



Pioneer

ROLL OF HONOUR

ALLAN, G.H.	JAMIESON, I.G.
BOWMAN, R.B.	JAMIESON, J.I.M.
BOWMAN, G.R.	KING, F.J.
BLACK, A.T.	MAC, G.H. MACARTHER
BLACK, P.A.W.	LANDALE, D.G.
BOWDEN, N.H.M.	LARSON, ERIC
BRAY, J.C.	LOCAS, J.W.S.
BRAY, A.H.K.	MILSON, A.D.
* BULL, E.N.	MILSON, G.H.
BULL, R.M.	MILSON, IV.
BULL, H.H.	MAXWELL, SCOTT.
BROUGHTON, F.W.	* OAKES, A.W.
COLE, J.R.	OSGILL, MACARTHUR
* COLE, WILLACE	OSLEY, A.L.M.
CONWAY, A.H.	OSLEY, J.N.
CONWAY, B.C.	OSLEY, J.
CONWAY, E.D.	OSLEY, L.T.
COOPER, W.H.	PARCE, A.N.
DAVIDSON, B.C.	RAINOLD, D.
DODDARD, K.O.	RAINE, F.R.
GOULDEN, C.M.	RANKIN, E.J.
HALL, ALEX.	RUTLEDGE, K.E.
HOCK, G.S.B.	SCOTT, H.E.
* HASSALL, B.L.	SHAW, AND. W.S.C.
HODGKIN, A.	SIXNOT, R.
HODDER, E.D.	THORNTON, C.E.Z.
HUGHES, T.W.	WALTON, T.B.
HUGHSON, H.A.	WALKER, K.C.
HUGHSON, E.A.	WILSHIRE, J.R.O.
HUGHSON, E.M.	WILSHIRE, G.B.
JOY, G.H.	WILL, G.

CONTENTS

- 1 THE CLUB AT WAR
- 2 EDITORIAL
- 4 COMMEMORATIVE SERVICE FOR GOVERNOR ARTHUR PHILLIP, RN
- 6 A MAN AND HIS SHIPS
ARTHUR PHILLIP AND THE SHIPS
IN WHICH HE SERVED
- 13 ARTHUR PHILLIP
AN UNWRITTEN CHAPTER
- 18 MAJOR JOHNSTON'S OTHER
REBELLION

Front Cover: The Club's Honour Board for those who served in World War One.

EDITORIAL SUB-COMMITTEE

Sir Hugh Gore (Chairman)

John Lanser RFD

Chris White (President, ex officio)

THE CLUB AT WAR

Last month marked the centenary of the outbreak of the Great War. Yet, as Lark and McKenzie have pointed out in the official history, the Club's first historian, H M Suttor, "makes little mention of it in relation to the membership" and, despite the number of members then on active service, "the Club's 1915 Annual Report did not mention the war" (thereby anticipating Basil Fawltly by some 60 years).

For the centenary (a four year long event) we intend to do a little better.

First, the World War I honour board has been relocated to a prominent position immediately to the right of the new artefacts display case on level 3, where it will be readily seen by all users of Pioneers' Rooms 1 and 2 and the UUSC Business Centre on that floor. It is now permanently lit.

Secondly, the three "remarkable family memorials" in the Club's possession, framed collections of photographs of members of the First AIF who were descendants of Commissary-General William Broughton, Governor Philip Gidley King and Deputy Commissary-General James Wilshire, are to be displayed at the eastern end of the north wall of the billiard room.

Finally, it is intended to rectify the omission of the Club's early historian by publishing, in coming issues of *The Pioneer*, details of the war service records of those members who died on active service in "the war to end all wars."

John Lanser

EDITORIAL

This year marks the 200th anniversary of the death of Captain Arthur Phillip. Mr Justice Michael Pembroke has recently written a highly acclaimed biography of Phillip, and has generously agreed to address Club on the subject of Phillip later in October.

In anticipation of this, we are making this issue a special issue in commemoration of Phillip and his part in founding our nation. There are three pieces regarding Phillip. The first is a report on commemorative service held in St James church and the presentation and dedication of a plaque in his memory. The second looks at his life from a slightly different angle from the usual biography, and the third is a quirkish piece and is reproduced as it appeared in The Sydney Mail, a weekly edition of The Sydney Morning Herald which ran from 1860 to 1938.

