



Founders

NEWSLETTER OF FELLOWSHIP OF FIRST FLEETERS

'To live on in the hearts and minds of Descendants is never to die!'

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

President's report

No further news on the proposed new site of the Bonds of Friendship! I hope to have some news in the next issue. The bonds of Friendship is a chain with only two links, locked so tightly together it is inseparable. Unveiled in 1980 at Circular Quay, it was a joint project as to funding and positioning between Westpac, the Sydney City Council and the Fellowship of First Fleeters. The monument, of polished bronze, is 1.5m x 1m and complements the same monument at Sally Port, Portsmouth, unveiled by the Queen in 1979, differing only by the fact that the British counterpart is of unpolished bronze. The symbolism is apparent to us all – for the convicts, the old ways were left behind and they sailed into a new future, a new way of life. I very much doubt whether the City Fathers understand at all, the symbolism, and, indeed, the significance of the Bonds of Friendship. Political correctness???

Our Daytime Auxiliary Soup and Damper Day, 14 July last, from all reports was very successful. It was unfortunate that due to illness former President Beryl Lewis was unable to be guest speaker.

Thank you John Kemsley #2526 re suggestion that our motto reappear on the front page of *Founders*. The Executive has taken this matter up with our hard-working editor.

In July I spoke to the newly formed Chatswood Seniors Club. This year I have spread the story of our pioneers to well over 1,000 people.

Nice to hear from our former President James Donohoe. James has been in ill-health for some time and we wish him a speedy recovery in the near future. We are also indebted to him for the donation of microfiches from three of his books.

John and Judy Minehan did a wonderful job at a heritage fair organised by the Botany Bay Family History Group by manning a stall on behalf of the Fellowship.

Our Acting Treasurer, Cec Thompson, is back on deck after a stint in hospital. Cec has done a marvellous job whilst Treasurer Roy Morris is overseas.

I was approached recently by the Department of Juvenile Justice to put forward a suitable name for a new complex being built at Gosford. The most obvious name was that of Matthew James Everingham, who at the age of 14 or 15, stood in the dock at Old Bailey pleading guilty for 'unlawfully by false pretences defrauding Samuel Shepherd Esq of good value 10s'. His only utterance in his defence was 'I was in great distress'. Matthew was sentenced to seven years transportation.

On behalf of the Executive and members I would like to thank the 'Anonymous Donor' of the new and much easier to manage fax machine. Our fax line is 9360 3988.

The 'Project 2000' committee from the Order of Australia Association requires over 2000 books in new or near mint condition, suitable for ages four years to eleven years, about Australia or by Australian authors for distribution to various schools in the United Kingdom. If any member can help in this regard I will see that the books are directed in the right channel.

To all members another reminder about subs now due for 1999 – 2000.

In Fellowship
PETER

**'...WHO AT THE AGE OF 14 OR 15
STOOD IN THE DOCK AT
OLD BAILEY PLEADING GUILTY ...
MATTHEW WAS SENTENCED TO
SEVEN YEARS TRANSPORTATION'**

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News of Members

MEMBERSHIP REPORT

FOR PERIOD 27 MAY 1999 TO JULY 1999

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

THOMAS ARNDELL: Mrs Ailsie Ann Glasson; Miss Glasson.

JAMES BRADLEY: Mr Victor John Smith.

JOHN GOWEN: Mr Cooper Adam Bartlett (jun.).

HENRY KABLE – SUSANNAH HOLMES: Mrs Dorothy Rosalind Watson.

SAMUEL PIGGOTT: Mr Robin John Carrall.

THOMAS SMITH – ANN COLPITTS: Mr Mark Allen Troy.

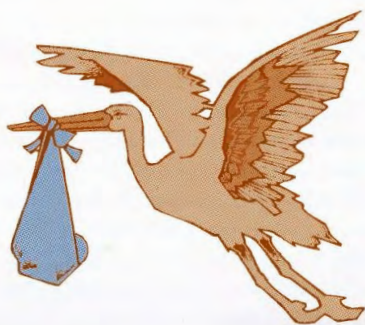
THOMAS WILLIAMS: Mrs Shirley McLeod.

