FIRST-FLEETERS

JOURNAL OF THE PIONEER FAMILIES OF AUSTRALIA

View of the town from north side of Sydney (Chiarabilly).
J. W. Lewin 1811.

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†

OBITUARIES

Lisa Maree Guy, aged 2 years (Henry Kable)

Miss Alice Brown (James Bloodworth).

Editorial

THE DAWNING AWARENESS

ON the first Sunday in February, 1788, the Reverend Richard Johnson, Chaplain to the Fleet, and First Chaplain to the Colony of New South Wales, conducted Divine Service under a great tree in the presence of troops and convicts. The shade of this tree was to he the permanent place of worship for some time to come.

"What shall I render unto the Lord for all His benefits toward me? I will take the Cup of Salvation and call upon the name of the Lord." (Psalm 116 verses 12 and 13—the Rev. Richard Johnson's Text at the first Service.)

This "great tree" as near as can be determined stood where Hunter and Castlereagh Streets intersect. It is now called Richard Johnson Square. Those present would have seen as they walked up from the shores of Sydney Cove the ships of the First Fleet at anchor in the Bay. At this great tree behind them and to their left they may have seen small boats where Martin Place now stands. This stream of fresh water they soon ealled the Tank Stream.

The subsequent history of many who heard Richard Johnson on that first Sunday in February, 1788, establishes beyond douht that they did indeed give thanks. His text, as we look back, seems to contain both a prophecy and a vision. In retrospect it seems also to contain a warning to those of us, and it well may be all of us, who accept without thought or thanks the many benefits we now enjoy.

The long hard voyage was hehind them, they must have looked with longing through the trees at the ships that had brought them here so far from loved ones and familiar surroundings. With anguish they knew that the ships would return without them.

"Their first dwellings were constructed of posts driven into the ground, and poles fastened to these hy ropes made of twisted withes, thus making the framework. Into this were woven twigs and bark, and small branches, and then plastered up with mud. Fancy a little town of a thousand inhabitants thus situated, and you can have the only true picture of our great city in embryo. What a jolly time our ancestors had of it 100 years ago all through the months of autumn and winter. They were all lords and ladies. Rulers and ruled lived pretty much after the same fashion. The same style of architecture prevailed. They walked on the same pavement of sandstone, and drank from the same 'little tank' stream. They looked out on the same lovely harbour and sky. They listened to the same notes of music from the feathered tribes, whose gorgeous plumage is a reflection of the universal loveliness that reigns. They went to the same church, which consisted of a clump of fig-trees, and worshipped the same God without a thought or dread of collection hoxes or pew rent

bills. The only distinction that seemed to mark the superiority of one class above the other was the quality and quantity of their rum". (Centennial History of N.S.W., W. Frederic Morrison, M.A., M.D.)

They were never to know what would be the results of what in a few months rapidly became an individual and collective struggle for survival, marked by unparalleled callousness and brutality.

The lives of the 1,030 people who came ashore intensified into the sordidness that has, sadly, come to be regarded as the major interest of historians in every decade since the Pioneers of the First Fleet came ashore in Sydney Cove.

That it was real, degrading and brutal was beyond argument. This way of life, however, did not provide the foundation on which this nation has been built.

There were men and women of great heart who could and did give thanks. They expressed their thanks in enduring memorials that are forever a testament to their belief and their faith.

Not all are known to those of us of today. There were amongst those who raised their Church on the Hawkesbury in 1809 some of the Pioneers of the First Fleet. They called it Ebenezer. "Hitherto hath the Lord helped us".

The sordidness, the brutality and the callousness have long disappeared. The survivors, their children and grandchildren created our heritage.

There are Australians today bearing the names of those who built at Ebenezer still attending Divine Service in the church of their ancestors. Many descendants attend the annual pilgrimage to this historic place.

In every generation since January 1788, there have been descendants of the Pioneers of the First Fleet who, taking heart from the courage and determination of their ancestors, created a way of life for themselves both near and far away from the birth-place of their nation.

Throughout the nineteenth century those who came seeking a better life became Australians, such was the power and influence of those who founded the nation and our tradition.

There will be Australians, and great Australians in the future, whose parents have come to this country in the last decade and they will become part of our heritage.

In this Journal there are contributions by two distinguished Australians. Beyond the duties of their office they are concerned with the future and the welfare of their nation and their country. Such concern may be traced to those who gave thanks in the earliest days of our nation.

There is every sign that we are becoming aware that the bounty of nature which we have enjoyed for so long is not infinite. There is more than a dawning awareness that greed and avariciousness masquerading as progress and development may yet dispossess us of what our ancestors struggled to preserve.

The similarity of the first decades of our history and now is quite apparent. The struggle differs only in that now it is on a vast scale with enormous riches, if they be such, for the plunderers and depredators within our own nation and those within other countries.

In the first decades the greedy and the plunderers had only the redcoats to enforce their will. We must recognise and understand that the minds of men, women and children must now be won and they will be part of the prize.

In understanding the lives of our ancestors we will have the awareness to find the course and the way to preserve our heritage. To hand to our posterity what was perhaps something fleetingly perceived and felt by at least some of those who gave thanks on that Sunday in February 1788.

THE AUSTRALIAN CONSERVATION FOUNDATION — PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE

By Sir GARFIELD BARWICK

(Vice-President, The Australian Conservation Foundation)

"IT seems almost incredible that Australia should have gone from the problems of settling a wilderness to the problems of conservation of nature in little over 100 years. Even today there are many Australians who find it hard to believe that the problems of conservation exist at all . . . It's never too early to care about the conservation of our natural inheritance, but the time may come when it is too late . . . "

—H.R.H. Prince Philip, Canberra, Feb., 1963.

Now that H.R.H. Prince Philip is the President of the Australian Conservation Foundation, having assumed the position last October, it is interesting to recall that the Foundation had its genesis during the visit made by the Duke of Edinburgh to Australia in 1963. The Duke had intimated that Australia might support the World Wildlife Fund and that perhaps a branch might be established here. The W.W.F., in which the Duke was an office-hearer at the time, had been created to foster the conservation of wildlife in those parts of the world such as Asia, Africa and South America where the problems are greater than the resources available for tackling them. A meeting of biologists and others interested in conservation was hastily convened in Canberra to consider the Duke's suggestion. This meeting revealed that not only was there no Australia-wide body concerned with conservation, but also that the threats to Australia's own wildlife were so great that a major conservation effort was needed. In short, the meeting decided that Australia was in no position to help others, but must start putting her own house in order right away. In fact, Australia still is not a contributing member of the W.W.F., but consideration is now being given to helping this very worthy and effective international organisation.

Another meeting with a nation-wide representation of scientists, businessmen and others was held in August 1964 after much behind-the-scenes activities, especially by the late Francis Ratcliffe, whose name will always be associated with conservation in Australia. At this meeting an Interim Council was formed. Action flowed fairly rapidly from this point on. A draft constitution was approved in 1965 and the first meeting of the Council was held on 18-19 September 1966. In the following year the Australian Conservation Foundation was incorporated (12 August) as a non-profitmaking association under the appropriate ordinance of the Australian Capital Territory. Dr. Ratcliffe was its first Honorary

Secretary, but by mid-1966 the work had increased to the point where a part-time Executive Secretary was appointed. During 1967 the first election of Councillors took place and the first full-time Director, Dr. Don McMichael, now the Director of the N.S.W. National Parks and Wildlife Service, was installed.

This first spurt of growth was greatly assisted by the ready support of the Commonwealth Government which allocated the fledgling Foundation a grant of $20,000 a year for the first three years, later extended to $50,000 for five years, principally for the purpose of maintaining a secretariat. It also made provision for donations of $2.00 or more to the Foundation to be eligible as income tax deductions.

Of course, the A.C.F. was by no means the first society in Australia to be concerned with conservation. The Linnean Society, for example, was established nearly a century ago in 1874 and there are quite a number of other bodies such as The Royal Zoological Society of N.S.W. which can proudly point to many decades of work on behalf of conservation. Many State Departments since their earliest days have also taken a lively interest in certain aspects of conservation. However, the greatest increase in both the number of new conservation societies formed and in their membership has come only within the last six or seven years. Our *Conservation Directory* published in 1970 lists over 350 scattered throughout Australia. Some of these groups have very specific interests, being concerned only with, say, clean air, fire-control or the preservation of our fast-disappearing tropical rain forests. But the majority are more broadly concerned with this country's unique flora and fauna—its study, enjoyment and preservation.

Besides these permanent societies, *ad hoc*, action-oriented conservation groups spring up as urgent need arises to save some treasured local feature or forestall development until a proper assessment of the issues involved can be conducted. To the man-in-the-street, indeed, it may seem that it is these local and vocal pressure groups who are really carrying on the conservation battle. Such names as Colong, Myall Lakes, Cooloola, Lake Pedder, etc., have now become household words in Australia as a result of the intense publicity they have received arising out of the initiative and doggedness exhibited by a small local group. Often these tiny conservation committees may have only a dozen or so members, but in conservation size is not always a criterion of either activity or effectiveness. But actions of this type are designed to meet an emergency—to save something before it is lost forever. Unfortunately, the wide publicity resulting from the sanguine activities or expressions of such groups tends to cloud two basic characteristics of conservation in the public mind; first, that extremism is not a feature of the real and continuing work of the conservation movement; and, second, that conservation demands an intellectual approach. That depends upon calm, unemotional examination of the facts followed by careful appraisal of what ought to be done in the course of necessary change designed to bring about real as distinct from merely financial progress. Or, as it has been aptly explained by another, conservation does not comprise of blind opposition to progress, but rather opposition to blind progress. As a nation, we will never solve our environmental problems merely by dealing with or even by staying one jump ahead of the emergencies. Certainly, at this point in the history of conservation we need the advantage of that one jump: but that is not enough.

