



# Founders

NEWSLETTER OF FELLOWSHIP OF FIRST FLEETERS

**PATRON:** His Excellency the Honourable Gordon Samuels, AC, Governor of New South Wales

## President's report

From all accounts the new look Newsletter has been widely acclaimed by members. The Executive was heartened by the letters of congratulations from members with comments on the quality, style and content of *Founders*.

Belated congratulations to member Olive Mulholland #1545 FF Nash/Haynes on her Australia Day award of the OAM. Olive, who resides in Canberra, received the award for service to the community through welfare organisations of the Catholic Church. Her sister, Betty McAlister of Goulburn is also a keen member of the Fellowship.

The Green Hills Burial Ground FF plaque ceremony held on Sunday, 7 March last, was an unqualified success. Our thanks to Doug Oakes, who liaised with the Hawkesbury Historical Society, for the Fellowship's recognition of this first burial ground in Windsor. It was a privilege for me, on your behalf, to not only help raise the Queen Ann Jack off the monument, but also to plant a tree in honour of First Fleeters.

Among the many visitors to First Fleet House recently were the Hon Max Evans from Western Australia and Dr Ted Inett and his wife Glenda. Max, a keen First Fleeter, is Minister for Finance and Racing in the W.A. Parliament and hopes to gather some members of the Fellowship together sometime in the near future. I gave Max a list of our Western Australian members for a get-together to be announced later. It would be of great advantage 'PR-wise' to have a Chapter of the Fellowship in the West. We, all of us, have something intrinsically common in our heritage, which should

bind us all together, and meet in fellowship which transcends creed, politics or any other barrier which would fracture our unity. Before I step down as your president I would dearly hope that this Fellowship will have Chapters in all States of the Commonwealth.

Dr Ted Inett and his wife Glenda visited us from the U.K. recently. Ted is a kinsman of Ann Inett, convict, First Fleet, who had two children from Phillip Gidley King. Ted has investigated his family tree and was intrigued by his family connections to our nation. Though not a First Fleeter he understood our inherent pride that our forebears had settled this nation. He and his wife came with me to the ceremony at Windsor Green Hills Burial Ground, and in his letter, thanking the Fellowship for hospitality during his stay, expressed sentiments of amazement that we, in the Fellowship, record the deeds of those who were exiled from their native land to start a new life in a new land. Contrary to the opinion of some, most of these transportees indeed made a new life in a new land.

So, having said this, would you believe that at the opening at the 'Museum of Sydney on the Site of First Government House,' (what a mouthful!!) for the exhibition 'Flesh and Blood: A Sydney Story 1788-1988', December last one of the guest speakers said 'that the arrival of the British in Australia was the greatest tragedy that could have fallen this country'. The speech was recorded in the Weekend Australian and went on to record that it was met with loud sycophantic cheers!!! The reporter remarked subsequently

that 'such sentiments may indeed be an accurate reflection of the museum culture of Australia. A stranglehold which this nation needs to tear very quickly from its neck.'

I am indebted to *The Site Gazette* the newsletter from 'The Friends of the First Government House Site' for this piece of information. For the past decade or so there have been some pseudo-intellectual members of our community who have endeavoured to denigrate the first white settlement of this country. They have no conception whatsoever of the beginnings of our nation. The powers that be, who run this museum under the auspices of the Historic Houses Trust, from our point of view, are certainly suspect as to historical correctness. In spite of all this I am led to believe that the exhibition in question was quite informative. Pity about the opening!

I missed the Tunks annual picnic in March due to a stint in hospital and subsequent recovery. Thanks to Doug Oakes for representing the Fellowship. Joy and I will be away at the end of April. I am making a pilgrimage to Gallipoli where my grandfather is buried.

In Fellowship  
PETER

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# News of Members

## MEMBERSHIP REPORT

FOR PERIOD 26 NOVEMBER 1998 TO  
24 MARCH 1999

We extend a warm welcome to new members joined during this period – eleven adults and one junior.

ESTHER ABRAHAMS + ROSANNA ABRAHAMS: Mr Wayne Robert Trenear.

WILLIAM BROUGHTON: Mrs Mary Throsby Swanson.