IRIS ROSE MILLER (#1648), died 11 April 1999. Aged 91 years. Descendant of First Fleeters Peter Hibbs – Matthew Everingham.

BIRTHS

Welcome to additional First Fleeters:

WILLIAM STUART BOOTH and ERIN LYNETTE MILLAR (F.F. Peter Hibbs – Matthew Everingham). Great-grandchildren of Clifford and Dorothy (#3161) Booth. Seventh generation.



DEATHS

Deepest sympathy is extended to the families of the following:

JOHN KITCHENER CREES (#3917), passed away 29 May 1999. Descendant of First Fleeters David Collins – Ann Yeates.

BRADY JAMES AUSTIN DAWSON (F.F. John Cross – Mary Davison (Lady Juliana 1790)), 31 May 1999, at North Shore Private Hospital, a son to Martin and Kathryn and a brother for four-year-old Rhianna. A grandson to Leonard (#2437) and Lola Murray and to Emma and the late Austin Dawson. Seventh generation.

SYDNEY DAYTIME AUXILIARY COMMITTEE

Over 30 members and friends attended the Soup and Damper day on Wednesday 14 July at First Fleet House, Woolloomooloo.

A number of apologies were received due to the inclement weather. Mrs Beryl Lewis who was to be the guest speaker was not well and had to send her apologies.

After welcoming those in attendance Phyllis Selby and Joy Pankhurst gave details of future events. Details of these are featured on page 3.

Please note in your diary **Saturday 22 January, 2000 – Australia Day Lunch** at Masonic Club, Castlereagh Street, Sydney. Full booking details later.

After lunch, I spoke on the history of the Fellowship as I am privileged to be a Foundation

member. I remember quite vividly the first meeting at the AMP Society Auditorium, Circular Quay, on Wednesday 27 March, 1968. Little did I know the success the Fellowship would have and the number of members that it would attract. Incidentally at the June 1999 Executive meeting membership number 6782 was approved.

Fellow Foundation member Joan Ross was also at our Soup and Damper Day and we have had continuous contact and involvement with the Fellowship since that first meeting. Other long-term members who attended were also very helpful in aiding my talk.

After speaking and answering questions for nearly an hour the meeting was officially closed.

Once again I thank Phyllis Selby and Bonney Savill for organising the day as well as those who helped prepare lunch and clean up afterwards.

DOUGLAS OAKES

Convenor Daytime Auxiliary Committee.

GET WELL SOON ZONA

Forever chasing up family tree information, Zona Maguire, wife of Founders editor Ron, unfortunately fell down steps at the Genealogical Society. With her knee-cap requiring surgery, Zona hopes to be back on deck in six weeks.

Closing date for copy and pictures
September/
October issue
September 19

OFFICE HOURS
10.00am to 3.00pm
Monday to Friday

what's *on*

ROUSE HILL ESTATE & MOUNT TOMAH BOTANIC GARDENS

Sunday 14 November

Join us for a great spring day with our morning at the Historic Houses Trust property at Rouse Hill and the afternoon at Mount Tomah Gardens. Rouse Hill Estate reveals the enterprise of Richard and Elizabeth Rouse who established it in 1813. Through 180 years of occupancy, the estate chronicles the fortunes and failings of one family and gives an insight into Australia's history. Our guided tour will enable us to explore the 13 hectares of this historic rural property!

Our afternoon sees us travel through Windsor, Richmond and Kurrajong on our way to Mount Tomah Botanic Gardens. The gardens on the peak of the mountain are the cool annexe of The Royal Botanic Gardens and having opened in 1987 are now well established. While our BBQ lunch is being prepared (scotch fillet steaks, salads and dessert), a Ranger will guide us through the extensive gardens. If you prefer, simply enjoy the views from the visitors' centre. The panorama from this point is one of the loveliest in the mountains and on a clear day you really can see forever.

Cost per person \$36.00 including morning tea, lunch, admissions and luxury transport.

Departs Central 8.30am and returns approx. 5.30pm. Lane Cove 8.45am.