The "founding fathers" of the A.C.F. recognised this and saw that Australia must have a national organisation which is capable of taking the long-range view and

working towards the establishment of basic principles affecting the use of natural resources and the issues underlying typical conservation conflicts. Thus, while the A.C.F. will and does provide tangible support for worthy local causes, with its still slender resources both of cash and staff, it cannot afford to become deeply enmeshed in "brush fires" and, if I may extend the analogy, fail to notice that a whole forest is becoming ready for burning up somewhere else.

Initially, it is true that the A.C.F. concerned itself with the conservation of certain individual species of animals such as the Cape Barren Goose, various members of our hard-pressed waterfowl and, of course, our national emblem, the red kangaroo. Vital though the conservation of these creatures is from the national point of view, the Foundation was soon getting its teeth into even more fundamental matters. Thus, realising that in the end conservation rests mainly in the hearts and minds of ordinary people the Foundation at a very early stage appointed a conservation education officer. His main goal is to see that the curricula presented to our schoolchildren includes at least some material introducing conservation values so that the next generation will have a more perceptive view of their environment than did their parents who, I am afraid, generally grew up with the archaic, narrow idea that nature existed to be conquered and exploited. Eventually it is our hope that natural resource education will receive as much attention in schools as do reading, writing and arithmetic. Meanwhile, the Foundation is doing its best in the field of adult education through both formal and informal channels. In this the daily press has afforded the conservation movement inestimable help.

Other major preoccupations of the Foundation which will only be mentioned *en passant* pertain to the extension (and defence) of the system of National Parks, the vastly complicated question of the allocation of land for different uses, resource utilisation planning, the inadequacy of existing legislation, particularly as it relates to mining and generalised physical conservation problems such as preservation of the coast, the arid zone which amounts to two-thirds of the surface area of the continent, the high country of which there is proportionally far less on this continent than on any other, and the Murray Valley among others.

None of these matters will be quickly settled and are sure to command the greater part of the Foundation's resources for many years to come. Considerable progress has already been made nevertheless. For instance, the National Parks, although still not absolutely secure, are more strongly safeguarded both by law and public opinion. Mining legislation is being overhauled in several States. Objective bodies to study and plan land utilisation are or have been established in most States and the Commonwealth, and offices for the protection of the environment have also been created. At least one of these has already demonstrated that it has some teeth. Further, under the stimulus of the Foundation field study centres are being set up where teachers and children may be instructed in ecological matters and considerations.

Looking to the more distant future we can expect the Foundation to take an active role in thrashing out national policies concerning the use and disposal of non-renewable natural resources such as land, fuel and minerals. It is likely also to take a keener interest in the urban sprawl, town and country planning, especially the location of new cities and the problems of excessive use of recreational resources which will flow from increased tourism, greater leisure time and a considerably larger population.

Conservationists, of course, have absolutely no intention of trying to

preserve the existing *status quo* or to return the countryside to the condition in which the First Fleeters found it. For a start, we have only a rough idea now of what the country was like some 200 years ago. We do know that a considerable amount of change was afoot before European settlement. The original Australians were making an appreciable impact as a result of hunting and the use of fire.

Archaeological research within the last decade has shown that when the Aborigines first arrived here possibly as long as 20,000 years ago, there was a rich and varied fauna of large-bodied animals as well as several species of large-bodied, flightless birds. These were in addition to the full range of our modern fauna. To what extent the Aborigines were responsible for the extinction of the large types is debatable because large-scale climatic changes were progressing during the period when the Aborigines were establishing themselves here. Probably it can be said that the Aborigines hastened these extinctions and were the decisive factor in bringing about their doom.

The earliest Europeans to sight Australian coasts, as well as the inland explorers later, rarely failed to remark on the numerous fires and falls of smoke sighted. For instance, Abel Tasman in 1642 recorded in his log: "Now and then we saw clouds of dense smoke rising up from the land." Much evidence has now been amassed that the Aborigines deliberately used fire on a wide scale to alter vegetation, even if only temporarily. However, probably almost every part of the continent had a fire through it at least once a decade and some areas would have been burnt annually.

European man for the first 150 years or so after settlement aided and abetted this practice and extended it on a very impressive scale. Gradually, however, as much of the better land was converted into farm and grazing country and constructions were established the need to control fires arose. For the last 50 or more years much less burning has been going on. The precise effects of this trend as well as those of the burning programme of earlier times on the flora and fauna are not clearly known, although a few consequences have been recognised. Thus, Leadbeater's possum depends on regenerating *E. regnans* forest. It has become very rare in modern times because we have effectively stopped the frequent burning of much of this kind of valuable forest. On balance, our forests may be growing more dense as they are burned less often. In other words, country which in Aboriginal times was open savannah woodland may now have become brush or forest and light forest country may have become dense forest. Dense forest does not attract or support edible animals, which perhaps is the reason behind the habitual burning practised by the Aborigines.

By controlling fire we may have displaced many species of native animals as well as causing even greater changes in the vegetation. The development of the grazing industry in inland N.S.W. brought about vegetation changes which assisted the red and grey kangaroos so that their populations in this region are certainly much greater now than before white settlement despite the severe persecution to which these animals have been subjected, especially in recent years. There can be little doubt that the frequent burning of Aboriginal times caused much soil erosion which European man has either repaired or is attempting to do so.

Clearly, the activities of European man have not been all bad. By the same token it would be wrong to claim that the Aborigine was in complete harmony with the environment. In his own way and to the extent that he was able with the means at his disposal, he, too, was an exploiter.

Two general points come out of this: with the tools at his command the Ahorigine could bring about only relatively slow environmental change unlike the European settlers who have become now so well equipped with chemicals and massive macbinery, and whose activities are so much more purposive. And the second point is that there has always been environmental change and that there always will be.

Conservationists recognise that nature is dynamic and therefore do not seek to preserve a steady state. Their only concern is to prevent premature, unnecessary, or ill-informed change which too often has drastic and destructive effects as well as heing wasteful of resources. This is why the main aim of the Australian Conservation Foundation is "the rational use of the environment to achieve the highest quality of living for mankind now and in the future", or as it also expressed "The wisest possihle use, over a long term, of all our natural resources, applied for the benefit of man". It strives to accomplish this end by seeking and evaluating the facts and then forming objective judgments about the long-range effects of any particular activity or proposed development. It then offers practical solutions and positive policies for the puhlic, governments and private enterprise to consider and adopt in the practical affairs of a changing and developing society.

To make significant progress in this essential work which is designed to keep Australia a good place to live, the Foundation needs both money and members. The money, which is tax deductible, is needed to pay essential professional and ancillary staff, to conduct studies and surveys, and to support wortby causes. The members are needed to amplify the Foundation's voice so that it will be clearly heard by social, industrial and political leaders and by the public at large. Address enquiries to The Director, Australian Conservation Foundation, National Science Centre, 191 Royal Parade, Parkville, Victoria, 3052.

AUSTRALIA HERITAGE

By Mr. A. J. GRASSBY, M.H.R.

THE announcement from North Queensland that three leases in the Simpson Desert area had been put on the market in the United States at 25c per acre was the beginning of the extraordinary project now known as Australia Heritage.

It had been indicated in the National Parliament by the Prime Minister, Mr. McMahon, that "it is possible to go through three-quarters of the top end of the Northern Territory and find ourselves trespassing in our own country as we find land held by a growing proliferation of overseas interests".

The Minister for National Development had stated that 71% of all Australia's mineral exports are now overseas controlled and the estimate of Australian land now owned outside the country exceeds 250 million acres.

In the industrial sector, of 299 large companies 36% of total shareholders' funds are foreign owned and 141 are classified as foreign controlled. Forty-six giant companies, those who have assets of $20 million or over, have three-quarters of their assets controlled from five outside countries.

Of the construction and assembly of motor vehicles in Australia 87.8% is controlled outside the country. 76.3% of all pharmaceutical and toilet preparations originate with foreign-controlled corporations. White lead paints and varnishes are 70% controlled outside Australia. 65% of all musical instruments are produced by foreign-owned firms, and nearly half of our radio sets originate from overseas interests.

Thirty per cent of meat and fish preserving companies are controlled overseas and nearly the same percentage applies to jam, fruit and vegetable canning. Half of the top 40 selling items in the supermarkets are controlled overseas.

It is certain that this trend is increasing.

Dr. Douglas Everingham, M.P., Member for Capricornia, offered in the House of Parliament 50c for the purchase of two acres of land. This was the beginning of Australia Heritage.

The next morning, Dr. Everingham spoke on national radio and urged Australians to make bids for this land at 25c an acre. That night on National television, I supported the move to prevent alienation of further areas of Australia to outside interests and I followed this up with a further broadcast next morning. From a total of seven minutes of radio and television, a veritable "bushfire of nationalism" began.