PATRICK BYRNE – ANN SMITH: Mr Masaki Liam Adam Pike (jun.).

ANN FORBES: Mr Reginald Sylvester James Tibbett.

HENRY KABLE – SUSANNAH HOLMES: Mrs Deborah Kelly.

PHILIP GIDLEY KING: Mr Charles MacArthur Hardy.

FREDERICK MEREDITH: Mr John Francis Wallis; Mrs Valerie Myers.

BARTHOLOMEW REARDON: Mrs Kathleen Wilson; Mrs Cynthia Ann Walker.

THOMAS SMITH: Mr Donald Kennedy.

WILLIAM TYRRELL + JAMES WILLIAMS: Mr James Henry Cross.

## BIRTHS

Welcome to additional First Fleeters:

THOMAS GEORGE DWYER (F.F. Joseph Hatton), 19 February 1999. Son of John and Patricia Dwyer. Brother for Maddyson. Fourth grandchild of Beverley (#5673) and Leo Dwyer – first grandson.

BILLIE CHIKA ARCH (F.F. Nathaniel Lucas-Olivia Gascoigne), 26 January 1999. To Darryn and Christine a daughter, to Kenneth (#6202) and Maureen a granddaughter. Eighth generation.

HAMISH MILSON BLAIR (F.F. David Kilpack), 12 March 1999. Son of Allison and Michael Blair. Eighth generation.

## DEATHS

Deepest sympathy is extended to the families of the following:

HAZEL LAURA LIEBAU (#934), passed away 12 January 1999. Aged 91. Descendant of First Fleeter William Tunks.

JOHN HEMSLEY ROGERS (#3922), passed away 15 January 1999. Late of Clayfield, Brisbane, and of Currumbin, Queensland. Descendant of Frederick Meredith.

## mail box

### BROUGHTON PAPERS CATALOGUE PROJECT

John Gooch (#4546) wants information to help in compilation of a catalogue of original material (letters, diaries, reports, deeds, certificates, pictorial material etc, covering the period 1788 – 1918 and genealogical research records of any date) relating to William Broughton (First Fleeter and Commissariat Officer, not Bishop Broughton) and his direct

descendants whose surname (at least at birth) was Broughton and the spouses of such people. Acquisition of material is not being sought.

His address is 9 Osmond Street, Wanniasa, ACT 2903.

### EDWARD MILES

Member Karen O'Brien (#6725) 6 Poinciana Street, Caboolture, Qld 4510, would be very happy to make contact with anyone else researching the family of Edward Miles.

### JANE LANGLEY DESCENDANTS

Stories and photos for inclusion in the book are needed now. Cut-off date by middle of this year. Information to Tom Silk, 87 Arabella Street, Longueville 2066, or David Huxley, 5 Lambert Place, Leumeah 2560.

## FFF BIRTH MAKES NEWS

Billie Chika Arch was the first baby born in Victoria on Australia Day and newborn Billie, father Darryn and mother Christine were interviewed on Channel 7 News. Needless to say, Billie was the star of the show! A plus for the News was that Billie arrived on the same day as her ancestors, Nathaniel Lucas and Olivia Gascoigne, arrived with First Fleet in 1788.

Billie's mother Christine came to Australia from Nigeria four years ago, and became an Australian Citizen early last year.

Closing date for  
copy and pictures  
May/June issue  
May 26 1999

OFFICE HOURS  
10.00am to 3.00pm  
Monday to Friday

# what's *on*



## ST ALBANS IS DOWN MEMORY LANE Sunday, 11 April

### YOUR ESCAPE TO THE PAST

There are still vacancies for the trip to St Albans on Sunday, 11 April 1999.

Cost per person: \$35.00 (including two-course lunch, morning tea, guide and coach travel).

Departs Central 8.30am and returns approximately 5.30pm

Also stopping at Cremorne and Pacific Highway, Lane Cove.

Please phone the Office on 9360 3788 and send money and bookings to First Fleet House.

## CHAPTER MEETINGS

### HUNTER VALLEY

Third Saturday of each month

### NORTH COAST

11 April, 6 June

### NORTHERN RIVERS

Third Sunday of May

## DAYTIME AUXILIARY ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The fifteenth Annual Meeting of the Daytime Auxiliary Committee was held at First Fleet House on Wednesday 17 March 1999.

