many were appreciative of you allowing an abundance of rum and wine for their celebration. I noticed a number of natives standing among the trees watching the proceedings. Amused and bewildered, I'm sure as the biggest and loudest party they had ever witnessed. But once the gale hit the cove, it did cause a commotion. The little hut that housed several sheep was destroyed by a falling branch, to Lieutenant Ross' dismay, as he owned the sheep. Anyway, I am sure you will hear from good folk among us concerning the revelry and cavorting that went on last night."

"Thank you for the warning," Arthur again chuckled.

"There will be a few sore heads this morning and the ground will still be wet so leaving today's celebration to the afternoon will work out well," continued Gidley.

"Ah, here's breakfast. Let's move across to the dining table," said Arthur as he rose from his chair and moved around the desk to slowly take his seat as the table was quickly set.

“We put in some work this week but those trees, so hard to cut and move, made clearing the land behind the cove so incredibly difficult,” said Arthur. “It had been my hope to acquire more artificers than we have. There are only 12 carpenters among the convicts and to this number we were able to add a further 16 from the ships. This is but a small party by which to carry out the work. We have added one hundred labourers to work for them but the task is made difficult by the hardness of the wood to be cleared and rendered useful for building.

“And, despite their good fortunes, there are some convicts among us that are just of a temperament to be lazy, which requires more time than we have to spare to marshal them,” said Gidley. “Just hopeless individuals.”

“It is to my regret that we still have thieves among us. Even the ship’s captains complained of people taking the most ridiculous items when departing to come ashore. If they don’t take heed of my warnings today, I will deal with them severely. I will commit today to care for the community by establishing discipline and thereby earn a fundamental trust in my leadership. The rigor of the law will be put into force and such discipline will include the marines. By navy law, men are to be hanged for homosexuality and murder. To this, I will add theft, especially of government stores,” said Arthur.

The men sat in silence for a time, eating their eggs, bacon, and freshly made bread.

“I have been looking over our plans for the town and making out roads. The construction of a house for government stores and a hospital have commenced, and a house for the Governor will be the next project,” said Gidley.

“But the large canopy we brought out with us - my temporary house of canvas, is ready for tonight’s reception, I am glad to say,” said Arthur.

“I am pleased to say that there are several people wishing at the earliest opportunity to get married, including young Henry Kable and his lady, Susannah,” said Gidley.

“Oh, yes, I remember them. The couple who had the baby and had all that trouble at the port but were given farewell gifts to bring with them.”

“Kable, I am told, poor fellow, has been aggrieved with his goods pilfered on the *Alexander* during the journey,” said Gidley.

“I won’t stand for it,” said Arthur, dropping his knife and fork on his plate. “At the first opportunity, have Kable make a declaration to David Collins – he’s our Judge Advocate, and prevent the *Dunkirk* from leaving until this matter is resolved. I won’t stand for it. As if we don’t have enough trouble with discipline of convicts but I expect more from ship’s captains.”

“You have my full support in this matter and this was the opinion I hoped for,” said Gidley.

The men fell silent again. Arthur pulled apart some of the warm bread.

“There is another matter of some convicts wandering off and being killed by the natives. I suspect, quite strongly, that such people have provoked just retaliations for their behaviours,” said Gidley.

“It is my intention to establish full amity with the natives, and an alliance. I am determined to treat them with the utmost kindness. Whatever differences may arise, nothing less than the most absolute necessity should ever compel me to fire upon them. I have heard that some convicts have wandered off into the woods to be killed or injured, but as you say, it is



Philip Gidley King

probable that they were the aggressors in the conflicts. I have also heard that French sailors offended the natives, only to find retaliations. And, for this, I have nothing but regret as such intercourse will only make it that much more difficult to promote goodwill. But, we must try. We will succeed,” said Arthur with a touch of anguish mixed with his determination.

“I don’t think that having Major Robert Ross, another Scott with an attitude, as Lieutenant Governor, will promote your ambitions,” offered Gidley.

“Yes, there are problems within and without but that is the lot I have drawn and the allotment I will deal with.”

Finishing up their breakfast and conversation, Gidley concluded, “I presume you will come ashore shortly to inspect that all is ready?”

“Yes, but I will take my time. My plan is to begin proceedings in the afternoon and then move on to a celebration dinner. I will have extra rations dispersed to the community that they may all cook meats, or fish, with what vegetables can be spared, and perhaps have a small quantity of rum and wine to round off a memorable day.”

“There should be no complaints from anyone with this program. I image the colony will rue the day that William Bligh ever becomes Governor,” said Gidley. Both men laughed.