Ten thousand Australians have sent pledges and money to support Australia Heritage. The Minister for the Interior has received 600 letters with cash to help save Australian land from being sold. Dr. Everingham and myself received in one day one thousand letters. Mr. Barry Cohen, M.P., Member for Robertson, was the first to volunteer to Australia Heritage with an offer to assist in sorting this mail.

I drew the attention of the Attorney-General to advertisements in Asian and American newspapers urging people to buy a bit of Australia and offering areas of land here at discount prices. The headings urged "Buy a Bit of Australia Now".

The Attorney-General stated the situation that such promotions are "completely in accord with the law".

The particular area of land has been clearly pinpointed in the House of Representatives. It is in the vicinity of the Simpson Desert and comprises 1,600 square miles made up of three pastoral leases, known as Yuluma, Gungui and Buruli. Part of the

Simpson Desert is in the Northern Territory and under the control of the Minister for the Interior. The Queensland Government has declared a large area of the Simpson Desert as a national park.

The leases referred to were allotted to an Australian in the Boulia Land Court in 1964 and for personal and private reasons the lessee has elected to sell and discussions are now taking place between a prospective American purchaser and a Queensland estate agent.

The response by Australians has come from the most diverse areas of the Australian nation. Members of the Parliamentary Press Gallery have pledged their support. Members of Parliament on both sides of the house have indicated they would contribute to the cost of company registration. A group of employees of an overseas company have pledged $4,000. An Anglican clergyman contributed what he described as "a mite". Two brothers, aged 10 and 12, sent the contents of their money-boxes, being $2.48, and stated that "we will talk to our parents, we feel sure they will be interested in saving Australia too". A young couple saving to marry and buy a house sent $10, adding "we feel we could at least afford this for our country and its future". Migrants from the U.S., Great Britain, Italy, Germany, Greece, all write and state that they have settled here and do not wish to see the country of their adoption sold and lost to their children.

The response to Australia Heritage is a national response and a clear demonstration that Australians wish to preserve their country for their posterity.

It was considered clearly desirable to seek further skill and talent to guide Australia Heritage. Invitations were extended and accepted by the following distinguished Australians:

The Rt. Hon. J. G. Gorton, M.H.R., former Prime Minister.

The Rt. Rev. Howell Witt, Anglican Bishop of North West Australia.

Mrs. Kath Walker, M.B.E., Aboriginal Poetess.

Judith Wright McKinney, Queensland Conservationist.

Professor A. R. Main, Professor of Zoology, University of West Australia.

Mr. Gordon Barton, Sydney, New South Wales.

Professor E. L. Wheelwright, Associate Professor Economics, University of Sydney.

Mr. Alan Strong, Former Chief Guardian of Flora and Fauna, New South Wales.

At the present moment a solicitor is handling formation of the company, without fee or charges, that will control Australia Heritage. The basis for future contributions will be 25c, which will represent one acre. Contributions are not limited to 25c and there have been some offers of $1,000. Irrespective of the size of the contribution, it will represent one acre and any profits will be reinvested in acquisition of further lands. It is possible that one million Australians may contribute to the purchase of one million acres with a cash contribution of $250,000. The Company Articles provide that each shareholder will have one vote only. This will guard the company from take-over by business or sectional interests. Tax deductibility is being sought for gifts and requests. For those who wish to support Australia Heritage, pledges of support are all that is required. All contributions of cheques and money orders, bank notes, stamps, etc., are being held pending the finalisation of the objectives and the bid to be made for the land.

The major objective will be to secure natural scenic areas as Australian parks and to prevent unwise exploitation. The three convenors are Dr. Douglas Everingham, M.P., Mr. A. J. Grassby, M.P., and Mr. Milo Dunphy, distinguished and nationally known conservationist, of Sydney, N.S.W.

EARLY COUNCILS OF THE CITY OF SYDNEY

By Mr. J. H. LUSCOMBE

(Vice-Patron, Fellowship of First Fleeters)

Town Clerk, Sydney

UNTIL 1823 the Government of the whole of the Colony was vested solely in the Governor but in that year a Legislative Council was appointed to assist him. The Council, however, was appointed, not elected, and the ordinary citizen had no say in the government of his country.

I believe that between 1823 and 1842 there were some persons elected to a Legislative Council but I am not sure what the franchise was, so therefore it cannot be claimed that the Municipal Council of Sydney was the first elected body in the Colony.

It was not until 10 years later that Sydney itself achieved a separate identity from that of the Colony. In 1833 a Proclamation was issued passing the Government of Sydney to three Police Magistrates under an "Act for regulating the police in the town and Port of Sydney and for removing and preventing nuisances and obstructions therein". The magisterial system was not particularly successful as police duties frequently took precedence over civic affairs. Nor were all the early Police Magistrates noted for their probity. Moreover, there were sometimes only one or two Magistrates, instead of the stipulated three, to supervise the affairs of the town.

As a result in July, 1835, a petition was presented to Governor Bourke requesting some more organised form of Municipal Government. The petitioners also asked for additional revenue to be set aside for civic management and improvement.

The Governor laid the petition before the Legislative Council which, after due consideration, resolved that Commissioners should be elected by the land and householders of the town. The Commissioners would be in control of streets, lighting, sewerage, water supply, etc., and would have the power to assess and levy rates for these purposes. Also, certain revenues collected in the town would be available for five years for civic purposes. The revenues to go to the town were—

(a) The amount received for licences to retail spirits within the town of Sydney.
(b) The Sydney Market dues.
(c) The income from conducting water to private houses (in these days there was not a water supply in the City and at some time later Busby's Bore was completed).

However, in order to introduce such a form of Municipal Government the Legislative Council further stated that a private bill would have to be prepared, presented to the Governor, and then placed before the Council. Nothing appeared to have been done about presenting this bill and the matter fell into abeyance until 1839.

In 1840 Governor Gipps brought forward a bill in the Legislative Council providing for the introduction of Municipal Government in New South Wales. Unfortunately, the bill included a clause which prohibited all persons who had been transported to the Colony from voting or being elected to the proposed municipal bodies. This clause ignited a powder keg of controversy and in the resulting explosion the bill itself was lost.

Governor Gipps reported the failure of his bill and the controversy to England. Lord John Russell, then Secretary of State for the Colonies, replied in a despatch dated 21 July 1841. In this despatch Lord Russell assured Gipps that the

New South Wales Legislative Council had powers as full as those of any other British Colony and was quite competent to enact municipal legislation.

Lord Russell expressed disappointment that the bill had heen defeated since he found it, apart from the offending clauses which Gipps had by then apparently removed, "judicious and well considered".

As a result of Russell's support and approval, the Governor introduced the hill to the Legislative Council again in 1842, and it was passed on 20 July of that year. The Act is entitled "An Act to declare the town of Sydney to he a City and to incorporate the inhabitants thereof". (Melbourne had already been incorporated on 12 August 1842, but only as a town. Consequently, Melbourne's inhabitants were merely "burgesses", while those of Sydney were "citizens".) The cost of incorporating Sydney was £257.19.6.

Although the City was in sore need of development and efficient services, the period chosen to inaugurate Municipal Government could hardly have been worse from a financial point of view. The whole community was entering the most disastrous recession yet experienced.

Transportation diminished to a thin trickle and then dried up altogether. This meant that cheap labour was no longer available and the cost of everything increased.

The Government in England spent less money in the Colony as she no longer had to contribute so much towards the expense of transportation. She also withdrew capital from New South Wales in order to finance immigration.

Finally, a severe two-year drought sent food prices soaring, while wool prices dropped by as much as 50%. A contemporary letter-writer stated that a friend of his had to pay "40% for £300 in order to meet a hill for that amount" and that "one-half of the Sydney merchants and some of the stockholders were on their last legs".

Into this wave, which was a veritable dumper, the young Sydney Municipal Council was flung. That it survived at all is surprising—that it not only managed to keep its head ahove water, but eventually learned to swim, may be considered a small miracle.

Under the provisions of the Act incorporating Sydney, the City was divided into six Wards, namely, Bourke's, Cook, Gipps, Macquarie, Brisbane and Phillip's. In order to facilitate the smooth functioning of the election and to provide officers to carry out municipal duties until the elected Council should take over, Governor Gipps appointed six provisional Aldermen. That two of the six Aldermen appointed hy the Governor were later to he found guilty of lapses from duty is a sad commentary on human probity as the Governor had doubtless attempted to choose men noted for their honesty and devotion to duty.

As well as appointing provisional Aldermen, Governor Gipps also appointed two Assessors for each Ward and a temporary Town Clerk.

It is interesting to note that one of the Assessors who was appointed on 3 September 1842 was a Mr. David Jones who was the Founder of the firm of that name which is situated in Sydney today.

The method of electing the Councillors and Aldermen was complicated in the extreme. Any person in possession of £1,000 worth of property or who was rated at an annual value of not less than £50 was eligihle to stand for election. Four Councillors were to he elected for each Ward, making a total of 24 in all.

Another intimidating clause in the Act stated that any person elected to the position of Councillor, Alderman, Auditor or Assessor must assume duty or pay a fine of not less than £25 or more than £50; while a person elected and refusing office had to pay a fine of not less than £50 or more than £100.