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
10 October
Rod and Ruth Holmes
(02) 6657 2765

NORTHERN RIVERS
Third Sunday of September

THE HOLIDAY FOR 2000

to

LORNE CHALET GUEST HOUSE
ON GREAT OCEAN ROAD

TUESDAY 21 MARCH –
28 MARCH 2000

The tour leaves from Spencer Street Station,
Melbourne, at 1.00pm.

BOOK YOUR OWN TRAIN SEAT

Perhaps you would like to arrive early in
Melbourne and see the sights.

Cost ex Melbourne (+ \$4 Booking Fee)

\$599 twin share

\$680 single

\$520 triple

Deposit of \$50.00

required at time of booking
preferably by end of November 1999.

TOUR OF FAIRFAX PRINTERS – CHULLORA

WEDNESDAY, 8 SEPTEMBER

Lunch at Fairfax Canteen

Afterwards a tour of Olympic Complex
Homebush

Pick up at Central Railway 10.00am

Strathfield Station 10.30am

Approx. cost \$20 (coach tour)

Please phone the Office on 9360 3788
for further details.

NAME BARS FELLOWSHIP OF FIRST FLEETERS (with F.F.F. logo)

Cost:

Member's name Plus	
One First Fleeter Name	\$10.00
Two First Fleeter Names	\$11.00
(\$1.00 for each First Fleeter name)	
Spouse Name Bar with	
just the one name	\$9.00
Member's badge	\$5.00

Family Reunions



THE ANNUAL HIBBS FAMILY REUNION

Sunday 12 September 1999 from 9.00am

Community Hall, Spencer, NSW
1km past the Spencer Public School along the Wiseman's Ferry Road. Peter Kenney Hibbs was a sailor aboard HMS Sirius of the 1788 First Fleet who settled here and married Second Fleet Convict Mary Pardoe.

Surnames associated with the Hibbs family are:
Everingham (also of the First Fleet on Scarborough)
Byrne, Izzard, Toomey, Webber, Cox and Kelly. (There are many more names but far too many to reproduce here.)

Tea, coffee & hot water will be supplied, but please bring along a picnic lunch, folding table, chairs, rugs, cushions etc, plus any family photographs or documentation to be put on display at the reunion.

If you have any questions or queries, please feel free to contact the following people:

Lindy Carrall, (02) 4937-4346 Betty Warn (02) 4294-2735 Elaine Young (02) 9874-6272 Elgine Kelly (02) 9587-0697 or Roy Cox 0418-270-963 (mobile number).

In event of inclement weather, the Community Hall is available for us to shelter in. Do please come along and bring your family, this reunion is also open to those interested in Family or Early Australian History.

As the Fellowship of First Fleeters so rightly puts it:
'To Live on in the hearts and minds of descendants is never to die'

Please come and help us celebrate this important event!

THE NASH FAMILY REUNION

Saturday 9 October 1999 from 11.00am

at the 'WREN' GROUND
Nurragingy, Knox Road, Doonside

Contact numbers for the reunion are:
Mr Alan Simpson (02) 4773 9324
Mrs Lydia Hope (02) 9831 2279

DESCENDANTS OF JAMES BLOODWORTH, SARAH BELAMY AND JAMES LEE REUNION

Rylstone
9 and 10 October 1999

Main event
DINNER: Saturday, 9 October, Bridge Restaurant
6.00pm.
(Hotel formerly owned by John Brown) Louee Street

Sunday, 10th 10.00am-3.30pm
Memorial Hall. Picnic lunch B.Y.O.
(Box lunch may be ordered locally; \$10.00)
Bring your photos and stories. Commemorative
glassware and F.F. Ships Posters for sale.
Must be ordered by 1 September.

Contact Alice Clarke, Tel. (02) 9428 4530.
PO Box 328, Lane Cove 1595

JOHN and MARY SMALL DESCENDANTS ASSOCIATION

The Small Family Association is making plans for its Family Reunion to be held at historic St. Anne's, Ryde, on Sunday, 10 October, 1999. This will be the family's 29th anniversary of the first Family Reunion held in 1971.