The convicts had been seated on the ground, which was still damp, to the left and away from the makeshift podium at the front of the clearing. Again, they were in their best clothing. Arthur Phillip, dressed in his new uniform, complete with sword by his side, stood on the podium, Next to him stood Lieutenant Philip Gidley King, Major Robert Ross, Captain David Collins, and the Reverend Richard Johnson. Phillip’s two greyhounds were controlled by a steward standing nearby. The wives and children of the officers and marines, along with the other civilians of the community, ship’s captains and some sailors, all sat on seats that had been brought from the ships. Aborigines stood on the edge of the gathering under the trees, watching. The New South Wales Regiment was in uniform and under arms and assembled in formation at the back and to the right of the clearing.

When all seemed to be ready and everyone in their place, Major Ross gave a nod as the signal to the Sergeant Major in front of the Regiment.

The Sergeant Major lifted his baton to the sky. The drummer did a drum roll. The piper hit a ‘C’ note and began to lead out the music for the *British Grenadiers*. The rest of the 12 members of the band joined in. The Sergeant Major led the troops in formation of four across the parade ground clearing and down to pass the podium. The soldiers saluted as they passed the podium and came to stand in rows 10 deep. The Sergeant Major lifted his baton and lowered it as the signal for the band to cease playing.

Arthur Phillip nodded to Major Ross who then led him to inspect the troops. A steward with the greyhounds on leashes followed behind. Completing the inspection, Phillip and Ross returned to the podium and the dogs led to its side.

Captain David Collins, the Judge Advocate for the Colony, stepped forward.

“I hereby read this Royal Commission to establish British Government of New South Wales and by this instrument appoint Arthur Phillip as our Captain General and Governor in Chief in and over the territory called New South Wales, extending from the northern point or extremity of the coast, called Cape York, in the latitude of ten degrees, thirty-seven minutes

south, to the southern extremity of the said territory of New South Wales, or South Cape, in the latitude of forty-three degrees, thirty-nine minutes south, and of all the country inland to the westward, as far as the one hundred and thirty-fifth degree of east longitude, reckoning from the meridian of Greenwich, including all the islands adjacent in the Pacific Ocean, within the latitudes aforesaid of 10°. 37'. south, and 43°. 39'. south, and of all towns, garrisons, castles, forts, and all other fortifications, or other military works which may be hereafter erected upon the said territory, or any of the said islands.

By Act of Parliament of December 6, 1786, I declare that a colonial and civil government shall hereby be established in this place and that a criminal court be established with authority given to the Governor to proceed in a summary way to represent His King's government and courts of Great Britain. Authority is also given to establish a civil court, consisting of the judge-advocate and two inhabitants of the settlement, who are to be appointed by the Governor; which court has full power to hear and determine in a summary way all pleas of lands, houses, debts, contracts, and all personal pleas whatsoever. And third, a vice-admiralty court shall be established for the trial of offences committed upon the high seas, of which the Lieutenant Governor is constituted as the judge. The Governor is also commissioned today as Vice-Admiral of the territory vesting him with authority to hold general courts-martial, and to confirm or set aside the sentence. I, David Collins, am appointed Judge Advocate of this Colony and Major Robert Ross is appointed Lieutenant Governor in this place."

"I hereby read the Letters Patent under seal from our King George III, establishing the social, legal and political form of this Colony and the lands so claimed in this place by British law and by international laws of Europe," said David Collins. On concluding the reading of Letters Patent, David Collins stepped back in line beside Major Ross.

The Sergeant Major, then shouted orders. Seven men stepped forward and on command, a triple discharge of 'musquetry' concluded this part of the ceremony.



Reverend Robert Johnson

The Reverend Robert Johnston then stepped forward. "Let us pray."

"Our Father, we are thankful for our safe voyage to this place. We pray that You would give us strength and the will to prosper. Give us forbearance in all that we do and towards others. Help us to be kind to our new found friends and natives in this place and may we show every care towards them as we would have others show unto us. We seek Your blessing upon those who would lead us, especially our Governor, Arthur Phillip. May he have the wisdom, fortitude he needs as the Viceroy of our King George in this Colony. In Your Name we pray, Jesus Christ. Amen."

With the formalities of the ceremony over, Governor Arthur Phillip then stepped forward to address the community.

"First may I thank Lieutenant Philip King, Captain David Collins, Major Robert Ross and the Reverend Robert Johnson for their participation here today. I want to also thank the soldiers for their steady good conduct on every occasion. To the people who have been transported to this Colony under law, as you well know, you have forfeited your lives to the justice of this

colony. Yet, by the lenity of Britain's laws you are now so placed into my care and oversight and, by industry and good behaviour you might, in time, regain the advantages and estimation in society of which you have been deprived."

"But, to persons detected committing crimes, I promise no mercy, nor indeed to any whom should presume to offend against the peace and good order of the settlement. What mercy could do for you, you have already experienced. Against offenders, therefore, the rigour of the law will certainly be put in force. Yet, for those whose behaviour should in any degree promise reformation, you might always depend upon encouragement fully proportioned to your deserts. I have particularly noticed the illegal intercourse between the sexes and view this as an offence which encourages a general profligacy of manners, and is in several ways injurious to society. To prevent this, I strongly recommend marriage, and promise every kind of countenance and assistance to those who, by entering into that state, should manifest their willingness to conform to the laws of morality and religion. I conclude my remarks by declaring my earnest desire to promote the happiness of all who are under my government, and to render the settlement in New South Wales advantageous and honourable to His Majesty's country," said Governor Arthur Phillip.