Any person who assumed office but later wished to resign had to pay an equivalent fine, depending on his position. As the consent of a nominee for office did not have to be obtained it was on the cards that a person could be elected without either his consent or knowledge. This unlikely situation did occur in 1843, when a certain Hastings Elwin was elected Auditor against his will. Fortunately Mr. Elwin was over the age of 65 years and thus exempt under the Act. He therefore was able to resign for free.

The date of the first election was 1 November 1842, a day as the "Sydney Morning Herald" described it whose "genial weather and cool breeze added much to the general enjoyment".

The polling places were opened from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., and the day was remarkably free from incident, although Brishane Ward saw a violent quarrel between husband and wife over which candidate the husband should support.

It might be noted that the voters had "to deliver to the Presiding Officer a ballot paper containing the names, addresses and descriptions of the candidates they wish to vote for." The paper was signed by the voter and the candidates had the option of examining the papers after the election. Such a system would give considerable opportunity for intimidation and bribery, one would imagine.

The day after the election the "Sydney Morning Herald" commented on the election. It stated bluntly that "the evil consequences of the low franchise is apparent in the great number of uneducated men who have been elected". Some days later the "Herald" offered some advice to the embryo Council. After emphasising that the Councillors, having taken public office, could no longer shelter "behind the snug fences of domestic privacy", it continued, "They stand on elevated ground, exposed to the rough elements of popular observation and criticism. They must be content to abide the peltings of many a storm. They are public property. Their office has been created for public benefit. These persons have been elected by the public voice and for the public use and in accepting the suffrages of their fellow citizens they have enlisted themselves as public servants. It is important that this new relation should never be forgotten by them."

After this excellent and timeless advice, the paper explained even more explicitly the Councillors' positions and duties. "Their peculiar position is that they are the first body of Sydney representatives. If by their prudence, zeal and honest devotedness to the public interests they should do credit to the new fledged corporation great will be the honours shed upon their names and lasting their fame in our Municipal annals."

As a final warning the "Herald" offered these remarks—

"If, on the contrary, by their remissness, their ignorance, their folly, their blundering measures, their violent tempers and angry contentions, they shall cause Sydney to blush for her maiden Council, they will draw down upon their heads the scorn and indignation of the whole colony and consign their names to an infamous immortality."

On 9 November 1842 the newly elected Councillors assembled for the first time in a room in the north-eastern corner of the old Market Building in George Street for the purpose of electing a Mayor.

Alderman John Hosking achieved the distinction of being the first elected Mayor of Sydney. After this arduous first meeting the Councillors adjourned until the following week.

At the second meeting the principal business was the appointment of a Town Clerk at a salary of £400 per annum. There were five nominees for the position and the successful applicant was Charles Henry Chambers.

A duty imposed on the Mayor by the 1842 Act of Incorporation was to have boundary stones set up to mark the limits of the City and the Wards. The markers were to be erected within six months of his election, and consequently Mr. Hosking placed an order for the requisite number of boundary stones with the firm of P. N. Russell.

As well as having boundary posts erected, the Mayor and Town Clerk were to make "a circuit of perambulation" every three years. During this "perambulation" the Town Clerk was to "enquire whether the name or names whereby the said metes and bounds, or any part thereof, are or is described have or has been changed." All such changes were to be entered in a special book known as the Boundary Book.

This in fact was merely a local version of the old English custom of "beating the bounds". In the days when literacy was rare, and street maps even rarer, this custom helped to impress the boundaries of parish or town upon the residents by dint of repetition. It also helped to preserve the local records of such boundaries with accuracy, and so prevent disputes with adjoining parishes.

The first Balance Sheet of the Council was prepared for the period Novemher 1842 to August 1843 and showed that £4,462.0.10 had heen received and that £4,587.9.6 had been expended. It is interesting to note that at a meeting of the Council to he held in a few weeks' time the 1972 budget will he discussed and it will show the expenditure of approximately $20 million.

It is not generally known that for a brief period the City Council had control of the Police Force in Sydney. "Had control" is perhaps not the best term, for the Council appeared to do little except foot the bill.

In his instructions to the Commissioner of Police of 6 March 1843, the Colonial Secretary wrote, "In the execution of your duties you will take orders only from the Government. The distribution of the police force will rest with you, under such orders as you may receive from the Government, although the numerical strength of the Police and the amount of their pay and allowances, are matters which, under the Corporation Act, are to be regulated by the Mayor and Council of the City." A position which could he compared with the policing of parking meters today. Council pays the salary and/or wages of the Parking Police but the State Government receives all penalties.

As a result of Council's dissatisfaction and complaints, an Act was passed in November 1845 suspending for one year the operation of the Corporation Act which related to the Police and vesting management of the Force in the Executive Council. The suspension was continued only until 1850 when the first Corporation Act was repealed. In the new Corporation Act the police clauses were not re-enacted and thus ended the Council's connection with the Force.

Three times during the Council's history it was suspended from office and Commissioners appointed to administer the city. The first time was between the year 1854 and 1857. The second time from 1928 to 1930 and the third time from 1967 until 1969. It is not proposed to go into the pros and cons of the reasons for the dissolution of the Council as there are many and varied arguments both for and against. It is merely mentioned here to indicate that the elected body had not had continuity of office.

CONCLUSION

I have endeavoured to outline some of the difficulties and the atmosphere in which the young City of Sydney was born. It has continued to thrive and will thrive and although not the seat of the Federal Government for the Commonwealth of Australia it undoubtedly is the principal city and I feel sure that it will remain so.

ANNIVERSARY DAY DINNER 1972

Left to right: Mr. Frank Everingham, President F.F.F. (Matthew Everingham), Mr. Frederick Daniell, Vice-President F.F.F. (James Bloodworth), Miss Bette Charleston, Mr. J. H. Luscombe (Town Clerk, Sydney), Vice-Patron F.F.F. (Owen Cavanough), Mrs. J. H. Luscombe, Mrs. Heather Everingham (Associate) (James Wilshire 1792).

Front row: Mr. Ron Rope (Anthony Rope), Mrs. Joyce Crook (Anthony Rope), Mrs. Ron Rope (Associate). Back row: Mr. Frank Rupps (Associate), Miss Mariette Rupps (Anthony Rope), Mr. Jack Parker (Associate), Mr. Keith Crook (Associate), Miss Annette Rupps (Anthony Rope), Mrs. Madge Rupps (Anthony Rope).

Left to right: Mr. Frank Everingham, Mrs. Heather Everingham, Mr. Monty Fowler (North Sydney Anzac Memorial Club), Mrs. Monty Fowler, Mr. Douglas Oakes (John Small), Mr. Edgar Kable, Vice-President F.F.F. (Henry Kable).

Front row: Miss Lorna Byrne, Mrs. Olwyn Mackenzie, Mr. Wilfred East. Back row: Mrs. Bess Hooke (John Small), Mr. John Hooke (Associate), Miss Beryl Bridle (John Small).

Mrs. Thelma Kable, Mrs. Thelma Guy (Henry Kable), Mrs. Amy Peacock (Henry Kable), Mrs. Marjorie Watkins (Henry Kable).

Mrs. Ruth Craig (William Broughton) and Mr. Eric Blair (Frederick Meredith).

Front row: Mr. Robert Montgomery (Henry Kable), Mr. and Mrs. I. Docherty. Back row: Mr. Vincent Parker (Matthew Everingham), Mrs. Thelma Guy (Henry Kable), Mrs. Betty Loneragan, Secretary F.F.F. (John Palmer).

Mr. Dudley Oakes, Vice-Patron F.F.F. (John Small).

Mr. and Mrs. Prosper Kable (Henry Kable).

Mrs. Mary Bailey (William Broughton) and Mrs. Margaret Markwell (William Broughton).

Mr. Dudley Everingham and niece, Mrs. Val Ross (both Matthew Everingham).

CATHARINE JOHNSON

By D. G. BOWD
(Secretary, Hawkesbury Historical Society)

AT St. John's cemetery, Wilberforce, a neat headstone marks the burial place of Catharine Moore (nee Johnson), who was sentenced to seven years' transportation at the age of sixteen.

Catharine Johnson and Ann Smith were tried by the London Jury before the Court Recorder at the Old Bailey Sessions which commenced on 18/4/1787, that is, less than a month before the First Fleet sailed for Botany Bay. They were indicted "for stealing on 3rd March last, fifteen yards of printed calico, value £3, the property of Thomas Ashby and Joseph Osborne, privily in their shop". The shop was at Holborn Bridge.

This case is rather unusual in that the prisoners were defended by counsel. Very few of the First Fleet convicts had counsel for their defence. There is no indication of who employed him.

The owner of the shop and two assistants stated that the defendants were looking at "some muslins and prints" and that "they tumbled the things over the counter more than generally is the case and asked for a number of things from the poles".

After they had gone out an assistant, acting on suspicion, went "to fetch them back". After they came back to the counter Catharine Johnson was observed to drop the calico from under her petticoats on her left side. It was claimed that Catharine Johnson pressed the owner to let her go and said "it was the first time she was guilty".

Catharine Johnson in her defence said "when we came home the gentleman said they might be his things but he could not swear to them, and that gentleman that stands up now (presumably Ashby) said hanging was too good for us, and hang us, he said he would, if he could, and he took out a pencil and made a mark". Ann Smith said nothing in her own defence.

Catharine Johnson called two witnesses "who gave her a good Character". Regrettably their names were not recorded, nor what they said.

