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OFFICE HOURS:

Tuesday, 10 am-4 pm
Wednesday, 10 am-2 pm
Thursday, 10 am-2 pm
Friday, 10 am-2 pm

Volume 13, No. 6
DECEMBER, 1982

FROM THE PRESIDENT:

It was my pleasure to represent the Fellowship at a wreath laying and luncheon, held by the Women's Pioneer Society, to commemorate the 244th anniversary of the birth of Governor Arthur Phillip. It was a very pleasant and friendly function and I am hopeful that next year we may make it a joint effort—after all **First Fleeters** are the very ones who should acknowledge the part played by this great man in our very beginnings. I would be interested to have your thoughts on this. Accompanied by my husband I also attended the Lord Mayoral Ball in Sydney Town Hall.

On Friday, 22nd October, I was received by His Excellency the Governor of New South Wales, Sir James Rowland, when I was informed by His Excellency, that he and Lady Rowland will attend our Australia Day Dinner Dance on Wednesday, 26th January, 1983. I'm sure all members will be delighted that we are to be so honoured. I hope many are already arranging table parties.

This coming year our schedule for Australia Day will be slightly different, as we decided to revert to holding the Dinner on the actual day. I do hope as many as possible will attend the Flag Raising in Macquarie Place on Wednesday, 26th January, at 12 Noon—in costume for preference. Then the Dinner Dance at the Boulevard Hotel at 7.30 p.m. On Saturday, 29th January, a plaque will be placed on the grave of Philip Devine at Wilberforce Cemetery, in conjunction with a Devine Family Reunion. Then on Sunday, 30th January, we will participate in "Australia Day" at the Rocks" from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. I do appeal to all to donate anything saleable for our stall on that day. Also to help man the stall (again in cosume if possible). On Monday morning 31st January we will again visit Government House, Sydney to present a memorial to His Excellency the Governor. Please meet at the main gates at 9 a.m. for 9.30 a.m. presentation (costumes again please). I hope some of our country and interstate members may be able to join us at sometime during these celebrations.

Your Committee were saddened to hear of the hospitalisation of two of our hard working members—Mrs. Mary Bailey and Mrs. Thelma Guy. Both are now home and we wish them a speedy recovery.

The raffle for the Flannel Flower Brooch has been most successful and we thank Mrs. Sybil Everingham again for her generous donation. (Result appears elsewhere in this Newsletter).

Once again I appeal to members to make donations **NOW** for our Bicentenary Tapestry. A dollar donated now will increase a great deal over the next five years.

As this is the last Newsletter before Christmas, I extend best wishes to all, that you may have a peaceful, joyous Christmas and the New Year brings you health and happiness.

BERYL LEWIS

Report on the July Lecture Evening:

The lecturer for our July meeting was Mr. William Buckley, Vice-President of the Jenolan Caves Historical Society.

This was a wonderful lecture night, with so much to interest us all. Mr. Buckley started with an early history of the caves telling us about the first European discoverer—an outlaw named James McKeown. A possee surprised McKeown in his hideout, a large cave, now known as McKeown's Hole.

The two brothers who found the convict were the Whalan Brothers and later they explored more of the caves, and news quickly spread about the wonders of the caves. Charles Whalan and his two sons worked as honorary guides, leading an increasing number of visitors through the caves.

In 1866 the N.S.W. Government declared the caves a reserve. Jeremiah Wilson, who farmed on the banks of the Fish River was appointed "Keeper" of the caves. A duty performed till 1896.

Visitors walked in the underground caverns carrying candles, and when special features were at hand, Wilson ignited a strip of blazing magnesium. Many of the caves have been robbed through the years of their stalagmites and stalactites. Souvenir hunters with little thought to the time it takes for the beautiful calcite formations to grow.

Mr. Buckley showed slides of the caves, including the imposing Jubilee Cave, discovered in 1893, the "Dark" Caves, "Chiffley Cave" discovered 1880, "Lucas Cave" discovered 1860, which has the cathedral music room and exhibition chamber.

We saw "The River Cave" and "Ribbon Cave" discovered 1904 and many others. a truly fascinating lecture evening.