Lieutenant King in stepping forward, yelled "Hip hip."

"Hooray."

"Hip hip."

"Hooray."

"Hip. hip."

"Hooray."

"The community - soldiers and convicts alike, can obtain extra rations today from the supply tent for a general festivities this evening," announced Lieutenant King. "Officers and civilians are invited to be the guests of the Governor at his canvass residence to also partake in festivities of the evening."

In the following week, 14 marriages took place, including that of Henry and Susannah Kable.

"Come in, Gidley. Try to find somewhere dry to sit. This can house of mine is having its structures tested by this incessant rain," said Phillip as he cleared a seat and wiped away the water from a chair for Gidley to sit on.

"Yes, we have all been kept inside our tents these last few days. I have to say that we were so fortunate to have that fine weather three days back for our Commissioning celebrations," said Gidley.

"Would you care for some tea? I have just had some made, although I don't know how the cook manages it. I don't have any of Lord Sydney's renowned scones to offer you, I'm afraid."

"Oh, how disappointing," Gidley chuckled. "Tea is just fine, thank you."

Arthur poured tea for both of them and sat back in his chair.

"Now, Gidley, you know that Norfolk Island has been seen by the Home Office as a place we should take claim to at our earliest convenience, mainly for the purpose of cultivating flax for the Navy. But the presence of the French explorer Comte De la Pérouse leads me to think that this matter of claiming Norfolk Island should be done not for our convenience but with some haste."

“I agree.”

“I wish for you to gather some essential people, including some women, to travel with and to set up a settlement at Norfolk Island and to leave within the week. I do not have the power to appoint you to Lieutenant Governor, that position has been given to Major Ross, but I will write instructions that you receive my Commission, appointing you as Superintendent and Commandant of the settlement to be formed in Norfolk Island, and thereby to receive and to obey all such orders as you shall from time to time receive from me, his Majesty's Governor in Chief, and Captain General of the territory of New South Wales and its dependencies, or from the Lieutenant-Governor in my absence,” said Phillip.

“Thank you for that, I think. It is going to be something of a task and certainly a lonely existence. But I hope it doesn't rain as much as we have witnessed here these past weeks.” Both men laughed.

Now, I have given some thought to the directives for your commission and my thoughts are ...” Phillip reached across to the desk behind him and took hold of a piece of paper to read, “um, ... my thoughts are that you will be furnished with six months provisions, within which time you will receive an additional supply, but as you will be able to procure fish and vegetables, you are to endeavour to make the provisions you receive serve as long as possible. The convicts being the servants of the Crown, till the time for which they are sentenced is expired, their labour is to be for the public and you are to take particular notice of their general good or bad behaviour that they may hereafter be employed or rewarded according to their different merits. You are to cause the Prayers of the Church of England to be read with all due solemnity every Sunday, and you are to enforce a due observance of religion and good order, transmitting to me, as often as opportunity offers, a full account of your particular situation and transactions. You are not to permit any intercourse or trade with any ships or vessels that may stop at the island, whether English or of any other nation, unless such ships or vessels should be in distress, in which case you are to afford them such assistance as may be in your power.” Phillip lifted his head from reading his paper. “Does that all sound agreeable?”

“I can see no problem. And, as you say, we can be in communication as opportunities arise and unforeseen needs and issues can be worked out as we proceed. Again, thank you for this appointment.”

On February 14, 1788, a party was sent out in the *HMS Supply*, to settle on a small island to the north-west of New Zealand, led by their Superintendent and Commandant Lieutenant Philip Gidley King. As it was known that there were no inhabitants on Norfolk Island, there was sent only a small detachment, consisting of one subaltern officer, six marines, a midshipman, surgeon Jameson, two men who understood the cultivation and dressing of flax, with nine men and six women convicts. Norfolk Island was assumed as a British possession under the international law of *terra nullius* and government as part of the Colony of New South Wales

On the morning of Monday, February 18, 1788, the rain had ceased and promised a warm summer's day. Governor Arthur Phillip was sitting with David Collins under the canapé extending from the front of Phillip's 'house under canvas', with the two dogs at his feet. The

men sat looking over plans and work details while drinking tea. Up the hill from the cove walked Captain Hunter with three Frenchmen. Phillip and Collins stopped what they were doing and stood up.

“Bonjour, Gouverneur Phillip. Puis-je vous présenter le Capitaine Robert Sutton de Conard de la Marine Nationale et capitaine du navire *Astrolabe* (Good morning Governor Phillip. May I present to you Captain Robert Sutton de Conard of the French Navy and Captain of the ship *Astrolabe*), said Captain Hunter.