The jury returned a verdict of guilty. Although the offence was a capital one, the Recorder merely sentenced them to transportation for seven years. It may be that the jury returned a correct verdict, but on the evidence, and remembering the judge's sentence, it seems that there was an element of doubt.

Both women were received on board the transport "Prince of Wales" on 3rd May 1787. They had been sent with 35 other women from London to Portsmouth, where the First Fleet vessels were anchored, to make up the complement for the "Prince of Wales".

The "Prince of Wales" was a vessel of 333 tons. It sailed from Portsmouth on 13/5/1787 and landed 1 male and 49 female convicts at Sydney Cove. No mention is made of Catharine Johnson in the records of the voyage.

She was transferred from Sydney Cove to Norfolk Island late in 1788 or early in 1789. The only reference to her at Norfolk Island is an entry in Lt. King's Journal—"Catharine Johnson, a female convict, was punished with fifty lashes on the 7th (Sept. 1789) for abusing the storekeeper, and accusing him of theft wrongfully".

It would appear that she returned some time after her term expired, in 1794, as she is shown in the Muster of 1800 as being a resident of Sydney.

The next reference is in St. Phillip's register which shows that Margaret Jane Moore was born to Catharine Johnson at Sydney in August 1804.

The father of her child, Tristram Moore, had arrived in the "Atlas" in October 1802. He had been transported from Ireland with a life sentence. He was an apothecary and was six feet in height, which was rather unusual in those days. Moore and Johnson were to spend their lives together, although there is no record of them being married.

Another child, Mary Ann, was born to them in April 1806, whilst a child Tristram, was buried at St. Phillip's in August 1809. As they were particular to have their daughters baptised within four months of birth, it would appear that the son was very young at death as there is no record of his baptism.

Meanwhile, Catharine Johnson was to become a landowner. As a free person she was able to buy 100 acres, the property of Charles Cross, which was auctioned "by virtue of execution". The purchase price was £120 to be paid "in storeable wheat or cash" and the transaction was completed in August 1806. One year later the title to this property, which was situated half a mile upstream from the Ebenezer Church, was transferred to Tristram Moore.

There the apothecary from Ireland and the shoplifter from London settled down to the unbelievably harsh conditions of farming in those times.

They grew their wheat and maize in the face of the depredations of the aborigines and in spite of frequent inundation from the Hawkesbury River.

In 1828 they had thirty-four acres under cultivation and were running a horse and eighteen horned cattle. Their home consisted of a rough slab hut with a bark roof, "a ground floor" and a crude stone fireplace. It was on the banks of the river safely above flood level. It is marked today by a grassy mound that grew over the old rough stone chimney when it collapsed.

When they died they left their original purchase, intact, to their younger daughter, Mary Ann. The tombstone of these very humble pioneers of the Hawkesbury has been carefully tended by their descendants to this day.

References:
1. Old Bailey Session Papers, 1786-7, pp. 552-4.
2. Colonial Office Papers, 201/2, p. 328. Major Ross' return to Under Secretary, Nepean.
3. Hunter: An Historical Journal, pp. 373-4.
4. H.R.N.S.W., vol. 2, p. 637.
5. Home Office Records, 10/9, p. 46; 10/11, p. 60.
6. Musters, 1800, 1811, 1814, 1828.
7. *Sydney Gazette*, 25/8/1805.

The author is a fifth generation descendant of Catharine Johnson. Her property is still owned by her descendants.

(C.M. died May 18th, 1838; T.M. died May 18th, 1839) Photo by courtesy C. Sweeney

'ARRIVALS BY NECESSITY, NOT CHOICE'

THE SINGLETONS

By H. TORR

An address to the Canberra and District Historical Society on 8 June 1971.

Reprinted by courtesy of the Canberra and District Historical Society, in whose Journal, Part 4, December, 1971, the above article appeared.

SINGLETON is a pleasant little town with a population of six or seven thousand, situated on the Hunter River and located on the New England Highway between Maitland and Muswellbrook. In its clean streets and neat public buildings one sees evidence of civic pride but apart from its Army Training Camp, the nearby Liddell open-cut coal mine and power station and regular floodings of the Hunter River, there is no reason why its fame should have spread to these southern regions.

Before it became the town of Singleton, it was known as Singleton's Ford, Singleton's Place or more simply, Singleton's. In other words, it took its name from a family—the family of my maternal ancestors. This paper is a very incomplete report of the results of my research into the family history.

To begin my story it is necessary to go to England. In English travel brochures one may read of the "pretty little village of Singleton" which, according to the Victorian *History of the English Counties* "gave its name to a family". This "pretty little village" is in Lancashire, not far from Blackpool, now famous for its amusement fair.

In the earliest references the village is spelt "Singltun", the "tun" being the final syllable of a number of district place names. When it first adopted its name, the family used the spelling "Syngletun" prefixed with the Norman "de"—Randolph de Syngletun, etc. In the same district one might also find Singleton Magna, Singleton Minor and Singleton Manor which had passed out of the family's hands before the Norman Conquest. By this time the family had begun to spread south into neighbouring Cheshire.

I was particularly interested to note that in those early days the family boasted Christian names such as Randolph, Cuthbert, and Ferdinand, and the occupations were "gentleman", "doctor", etc. Chester was, during the Civil War, a stronghold of Charles, and after that war it is probably significant that the Singletons bore less aristocratic names—John, James, William, and their occupations were those of tradesmen—shoemaker, labourer. The only connection I have been able to establish with these Singletons was a statement made by William Singleton, my great-great-great-grandfather, while living at Singleton, New South Wales in the 1830s, in which he claimed to have "been born in the

English County of Cheshire in the year 1752".[1]

This William is the first flesh-and-blood member of the clan to appear on the stage of history, making his debut in the Old Bailey, London, in June 1791. He was charged that he did, upon the thirtieth day of May in that year, feloniously steal twenty-seven yards of calico, valued at 27s, the property of Matthew and Thomas Pickford. It may be of interest that the proceedings of the trial were recorded in shorthand by E. Hodgson, professor of shorthand.

The case for the prosecution was opened by a porter who, being duly sworn, stated:

"I am porter to Mr. Miller, Manchester Warehouseman, No. 28, King Street, Cheapside; I packed up some goods and delivered the goods at the usual place, the Swan with Two Necks, Lad Lane, at the Warehouse door; I delivered them on 26th May."

John Martin then deposed:

"I am head porter to this wagon, they have several packages; the prisoner was a porter under me between two and three years; on 30th May last I was in the Crown in Lad Lane, having a pint of beer, and the prisoner went up the Swan-yard, and turned to the right-hand; I went up in about two or three minutes, and could not see him; in half an hour he was coming down the yard with a bundle under his arm; I said 'Singleton, what have you got?' He says 'Some linen!' Says I, 'Let's See.' They were tied up in his apron. I said, 'Pretty linen, indeed.' Says he, 'Master, be as easy with me as you can'; I said, 'Damn me, where did you get them?' He said, 'I took them out of the wrapper'.

The prisoner called four witnesses in his favour, but their evidence was not recorded. During the whole proceedings Singleton did not utter one word nor was he asked how he pleaded before the judge passed sentence of transportation for seven years. For all that, William was lucky in some respects—he spent only a short period in the hulks moored in the Thames, while the voyage of the "Pitt" (Captain Edward Manning), by which he travelled to New South Wales, was a comparatively comfortable one.

Shortly before the "Pitt" was due to sail, Lord Grenville received an anonymous letter which stated that there were five hundred convicts on board, as well as members of the New South Wales Corps and the crew. It was claimed that the convicts' quarters were overcrowded and it was inevitable that "epidemical fevers and other contagious distempers must be generated" as soon as the ship entered the tropics. His Lordship acted with incredible speed. That letter had been written on 21 June and within nine days it was reported that 33 convicts had been removed.[2]

The "Pitt" sailed from Yarmouth Road, near what is now Wapping Steps, in July and arrived in Sydney Cove on 14 February 1792. William's wife, Hannah, and two sons—Benjamin, who turned three years of age during the voyage, and Joseph who celebrated his second birthday at sea—were among the passengers which included Major Grose and the balance of the New South Wales Corps and that worthy custodian of the law, Deputy Judge-Advocate Richard Atkins.

During the voyage the ship called at St. Jago, in the Cape Verde Islands and here "a most malignant epidemical fever" spread among the soldiers and sailors, with 27 persons being buried in 14 days. However, none of the convicts suffered from the malady although they, in common with the other passengers, were not spared the flux or scurvy. And probably something unique—the captain was able to report that the convicts were so well behaved that he had had no reason to inflict punishment for any misdemeanour or violent conduct after leaving St. Jago.

The convicts sent aboard the "Pitt" had been selected with a view to their being some use in the colony—something which had not occurred to anyone when the First Fleet sailed. William's use to the colony apparently lay in his farming experience. The reasons for his leaving his ancestral home in Chester to meet temptation in a London warehouse have been lost but it does seem that he was either a dispossessed farmer or unemployed farm labourer, a victim of the agrarian revolution who had drifted to London in search of employment.

Be that as it may, it would seem that for him, as for many others who were transported for what would now be regarded as minor offences, his sentence was the best thing that could have happened. It took him from the slums of London and set him upon the road to a useful and self-respecting life.