The Convenor gave a report on the numerous activities the committee held during the year:

- ▶ the Wentworth Adventure in May;
- ▶ the trip to Berrima and Joadja Creek ghost town in June;
- ▶ the Soup and Damper Day in July at First Fleet House;
- ▶ the trip to Sydney Airport in September;
- ▶ the trip to Brisbane Waters in October; and
- ▶ the Australia Day luncheon at Cello's in the NSW Masonic Club on Saturday 29 January 1999.

The committee made donations totalling \$842.00 to the Fellowship during the year.

Trips are to be held to visit the Sydney Morning Herald building at Chullora and the 2000 Olympic site this year.

## FIRST FLEETERS FLIGHT TO EDEN

A NATURAL PARADISE  
6 MAY – 21 MAY 1999

There are still vacancies for the trip to this very desirable setting

Leaving CENTRAL STATION,  
Eddy Avenue, Bay 4 at 8.00am

Also from SUTHERLAND (Flora Street),  
opposite PO near taxi rank at 8.30am

The cost of the trip, as previously advertised, is a reasonable \$404 and a \$50 deposit is required to make a firm booking.

The final payment must be made by end of April to First Fleet House 105 Cathedral St, Woolloomooloo NSW 2011

## TOUR OF FAIRFAX PRINTERS – CHULLORA

WEDNESDAY, 8 SEPTEMBER

Afterwards a tour of Olympic Complex  
Homebush

Approx. cost \$20 (coach tour)

MORE DETAILS LATER

The incoming committee is as follows:  
Convenor/Minutes Secretary:

Douglas Oakes

Treasurer:

Bonny Savill

Weekend Functions Organiser:

Joy Pankhurst

Weekday Functions Organiser:

Phyllis Selby

The members expressed thanks to retiring treasurer Joyce Rixon for her efforts over the years that she was in office.

After lunch Julie Dawson from the Ryde Historical Society gave a talk on the historical St Anne's Church, Ryde, and a short biography of the First Fleeters buried in the church cemetery and their contribution to the Ryde area.

The First Fleeters known to be buried at St Anne's Cemetery are: John Small, James Bradley, Edward Goodin, Joseph Hatton and Richard Hawkes. Memorial plaques have been placed on the tombstones of John Small, James Bradley and Edward Goodin with a Bicentennial plaque on the gateway at the ground's entrance.

### DOUGLAS OAKES

Convenor Daytime Auxiliary Committee

# dedication service

## at GREEN HILLS BURIAL GROUNDS



**d**espite inclement weather a large crowd was in attendance on Sunday, 7 March 1999, at the Green Hills Burial Grounds, Windsor, for the dedication of a Fellowship of First Fleeters commemorative plaque on the memorial plinth in the Burial Grounds. The commemorative plaque was in memory of First Fleeters who are thought buried in or near this place.

The service was a joint venture between the Fellowship of First Fleeters, Hawkesbury Historical Society, the Hawkesbury-Nepean Catchment Management Trust and the Hawkesbury City Council.

The service commenced with the Australian Colonial Marine Enactment Group marching on to the grounds and forming a guard of honour at each corner of the plinth.

Dr Rex Stubbs, President of the Hawkesbury Historical Society, then welcomed everybody to the service, our President, Peter Christian, responded.

Noted local historian John Miller then gave a history of the Burial Grounds and thanked the Fellowship for its acceptance of the invitation to have the commemorative plaque installed on the Historical Society's plinth.

Kerry Bartlett MP, Federal Member for Macquarie, then spoke on behalf of himself and the Hon Kevin Rozzoli MP, State Member for Hawkesbury. Mr Bartlett congratulated the Hawkesbury Historical Society and the Fellowship of First Fleeters for this combined effort.

Mr Bartlett and Mr Rozzoli with Councillor Rex Stubbs, Mayor of the City of Hawkesbury, and Fellowship of First Fleeters President Peter Christian then removed the Queen Anne flag that was covering the plaque.

When the flag was lifted the Enactment Group presented arms. Father Michael O'Callaghan, President of the Hawkesbury Ministers' Association, then gave the dedication prayer.