The Association will be celebrating the 200th anniversary of John and Mary's fifth child Thomas's birthday on 7 July, 1799.

Thomas was born at Kissing Point and baptised at St. Philip's, Sydney, on 15 February 1800. He married Priscilla (Squire) Devlin on 17 December 1821. Priscilla was the daughter of First Fleeter James Squire. She was previously married to Arthur Devlin.

Priscilla had five children by Arthur Devlin and eight more with Thomas Small.

Priscilla died in the family home 'Orange Grove', Ryde on 28 June 1862 and Thomas died at the family home on 12 November, 1863. They are buried at St. Anne's Church cemetery. Unfortunately there is no record of the actual burial site.

The Small Family Association is inviting descendants of Arthur and Priscilla Devlin to join them at the reunion. The day starts at 10.00am with an exhibition and a gathering in St. Anne's Memorial Hall, Ryde. After the annual meeting luncheon is served at 12.15pm. The Thanksgiving service to be held at St. Anne's Church commences at 2.30pm. For further information please contact the Family Association's Secretary, Douglas Oakes, on 9428 2806.

ST DAVID'S PARK – HOBART

We have been informed that Alderman Rob Valentine, Lord Mayor of Hobart, is a descendant of First Fleeters Daniel Stanfield and Alice (Harmsworth) Stanfield. Alderman Valentine has been invited to the plaque dedication service on Saturday, 11 September, 1999, for First Fleeters Edward and Susannah (Gough) Garth, John Griffiths and Alice (Harmsworth) Stanfield.

The dedication service is a joint venture by the Fellowship of First Fleeters and The Hobart (1804) First Settlers Association. Freda Gray, President of the First Settlers Association, and her committee are busily organising the service.

Brian Garth, a descendant of Edward and Susannah Garth, from Melbourne will be giving the eulogy for his famous ancestors.

Due to circumstances beyond our control we are unable to arrange a bus tour to Tasmania for the service and a trip around the island. Anyone wishing to come to the service from the mainland please give me a ring on 02 9428 2806 and I may be able to give you further information to join us at St. David's Park, Hobart, on 11 September, 1999.

DOUGLAS OAKES

Convenor Plaques Committee

THE FIRST EMANCIPIST

Last month I was invited to speak to a Class 4 at Glenmore Road Public School, Paddington, on People of the First Fleet as part of their project on the First Fleet. Naturally I began with my own forebear James Bloodworth, who had been convicted of stealing one fighting cock and two hens, for which he received a sentence of seven years transportation. He arrived on Charlotte.

At Sydney Cove, James Bloodworth made the first bricks, built the first Government House and became the first master builder in the Colony after receiving his freedom; the second person to receive 'the greatest reward the Governor was empowered to bestow'.

Immediately hands shot up to know who was the first emancipist?

John Irvine (Irving, alias Anderson, alias Law) was convicted at the Assizes at the Castle at Lincoln, March 1784; for stealing a silver cup from a widow, and ordered to be transported for seven years. His occupation – surgeon.

John Irving was listed as being on Scarborough but his medical skills were recognised and he sailed on Lady Penrhyn as surgeon's mate. At Sydney Cove he was employed as an assistant at the portable hospital. On Sunday 28 February the Governor 'remitted the remainder of the Sentence of Transportation on John Irving in consequence of his unremitted good conduct and is to be considered to be restored to all those rights and privileges ... and is appointed to be an assistant surgeon at Norfolk Island – to Surgeon Considen.'

John Irving was the first person to receive his freedom, and was thought to be 'the best surgeon amongst them.' Collins praised his exemplary conduct which raised him from the situation of a convict to the privileges of a free man. He was bred a surgeon.'

After eighteen months on Norfolk Island he returned to Sydney Cove and took up an appointment at Parramatta where he was granted 30 acres of land, on which he had a good crop of maize. He also saved a woman from snakebite.

John Irving died 3 September 1795 just before Governor Hunter arrived. He did not know he had been appointed an assistant surgeon at fifty pounds a year. It is sad that he did not live to see the son born to him by Ann Marsh (17 January 1796). David Collins said that 'his death was much regretted and his loss would be severely felt.'