“Ah, the Irish Frenchman. Bonjour Capitaine de Conard. I presume we can continue to converse in English. You probably don’t often get to practice your English, I suspect, travelling among the French,” said Phillip in French.

“You are correct on both accounts. And it is my great pleasure, Sir, to make your acquaintance,” said Conard, as he gave a bow of his head. “I bring you the warmest of greetings from my Commander Comte de la Pérouse.”

“His greeting is well received. May I introduce Captain David Collins to you? He is our Colonial Secretary and Judge Advocate for this new Colony of New South Wales which, I am sure you will agree, is in a charming location, when it is not raining. But please, come, sit down and join us. We will just clear the table,” said Phillip as he signalled for a steward to come and help move the papers inside the tent.

Within minutes the table was cleared, a steward had brought sufficient cups and plates and stood with a tea pot. Conard’s two escorts moved to the shade of a nearby tree.

“Now, Captain Conard, you have picked a fine morning to come and visit and, as you can see, we have a spectacular view of the harbour from this vantage point. But, I did not see a pinnacle come up the harbour. Did you come over from Botany Bay by foot?” asked Phillip.

“Governor, please call me Robert. And, again, you are correct with your assessment that my escort and I have walked these several kilometres across the country from Botany Bay.”

“Well, in pressing forward with my successful assessments, I presume you will take tea with us but may I offer you something that has become a favourite of mine, acquired, I am afraid, from supping with Lord Sydney of our Home Office, and that is a taste for scones with jam and cream. I hope that you will indulge with us in this little but delightful habit of taking scones with our tea.”

“Neither my Irish or French alliances could persuade me not to indulge with you gentlemen in this little debauchery,” said Robert with a chuckle as the other men joining in his humour.

Tea was poured, and offered also to the two French soldiers. Scones with jam and cream were placed on plates for the men to help themselves.

“I have received word from our Gidley King of his visit with you at Botany Bay two weeks past on February 2nd and of your hospitality and good humours. He was, as you are no doubt aware, delivering my enthusiastic willingness to have Monsieur de la Pérouse letter transported as soon as it is possible to the French Ambassador in London,” said Phillip.

“Yes, I have come this morning with Monsieur de la Pérouse letter to Charles Pierre Claret de Fleurieu, Director of Ports and Arsenals in the port of Brest. He wrote the letter a week ago on February 7th, but he received word that you were having your celebrations and thought he would wait a little time before contacting you. My Commander asks that you send along with the letter these journals of his travels. He also wishes for me to reinforce his offer to provide you with any supplies as we have far more than what we need,” said Robert.

“Please convey to Monsieur de la Pérouse that he can trust me to take the greatest care to have them delivered to his ambassador in the British Court departing here on the earliest ship to depart this harbour.”

“I hear,” said David Collins, “that your priest, Claude Receveur, has died from wounds he received in Samoa.”

“Yes. Very sad. We have had some little trouble with the natives of the various places we have visited but in Botany Bay Monsieur la Pérouse wants to take no more chances of calamity and has had a barricade built to protect our continent. But we are also protected from the pestilence of your wandering convicts, five of whom have sought to abscond and join our crew, only to be firmly rejected,” Robert chuckled. “As for Father Claude, we have buried him in a cove and put a marker on a tree to mark his grave but I am not sure it would survive even the slightest of vandalism,” said Robert.

“I will find the place and will have a copper plaque placed on the tree as a sign of respect for him and your contingent,” offered Phillip.

“Thank you. Monsieur de la Pérouse will be most thankful, I have no doubt of this.”

“Tell us, Robert,” asked David, “of your other visits to the islands.”

“In September, last, we were at port at the Kamchatka Peninsula, in Eastern Russia when we received a letter from Charles Pierre Claret de Fleurieu. The letter had been written by King Louis to Comte de la Perouse on December 15, 1786 but had taken nine months and travelled 7,000 kilometres to reach him. The King had wanted to know of our progress, which is why my Commander wishes for you to send word of his adventures, but also to sail to Botany Bay and enquire of your progress in this settlement. I think the King, and indeed the Comte himself, thought you would have been further advanced. The Comte had anticipated having repairs made to his vessels, but alas, this is not to be.”

Robert took another bite of his scone.

“As to where we have been since receiving the letter, Monsieur de la Pérouse, was in no hurry. There was no urgency. We stopped at the Sandwich Islands (Hawaii), the Friendly Islands (Tonga) and then tried to anchor at Norfolk Island, before coming here to Botany Bay. It has taken us 120 days since we left the Kamchatka Peninsula. I do not think we will stay here for very long. Our Commander wishes now to return north and back into the Pacific to continue to retrace Monsieur Cook’s journeys. It is our intention to be home by March next year, but let us see, of course, what opportunities and calamities befall us to alter this objective.”

The men sat pondering all that Robert had said.

“Perhaps, Robert,” said John Hunter, “since the morning is so pleasant, I might show you around our little settlement and this beautiful bay?”