The Australian Colonial Marine Enactment Group then marched to a clear area and fired three salutes to the First Fleeters being honoured that day.

The service was completed with the two members of Parliament, the Mayor of Hawkesbury, and the President of the First Fleeters, planting trees in the area. This service being conducted by the Hawkesbury-Nepean Catchment Management Trust. The trust has had a number of trees planted in the Burial Grounds.



This is the twenty-first commemorative plaque the Fellowship has had installed in areas that First Fleeters are recorded as being buried in without the specific site been known or any memorial stone.



## HISTORY OF THE GREEN HILLS BURIAL GROUND

The Burial Ground was established before Governor Lachlan Macquarie designated the five Macquarie Towns of Windsor, Pitt Town, Richmond, Wilberforce and Castlereagh in 1810. The first consecrated burial site was established on the site of St Matthew's Anglican Church, Windsor. The long lost site is located on a patch of undeveloped land behind Windsor's Jolly Frog Hotel. Many of the site's burials were convicts.

Former Windsor and Richmond Gazette editor J.C.L. Fitzpatrick discussed the last recorded burial at Green Hills in 1834 in his book 'The Good Old Days', compiled in 1900 from the newspaper columns.

He witnessed the hanging of 'Barley, the highwaymen', for robbery on the Pitt Town Road in 1834, and said the body was interred in the cemetery's condemned quarter at the back of Colreavy's premises on Crowley's paddock. A painting by an unknown artist of the 1816 flood, a copy of which is in the Hawkesbury Museum, gave the society its first clue on the burial site.

The astronomer, John Tebbutt, identified the site in 1912.

Probably the most famous person believed to be buried in the rediscovered burial ground was Philip Cunningham, an Irish political prisoner who led the Vinegar Hill uprising at Castle Hill

on 5 March 1804. He was most likely buried in the graveyard's condemned quarter after being hanged from the stairs of the Government Store without a trial.

Early burials confirmed at the site of free and emancipated people, are William Green (carpenter) and John Chapman Morris (settler). Both died when drowned in April in the 1806 flood. John Pilot Rickerby died 20 July 1806 aged 5 years, an Aboriginal child rescued and adopted by Thomas Rickerby.

Other people believed buried on the site are:

- 1802 Edward Whitton, First Fleeter, and 1806 Ann Slater (wife of Edward Whitton).
- 1809 Sarah Woolley Mason (wife of Wm Mason).  
8 October, daughter of A. Bell, Commandant at the settlement of Hawkesbury.
- 1810 25 March, Roger Twyfield, aged 5 weeks.  
12 May, John Gilesy, aged 45 years.  
4 June, John Wainwright, aged 2 months.  
7 October, Rosetta Stabler, aged 43 years.

**DOUGLAS OAKES**  
Convener Plaques Committee

## What did YOU do on Australia Day 1999?

I hope you dressed in colonial costume as a way of honouring your First Fleet ancestor. It is important we keep the memory of the first settlement alive regardless of whether people see it as a colonial invasion or an inevitable part of modern imperial history.

Some people would prefer to celebrate a more auspicious beginning for Australia than a humble convict settlement.

These people would prefer our national day of celebration to be 1 January 1901, the date of our Federation as a nation. It is after all, a such less traumatic date. But to allow our national day to be transferred to this date negates one hundred and twelve years of our history and must be resisted.

Such a move would deny:

- ▶ the wise and humane leadership of Governor Arthur Phillip and the contribution of hard labour by the convicts and marines;
- ▶ the hardships endured by all the pioneers and their contribution to our culture of initiative, mateship, and the idea of a fair go for the underdog;
- ▶ the fight for civil rights by the emancipists and the humanitarian approach of Governor Lachlan Macquarie
- ▶ the fight for religious freedom;
- ▶ the fight for free education;
- ▶ the exploration of the country and the growth of new settlements;
- ▶ the gradual development of self-government;
- ▶ the growth of our primary industries;

- ▶ the population explosion and political changes that came with the goldrushes;
- ▶ the earliest signs of larrikin/heroism of our soldiers in the Boer War;
- ▶ the early prowess of our cricketers;
- ▶ the influence of our egalitarian attitude on industrial relations and social security provisions.