The Fellowship would like to hear from anyone who knows what happened to Ann Marsh and her baby son.

ALICE CLARKE

[Ref. John Cobley *Crimes of the First Fleet Convicts and Sydney Cove 1788-1789*]



Arthur Ingham Myers osj

A.I. MYERS WAS VICE-PATRON OF THE FELLOWSHIP OF FIRST FLEETERS, A LONG-TIME MEMBER OF THE SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIAN GENEALOGISTS (SYDNEY), AND A MEMBER OF THE SOCIETY OF GENEALOGISTS, LONDON. HE WAS AN INAUGURAL MEMBER OF THE TOOWOOMBA BRANCH OF THE GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY OF QUEENSLAND. THE SUBJECT OF AUSTRALIA'S EARLY SETTLERS GREATLY INTERESTED A.I. MYERS. AS A FIRST FLEETER HE WAS DESCENDED FROM HENRY KABLE AND SUSSANAH HOLMES. A.I. MYERS WAS MADE A MEMBER OF THE ORDER OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE IN 1981.

'From distant climes, o'er widespread seas we come
Though not with much eclat or beat of drum
True patriots all, for be it understood
We left our country for our country's good'

Attributed to the pickpocket George Barrington, these words were the opening chorus as the curtain rose in old Sydney's first theatre

Today they remind us of our nation's genesis one hundred and ninety two years ago.

From a historical and genealogical point of view no other nation had such a beginning fully recorded from its start in far away England and culminating in the most remarkable voyage of settlement in the history of mankind known to us as the First Fleet.

Our nation's beginning was not like that of other lands that accepted European settlement, albeit reluctantly, with starry eyed adventurers or a faithful band bringing with them their particular brand of Christian faith. Ours was merely the compulsory dumping of the sweepings from English jails and hulks to a remote corner of this earth. Our genesis, therefore, was without parallel in history and the story of it and its people have little of which to be ashamed – rogues some might have been but it is what they did and what they became that matters to us today.

Firstly, they were the products of a time and age where class and privilege ruled and the Law that related more to property rather than people's rights was there to protect the favourites of the moment.

The Enclosures and Industrial revolution had forced crofters, small farmers and cottage workers from their green fields to the overcrowded cities at a time of England's great population explosion.

Conditions existing in these cities have been well depicted by Hogarth, the artist of that era, in his London scenes. There were no poor laws, no welfare organisations and the established Church with its clergy drawn in the main from the upper classes gave little, if any, practical help.

The wrong doer, if he was caught, found he could be convicted by repute and hearsay up to 1835, and as secondary punishment was unknown there was little alternative to the death sentence but transportation.

This latter was not new and in fact had been in vogue since the days of Elizabeth the First. It had a basis of humanitarianism in that it would spare the gallows; was expected to purify British society, not altogether successful; allow the culprit to reform away from his or her old haunts and associates and with servitude over, offer the chance to raise and support their families in respectability.

In commonsense, too, it would ease the labour shortage in the colonies and thwart England's main enemies, France and Spain.

Again looking at Hogarth's sketches of that time one could well say that conditions in the colonies could not have been any worse for many than at home.

And so it had been for almost one hundred and fifty years with transportation to the West Indies and to the American colonies of Virginia, Georgia and the Carolinas, a cold hard fact, which has been swept under the carpet by American historians. However, this phase was to end with the American War of Independence and by 1783 all American ports were closed to the traffic. The jails and hulks of England became overcrowded including among the inmates two hundred and seventy-nine male and fifteen female convicts with endorsement on their convictions for America by the time of the sailing of the Fleet.

The urgent search for another dumping place even included Continental Europe and Africa but it was the American born Joseph Matra, who had been a midshipman on Cook's Endeavour, who suggested to Sir Joseph Banks, his former shipmate, that Botany Bay was a likely spot.