“Oh, but you must return to have a lunch with us,” said Phillip to Robert. “John, see that you don’t get waylaid in your wonderings, for Robert must return to sup with us for our mutual pleasure and entertainment. I will hear of no other option for the day’s events.”

Robert smiled, chuckled a little. “Thank you. I can accept no other option for the day’s events than to return here for some lunch.” He bowed his head slightly then turned to follow John Hunter, accompanied by his French companions.

Governor Arthur Phillip would never meet Rear Admiral Jean-Francois de Galaup, the Comte de La Pérouse who sailed away from Botany Bay on March 15, 1788 into the Pacific. He was never heard of again. In his letter to Charles Pierre Claret de Fleurieu, La Pérouse makes no mention at all of the British settlement at Sydney Cove. As to why Phillip never met with La Pérouse, Phillip says in his diary that “there had not been much intercourse

between the French and English in this interval: both being too busily employed to waste their time in parties of pleasure.”

Two years later in May, 1790, Governor Phillip, accompanied by Second Lieutenant William Dawes and Henry Dodd, walked around the colony to inspect the progress. It was a lovely summer’s morning. Dodd who had worked for Arthur Phillip on his farm in Lyndhurst in England, was now Superintendent of the Colony. Dawes was an engineer and surveyor.



Government House 1790

William Dawes and Henry Dodd stood at the front door of the new

Government House waiting for Arthur Phillip to grab his hat and finish giving instructions for the day to his steward. Phillip came out the door with, “Sorry, that took a few minutes. There is a Spanish ship come into the harbour and I have invited the Captain, um, Captain Malaspina, an explorer, to dinner. There is also another American whaling ship in the harbour and I thought the captain might join us as well. He has generously offered to share supplies from his ship with us. I have asked if my steward could ask young Bennelong to join us and invite the local chief, Boongaree, and our other young friend, Yemmerrawanne, as well. These men have come to dinner with me several times before this so I do not foresee a problem. I should think of several couples to join us so we have the pleasure of some female company. But I will get onto this when we return from our meandering.”



Henry Dodd

Henry smiled as Phillip put on his hat. “Let’s start with a look at your garden, Govna’,” said Henry.

“Lead on, Henry. I know before we start that I am going to be favourably impressed,” said Phillip.

“My, goodness,” said William. “Look at those cabbages. And those peas, and even carrots.”

“Yes, we have an abundance of vegetables this year, even better than last year. Those large cabbages there will probably grow to be as big as the one I brought the Govna’ before Christmas last: it was 26 pounds (12 kilos). And the crop on Garden Island is doing equally well,” said Henry.

“And how is young James Ruse doing under your tutelage out at Parramatta?” asked Phillip.

“Ruse has shown much promise. He wants to succeed at the task you have given him to grow a successful crop and he is putting in the hours. I’d say that within the month he’ll be down to brag about his crops. We have some 80 acres cleared at Rose Hill, near Parramatta, with crops coming on in wheat, barley, oats and maize. I am pleased to say that the crops over yonder at Farm Cove are also doing well.”

“Splendid,” said Phillip.

“Henry, you have turned this colony into the success that it is. You have got convicts working, the pilfering has fallen drastically, our gardens are thriving and buildings are going up. Even the military are chipping in to the work,” said William.

“It’s the Govna’ that should be given the credit, Mr. Dawes. Giving John Harris the job last August to have a night watch to stop the brickworks people from

coming up at night to steal supplies was a start in stemin’ the crime and getting a police force operating.”

“Credit to where credit is due,” said Phillip. “I have no doubt your military experience and having the men and women get their jobs done, or know your wrath, is noteworthy but you have also got them working as teams and this is solely to your credit as their superintendent.”

“And now that we are seeing an abundance of fish in our nets, food supply is not the issue it was, for us, or the Aborigines.” said Collins.

“Yes, I have been able to attend several of their corroborees and I am being treated very well,” added William. “I think that Dr. White’s care for the natives that were brought in with the smallpox last year did not go unnoticed. And I am so glad that that disease has passed.” The men stopped to look around and ponder what David had said.

“How are the two native orphans getting on with Dr. White and his family and Reverend Johnson and his wife, Mary?”

“I hear nothing but good reports on both the health and pleasure of the children,” said William.

“Let’s go on to look at the people in their work,” said Henry.

The men walked around the bay towards the west side of the cove. An area now being referred to as ‘The Rocks’ because of the sandstone outcrop that was used for the construction of buildings. The consideration for the natives was still on their minds.

“I must say that sharing the catch of fish over the past years with the natives has been very much appreciated by them,” added Henry.

“I think the other consideration in our recent success has to be the getting rid of that Major Ross to Norfolk Island,” said William.