No, we can't rewrite our history.

Nor should we be selective and try to hide our skeletons in the cupboard. We need to acknowledge the injustices and cruelty of the convict system and its adverse effect on the original inhabitants. We need to move from recrimination to reconciliation, if we want to keep 26 January as our national day and 'The Day We Celebrate'.

CORALIE GREEN

Archivist



## Memories are made of this ...

Many thanks for the latest Newsletter (Vol 30 No 1) and congratulations, it is very smart and professional.

However it unleashed a flood of memories for me. I first started working on the Newsletter in 1970/71 when it was printed on an old Roneo machine with very poor quality paper. At this time the envelopes were hand addressed. The office was in the Scots Church building at Wynyard and we had no real facilities. We sat on the floor to collate and fold. The next improvement was a Gestetner which was much cleaner to operate and produced a clearer print. An addressograph together with its 'plates' then came into our lives – and what a troublesome machine that was. My husband, Howard, used to do the envelopes whilst I was at the Executive meeting. It was a case of 'all hands at the plough.' Then came an electric stapler. When the Gestetner started to give trouble it was decided to have the job done commercially by Sven, a printer on the same floor of the building. We then acquired a shopping trolley to help ease the load to the nearby Post Office in Grosvenor Street.

There was a small team of helpers and unfortunately the years have taken their toll. I

particularly remember the late Lola Wilkinson who never failed to walk from her home in Macquarie Street down to the office, although in her nineties; the late Barbara Townsend who came in from Eastern Creek about 8 o'clock in the morning and did a wonderful job of printing and sorting. We also had help from Betty Stephenson an Associate Friend – not a First Fleeter, but one who wished she was! What wonderful people they were – true First Fleeters!

On acquiring First Fleet House things became much easier even though membership had grown considerably. Quality improved in leaps and bounds until we now have this latest wonderful production.

The Fellowship of First Fleeters has been a large and important portion of my life and it is good to see new and younger faces at the Australia Day luncheon, but also a great pleasure to see a few of the original Newsletter team – Joan Ross, Joan Cox, Doug Oakes, to name a few – still in attendance.

Long may the Newsletter thrive!

With kind regards, sincerely  
Beryl Lewis (#709)



# Who are we?

FINAL PART OF THE SERIES ORIGINALLY BROADCAST  
OVER 2CBA FM BY PRESIDENT PETER CHRISTIAN

There are so many stories of success in this new Colony, pioneered by both bonded and free, it would take many many pages to go through the history of these men and women of the First Fleet. I would commend to you a volume called the Founders of Australia written by Dr Mollie Gillen AM, a life member of the Fellowship of First Fleeters. This book contains a biography of each person who embarked on the Fleet or born during the voyage and who is known to have reached Sydney Cove on 26 January 1788.

I could tell you if time allowed of pioneers such as Ann Forbes, Thomas Arndell, Andrew Fishburn, John Herbert and Deborah Ellem, Thomas Acres, Robert Forrester, Thomas Eccles, Augustus Alt, Owen Cavenough, Eleanor Frazer, William Broughton, Nathaniel Lucas, Henrietta Langley, John Gowen, Eleanor Wainwright, James Bloodworth – builder of First Government House – and many many more, but unfortunately time does not permit. Their deeds are indelibly etched into the history of our nation from its very birth pangs. Their descendants have enriched our heritage and we remember them with pride.

Contrary to opinion, that the Fleet was made up entirely of Anglo-Celtic people is wrong. We now know for instance that there were at least fifteen West Indians and Negroes, Dutch, French, Portuguese, Swedes and one Indian from Bengal. At least fourteen Jewish folk mostly convicts also on the Fleet. It is of interest that these Jewish people were mostly Sephardim. If I could put you in the picture – during the Diaspora or the dispersion of the Jewish people from Israel one tribe moved across the North African continent and settled in Spain. During the inquisition they scattered north to Holland, France and England. Most of those of Jewish faith who were transported to Botany Bay were descendants of Sephardim Jews. Some of us in the Fellowship have this blood in our veins. John Harris, for instance, arrived on the First Fleet having had a death sentence reduced to transportation for 14 years. He prospered in the Colony, married, only