Banks spoke with Lord Sydney at Matra's urging and as a result on 12 November 1786, Captain Arthur Phillip, then aged 48, the son of a German father and English mother, was appointed to command the expedition and first settlement. His selection was queried more particularly by Lord Howe, but by a fortunate circumstance, Sir George Rose, a near neighbour of Phillip at Lyndhurst in England's New Forest, who knew and liked the man and held the purse strings of the Admiralty had his way.

It was indeed a wise choice as Phillip had commonsense, kindness, vision, firmness and sincerity well above the order of the day, all attributes necessary to a founder of a colonial outpost in a difficult appointment.

And so the First Fleet assembled taking on crews, passengers and supplies not in one port but in three, Plymouth, Portsmouth and Woolwich. The Fleet comprised two naval ships, Sirius and Supply, six transports – Alexander, Scarborough, Friendship, Charlotte, Prince of Wales and Lady Penrhyn – all familiar names to First Fleet genealogist – and three storeships; Golden Grove, Fishburn and Borrowdale. The largest was no bigger than the Sydney-Manly ferry.

Into their confined spaces went two hundred and eight marines, including eight bandsmen forty wives, seven hundred and seventy-eight convicts of which seven hundred and thirty-six arrived. (The discrepancy of forty-two, I might add, were not all from deaths on the voyage which were minimal thanks to Phillip's health measures but from escapes and reprieves before sailing). Then there were the crews together with sheep, hogs, goats, puppies, turkeys, geese, ducks, chickens, pigeons, cats and of course at least two rabbits.

The occupations of the convicts, one hundred and sixty-six only of which I have been able to discover, leave little indication of any serious intention by the authorities to select the right people to found a self supporting colony. These one hundred and sixty-six taken from conviction records are recorded as eighty-three labourers, fifty-nine servants, ten

hawkers, nine dressmakers, a pin header, a white smith, an artificial flower maker, a 'poor unhappy woman' and an 'unfortunate girl'.

Prior to embarkation there occurred an event which is one of the reasons I am able to stand before you today. On 31 October 1786 three female convicts, Ann Turner, Elizabeth Powley and Susannah Holmes were taken by coach from Norwich Castle to Plymouth to join Charlotte in the custody of a jailer, John Simpson. Susannah had a six months old baby with her fathered by Henry Kable, her lover, a fellow inmate in the castle prison.

On arrival at Plymouth, Captain Thomas Gilbert of Charlotte in accepting the women refused to take delivery of the baby as he was not on the manifest and handed him back to the jailer despite the hysterical pleadings of the mother.

In a rare show of humanity, Simpson went back ashore not forgetting to stir up public indignation at the dockside in the process and set off for London, three hundred and fifty kilometres away caring for the baby en route. Again in London and followed by a sympathetic crowd to whom he had told the story he went to the home of Lord Sydney requesting audience of his secretary, Evan Nepean, in an endeavour to secure passage for young Henry with his mother. The noisy crowd outside his own door brought Lord Sydney downstairs to inquire the nature of the commotion and on hearing the reason it was said that the great aristocrat was visibly moved. He not only issued authority for the child to accompany the mother but on inquiring the whereabouts of the father, ordered that he too be allowed to accompany the mother and child and that they be permitted to marry, which request had been previously denied them by the Governor of Norwich Castle. On top of that he directed they go in a transport other than Charlotte and Friendship was selected. By 9 November, such was the speed of the action taken; the keeper of Norwich Castle had received the new instructions. Public sympathy for the young couple led to a fund being organised by a Mrs Jackson of Somerset Street, London, to provide comforts for them. Pilfering of part of this gift during the voyage also made history as it led to the first civil law suit in Australia where the Kables obtained judgment against Captain Duncan Sinclair of Alexander on which ship the goods had been consigned.

These incidents led to unusual interest in the Kables by the authorities and the Reverend Richard Johnson who was the pastor to the Fleet. With four other couples, William Parr and Mary McCormack, Simon Burn and Frances Anderson, William Haynes and Hannah Green and William Bryant and Mary Brand, Henry and Susannah were to be married in Australia's first wedding ceremony on Sunday, 10 February 1788.

Phillip appointed Kable Chief Constable of the Colony and he later became a successful businessman with shipping, brewing and ship building interests.