Due to a number of circumstances over the last couple of months this issue is coming out much later than was planned. Therefore there will be no more issues of *The Pioneer* this year. But you can look forward to one early in the new year.



ARTHUR PHILLIP by *Francis Wheatley (1876)*
© National Portrait Gallery, London.

COMMEMORATIVE SERVICE FOR GOVERNOR ARTHUR PHILLIP, RN



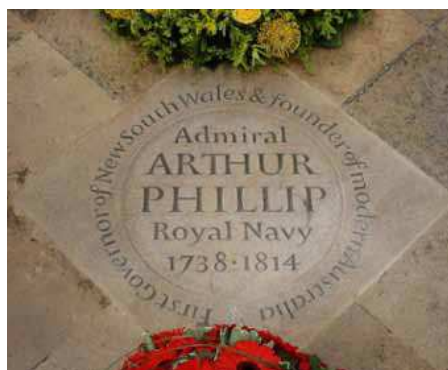
Members of the Australasian Pioneers' Club and the Union, University & Schools Club were among a congregation in excess of 440 who attended a service of Choral Evensong at St James Church, King Street, on Sunday 31 August 2014, the 200th anniversary of the death of the founding governor of New South Wales, Admiral Arthur Phillip, RN, to see a memorial unveiled by the present Governor, her Excellency the Honourable Dame Marie Bashir, AD, CVO, and dedicated by the Bishop of South Sydney, the Right Reverend Robert Forsyth.

Following its unveiling the memorial was formally presented by the President, Chris White, as a gift of the Australasian Pioneers' Club to St James Church. The memorial is a replica of the plaque carved from Sydney sandstone which is now prominently placed in the nave of Westminster Abbey, having been dedicated by the Dean of the Abbey at a service on 9 July 2014 in the presence of the Duke of Edinburgh, who laid a wreath.

Addressing the congregation in St James the Honourable Justice Michael Pembroke, Phillip's biographer, described him as "cerebral, persistent and painstaking ... egalitarian, [possessed of] that wonderful Enlightenment quality of humanity." He recalled that on 21 January 1788, five days before the founding settlement,



The Plaque in St James



The Plaque in Westminster Abbey

Phillip with 12 seamen rowing a longboat became the first-ever white men to enter what the first governor was to describe as “the finest harbour in the world.” By the time he left, less than five years later, “a new European society, built from absolutely nothing, had begun to thrive, [yet] the little settlement only survived in its first years because of his personal qualities and the leadership that he demonstrated.”

Justice Pembroke found it fitting that Phillip be memorialised in St James, for it was he who recommended Francis Greenway, the designer of the church building, to Governor Macquarie. The Australasian Pioneers’ Club, too, has a special association with St James, having leased its former premises in Broughton House at 169 Phillip Street from the churchwardens as early as 1918. In donating the memorial plaque the Club is keeping faith with its founding Objects, published in 1911, which included commemorating “... our first and greatest Pioneer, who by his wonderful devotion and self-denial, rendered magnificent service to the British Empire.”

John Lanser

A MAN AND HIS SHIPS

ARTHUR PHILLIP AND THE SHIPS IN WHICH HE SERVED

Every year on the anniversary of Arthur Phillip's birthday, the Women's Pioneer Society of Australia holds a short ceremony at his statue in the Royal Botanic Gardens in Sydney, followed by lunch and an address by a guest speaker in their clubrooms. In 1994, Mr Hugh Gore, at the time President of the Australasian Pioneers' Club, was the guest speaker.

This is an edited version of the address he gave.

When your President asked me to talk today to the Women's Pioneer Society, I at first thought it might be fitting if I approached the subject of Arthur Phillip from the point of view of Mrs Phillip (or rather the two Mrs Phillips, because he remarried after the death of his first wife). However there was so little material available for this approach that I had to change my tack, and will now be talking about his mistresses, of whom he had many and all of whom he loved.

These are not his land-based mistresses, of whom there is no record if indeed any ever existed. I am referring to the ships on which he served.