“As you know,” said Phillip, “I have sent Gidley King off to London to give our new Secretary for War and the Colonies, Lord William Grenville, a full report of our successes and our difficulties. I have sent with him a letter of recommendation that he be promoted and installed as the Lieutenant Governor of Norfolk Island. He tells me that he has a young woman, Anna Coombe, whom he wishes to marry. He left us with much enthusiasm,” said Phillip as he turned his head to smile at his companions. “As for Major Robert Ross, he has been a total disappointment as Lieutenant Governor of New South Wales with his constant arguments and ineptitude in commanding his troops. Sending more than 500 convicts with



Sydney Cove. 1789

him last month may prove beneficial to them with the possibility of prosperous gardens but I think they will rue the day that I left them to the oversight of Ross,” said Phillip.

“I believe,” said William, “that we are to expect a second convoy of ships to arrive in a few months hence and with it will come the 102nd Regiment of Foot, to become known as the New South Wales Corps, and they will replace the marines that are with us now. Major Ross will depart us along with his regiment.”

“Good riddens,” said Henry.

Phillip said nothing and kept walking.

“As you can see Govna’, the convicts have built for themselves their houses, although it has taken them some practice and some tutelage to get them to stand up. The marines have built for themselves a barracks and the hospital has finally got its roof on after all that rain prevented our work, and a storehouse has been built. Several hundred convicts are out at



Sydney Cove 1790 showing Convict Huts

Parramatta preparing land for farming and the marines have their barracks at Parramatta as well.”

“Splendid, Henry. Just splendid,” said Phillip.

“Let me show you some of the things the convicts are doing,” said Henry.

As the men walked, Henry said, “As you know Govna’, on the way out, some convicts worked to gain reward by mending and washing clothes, cutting hair, or working as ship’s crew. They were paid for their efforts in tea and tobacco, clothing and rum, and sometimes in cash. Most



The Carpentry Shop

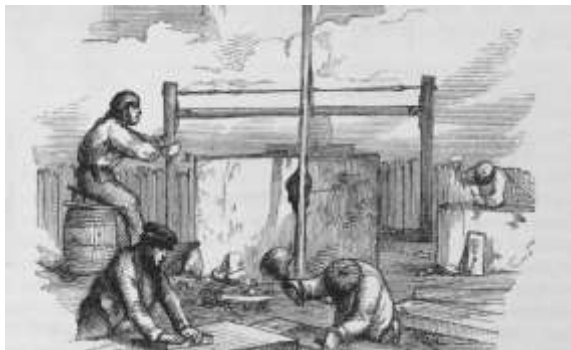
convicts brought personal property with them from Britain; chests filled with clothing and cooking utensils; women packed perfume, jewellery, hair curlers and wigs; small valuables and cash; books; and even musical instruments. They were in some regard, ready to start their new lives. While we have some convicts that want to make a new life for themselves, some that need the motivation of discipline and leadership, and there are some, a few, that

are just no-hoppers that require stern incentives. But most here are now gainfully employed, and rewarded for their efforts.”

“Over here is the carpentry shop and over there are the masons. I have the tradesmen teaching others in their crafts as they work.”

Henry slowed his pace to point to women working making clothes and shoes. “I have assigned convicts to various work duties. Convicts in the service of government works are garden labourers, construction labourers and builders or builder’s assistants. We have bakers, blacksmiths, potters, barbers, printers, stonemasons and domestic servants. I have

assigned men as gang overseers from convict ranks and woman to manage quite a number of needed tasks.”



Masons at Work

“The brickworks is a few miles inland near a good supply of clay. We won’t trouble ourselves to walk over there today but you will see the fruits of their work as we journey this morning,” said Henry. “I should add that I now have native people working on the farms and are being rewarded equally with the others. I have several very keen and hard-working native boys that work harder than even the convicts.”

William looked over the industry before him. “Henry, what are you planning next?”

“I have a plan but one thing needs to lead to another. I want to improve the docks and roads then look to some more substantial construction of the barracks. For all of this work I will want you to help William.

“Keep up the good work, Henry.

Anything you need, just ask,” said

Phillip “Do you think it is time we took some tea?”



Bricklayers making bricks

In June 1789, Lord Sydney retired from his appointment as Secretary of State for War and the Colonies and was replaced by William Pitt’s cousin, the 29 year old Baron William Grenville.

In August, 1789, or thereabouts, Thomas King and William Camden, two of the partners and the very lucrative slave and merchant shipping company, Camden, Calvert & King, sat in the Fox Room at the rear of the Brooks Club waiting for their guest. It was 9.30 at night and at the height of summer. The Parliament was in recess. The ideal time for a quiet and unnoticed meeting. Baron Grenville walked into the room.

“Ah, there you are, William,” said Thomas King as he and William Camden rose to their feet. “Please come and join us. Would you care for one of Brook’s fine wines?” asked Thomas. “Nice to see you Thomas, William,” said Grenville. Taking off his gloves and lowering himself into a leather chair he said, “No, I believe that Brooks might still have some Bushmills Irish Whiskey I left him some time back.” Calling young Jack, the waiter, to come near, he said, “Good evening Jack. Could you please fetch us a bottle of the Bushmills Whiskey from the crate in your cellar and bring three glasses. Thank you.” Jack walked away to do what he was asked.