But back again to the Fleet still loading in England. To start a new colony there had to be tools, building materials, clothing and provisions and it would be understandable that there were, for instance, 700 spades, 700 shovels and the like but for what reason there were different numbers in clothing for the ladies defies the imagination such as 589 women's petticoats, 506 women's jackets and 327 pairs of stockings. To prove that the First Fleeters were really not such a vicious lot there were only ten pairs of handcuffs. Also in the cargo, believe it or not, was a piano owned by Surgeon Worgan.

At long last the various ships of the Fleet left their three ports to rendezvous off the Isle of Wight from where it sailed on the thirteenth of May 1787, escorted by HMS Hyena for the Bay of Biscay crossing, out of sight and no doubt out of mind of the majority of the English people.

On the 3rd June it called at Santa Cruz for fresh provisions, it crossed the Equator on 5th July and arrived at Rio de Janeiro on 5th August. Here, the Portuguese Vice-Roy Don Luis de Varconcellos greeted Phillip as an old friend and ally; Phillip at one stage having been seconded to the Portuguese Navy. It was a fortunate circumstance as from this port came aboard our first coffee seeds and plants, cocoa, bananas, guavas, fig trees and bamboo. After a months stay the fleet then sailed southward before turning east to take advantage of the prevailing westerly winds, to bring them off Capetown on 13 October where by courtesy of the Dutch Governor of Cape Colony, Van Graaf, they acquired oranges, lemons, grain, cotton seed, a bull, a bull calf, cows, a stallion, three mares and three colts.

At sailing on 12 November the fleet resembled a multiple Noah's Ark with over five hundred species of animals and birds aboard. Phillip, now anxious to get on, transferred to the faster Supply and accompanied by the Alexander, Scarborough and Friendship hurried ahead to make Botany Bay by 18th January, a remarkable feat of British seamanship and navigation when one realises that the entire fleet assembled there within forty-eight hours and that at a rendezvous previously only visited by Endeavour.

The long journey of eight and a half months over twenty-five thousand kilometres had ended in the land that waited – the only land surface on earth apart from the polar regions that had not one permanent building structure, one acre of cultivation or one domestic animal. As Deputy Governor Ross said: 'I do not scruple to pronounce that in the whole world there is not a worse country than what we have seen on this.'

What happened from then on is part of our history. Botany Bay being found unsuitable led to the discovery of Port Jackson and the first settlement took place there on Sydney Cove on 26 January 1788.

Out of degradation and despair, through drought, pestilence and famine the Colony survived and started to grow. Soon there were more births than deaths and the first generation Australians with others more recently arrived were to go west, south, north and indeed east to set the boundaries of our nation of today. They criss-crossed the harsh brown land of the hinterland in their bullock teams and drays, years before their American cousins traversed their Oregon trail.

The nation we take for granted today with its high rise buildings, great bridges, bustling cities, the vast areas of cultivation and pasture, mines, and highways was just all virgin bush one hundred and ninety-two years ago.

What better ancestors could one wish for than those wonderful pioneers, the men and the women who came, saw and conquered.

So much for the history of the First Fleet and its passengers, free and felon. As genealogists you might well ask did they leave any descendants? I can assure you they did and in their thousands.

I would be surprised to find that none of you here present had a First Fleet or convict ancestor, and if you feel as I do

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that there is a possibility and you wish to do something about it let me tell you the problems encountered by Fellowship of First Fleeters aspirants.

The first problem is that while some families have carefully recorded family history and events, these related to certain branches only; others knew from family legend that their forebear or forebears had so arrived but lacked proof, and a third section in perusing the lists mainly of the principal officers and convicts published at the time and on occasions since recognised a family surname which led to an assumption that they, too, were descended.

The second problem is that even in the best recorded of the early settler families there had been a tendency during the middle years to disguise any reference to a particular forebear's conviction or so called 'illegitimacy' and in some cases it is believed that vital records were removed and destroyed to hide these facts.

It would be appreciated that not all First Fleeters were convicts; there were officers, marines, seamen and servants who stayed on, but due to the imbalance of the sexes amongst their own kind there were marriages and de facto relationships with convicts and/or descendants.