There is no evidence of Singleton's movements after his arrival in Sydney but it seems probable that, being an experienced farm worker, he was immediately assigned to a landholder, Hannah going along as a domestic servant. It is certainly clear from information set out in the early musters that Hannah was not far away. A daughter, Ann Maria, was born on 25 October 1793; Sarah Maria was born on 26 December 1795, and Susannah on 16 March 1798, by which date William's sentence had expired. At least two more children were born to William and Hannah—a daughter Hannah, on 16 March 1802, and a son, William, on 11 March 1805.

On 10 May 1797, William Singleton, convict, was granted 90 acres of land at Mulgrave Place.[3] The usual grant for a convict was 30 acres for a single man, with additional land being allowed for a wife and each child. There is a reference in the *Sydney Gazette* of 4 November 1804, to certain persons, including William Singleton, who had obtained grants of land in trust for their children but had failed to collect their deeds. It would seem that William for one was not slow to respond to the direction that those deeds should be collected without further delay. The family prospered and the 1806 muster showed that they now held 232 acres.[4]

Mulgrave Place was the name given to a part of what is now known as the Windsor-Wilberforce district, lying some 20 miles to the north-west of Parramatta. Here in 1810 Governor Macquarie laid out the five towns, Castlereagh, Richmond, Windsor and Pitt Town on the right bank of the Hawkesbury River and Wilberforce on the left. Until that time the district was known first as Mulgrave Place and later Green Hills.[5]

Shortly after commencing my research, a colleague informed me that he was interested in his ancestors the Gospers, who had settled in the same area in the early 1790s. His further research showed that Thomas Gosper had been sentenced to 14 years' transportation for a boyish prank and had arrived in the colony in the "Surprize" in June 1790. Shortly

1. Memorial of Wm. Singleton to His Excellency Lt. General Ralph Darling, 2 April 1830.

2. Report on Transportation: Correspondence, Under-Secretary Rose to Commissioners of the Navy, etc. (Collection given to Singleton Historical Society by Mrs. Allan Drakeford, 1971).

3. H.R. N.S.W. series I, vol. II.

4. 1806 muster.

5. *Sydney Gazettes*, various, H.R. N.S.W., etc.

afterwards he married Mary Hipwell, transported for stealing a pair of gloves, valued at one shilling, the property of her mistress.

Green Hills was a small, self-contained world in those days and it seemed highly likely that the paths of William Singleton and Thomas Gosper would have crossed. But it was surprising to find that their original land grants were side by side. One can imagine them yarning about those acres of wheat, barley, the pigs and cows and, maybe, even the one wife which the musters showed each to possess. Nor were floods far from their minds—floods which sometimes brought prosperity to the Hawkesbury valley by gifts of rich new soil, and sometimes ruin.

The name of Robert Campbell—Campbell of the Wharf and Duntroon—is one well known in Canberra. In 1811 and 1812 Robert Campbell was in financial difficulties and set out to collect the many debts owing to him. Summonses were issued against several hundred persons including William Singleton, who was alleged to owe £496.18.7 which by a court judgment dated 13 January 1812 was increased to £508.10.5. It is of interest that Singleton, who had been advanced the money in 1804 to enable him to clear and cultivate his farm, was one of Campbell's largest debtors and shared that honour with such prominent citizens as J. Bowman, William Collins, John Palmer and William Gore.[6] On a later occasion, William stated that his debts had been incurred as a result of three disastrous floods and in order to meet his liabilities he had been forced to sell his original grant.[7] One might well imagine that it was for the same reason that in October 1809, the Provost Marshall announced his intention to sell by public auction "the valuable Thirty-acre Farm, sundry pigs, and other Effects of the said William Singleton (unless the Execution thereupon be previously superseded)".[8]

William Singleton was among those who during the early years had signed a number of petitions and memorials presented to the governors. But one in particular was significant in the light of subsequent events. In 1806 Governor Bligh was welcomed in a memorial which, after congratulating the King on his wise choice of governor, expressed the willingness at all times of residents of the Hawkesbury to lay down their lives and fortunes for the protection of his Excellency; they prayed that a legal authority would be established to make local laws for the good of the colony; and expressed resentment of the "infringement made on their rights, privileges and liberty by John Macarthur Esq., who appears by the *Sydney Gazette* to have signed for the inhabitants without any previous knowledge, consent or authority public or private".[9] Another petition, dated 1 January 1808 asked, among other things, that his Excellency establish trial by jury.[10]

In that same year William was joined by another son, James, of whom there is no earlier record. He arrived as a free settler in the "Aeolus" and was then aged about 30 years, so that at the time of William's conviction he would have been about 14 years of age. He may well have been apprenticed to a trade and for this reason had not travelled out with the family. Furthermore, it is possible that, on account of the difference of 10 years in the ages of Benjamin and

6. See M. Steven, *Merchant Campbell*, 1769-1846 (Melbourne, 1965) Chapter 8, and Appendix E.

7. Colonial Secretary In Letters.

8. *Sydney Gazette*, Vol. VII, 1 October 1809.

9. H.R. N.S.W. Vol. VI, p. 191; Banks Papers, Vol. 22—Capt. Bligh.

10. Banks Papers, *ibid*

James, the latter may not have been Hannah's son.

James married Mary, a daughter of Thomas and Jane Rose, who came out in the "Bellona". She was at the time the widow of Henry Murray and had in 1800 been previously married to William Green. Her parents were among the first assisted migrants to arrive in the colony and had settled in the Wilberforce district where, in about 1812, they built Rose Cottage, the oldest wooden building used as a residence still standing in Australia. James and his descendants remained in the Hawkesbury, and to this day one may find members of that line of the family.

On 4 February 1811, the Reverend Richard Cartwright, the same man who later was to celebrate the first Divine Service in the southern region of the colony, officiated at the marriage of Benjamin Singleton and Mary Sharling, and Benjamin's sister, Sarah Ann, to Thomas Siberry. Mary Sharling was the daughter of Thomas Sharling of the 102nd Regiment and Lucy Lane who, according to a letter written by Mary many years later, were married "about 18th January, 1796".[11] Mary was born on the "Ganges" on 28 December 1796, when Thomas with his regiment was en route to Sydney.

The marriage register at St. Matthew's Rectory, Windsor, was signed by Benjamin only; since unable to write, the other three happy people made their mark. Although it is not certain, it seems that Benjamin had probably attended, at least for a time, the school at Windsor which John Harris commenced in 1803.[12]

11. Letter Mary Singleton to her sister-in-law, Mrs. J. Sharling, Calcutta, 27 Sept., 1847 (collection given to Singleton Historical Society by Mrs. Allan Drakeford, 1971).

12. *Sydney Gazette*, Vol. I, 3 July 1803.

At a later date Benjamin kept a log on a journey of exploration.

Before continuing with the story of Benjamin Singleton, perhaps one should mention that in 1813, at the age of 56 years, Hannah died and was buried at Wilberforce. Her husband continued to live at Wilberforce for a time and after selling his "back farm" near Reibeycroft in 1814 and other sales in 1821 moved to the Hunter River. In 1830, now in his 78th year, and living at Patrick's Plains, he sent a memorial to Governor Ralph Darling seeking a new grant of land which was refused.[13] Five years later, in May, 1835, he died at the age of 83 years and was buried at Singleton.

With the opening in 1813 of a passage through the Blue Mountains, there was renewed interest in exploration inspired to some extent by a belief that a second crossing might be made to the north-west from Windsor. On 30 October 1817 William Parr, a government mineralogist, led an expedition into the north-west. Among those in the small party was Benjamin Singleton. The party was expected to be absent from Windsor for five weeks and it is puzzling to find the following entry in Parr's Journal for 14 November:

"Here Mr. B. Singleton who had been sometimes very low in spirits, first made known his inability, or desire, not to proceed further. However, I prevailed upon him to try another day. I planted a peach and apricot stones in the form of a crescent. On Saturday 15, Mr. B. Singleton declared his determination not to proceed any further, in consequence of which I signified to him that he might take any man to remain here with him and after I had gone as far as my provisions would allow, I would return to him. On Sunday 16

13. Memorial of Wm. Singleton to His Excellency Lt. General Ralph Darling, 2 April 1830.

Mr. B. Singleton took the black horse and Robert Francis and returned home about 9 a.m.".[14]

The reason for Singleton's decision to return home is not clear but, whatever it might be, it was not sufficient to deter him from organising his own expedition during the following year. His log, now in the Mitchell Library, consists of one large sheet of paper which, folded over, is somewhere in size between quarto and foolscap. It is rather remarkable for its complete absence of punctuation; there is not a full stop, comma, or semi-colon in the whole manuscript. The following extracts will be of interest:

"Left water mill Saturday April 25 1818 went down the edge of Weeny Creek about 10 miles down Discovered the track of a man fresh on the beach the Native Man who was with us Shouted an we heard a faint voice of a man who was lost We Desired him to Come Down to us he said he was not able we went towards him an gave him refreshments we took him from thence to the Branch an dericted him to his Master's he said he had been Lost for 5 Days an had nothing to eat He stated his name was Ray an he was Servant to Mr Churchill at Sackville Reach He slept with that night an we gave him some refreshments in the Morning an Provisions to take with him"

Over the next few days, the diary records progress in very short, laconic notes, in which the main attention, naturally enough, is given to grass and water, and the distances and direction travelled. The night of Tuesday, 5 May, was a most uncomfortable one and merited quite a long entry:

"halted this night about—Disturbed by the Voice of Natives Cracking of Sticks an Rolling Big Rocks Stones Down towards us every man of us arose an fled from the fire secreting ourselves behind trees with our guns an ammunition where we could have a view of the fire doubting if we staid by the Fire every man was lost spent the whole of the Night in that Condition Raining Very Hard the Native whom we had with us was timid than any of us Saying he was sure he would be killed"

Well, they were not killed, and the next morning had a further adventure:

"Wednesday 6th Arose in the Morning an Shaped our Course on the same hill about 10 o'clock fell in with upwards of two Hundred Natives who had Never seen a White Man Before except one by the name of Mawby who could speak a little English the Whole of Being Clothed with Skins and Furnished with a Great Quantity of Spears . . . we enquired if we could go to the Westward he informed us it was impossible as it was very rocky an No water . . . they asked us our Business we told them we wanted to go to Bathurst or to find good land they pointed to the N Eastward saying we go there in two days where there is a large river . . . they could not drink it which we suppose by that it means it was salt water we told our native to ask them which way it run they said Both Ways by that means we suppose the tide must rise and flow . . . am anxious to return we supposed ourselves to be 120 miles from Windsor N30W returned the same way we went We arrived home at the Water Mill May 14th"

Great interest was aroused by the report of the undrinkable river which flowed both ways, and Macquarie asked John Howe, Chief Constable of the Hawkesbury, to investigate it. In October, 1819, John Howe set off with a party and found the river, but after a brief reconnaissance, was forced to return partly because, it is said, of the leader's ill health. On 5 March 1820, Howe, now accompanied by Benjamin Singleton, set off and reached the big river 10 days later but at a spot lower downstream. On St. Patrick's Day, they decided to call the district St. Patrick's Plains. This was later shortened to Patrick's Plains and then Patrick Plains. Howe's party identified the river as the Hunter after following it downstream until meeting some sawyers from the Newcastle convict settlement.

Macquarie was not very enthusiastic about this new road to the Hunter valley. Not only did it provide convicts escaping from Newcastle with an easy retreat but, equally important, acted as a temptation to settlers to spread out beyond the confines of the Nineteen Counties.

Grazing began in the Hunter valley in 1820 when John Howe received a permit to graze stock on Patrick's Plains until such time as a grant of 700 acres could be surveyed for him.

In 1821 the Newcastle chaplain, the Reverend G. A. Middleton, was permitted to travel from Richmond to Wallis's Plains (now Maitland) and thence to Newcastle. He was followed shortly afterwards by an unauthorised party which blazed the track and thus further facilitated the escape of convicts. Shortly afterwards a Government Order was issued expressing Macquarie's "express desire that this irregularity (travelling without a permit) may not occur again". In December the Newcastle commandant, Morisset, reported that 12 convicts had escaped, and gone off by "the Parson's Road", and expressed a hope that no additional permits would be issued.

However, a few days later the following notice appeared in the *Sydney Gazette*:

"St. Patrick's Plains—Mr. B. Singleton begs leave to inform the public that he will take charge of any Person's Cattle at the abovementioned Plains. Terms 10s a head per annum: taken for no less than three years. Apply at Kurry Jong Mill, N.B. Responsible for any number which may be entrusted to his charge."

It is not clear whether Benjamin had as yet received any land in the new country or whether he was working as Howe's agent.

During 1821 Macquarie opened up the penal settlement at Port Macquarie and transferred the convicts from Newcastle. This was followed by a land rush to the new country which was preferred to the Bathurst district. By 1823 "a steady stream of settlers began to arrive in the district and to select sites for their farms". In February of that year, Morisset visited the district and reported that he had "found as much regularity as could be expected in a distant settlement" and as a security measure appointed Singleton as constable. In March a public notice announced that the road from Richmond to Wallis's Plains was now open to the public and "permits should be applied for". Soon after that, it was reported that Singleton's agistment business must have been flourishing; quite a large number of permits mentioned that the stock was being taken to graze with Mr. Singleton at Patrick's Plains; and by 1825 it was further reported that almost the whole length of the river from its mouth to the broad valley of Dart Brook, Kingdon Ponds, and Page's River had been selected.

On 2 March 1823, Benjamin Singleton submitted a memorial to Governor Brisbane in which he described himself as a free settler who had never been a prisoner. He stated that he had been a member of the party which had discovered this part of the colony and, having been twice ruined by floods on the Hawkesbury, begged an additional grant of land. He stated that he now held 200 acres and was the owner of eight working bullocks, 35 head of cattle, a mare and foal, a wife and six children.

14. Journal (Wm. Parr) of Expedition north from Windsor, October-November 1817.

In 1824 the family, including William, had apparently moved from the Windsor district and settled on Benjamin's new land in the Hunter valley. About this time, several advertisements apeared in the *Sydney Gazette* offering Singleton's Back Farm for sale and then, when it remained unsold, for letting. Applications were to be made to Mrs. Reiby.

Benjamin, on the other hand, did not sever his connection with his home town. In 1822, in conjunction with his brother James, who remained in the Hawkesbury district, he applied for a licence to brew spirits which was granted. He retained his interest in two mills, apparently flour mills: that previously mentioned at the Kurry Jong and the other at the Lower Hawkesbury. The ruins of the latter are still in existence and are shown on some maps as "Singleton's Mill".

On 10 September 1820, Benjamin and his brother, James, applied for the confirmation of a grant of a couple of pieces of land which had apparently been promised to them by Governor Macquarie. "The Humble Memorial of Benjamin Singleton and James Singleton respectfully sheweth . . . having created two water mills on Crown lands, one at Kurry Jong, the other opposite the lower branch of the Hawkesbury River, . . . beg to remind you of promise to confirm a proportion of lands on which such mills stand". In the left-hand margin there is a note: "The mills erected by Benj and James Singleton at the places herein described being useful to the public, each of them is to receive a grant of ten (10) acres of land where their respective mills have been erected". The note is dated Windsor, 18th Sept. 1821, and initialled L.M.

Not only did Benjamin not completely sever his connections with the Windsor district; at a later date, in 1832, he expanded to enter the Parramatta river transport business. He built a boat of 60 tons' burthen, capable of carrying 100 passengers and 30 tons of cargo. It was named the "Experiment" and was powered by four horses which apparently propelled the boat by walking in a treadmill. One trip only was made. Apparently she was missing on each cylinder, or horse, and most of the passengers went ashore to the accompaniment of much scoffing. Benjamin succeeded in getting the boat to Parramatta, in spite of his four-horse-power trouble, and later sold it for £400. He said that he lacked the capital necessary to convert the boat to steam. During this same period he was interested in boat building at Clarencetown, Williams River.

At some time Benjamin had received a grant of 200 acres of land from Governor Macquarie and in 1825 petitioned Governor Brisbane for more land. In justification of his petition he pointed out that, in addition to being a member of the party which had discovered that part of the country, he had been at great expense victualling and otherwise providing for a number of persons engaged with him on two excursions, and now had a very large number of cattle, which was a great inconvenience on so small a piece of land. This request seemed to have been unsuccessful and in 1827 he again petitioned for additional land. At that time he stated that he possessed: 200 acres of land by grant, 100 acres by purchase, 1,000 acres by lease, of which 200 acres were cleared; 200 head of cattle, 200 pigs, 12 horses; he had erected two dwelling houses valued at £200 each, one kitchen, £50; a barn, £100, and a water flour mill, £200. He had completed 3½ acres of fences and employed during the year three convict servants and 11 free men. His petition was marked "to await new form" and in another place, "new form transmitted 16th August".

None of those dwelling houses survived into modern times but his brewery and mill did last until well

into this century. As a matter of interest, his Phoenix Flour Mill was standing in 1955 when it was badly damaged by flood.

Perry in his *Australia's First Frontier* quotes a traveller: "The township at Patrick's Plains was embryonic rather than real, but nevertheless it was a centre. Benjamin Singleton had opened the "Plough Inn", and there was a ferry boat capable of conveying carts and heavy articles when the river is up".

On 24 and 26 November 1831, two leading articles, presumably written by the editor, were published in the *Sydney Gazette* and describe a journey up the Hunter River. In the second article the writer stated: "from Castle Forbes you may take a pleasant drive to Singleton's Ford, . . . The ford, as the name implies, is a part of the river which, (except after heavy rains), is easily crossed, on horseback or on foot. Here are the vestiges of a watermill (erected by the person whose name is given to the ford) swept away in a heavy flood".

Before following the fortunes of the family after settling in the Hunter district, it would be in order to digress a little to examine some developments in Mary's family affairs. In February 1824, she rediscovered a long lost brother then living in Calcutta. She wrote him the following letter which was apparently returned unclaimed:

"Patrick's Plains, H.R.

N.S.W. 9th February, 1824.

"My Dear Brother, Having heard the other day only of your address and an opportunity of conveyance I embrace it with the greatest pleasure to write to one I have never heard of for the last ten or twelve years. It gave me great pleasure to hear you are both alive and well. I wrote you some time since but not then knowing where to direct to you the letter must never have come to hand informing you of my situation, being married to Mr. Benj Singleton and having a large family of 5 girls and 2 boys which has since been increased by a boy. Your Mother and Father are still alive and well and will receive with infinite pleasure and comfort in hearing from you. We have lately begun farming down here but at present farming is but a poor employment, but thank God we are doing well and perhaps better than some of our neighbours. Again pressing you to write as early as possible believe me your affectionate sister

Mary Singleton.