to leave for England giving his children into the care of his friend James Larra, a Second Fleet convict, believed to have been his cousin. One of his descendants was Richard Gardiner Casey a Governor-General of our Commonwealth. We know that there were thirty-three Scottish First Fleeters, and of these only one a convict, John Ramsay, the rest being marines and seamen. Although one, William Balmain, was a surgeon and John Hunter a captain in the Fleet became second Governor of NSW. Yes, and the Welsh weren't left out – nine in number including four convicts, and there were 141 First Fleeters known to have been born in Ireland mostly convicts convicted in England.

## THEIR DESCENDANTS HAVE ENRICHED OUR HERITAGE AND WE REMEMBER THEM WITH PRIDE

So that is the story of some of the people who arrived in such inauspicious circumstances in Sydney Cove on that day 26 January 1788. For generations the shame of having a convict forbear was well hidden among the citizens of this land until the 1950s when we dusted the skeletons out of the cupboards and found that they weren't so bad after all. The majority made a new life, a new beginning and brought their children, those currency lads and lasses, into the fear and nurture of the Lord.

In the words of Dame Mary Gilmore:  
'I am old Botany Bay, stiff in the joints little to say  
I am he who paved the way that you may walk at your ease today  
I was the conscript sent to hell to make the desert the living well  
I bore the heat I blazed the track – furrowed and bloody upon my back  
I split the rock  
I felled the tree  
The nation was because of me.'

Finally, I would like to tell you about the unique organisation called the Fellowship of First Fleeters.

His Excellency the Honourable Gordon Samuels, AC, Governor of New South Wales is our Patron.

It was formed in 1968 by John Lavett, its first President, amid much media attention. The 1960s was a period when many Australians were eager to find their roots, and what a Pandora's box was opened up. For generations convict ancestry was blotted out, but today we the descendants of both bonded and free who arrived in Port Jackson on 26 January 1788 recognise the part they played in pioneering our nation.

The Fellowship has over the past twenty-nine years processed nearly 7,000 members and today still receives 100 new members annually. A conservative estimate is that there are over one million descendants of First Fleeters not only in Australia but scattered in the four corners of the globe.

What are our aims? Primarily we endeavour to collate the history of First Fleeters and their descendants to ensure that 26 January each year is celebrated in a fitting manner as the foundation of our nation. We recognise H.M. Queen Elizabeth as our head of State, in the knowledge that only by the will of the Australian people a change in our constitution can be made, and we will abide by that change. We encourage our members to ensure our heritage is passed on to descendants. We welcome newcomers to our land and hold out the hand of friendship to all who wish to make Australia their home. In our records we note that this generation of First Fleet descendants is becoming a microcosm of ethnic Australia. In 1988 the Fellowship of First Fleeters incorporated in all States and Territories of the Commonwealth. We have set up chapters in various parts of NSW, ACT, and have a nucleus in Tasmania. Our Newsletter is sent to not only the mainland, but many countries – our membership mainly contained in each State of Australia is scattered far and wide.

In 1988 we purchased a property in Woolloomooloo, on land that was an original grant to John Palmer First Fleeter.

Our Daytime Auxiliary organises tours, and day excursions to places of historical interest and invites guest

*continued overleaf*

speakers on subjects of historical or topical interest.

In 1975 the Fellowship undertook to seek out and identify the last resting place of a First Fleeter. Up till now we have placed plaques on the graves of some 80 First Fleeters with due ceremony. The Queen Ann Jack (that is the flag first raised at Sydney Cove) covers the tombstone, a eulogy is given, usually by a descendant and if possible a minister of religion gives a prayer.

Our centenary year in 1988 was indeed a landmark in the history of the Fellowship. Some 500 members were at

a dinner in Sydney addressed by the Prime Minister of Australia – the world press were angling for stories on Australia's first European arrivals – as President at that time I was somewhat overwhelmed by the attention we were receiving. Membership of the Fellowship is based on proven descent from a First Fleeter. Whilst our membership committee welcomes your inquiries it does not undertake genealogical research.