Mr. Buckley invited the Fellowship to travel to Jenolan Caves one day as a group, as he would enjoy showing us his dearly loved caves.

Thank you Mr. Buckley for a most enjoyable evening.

SALLY KALINA

Report on the August Lecture Evening:

Mr. Rick Pockley, Author of "Ancestor Treasure Hunt", was the speaker for our August lecture evening. Mr. Pockley talked about his famous ancestor - Henry Antill.

Before he wrote his four books, he told us he was searching for Frank Clune's "Bound for Botany Bay" for many years, and was tramping around Sydney in frantic search for this particular book which would help in his research when he mentioned it one day to his wife and she calmly said it was in their bookcase and "didn't he know it was there". He said writing a family history is not very easy at times, but he slowly put the missing pieces of family information together and finished his four books on the Antills, Pockleys, Wills and Waddies.

Henry Antill, 1779-1852, was born in New York of British stock. His father, John Antill, a Major in the New Jersey Volunteers fought under the King's banner in the American War of Independence. After the war his property was confiscated and he moved to Canada where Henry spent his youth. He joined the British Army and served in India. He was wounded and later promoted to Lieutenant and about this time he met Captain Lachlan Macquarie, and formed a firm friendship. In 1807 returned to England with his Regiment and later that year he sailed to Australia with the 73rd Regiment, commanded by Macquarie.

He arrived in January, 1810 and was appointed Aide-de-Camp to the Governor. He accompanied the Governor on his tours throughout the settled areas. In 1820 he took part in an excursion to the newly-discovered land, south of the Cowpastures as far as Lake George. On 9th October, 1818 at St. Phillip's Church Sydney, he married Eliza Wills. In 1821 he retired from the Army and settled near Liverpool, and later in 1825 on his estate near Picton, named "Jarvisfield".

He died at Jarvisfield in 1852, his wife died in 1858 and was buried in the family vault beside him. They were survived by six sons and two daughters.

Antill was a resident magistrate and superintendent of Police and showed sympathy towards the convict servants who were brought before him.

This is only one of Mr. Pockley's ancestors from his family history books, the other stories were equally interesting, and he urged us to tape or write down older family members memories, which die unless recorded and told to the younger generation.

We thank Mr. Pockley for his most interesting lecture.

SALLY KALINA

MEMBERSHIP REPORT - SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER, 1982

We extend a warm welcome to the following 56 new members and 15 spouse associates (in brackets). First Fleet ancestors are shown in heavy type.