His ships knew nothing of his origins, and indeed we do not know a great deal either. His mother was Elizabeth Breach who in 1728 married John Herbert, a seaman in the Royal Navy who died in 1732. She afterwards

married Jacob Phillip, had two children, Rebecca and Arthur, and for a while apparently lived reasonably comfortably. But since he was admitted to the Charity School of the Royal Hospital for Seamen at Greenwich, which was for the sons of poor seamen, they must have fallen on hard times.

He left Greenwich Hospital School on 1 December 1753 at the age of fifteen, indentured into a seven year apprenticeship with a Captain William Redhead who had agreed to instruct him in "the best Way and Manner for making an able Seaman and as good an artist as he can" and not to "immoderately beat or abuse" him.

Redhead was master of the *Fortune* and for the next year or so Phillip sailed on her with him. They went first to the Arctic whaling. Later we find them on a trading voyage between Portugal and

Spain, then Southern France, elsewhere perhaps, and finishing up in Rotterdam. This was the first time in his life that Phillip had been exposed to the larger world of Europe, and offered him his first insights into the wider environments of war and trade in which shipping is such an integral part.

There was one more whaling trip to Greenland before both the *Fortune* and Captain Redhead disappear from the story—we do not know why.

We next find Phillip, only just 19, joining the *Buckingham*, a 68-gun battleship of the Royal Navy, under the command of Captain Michael Everitt. Everitt, as was the custom in those days, had on board a handful of boys training to become officers. Phillip and Everitt were related, (not all that closely, but apparently close enough for a little family patronage to be extended). So Phillip became a captain's servant on the *Buckingham*.

The squadron put to sea on 7 November and five days later, Everitt and the *Buckingham* captured a French warship. They tried but were unable to keep her afloat so had to burn her. Thus on 13 November, only six days after leaving, Phillip was back in Portsmouth with the French

as prisoners ... a brief but eventful enough start to a naval career.

In the following February, the squadron again put to sea, but two weeks later was ordered Spithead for fitting for more distant service.

The commander of the squadron was Admiral John Byng and the more distant service was the ill-fated mission to relieve the garrison trapped by the French at Fort St Philip on the island of Minorca.

The least we can say about Byng on this mission is that he was indecisive, but his court martial convicted him of neglect of duty and sentenced him to death. Certainly he botched an engagement with the French fleet, did not take advantage of the opportunity when it unexpectedly retreated, and finally returned to Gibraltar instead of relieving the garrison as instructed. Arthur Phillip, who by now had risen through the rank of Corporal to become able bodied, was scathing in his criticism of Byng.

Everitt was relieved of his command to give evidence at Byng's court martial and Phillip moved uneventfully about through a series of postings to various ships—*Ramilles*, *Neptune* (again with Everitt in command and which he

joined with the rank of midshipman), *Union*, *Jason* and *Aurora*.

So from June, 1756 until February, 1760 Phillip was learning—learning at first hand about a ship's operation, about maps and mapping and navigation and ocean currents, and about battle techniques and strategies, and naval operations.

Then came Phillip's first major voyage.

On 19 February 1760, Phillip yet again joined his patron and mentor, Michael Everitt, this time on the *Stirling Castle* and after refitting at Woolwich sailed for the West Indies. The British Navy was there first of all to protect British trade, and secondly to expand the war effort against France (we are now at the end of the Seven Years War).

The first eighteen months on the *Stirling Castle* were no more eventful than his previous four years, though during this time he received further promotion to Fourth Lieutenant, which gave him considerably more responsibility than he had ever had before.

There was a brief piece of action as part of a squadron under Admiral George Rodney in which the French island of Martinique was captured, but while the rest of the squadron then went on

to take further French possessions, the *Stirling Castle* returned to cruising.

The last engagement Phillip had on the *Stirling Castle* was at the capture of Havana, a battle which took an immense toll of both ships and men (seamen and soldiers alike) and took Phillip into a situation he had been in once before. By this time Everitt had left the *Stirling Castle* and been replaced by Captain James Campbell. During the battle for Havana, Campbell kept out of the heat of the battle, even ignoring orders to go to the assistance of stricken ships, so Phillip again found himself involved in the court martial of a senior officer for not performing honourably in battle, but this time as a witness.