"I have requested Mr. Hassall who will take care to forward to me my letters directed to his care.

"C/o Revd Thos Hassall, Parramatta. Mr. Joseph Sharling, Honourable Company Pilot Service, Banks Hall, Calcutta."

The newly-found brother did not seem to be at all delighted. Some letters were returned unclaimed and when Joseph did reply it was only after long intervals. In 1847 while in England, Mary wrote to her sister-in-law. Whereas she had previously referred to her brother as Joseph, she now called him John and expressed a feeling of uneasiness at his thinking that she was not his sister. She hoped that if she and her husband were to return to Sydney by way of India, she would be able to explain the mystery. In 1851, still in England, Mary wrote another letter to her "Dear Sister" wherein she expressed her sorrow at hearing of the death of her brother. Then she began to explain the mystery to which she had previously referred. She mentioned that she had been born at sea and that her brother was born in Sydney "about February 1798". John returned to Sydney with "Mr. R." in about 1808 when "Mr. R. contrived to steal . . . who is Matthew and Anthony as he had stolen John in the first offset . . . as to the cause of their names being changed I cannot say as that was in Calcutta."

But this letter did little to explain the mystery. In 1858 Mary, being in

no fit condition to carry on correspondence, asked one of her daughters, Louisa, to write to Mary Sharling in Calcutta. There is a particularly interesting footnote to that letter which reads: "One Gilbert Singleton came out to India to discover John and his family in 1865 or 66 and he was also found dead in the streets of Calcutta with head split open. Evidently those who have stirred in the matter have met an untimely end."

There is a covering note to this batch of letters, written by a grandson of John Sharling, which makes two interesting points. The first refers to the statement made by Mary in her last letter that Mr. R. contrived to steal some of John's brothers. The writer says: "Grandfather called John supposed to be born February, 1798. He was stolen from Australia by a Captain Rousseau." The second point of interest is a note which states that in 1853-4 Francis Scallon went to Australia to make inquiries about the estate but had only landed a week when he was found dead with gum leaves in his mouth at the Hunter.

Settlement at Patrick's Plains developed quickly and in 1827 a clerk was appointed to the Bench. In June 1835, giving evidence before the Select Committee on Police, Robert Scott, a member of the Patrick's Plains Bench, stated that "Suitors at the Patrick's Plains Bench have to travel a distance of eighteen or twenty miles or it may be even sixty miles if crimes be committed on the old mountain road to Windsor." The court was held in a public house "in consequence of which scenes of drunkenness and disorder often occur, and particularly during musters of ticket-of-leave holders. Witnesses frequently come before the Court in a state of intoxication". "The greatest inconvenience and evil we have to complain of", Scott stated, "is the necessity of sending under escort of constables all prisoners who are sentenced to receive more than fifty lashes, to Maitland, twenty-seven miles, on their way to Newcastle, fortyfive miles, to be punished".

Shortly after this, it was decided that a court house should be built for the Patrick's Plains District. The site chosen was to the east in the Whittingham area, in the expectation that the settlement would grow up in that direction. By the time the court house was completed, the town had developed away from the court house, which stood in solitary grandeur in open country. Benjamin Singleton came to the rescue. He offered to build a replica of the court house on a piece of land he had reserved for a market square in the centre of the town. He offered to do this without cost to the government, on condition that the government gave him the superseded court house. This arrangement was accepted and the new building, with lock-up, was built. This court house, later rebuilt, became the Municipal Council Chambers and now houses the district's historical museum.

In the early 1830s the place which had at first been known as Singleton's Ford and Singleton's developed into a town. Benjamin had, at an early date, built an inn, a mill, and a brewery. Benjamin's young brother, fined in 1813 for illicit brewing, was now engaged legitimately in the trade as mine host at the Plough Inn. He died and was buried in Singleton in 1841 at the age of 52 years. Benjamin had also established a punt to carry travellers across the Hunter when the river was up; at other times they went across the Ford. During this period Benjamin was appointed for a term as district constable for Patrick's Plains, and had at least one quarrel with the infamous Mudie of Castle Forbes where the convicts were driven to an outright revolt because of poor conditions and cruel treatment. Singleton had to appeal to the Newcastle magistrate to uphold his authority as constable against Mudie. Mudie had as little esteem for Benjamin as he had for most other people in the Colony and complained of his

low state of respectability; he was "on a perfect footing of equality with his convict servants mine or any he comes in contact with—in a word *Ben S*— (as they call him) is a fine fellow".

By the late 1830s, Singleton had become a town. Benjamin had set aside at least one block of land for a church and a fair-sized block in the centre of the town to be developed as a market square, on the English pattern. He had put in roads and sold a number of town allotments. In 1842 he found himself in financial difficulties with debts amounting to some £2,500. Unable to raise the ready cash in a hurry, he became involved with the Sydney moneylender, Burdekin. Finally he was forced into insolvency, his estate was sold up, the township of Singleton passed out of the hands of the family.

Benjamin and Mary then turned their attention to reports of money held in Chancery and set out for England to investigate the matter. Perhaps it was held on behalf of some distant relative on the Singleton side; perhaps on that of Mary's ancestors, but whatever the case the visit was unsuccessful. Nor were they successful in identifying some real estate in which Benjamin seems to have invested.

Returning to New South Wales in 1852, he purchased some land in Singleton and died in the following year "leaving a widow who has been a faithful companion for 42 years, ten children, and thirty one grandchildren to lament their loss". He was described as a man of "frugal and temperate habits" whose only fault was that "he was a greater friend to everybody than himself".

After his death the town of Singleton continued to grow and by 1848 boasted 127 houses and a total population of 565 inhabitants. In the 1860s Burdekin announced that the land provided by Singleton for a market square would be subdivided and sold as town allotments. Despite protests from the townspeople, the sale was arranged and, as had been threatened, boycotted. Burdekin then decided that he would give the land to the town to be developed as a park which, much to the annoyance of the townspeople, was named in honour of—not Benjamin Singleton—but the man who had attempted to alienate it.

References

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PIONEERS OF AUSTRALIA

The names hereunder are those of people in the First Fleet. The members of the Fellowship of the First Fleet are descended from these Pioneers.

56 FIRST FLEETERS REPRESENTED IN THE FELLOWSHIP

Mr. Thomas Arndell (Second Assistant Surgeon)
John Bayliss
James Bloodworth—
Sarah Bellamy
Jacob Billett
James Bradley
William Broughton
Owen Cavanough
Capt. David Collins—
Ann Yates
Thomas Risdale Crowder
Phillip Devine
William Douglas—
Mary Groves
John Drummond
William Eggleton—
Mary Dickenson
Matthew James Everingham
Ann Forbes
Edward Garth
Thomas Halfpenny
Joseph Hatton
Thomas Hilton
John Herbert—
Deborah Hellam
Mr. Thomas Jamieson (First Surgeon's Mate, "Sirius")
Catharine Johnson
David Kilpack
Lt. George Johnston—
Esther Abrahams
Henry Kable—
Susannah Holmes
2nd Lt. Phillip Gidley King
Nathaniel Lucas—
Olivia Gascoyne
Thomas Lucas
Frederick Meridith
Edward Miles
James Morrisby
William Nash
John Palmer
Harry Parsons
Samuel Pickett
Ann Powell
William Roberts
Anthony Rope—
Elizabeth Pulley
James Ruse
James Sheers—
Mary Smith
John Small—
Mary Parker
James Squire
William Tunks
Mary Wilkes
Mr. John White (Surgeon General)

The above roll is incomplete as applications for membership are being received and researched continually.

FELLOWSHIP OF FIRST FLEETERS 1788 A.D.

AIMS AND OBJECTS

(a) To honour and be loyal to our Country—Australia. To acknowledge and honour the Crown and Monarch as Head of State.

(b) To disseminate a deeper knowledge and create a greater awareness of the part played by those Pioneers who arrived in Sydney with the First Fleet on 26th January 1788 and to ensure the accurate and authentic recording of the history of the members of the first fleet.

(c) To ensure that the country's National Day (26th January each year) is celebrated in a manner and on a scale befitting the important event.

(d) To encourage Australian patriotism and to strengthen the bonds of loyalty by all people living in Australia, irrespective of their birthplace or origin, creed or party and to welcome and extend hospitality to migrants and visitors from overseas.

(e) To support and encourage where possible Australian Art in all forms.

(f) To do any and all of those things which are in the opinion of the Fellowship considered beneficial to it and of future benefit and well-being of the Fellowship and the nation generally.

MEMBERSHIP:

The Fellowship consists of —

- Members — with proof of their ancestors having arrived in Sydney with the First Fleet on the 26th January, 1788, and who have attained the age of 18 years.
- Junior Members — possessing proof of the above and who are under the age of 18 years.
- Life Members — Life Membership may be conferred by the Fellowship (in General Meeting) on any Member who has, in the opinion of the Fellowship, rendered signal service to the Nation or the Fellowship.
- Associates — husbands and/or wives of Members having no voting rights.

THE FELLOWSHIP OF FIRST FLEETERS is non-political, non-sectarian and non-profitmaking. The Badge of the Fellowship is a map of Australia (in blue) with F.F.F. imposed thereon in gold letters.

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