“It is been nice of you to join us, William. I haven’t seen you since last February at William Pitt’s garden party,” said Thomas.

“Yes, I am not getting out to socialise and enjoy the company of people with wit and intelligence much at all since I took on this new position. It has been quite demanding these past several weeks with all the conversation about the trouble in France,” said Grenville.

“You are referring to the revolutionaries?”

Just then, Jack returned, placed three glasses on the table and poured the ‘breath of life’ into them. As he started to move away from the table, Grenville said, “Oh, please leave the bottle, Jack.”

“To the King,” said Grenville, as he leant forward to clink glasses. “To the King,” came the reply.

Allowing a moment to savour the fluid, Grenville then said, “Ah, yes, the French revolutionaries. Yes, the storming of the Bastille in July is most disturbing. But with the French Court seemingly in constant argument and the shortage of funds and insufficient revenue from the increased taxes, one doesn’t need to be a political scientist to see that the street fighting would come to a head. The situation is ‘calamiteux’, as the French would say: ‘calamitous’. Now we will watch with caution but be prepared for the worst. Still, I suppose, it is our own fault since we started the downhill run to ruin for the French,” pondered Grenville.

“Downhill run to ruin! What do you mean,” asked William.

“Oh, ... nothing. I was just reminiscing.” Seeking to change the subject, Grenville asked, “So, what is it that brings you to meet me in London on this fine evening?”

“We are aware that the first convoy of ships to New South Wales might soon be followed by other such convoys and since shipping is our business we would like to put a proposal to you,” said William.

“Well, this is a topic to arouse my interest. Please let me hear your proposal.”

“The last convoy cost the government some £25 per convict for the transportation alone,” said William. “We propose that we can reduce that cost down to £17 per convict. And since we own ships, we can reduce other associated costs of docking, ship’s crews, insurances, and other associated logistics with such a venture. If, to take a round figure of 1,000 convicts, it cost the government more than £25,000 for the conveyance but by contracting us it would cost you £17,000 (US\$3.3 million) and you would save £8,000 (US\$1.5 million). If there were 2,000 convicts or even 3,000 the savings would accrue to £24,000 (US\$45 million). And, if you were to pay us up front, you would also save on all the time and uncalculated and unforeseen additional costs of paying the ship’s captains on their return.”

Grenville took another sip of his whiskey. He might be young but even he could tell that these gentlemen weren’t meeting him in a private club at near 10 o’clock at night to be kind to the unfortunate. “So what’s in it for you? There are no slaves or profit on cargo in such a voyage.”

“Ship’s crew returning from the first convoy have reported on the great herds of whales in the southern oceans and we hope that by offering the government a significant opportunity to reduce costs in a time when money is desirous for other naval preparations, we might seek to do a conveyance of convicts and then return to England with a profitable product,” said Thomas.

“You mean whale oil,” said Grenville.

The other men smiled.

Grenville thought for a moment. Showing some surplus in his department in just a few months would serve him well, he had to admit. Attention had moved away from the welfare of convicts and with Lord Sydney gone and more conflicts looming, why not, he thought. “Alright gentlemen, it is agreeable to me. I presume you want to get focused on this venture sooner rather than later so please drop a contract off to my office marked ‘for your eyes only’ and we’ll get organised for the next shipment of convicts,” said Grenville.



South Sea Whalers Boiling Blubber by Oswald Brierly

With that the meeting was over.

Camden, Calvert & King made incredible profits off the returning cargos of whale oil and seal pelts. Of the 11 ships used for the Third Fleet of 1791, five of them were whalers. Arriving back in England in 1793, the cargo came to 349 tuns of whale oil and 25,368 seal skins. With 1 ‘tun’ of liquid quantity equal to 954 litres, the oil cargo amounted to some 333,000 litres (74,000 imperial gallons) of whale oil at £30 a tun, which gave a return of £10 million (US\$1.6 billion).

On the morning of July 15, 1791, Governor Arthur Phillip sat at his desk in the study of Government House writing notes.

“Govna, Govna,” said young Jimmy as he ran up to the study door, “Doctor White wants you to come to the docks fast. Ships have come in and there are people lying and dying all over the beach.” While Jimmy stood puffing from his run up the hill, Arthur Phillip dropped his quill, pushed back his chair and moved quickly to the door. “Thank you Jimmy.”

Phillip ran down the hill to the docks with Jimmy right on his heels. Jimmy was right: there were hundreds of people strewn across the docks and beach. Poor looking wretches, men women and children, near death. People tried to give the living food and water. Others tried to clean them up.

Phillip put his hand to his forehead. He felt sick. He stood in absolute shock at what he saw. Dr. John White, looking up from a man drinking water, saw Phillip standing there and gave his cup to a woman nearby and approached Phillip.