Incidentally, it has been suggested that it was under Everitt, who seems to have been a harsh disciplinarian by any standard, and particularly on the *Stirling Castle* that Phillip developed his sensitivity to punishment and his acknowledged understanding of fairness and mercy.

The *Stirling Castle* was so badly damaged during the battle for Havana that she had to be sunk. But amongst the spoils of the battle were ten line-of-battle ships and one of them, the *Infanta*, was new and in good condition so the

company of the *Stirling Castle* were transferred to her, and sailed her home to Portsmouth where they were paid off.

Thus began his first land-based sojourn, and the story of his ships has to jump some twelve years to 1775, except that there was an unexplained six month period when he served on the battleship *Egmont*.

By 1774 he had been a lieutenant for thirteen years, but had not yet had a permanent posting in the Royal Navy.

As so often happens though, events took a turn. Portugal and Spain had had a very long running dispute over land and settlements at the estuary of the River Plate in South America. This had been an on-again-off-again affair over some one hundred years, and in 1774 Portugal (who seems to have been coming off second best) decided to mount one final and decisive war and settle the thing once and for all.

The Portuguese had the ships but lacked the officers to run them and accordingly approached Augustus Harvey at the British Admiralty to have some of the half-pay English officers released to serve on their ships. Harvey remembered Phillip who had served under him at Havana and readily recommended him. For Phillip it

meant leaving the Royal Navy, but the conditions he was offered were good, and he would be given the rank of captain, so he accepted. It took some of the gloss off his rank of captain because it was the practice of the Portuguese to have two captains on a ship, with the longer serving one being the senior.

He travelled to Lisbon in December, where he was appointed second captain of the *Nossa Senhora de Belem* under a Portuguese captain, and on 9th February they sailed down the River Tagus to the Atlantic and Rio de Janiero.

In Rio he so impressed the Viceroy of Brazil, the Marquis of Lavradio, that he removed him from the *Belem* and gave him overall charge of a small squadron to patrol the Plate estuary, and posted him to the frigate *Nossa Senhora do Pillar*. Phillip in this roll provided Lavradio with a useful balance to one Robert M'Douall who was also a half pay officer, and who had been made commodore. M'Douall proved to be a pain in the side of Lavradio, with his offensive behaviour and his poor tactical judgement.

There were skirmishes with Spanish privateers as well as naval vessels and during one of these skirmishes, he captured a Spanish ship of the line, the *San Augustin* and in recognition of

his service, Lavradio appointed Phillip to command her. The command was short-lived though, because in only a few months Spain and Portugal signed a peace agreement, the *San Augustin* was returned to Spain and Phillip left the service of the Portuguese. So impressed were the Portuguese with his service with them that Queen Maria herself stepped in on his behalf to support the recommendation for both his reinstatement to the Royal Navy and his promotion in that service to captain.

Although reinstated, his promotion did not come through quickly, and Phillip found himself serving an uneventful stint back as first lieutenant on the *Alexander*. It was not until September, 1779, that he was given the rank of master and commander, and given the *Basilisk* to command.

One can only wonder what he thought about this, his first independent Royal Navy command. For the *Basilisk* was immediately ordered to be fitted out as a fire ship—an old ship filled with combustibles which could be sailed up alongside an enemy ship and set alight. This was dangerous work and success was well rewarded with cash and, if the victim was important enough, gold. The reward for failure was of a more spiritual kind. As it happened, the

Basilisk was too decrepit even for this role and in July 1780 it was paid off.

The period 1779–1782 was dull, relieving during refits, or just cruising. The names of ships come and go—*St Albans*, *Magnanime*, *Ariadne* (on which he spent some months iced in and marooned in the River Elbe) and *Europe*.

He rejoined the *Europe* at the end of 1782 and undertook a long voyage under the command of Robert Kingsmill.