As the eminent Australian historian, the late Malcolm Ellis once recorded: 'There is scarcely a New South Wales family whose roots reach down past 1825 which is free of convict blood.' With the broadening social scene in recent years people are now inclined to look lightly on their ancestors' misdemeanours, many of which by today's standards would only warrant a minor fine or bond, and as a result genealogists are no longer deterred in their research by the scruples of yesteryear.

Sir Anthony Wagner, KCVOD.Litt, the former Garter King of Arms gave a good lead in his 'English Genealogy' published in 1960 when he wrote 'It is much to be hoped that the natural inhibitions, which have hitherto kept Australians from the exploration of convict ancestry, will soon vanish. Transported ancestors four or five generations back are surely now far enough away to be looked on as mere incidents in a pedigree, quite apart from the question how many of them were by our standards ancestors to be ashamed of. Of that we shall be better placed to judge when the lives and antecedents of a sufficient number have been studied. For the genealogist a convict ancestor has the outstanding merit that his collision with the law will be the subject of record, so that far more personal information may be available about him than for the average of settlers. Every transported convict descendant, who overcomes his reluctance and investigates his pedigree, may congratulate himself upon making a contribution to the social history of both England and Australia.'

Sir Anthony could not be more correct. The problem for the newcomer to genealogy is where to find it and there are other problems.

The similarity of names between free and felon; alterations in the spelling of surnames; the aliases; the de facto relationships where officialdom required the mother and children of the union be known by the mother's name although she no longer used it in her 'Married State.' Children believed to have been twins from baptismal records were not often so, but brothers

and sisters of differing ages baptised on the same day. Another interesting feature was the adoption of children of a previous ex-marital relationship by a later and legitimate wife.

These are the problems for First Fleet researchers – but those later records or lack of them in the first few years of settlement. To prove that these problems are not insurmountable there are more and more people locating First Fleet ancestors every day and the number is expected to increase with the approaching bicentenary of British settlement.

When the Fellowship of First Fleeters was first formed in 1968, members related back to some twenty 1788 arrivals. At last tally proven lines from ninety-nine ancestors exist and the number is expected to grow.

What manner of men and women were they and did their descendants leave any mark on this nation? Well, here is a sample:

John Harris – original sentence 'Death' respited to fourteen years for stealing eight silver tablespoons value three pounds. He was the ancestor of the late Lord Casey, a former Governor-General of Australia.

Frederick Meredith – a steward on Scarborough was the ancestor of newspaper tycoon, Kerry Packer.

John Small – assault and theft of goods to value of £1.15.6 with three others. Sentence death and respited to seven years. He was the ancestor of the late Sir Bruce Small.

Matthew Everingham – seven years for false pretences involving sale of books to value of 10/-. He was the ancestor of Paul Everingham, a former First Minister of the Northern Territory and of Doctor Douglas Everingham, on the other side of the political fence, a Federal Member for Capricornia.

William Broughton, originally servant to Surgeon White and later prominent public servant. He numbered among his descendants, General Bridges, founder of Duntroon Military College, who was to die on Gallipoli, and Mr Paula Stafford of Gold Coast fame.

Philip Gidley King, Captain Phillip's first lieutenant was to become the forebear of some of Australia's most distinguished citizens from his son, Admiral Philip Parker King to this day. Over sixty of his descendants served in World War I.

Henry and Savannah Kable would have at least two thousand descendants living today – the Mayoress of Mackay, Mr. Gwen Abbott, being one of them. They are academics, doctors, lawyers, graziers, farmers and at least two have given distinguished service in the Royal Australian Navy. And there are so many more that time does not permit me to speak of today.

How best can I conclude but in quoting from the late Dame Mary Gilmore:-

'I was the conscript sent to Hell
To make in the desert the living well,
I bore the heat; I blazed the trace,
Furrowed and bloody upon my back.
I split the rock; I felled the tree,
The nation was because of me'
May I add a few words of my own –
'So when you look at that family tree
Be proud, not ashamed when you find me'

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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