T. Arndell + W. Dring/A. Forbes - Mr. Brian McGILL; J. Bradley - Mr. Brian D. LENNE (sp. Mrs. Susan A. LENNE); Miss Suzanne LENNE; J. Cullen - Mr. Justin P. O'DONNELL; Miss Samantha J. O'DONNELL (Jnr.); A. Fishburn - Mrs. Marjory LEWIS (sp. Mr. Donald J. LEWIS); Ann Forbes - Miss Trudie M. LEIGO (Jnr.); Mr. Frederick ELLEM (sp. Mrs. Heather M. ELLEM); N. Lucas/O. Gascoigne - Miss Leah BEAUMONT (Jnr.); Miss Sue BEAUMONT (Jnr.); Mr. William H. LUCAS; Mr. Kenneth C. GREENWAY (sp. Mrs. T.V. GREENWAY); Mr. Cameron C. GREENWAY; Mr. Murray L. GREENWAY; J. McManus/J. Poole + J. Bradley - Mr. Paul H. CAREY, Mr. John W. CAREY; Mrs. Marie E. FORTE; F. Meredith - Miss Fiona HYDE (Jnr.); Master Andrew HYDE (Jnr.); Mrs. Clarissa V. MAHER; Mrs. Hazel I. REIDY; Mr. Donald NEWBURY; J. Nicholls - Mrs. Sharon A. DRAPER; Mrs. Viara L. C. BALLEIN; Prof. Raymond de CUSACK; Mrs. Susan J. TUCK; Mr. Frederick L. CROFT (sp. Mrs. Beth CROFT); Mr. N.J. CROFT; Mr. Andrew C. CROFT; Mr. Wilfred P. CROFT; Miss Rebecca K. CROFT; Mrs. Deborah A. McWILLIAMS; Joshua Peck - Mr. Donald N. PECK (Joshua Peck, convict "Scarborough", is a new F.F. ancestor); J. Squires - Miss Rosemary A. BIRD (Jnr.); Mr. Hilton W. ELLIOTT; Miss Bronwyn ELLIOTT; Miss Christine ELLIOTT; Mr. Ronald B. Webster (sp. Mrs. Zelma WEBSTER); J. Small/M. Parker - Mrs. Jaclyn M. RATCLIFFE; J. Small/M. Parker + N. Lucas/O. Gascoigne + J. Squires + E. Goodin - Master Mark R. WHISKER (Jnr.); W. Tunks - Dr. Stephanie WAY (sp. Dr. Henry W. FOGL); Mr. Harry H. TUNKS (sp. Dorothy H. TUNKS); Rev. Father Barry H. TUNKS; Mr. Graham R. TUNKS (sp. Mrs. Lynne C. TUNKS); Miss Dianne R. TUNKS; Mr. Mark G. TUNKS; Mr. Anthony J. WAY (sp. Mrs. Marjorie WAY); W. TUNKS + A. Ropa/E. Pulley - Mr. John T. GREENHALGH (sp. Mrs. Leila M. GREENHALGH); W. Tunks + T. Spencer/M. Phillips - Mrs. Betty I. ALEXANDER; Mrs. Deborah L. ANDREWS; Mrs. Janet A. BUTTON; Miss Lisa A. DANIELS; Mr. Stephen M. ROBERTS; Mr. Brett C.M. SMITH; Ellen Wainwright - Mrs. Joyce K. BROOK; Mrs. Marjorie TREW;

Associate spouses of Earlier Members:- Mr. Campbell H. HARPER (husband of Mrs. Shirley HARPER); Mr. Barry O'CONNELL (husband of Mrs. Joan T. O'CONNELL); Mrs. Isabel THORNTON (wife of Mr. Neville G. THORNTON); Mrs. Nancy L. VERNON (wife of Mr. Ernest VERNON). Associate Friend - Mrs. Iris NIESER.

CLOSURE OF MITCHELL LIBRARY FOR STOCKTAKING

The Mitchell Library of the State Library of N.S.W. will be closed for Stocktaking from Monday, 29th November, 1982 to Sunday 2nd January, 1983 inclusive.

The following services will be closed: Mitchell Library Reading Room, Mitchell Library Research Service, Mitchell Manuscripts, Mitchell Pictures, Mitchell Maps, Copying Service (for Mitchell material).

A limited telephone enquiry and referral service will operate from 9 a.m. - 5 p.m. on weekdays (except Public Holidays). The General Reference Library will be open as usual, Monday to Saturday 9 a.m. to 9 p.m., Sunday 2 p.m. to 6 p.m. The Galleries will be open as usual, Monday to Saturday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., Sunday, 2 p.m. to 6 p.m.

R.F. DOUST, State Librarian

COIN COLLECTIONS:

Members who have collected 1c and 2c pieces throughout the year are requested to send a cheque, for the amount they have collected, to the Treasurer before the end of the year. These collections will help swell our Bicentenary Tapestry fund. Thank you.

COULD ANY MEMBER HELP US WITH THE CURRENT ADDRESS OF ANY OF THE FOLLOWING MEMBERS?

Mr. E. Hawes,
3/41 Goldsbrough Rd.,
TARINGA QLD 4038
Mr. R.B. Ravenscroft,
24 Powell St.,
RICHMOND N.S.W. 2753
Mrs. G. Jarvis,
43 Boundary Rd.,
NTH. EPPING N.S.W. 2121

Mr. Garry Hedges
4/7 Park Ave.,
MOSMAN N.S.W. 2088
Mrs. L. Waldron,
Genealogical Society of Qld.
P.O. Box 610, TOOWONG QLD 4066
Mr. B.D. Thomas,
c/o Ragrus, Nankervis and Curl,
6 Paul St., MILSONS POINT N.S.W. 2061