They sailed on 1 January 1783, but were swept with violent storms in the Bay of Biscay. Damage to the ships was severe and of the four that set out only Phillip on the *Europe* did not have to turn back. With no idea of what had happened to the rest of the squadron, he decided to follow his contingent orders and proceed to India, putting in to the Cape Verde Islands for temporary repairs then to Rio de Janiero where there were better facilities. Seaworthy again, he sailed east round the Cape of Good Hope and between Africa and Madagascar to the Comoro Islands. Revictualled, he set out across the Indian Ocean, round Ceylon to Madras. Sir Edward Hughes was in command of the squadron there. The *Europe* was badly in need of proper repair, and after essential repairs had been done, he included *Europe* in a

group of ships returning to England via Cape Town under the command of Sir Richard King. The Dutch at Cape Town proved obstructionist in their dealings; so much so that King sent Phillip ahead on *Europe* to convey to the Lord Commissioners of the Admiralty the difficulty they were having in refitting their ships there.

Thus he returned to London and for the next two years was again on half pay while he absorbed himself in 'private affairs'.

I can add nothing to what you already know about his next command, and will not try to go over it. His next ships were the *Sirius* and then the *Supply*. Then later on 11 December 1792 he sailed home to England, sick and exhausted, but having established the Colony of New South Wales.

It would have been better if the story of his ships could have finished there on that high note. As it was, on arriving in London he surrendered his governorship of the Colony and went back onto the Navy's Half Pay list.

He returned to active service in 1796 and was captain of the *Alexander* for some months (you may recall that he had been on her as a lieutenant in 1778-79) and then moved to the *Swiftsure*

(which he classed as one of the best ships in the navy), and was engaged in Atlantic patrols and convoy escort. Then he took over command of the battleship *Blenheim* and sent on a diplomatic mission to Lisbon. Although he did all that was required it proved fruitless.

These may have been necessary duties, but not challenging to a person of Phillip's abilities, experience and achievements.

Blenheim was his last ship. Not as a result of, but nevertheless soon after Lisbon, he was relieved of his command; Rear-Admiral Frederick insisted on taking it over. Phillip asked to go back to *Swiftsure* but his request was turned down and he finished his active service on land.

So there is the story of Phillip's mistresses—his ships:

- *Fortune* on which he first went to sea;
- *Buckingham* his first Royal Navy posting;
- *Ramilles*, *Neptune*, *Union*, *Jason* and *Aurora* his first teachers;
- *Stirling Castle* on which he first saw real action and which was lost after Havana;

- *Infanta* from the spoils of the battle of Havana;
- *Egmont* for an unexplained six months;
- *Noosa Senhora de Belem* his first Portuguese vessel;
- *Noosa Senhora do Pillar* his first in sole command;
- *San Augustin* which was captured from Spain but returned so soon after he took command;
- *Alexander* when he had to go back to lieutenant after all his time in command;
- *Basilisk* his first independent command in the Royal Navy which was not even sound enough to be a fire ship;
- *St Albans, Magnanime, Ariadne*;
- *Europe* which, all the time needing proper repair, took him to India and back;
- Our own *Sirius* and *Supply*;
- *Swiftsure* which he thought so highly of; and
- *Blenheim* his last ship.

FOOTNOTE: In preparing this presentation I drew heavily upon a book by Alan Frost titled "Arthur Phillip—His Voyaging". At the end of my address and on behalf of the Australasian Pioneers' Club, I presented, through their President, a copy of this book to the Women's Pioneer Society of Australia.

Hugh Gore

ARTHUR PHILLIP

AN UNWRITTEN CHAPTER

BY E. M. GREEN, IN "UNITED EMPIRE"

This is an article that appeared in the Sydney Mail on 11 January 1922.

It is presented here in its entirety. Who E. M. Green was or who or what organisation published the "United Empire" is unknown.

As anyone who has tried to unravel their family history will know, accounts handed down, whether oral or written, or whether provided contemporaneously or from memory, are littered with faded or failed memories, exaggerations and "airbrushings". There is no doubt that these failings are well represented in this article, but is also clearly an honest attempt by E. M. Green to pass on what she had been told, knew or believed.

Its connection with the Pioneers' Club is interesting and hardly likely to have been invented. As far as the rest of its revelations are concerned, it is for the reader to "winnow all that folly" ... and to "find a grain or two of truth among the chaff".