The motto of the Fellowship is:  
*'To live on in the hearts and minds of descendants is never to die.'*

Sources for these articles have been taken from:

*The Founders of Australia* by Dr Mollie Gillen AM

*Sydney Cove 1788* by John Cobley

John Cobley – *Sydney Cove 1791-1795*

*Australia the first 12 years* by Peter Taylor  
*1788 The people of the First Fleet* by Don Chapman.

Fellowship of First Fleeters Archives  
*Where First Fleeters Lie* by Rod Best and Joyce Cowell

*Arthur Phillip* by Thea Stanley Hughes  
Historical Records of NSW Vol I

## Anthony Rope

### A SEARCH FOR HIS ANCESTORS

**d**on't get too excited as what I have found is based on assumption and not fact but I have not given up. I have spent a lot of time in the Chelmsford Public Records Office, the town where Anthony Rope was convicted, and the only mention of Anthony Rope was in the local paper listing him as convicted of burglary and coming from Rochford in Essex.

Anthony was not a common name for that time and there were no records of any type listing the name 'Rope' for the whole of Essex. I also checked other counties close by and the only 'Rope' I came across was an Antonius Rope from Norfolk, more about him later.

Having exhausted the P.R.O. records I checked the local telephone directory and telephoned the only 'Rope' in this area. Having established I was not selling double glazing the Mr Rope I spoke to was more than happy to chat. As a result of this conversation I was given another 'Rope' to contact in Norfolk who has been researching the family of 'Rope'. There are Ropes in New Zealand and U.S.A.

He can trace the Rope family back to the Vikings, the 'Northmen' who later became known as the 'Normans' who invaded Northern France about 800 AD. There were three Ropes among those who sailed with William the Conqueror to invade England in 1066.

As a reward they were given land in Cheshire but something happened in about 1500 and they seemed to have lost their land and fortune and moved on. Some moved to Norfolk and became farmers; A Robertus Rope married Suzanne Reddle at Surlingham (Norfolk) on 16 April 1705, they had a son Antonius who was baptised on 30 March 1712 at Rockland St. Mary.

We think that Antonius Rope could have been Anthony's father as the dates fit. Another reason we think this is so is that Antonius had a brother Robert and Robert was a common family name. Anthony and Elizabeth's first born son was Robert.

As I have said, we have assumed all this as Mr Rope in

Norfolk can follow the line for the rest of the family except Antonius who seems to have left Rockwell St. Mary and disappeared. Also with the local dialects which were very strong (they still are!).

Rockland said with a Norfolk accent to someone with an Essex accent could have sounded like 'Rochford', hence Anthony recorded as being born in 'Rochford'.

If Anthony was born in Norfolk he could have been drawn to Elizabeth as they would have had similar accents.

The present Mr Rope in Norfolk is still searching for information on Antonius Rope and is putting together the Family Tree of which he will send me a copy when completed next year. If he finds any further information he will pass it to me and I am still searching.

We are looking for proof of a link, watch this space for further developments.

As an aside, another suggestion from a colleague of mine from the Essex Family History Society was that the name was not 'Rope' but 'Rolf'. The reason he came up with this idea is that I mentioned the unusual blood group that ran through the family. 'Rolf' was the man who married Pocahontas (wouldn't it be nice to think that we are related to her!) and they lived in Essex and had one son. I think the Mr Rope from Norfolk is our best bet, however.

Whilst on the subject on 'blood groups' I have contacted a friend of mine who is looking into how blood groups relate to the different races. I know from living in Hong Kong that the Chinese common blood group was different to ours, I think they were mostly A, AB etc.

Any comments on the above are welcome.

My line is through John Rope and Sarah Frost. William Frost married his cousin Mary Ann Rope daughter of John Rope and Maria Field.

Jan Ward

8 Anglesea Road, Wivenhoe. Essex CO7 9JR. U.K.

Fax 44 01206 822143

Opinions expressed herein are those of the article authors and correspondents and do not necessarily reflect the policy or views of the Fellowship of First Fleeters, nor the views of the Editor. The Editor reserves the right to omit any material considered unsuitable for publication. Space limitations may result in some material being held over to another issue. RON MAGUIRE, Hon. Editor

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