Miss Kathleen Whitting,
31/18 Margaret St.,
STRATHFIELD N.S.W. 2135

Calling all Members in Canberra/Queanbeyan District

Would you be interested in celebrating AUSTRALIA DAY, 1983 on 26th January, in your own district? Please write to, or phone:-

Olive Mulholland,
4 Bonython St.,
DOWNER A.C.T. 2602
Phone: 47-7024

Monica Flint,
"Congwarre"
THARWA A.C.T. 2620
Phone: 37-5148

FUTURE OUTING

A provisional booking has been made for the first Sunday in May, 1983, at 1 p.m. for a tour of Victoria Barracks and Museum with Sgt. Dobson.

Would you please mark this day in your 1983 Calender and contact Anne Campbell, our Secretary, either by mail to the F.F.F. rooms or phone her on (02) 437-6656.

IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT:

His Excellency the Governor and Lady Rowland will be our Guests of Honour at the Australia Day Dinner Dance to be held at 7.30 p.m. for 8 p.m. at the Boulevard Hotel, William Street, Sydney, on Wednesday 26th January, 1983.

Vice-Regal protocol requests that all guests be seated at 8 p.m. sharp, and to stand at five minutes past eight when the Governor and Lady Rowland enter the room and come to the Official Table. The first six bars of "God Save the Queen" is then played, followed by a very short speech of welcome, after which the Grace is said and everyone is seated and dinner is then served.

We expect that a good time will be had by all as usual, and don't forget to send a **STAMPED ADDRESSED ENVELOPE** with your cheque to Miss Alice Clark, who will be very busy processing your tickets. Alice's address is: P.O. Box 328, Lane Cove, 2066. So do all come and enjoy yourselves.

Mrs. Beryl Lewis will as usual, give her address on "The Day we Celebrate" and Mr. Johnathon King will speak on "The Day we will be Celebrating in 1988". This should be of particular interest to all of us, particularly as the Sunday Telegraph is running an essay competition for the best story of the F.F. for school children and the First Fleet Re-enactment is getting under way at last.

Looking forward to seeing you on the night.

Also, no smoking before coffee is served is correct protocol. The Governor and Lady Rowland would appreciate it if guests observed this rule.

AUSTRALIA DAY CELEBRATIONS

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| WED. 26th | FLAG RAISING – Macquarie Place – Time from Anne
AUSTRALIA DAY DINNER DANCE – Boulevard Hotel, 7.30 p.m. |
| SAT. 29th | PLAQUE CEREMONY – Phillip Devine Grave |
| SUN. 30th | AUSTRALIA DAY – "Fun Day at the Rocks", 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Trees to be planted in honour of First Fleet – Quay West Park.
CHURCH SERVICES – St. Patrick's, 9 a.m.
– Garrison Church, 10.30 a.m. |
| MON. 31st | PRESENTATION OF MEMORIAL – (Address of Loyalty) to His Excellency the Governor of N.S.W. – Time from Anne. |

SEARCH FOR OLDEST MEMBER:

The Fellowship of First Fleeters are interested to find our **OLDEST MEMBER** – could members please submit names and ages of any known members over 90 years of age.

Please submit to: The Editor, F.F.F., Box N283, Grosvenor Street, Sydney, 2000.

F.F.F. DINNER DANCE

Wednesday, 26th January, 1983 at 7.30 p.m. at the
BOULEVARDE HOTEL, William Street, Sydney.

TICKETS: \$25.00 per head.

CONTACT: Miss Alice Clarke
P.O. Box 326,
LANE COVE N.S.W. 2066
Telephone: 428-4530

FAMILY ASSOCIATIONS' DIRECTORY

LUCAS-GASCOIGNE REUNION AND BOOK COMMITTEE (Est. 1979):

Contact: (Secretary) Miss R. Kroehnert, Tel.: (02) 602-4657
Postal: 14 Fitzpatrick Cres., Casula 2170
Meetings: On an irregular basis. Annual reunion held each year in October on Sunday of Labor Day weekend, please contact Secretary for further details.

TUNKS DESCENDANTS' ASSOCIATION:

The above Association has been formed at a recent meeting of descendants of William Tunks, F.F.