“John, what has happened? How many of them are there?”

“I have already inspected the ships at dawn. I demanded that the captains release these people immediately from the slums of their ships. Some poor bastards were in chains. All up, there are 2,000 convicts arriving. I have got the manifests from the captains and there are 194 dead: men women and children. They have been treated worse than slaves. They have

been treated worse than animals,” said Dr. White. “There are five whaling ships of the eleven. People were just thrown into the hulls and left to rot in their own filth with little food, if any, to survive, if they could.”

“This is as bad as the last fleet. What was the carnage? Of the 800 men 262 arrived dead and another 486 were sick and could hardly move. I can see that the survivors of this calamitous voyage fared no better. I suspect you won’t know how many sick you have for a day or two. Where is David Collins?”

“Jimmy, run and find Lieutenant Governor Collins. I need to see him immediately.”

In a few minutes David Collins stood beside Phillip. There was nothing to say in the moment as Phillip gathered his thoughts.

“David I want an immediate embargo on all of the ships leaving the harbour. I want marines, armed marines, sent immediately to board every ship with round the clock rotation rosters. I want all the ships captains in my office within two hours.”

John, break out the rum to all and any that need it. Have the kitchens fired up and give orders as to what you want cooked. You are in charge at this point. Use all the people you need to set up makeshift hospital units to care for the sick. I can see they will also need clothing. Warm clothing. I will await the captains, with both of you present, in my drawing room in two hours.”

With that, John and David nodded consent to the instructions and moved off. Phillip walked to the beach to give a hand providing water to the wretches before him.

With 11 ship’s captains standing in his drawing room, five navy agents, John White, David Collins and Major Francis Grose, Governor Phillip entered the room and sat at the head of the table, his officers seated beside him.

“I would on a previous occasion welcomed you to my home as gentlemen but I do not see before me ‘gentlemen’ but rogues, swindlers, villains and murderers. I cannot for the life of me understand your behaviour and how you could possibly see yourselves as Englishmen or as Christian men. I am disgusted with you and find your behaviour abhorrent. If it was solely up to me I would have you all taken out this hour and hanged, or worse, have you given to New Zealand cannibals. But your behaviour is not to be rested on your shoulders alone but with the company you work for, Camden, Calvert & King. So this is what I will do. Your ships will not leave this harbour until I give you permission. Your manifests will be examined and all stores and food supplies designated for the sustenance of your passengers will be confiscated as will any cargo and supplies deemed not needed for your voyage hence. All the belongings of the passengers will be removed from your vessels. You men before me, along with your quartermasters and ship’s masters will personally handle and deliver to these shores all of the dead bodies on board your ships. You will mark your souls with the stench of death and the reputation you have brought upon yourselves. You will remove and transport these bodies personally and under the guard of Major Grose and his officers. You will not, nor any of your crew, stain this colony with your presence in the streets of this town but be restricted to remain on your death ships.”

Phillip paused to let his disgust take effect.

“Further, I am commissioning Lieutenant Governor, David Collins, the Colonial Secretary and Judge Advocate, to choose from among this community four good men to form a magisterial inquiry to investigate the matter before us. I will also ban the arrival and

harbouring of any ships henceforth from your employers, Camden, Calvert & King. I hope I never have to look at your disgusting faces again. Now, return to your ships and do as I have commanded. Major Grose would you please escort them to the dock.”

With that, the men left the room to Governor Phillip and David Collins to deliberate on the details of the magisterial inquiry.

“David, I do not understand how Grenville could not have heard my pleas after the disaster of the second convoy. Is he and the Cabinet so caught up in the affairs of Europe that he has given up all consideration for the value of human life and hope for this colony to allow this dreadful whaling and slave trader company to carry out these atrocities?”

“Governor, I, like you, am simply bewildered,” said David.

David Collins held his magisterial inquiry. Being Irish himself and originally from the King’s County in Ireland, he found that the Irish he interviewed were a ‘race of beings so extremely ignorant, and so little humanised ...’, he wrote in his diary. But this was no excuse for the way they had been treated. The Inquiry concluded that the rations contracted for had not been supplied, and that ‘It appeared beyond a doubt, that great abuses had been practiced in the issuing of the provision’ causing tribulations and death. Phillip, accordingly, wrote to Lord Grenville and Prime Minister Pitt lodging his disgust and the findings of the Inquiry.

From that time on, Phillip felt like he had been deserted from the Home Office. On January 28, 1791, Henry Dodd died: he had been sick for some months. Arthur Phillip wrote of him “I have now lost the only man, on whom I could depend for directing the labour of the Convicts that is setting out their work and seeing that it was done.”

While the Colony continued to grow and find its way as a settlement with its own character, after 16 more months on from the arrival of the Third Fleet, Phillip decided that he wished to go home – his shoulder wound was bothering him. But his leaving Sydney Cove led to disaster for the Colony which fell under the rule of the marines.

Story 8
George Cribb