Secretary/ Mr. Peter Christian, 162 Beecroft Road, Cheltenham 2119, Phone (02) 868-3063
Treasurer:

EDWARD MILES

This talk was read by Mrs. Ilma Medlyn (a descendant of Edward Miles) at the time of the unveiling of a plaque at the grave of Edward Miles in St. Matthew's Churchyard, Windsor on 20th June, 1982. (The talk was written by Roderick Best).

Edward Miles was convicted (together with John Rowe) at the Launceston Assizes on 19th March, 1785 of the theft of clothing from the home of Benjamin Barrett at 11 O'Clock one morning.

Both Edward Miles and his companion in crime, John Rowe, were sentenced to transportation for seven years. In the case of each man this resulted in his arrival in this land on 26th January, 1788.

During the lean and hungry first years of the Colony when deprivation created rancour, Miles was involved in two court cases. In the first, he was a witness to the disrespectful behaviour of the seaman James Davis to Mr. Reed, the Carpenter of the "Supply" and in the second as the prisoner - accused of the theft of vegetables from the garden of Captain George Johnston. Of the latter crime he was discharged due to lack of evidence.

As the years progressed, Miles received grants of land at Prospect (in 1779 and 1809) and later at Minto. Of his four daughters, two (Susannah and Martha) were born at Prospect and one (Elizabeth) at Minto. No grant, however, seems to have been developed. It is presumed that after struggling on his own property he left to work for others.

In the 1828 Census he is noted as being a carpenter living on the property of a Mrs. Ryan at Illawarra, while his wife Susannah, (nee Smith), whom he had married on 31st October, 1803, at St John's, Parramatta, was employed as a servant to Robert? The Census records their ages as 67 and 52 years respectively.

Miles died on 31st October, 1838 and his wife died some two months later.

Edward Miles found no "brilliant career" in the Colony. He did however, found a family and amongst his descendants was one Stella Maria Sarah Miles Franklin who is better known today by her pseudonyms Brent of Bin Bin and Miles Franklin - an Australian author, important not only in her own right but also for the encouragement and practical assistance her legacy has continued to provide for Australian authors. Her ancestor, Edward Miles would surely have appreciated the value of such practical assistance.

DESCENDANTS OF EDWARD MILES through his daughter Martha, together with other associated Tumut families have formed the Buddong Society. For those interested in obtaining further details, please contact: The Secretary, Margaret Frances of 36 Grandview Drive, Campbelltown, 2560, Telephone (046) 25 6751.

COMMEMORATIVE CHURCH SERVICE

The Executive and Members are invited to attend the Annual Ecumenical Service to commemorate the first Christian Service in Australia on Sunday, 6th February, 1983 at 3 p.m. at St. Philip's Church, 3 York St., Sydney.

It would help the Church with catering arrangements for afternoon tea, if you would advise Mrs. Beryl Lewis of your intention to attend at least **TWO** weeks prior to the Service.

THE FOUR WAYS OF ATTENTATIVE ATTENDANCE:

1. Is it true that you really have to talk over some important matter with those seated close to you at a Fellowship Meeting, while some one is addressing the Meeting?
 2. Is it fair to prevent others from listening to the speaker?
 3. Will it build goodwill and better friendships to slight your speaker who is addressing the audience, you included?
 4. Will it be beneficial to all concerned if you disturb the peace and order of the audience at a Meeting?
- With acknowledgements and apologies to Nelson Bay Rotary Club who provided our President with this copy.

THE FOLLOWING ITEMS ARE AVAILABLE FOR SALE FROM THE F.F.F. OFFICE

T. SHIRTS (<i>navy with gold emblem</i>) – most sizes (<i>packaged and post \$1 extra</i>) \$6.50 each.
Tea Towels – <i>linen 4 designs - old Sydney, modern Sydney, Australian birds, Australian wildflowers</i> \$2.50 each
NOTELETTES with matching envelopes, packet of 10 - <i>Postage 50¢ extra</i> \$2.00 each
SOUVENIR TEASPOONS <i>Sugar Spoons, Fluted Spoons, and Cake Forks, Tea Caddie Spoons, Key Rings</i> \$2.50 each
PAPER KNIFE \$2.85 each
CAR STICKERS \$0.50 each
<i>(Package and Post of each of above 80¢ each)</i>	

PUBLICATIONS AVAILABLE

Journals (<i>4 Editions</i>) 50¢ each plus postage – set of 4 in N.S.W. 80¢, interstate 90¢.
First Fleet Book \$4.50 – (<i>50¢ pack and post</i>).
Compiling your Family History – \$3.00 (<i>50¢ pack and post</i>).
First Fleet Lists – \$2.00 (<i>50¢ pack and post</i>).
They Came by Road – <i>By Viv Kable (special interest to Kable family)</i> – \$5.00 (<i>50¢ pack and post</i>).

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PLEASE NOTE: Before visiting the F.F.F. rooms during the week 28th, 29th, 30th, and 31st December, please ring the office to see if the rooms are manned, as it is uncertain at this stage.

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REMINISCENCES "A VICE-REGAL HOLD UP"

Memory takes me back to a Summery day in the early 1920's when the present day efficient and readily available NRMA road service lay over distant hills.

Returning from a NSW South Coast camping trip on my Harley-Davidson motor cycle outfit and when some twenty miles south of Nowra I came upon a Rolls-Royce limousine with raised bonnet beside which stood a dejected looking uniformed chauffeur.

He waved me down and as soon as I stopped he was joined by his three passengers one of whom I immediately recognised as the tall and imperial bearded NSW State Governor, Sir Walter Davidson; the others were Lady Davidson and his aide.

The tale of woe was soon unfolded, the car had run out of petrol and the chauffeur had smartly emptied the two cans, holding four gallons, carried for such emergencies, into the tank. But he had neglected to hold back about a quart of petrol with which to prime the vacuum tank which in those days before the advent of engine fuel pumps was the means by which petrol was sucked from the main tank beneath the vehicle and thence fed by gravity to the carburettor.

I forget why it had not been possible to drain the required amount into a tin by unscrewing the drain plug in the tank, possibly and traditionally the Rolls did not carry a tool kit or else a natty uniform was not designed for grovelling in the dust under a car.

Apparently the only traffic to pass them for over an hour had been horse drawn and so could I please go for help. I could do better than that and after producing a pair of very unwashed socks and an equally grubby frying pan from the side-car I soon collected the necessary quart by alternately dipping the socks into the Harley's tank and then squeezing them into the frying pan.

The resultant mixture of petrol, sweat, blue dye and bacon fat gave the car an instant start and with beaming smiles and courtly waves the party took off for a belated arrival at some rural function further south.

For some years afterwards I perused the New Year's Honors list for evidence of recognition of my services to the Crown and of my contribution to petro-chemical technology in the invention of an additive enriched motor spirit; others had been knighted for less but I was doomed to obscurity; at least the "Harley" could have been honored with permission to have "Under Vice-Regal Patronage" emblazoned on its tank.

And it could well be that the well known phrase "Sock it to me" had its genesis and origin that day on a hot and dusty Australian roadside.

BERT E. WESTON
25-10-1982

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RAFFLE RESULTS

Winner of the Raffle for the Sterling Silver Brooch was
Mr. R. Sinclair, of St. Peters with yellow ticket No. D34.

1879 INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITION, SYDNEY

Reprinted with kind permission from the Royal Historical Society

In our February 1982 issue of the "Newsletter" we printed an article by Dorothy Michell on the Great International Exhibition held in Sydney in 1879. On the eve of the hundredth anniversary of the fire that destroyed the magnificent Garden Palace in the Botanic Gardens in September 1882, we have been sent a copy of a wonderful letter that we feel will be of great interest to our members. The letter was written by a fourteen year-old student of Miss Flower's Ladies' School located in a building similar to History House in Macquarie Street, opposite the Garden Palace and not far from the present position of the State Office Block fountain. The girls most certainly had a grandstand view, perhaps the roof top spectators in our illustration are they.

The girl was Ethel Pockley and she was writing to her brother Francis who was a medical student in Edinburgh. The Society is grateful to her granddaughter Mrs. June Read of Killara for sending us a copy of the letter. It is a clear hand and gives a fine eyewitness description of one of the great events of the period.

Sydney Ladies College,
Macquarie Street,
September 22nd, 1882.

My dear old Frank,

I wont forget the date of this letter in a hurry for the poor old Exhibition was burnt down this morning. About a quarter past five we opened our window to look for the comet, and we saw it just over one of the towers. There was no sign of either smoke or flame then, but at a quarter to six we looked out again and could scarcely see the dome for the smoke. Flo sang out that it was on fire, but I thought it was the sun rising behind it. However when I got to the window there sure enough was the smoke in great thick black volumes, and it seemed to come out all round the dome at once and we had scarcely looked a minute when the flames broke out. In an instant it seemed, the whole building was on fire, and I never shall forget the sight. The lead melted and ran in a stream all along the ground and the flames were perfectly awful. You know how near we were to it and Miss Flower was terrified. She made all the other girls dress in case I suppose, this house caught, but as we saw the wind what little there was of it was blowing in the opposite direction we were not very frightened. In about ten minutes the dome fell in with a fearful crash and then the heat was really unbearable and we had to shut the windows. The paint outside the windows all cracked and the windows cracked. The fire engines came up but it was too late and all they could do was to play on the houses round. You could hear crash after crash and the flames seemed to reach enormous heights. The sun rose and was of course quite blood colour with fire and seemed to be spinning round and round. Every now and then through all the smoke and dust and flames we could see the reflection on the sea beyond and it was lovely. Tower after tower fell and when the glass was all burnt and broken we could see the flames inside and the statue of the Queen on the fountain stood such a long time with the flames all round and above it. It blazed for about an hour and a half and now all that remains are skeletons of the four towers (north, south, east and west) and a huge heap of smoking smouldering black rubbish.

Friday evening The firemen have been playing on the remains all day and bit by bit nearly all the front tower has fallen and a good part of the others. It is much clearer, for the smoke and dust have cleared off a bit and it is lovely to see the dear old harbour beyond. We will have our beautiful view back again now, but at what a loss! You know numbers of people had their offices in the building and Mr. Fache said an enormous amount of papers and deeds had been lost besides all the minerals and statues that were inside. There was a flower show there yesterday and all the beautiful plants have been lost. There are dozens of rumours about what time the fire began and how it caught. Some say it was accident, others that one of the discharged clerks (from where I don't know) set it on fire in revenge, others that whoever did it put some combustible stuff all round the building. But I don't believe that anyone could go and deliberately set fire to it, so unless something is proved to the contrary I will say it was an accident. What astonishes me is that such a huge building could have been burnt to the ground as it was without any other place catching. Miss Allison went down, or rather up, Macquarie Street this afternoon and she says that several of the houses are all blistered in from the heat. They must have been terrified at Government House for that end of the building is very close to the stables. I can tell you we thought it was all up with us this morning when first it caught. You can't imagine the feeling of seeing this one sheet of flame a few yards or not much more right in front of us. I think we can never be thankful enough that we in this house are all safe for I think there was a good deal of danger.

Papa and Norman had been to Newcastle and as the steamer came in about that time we thought they would have seen it but they did not get in till it was all over so they only just heard of it and he came up to see if we were all right. He said he almost expected to find us all evacuated. It has been an awfully hot day and of course the fire has made it much worse. Now at night we can see flames here and there that we could not see in the daylight and they seem to be principally down by Government House stables. Wont the water and the ruins look lovely in the moonlight tonight, but unless it gets cooler here I am afraid we wont enjoy it properly for the heat now is intense. It seems just as if you could not get a breath of cool air no matter how much you try. I am nearly choked. The poor old Garden Palace was burnt down just three years and five days after it was opened, that you know was the 17th September 1879. Our holidays being tomorrow, we are going up by the 9.45 train and after running up and down stairs for an hour packing I don't feel particularly cool or inclined for anything but a bath. Don't you think it too bad our boxes are kept down stairs and we have to carry all our things up and down three flights of stairs when we pack and unpack