It was a day of glorious sunshine, almost like summer, though the date was April 25, 1916, the Tuesday in Easter Week, when I stood, one of a crowd of thousands of persons, outside Westminster Abbey, waiting for the King and Queen to come out with the gallant troops who filled the Abbey—for this was Anzac Day ... At last the great doors of the Abbey were thrown open, and surely no King ever headed so gallant an army ... It was then that I stepped onto the grass by the Abbey to wait till the multitude had moved on towards Whitehall; and I found myself close to a lady and a gentleman, whose appearance led me to suppose

that they had been in the Abbey, and an Australian with a plume of cock's hackle in his hat.

"Were you in the Abbey?" I said, and the soldier answered, "I was. I was not meant to be, but I got in, and a policeman who saw I had no ticket asked me what I was doing there. 'Oh,' I said, 'I've got a mortgage on this place, and I'm just looking around.' So he let me stay."

We all laughed and the conversation grew general. The lady turned to me with the question, "Was I interested in Australia?" Probably there was no one in London who was not interested in Australia that day, but I not only had a

brother there, but it was an ancestor of ours who sent them Governor Phillip.

I expected to be met with a courteous rejoinder, but I found I was met with enthusiasm. In the odd million out that day to see the great sight I had stumbled across one of Australia's "Pioneer Club", Mr Douglas Hope Johnston, and learned that Australia, now fully awake to what Phillip had done for the Dominion, was searching in vain for anyone who could tell the old story of its Governor with a touch of personal knowledge, for, though several lives have been written of Arthur Phillip, they all begin by saying that nothing is known of his private life. The extraordinary coincidence on such a day that I should meet a member of the Pioneer Club, keen on Australia's history, and eager to tell me what was wanted, while I was, perhaps, one of the only family in the world where Phillip was a well-known name from childhood, is among those things that can never be explained, for there must have been millions of persons in the streets of London that morning, and one chance meeting brought about the writing of this article and the revealing of a historical romance which may well come to light at the time that the British Empire acknowledges the unparalleled courage of the dauntless Australians.

The story of Arthur Phillip I will give as my mother told it to us in our childhood, she having heard it from Harriet Lane, granddaughter of Captain Michael Everitt, Arthur Phillip's first captain and lifelong friend.

Arthur Phillip had a great wish to set sail and make further discoveries on the other side of the world, but in all his ideas neither the Admiralty nor the Government would back him up. He talked over his plans with Captain Michael Everitt, whose house at Peckham appears to have been his home when he was not at sea.

Among the records of Arthur Phillip we learn that at the age of 17, according to his "Voyage", a work published in 1879, he was, at the commencement of hostilities in 1755, "serving under Captain Everett, and learning the rudiments of his profession under that able officer."

We learn that Phillip followed Captain Everett (as his name was spelt afterwards) to the ships that he subsequently commanded; otherwise in all that has been written about the first Governor of New South Wales there is absolute silence about his private history. It is at this point that my mother's story is valuable, as giving to the public information that was

till now unknown beyond the circle of Captain Everitt's descendants.

Captain Everitt had a daughter Eleanor, who married a certain Mr John Lane, of Peckham. Evidently the friendship between Captain Michael Everitt and the younger officer was very strong, and Arthur Phillip carried the intimacy into the next generation.

Mr John Lane appears to have been a man of substance, and his father, Sir Thomas Lane, was Lord Mayor of London. The four solid silver candlesticks given to Sir Thomas Lane by the aldermen of London still exist. Sir Thomas Lane had previously served the office of sheriff in 1692, when Sir John Fleet was Lord Mayor and Thomas Cooke his brother sheriff.

In an old book Sir Thomas Lane is described as a Londoner, and ancestor of Lord Foley. While he was sheriff William and Mary dined at the Guildhall, and the Queen borrowed £200,000 of the city. We can picture the city gentleman driving to the village of Peckham to visit his son and daughter-in-law, and their portraits by Copely and Romney fill in the picture. They bring before us "my dear friend Mr. John Lane," as Phillip calls him in his will, when he leaves a sum of

money for his family and household to go into mourning at his death.

John Lane sympathised with Arthur Phillip in his disappointment when neither the Admiralty nor the Government would help him in his investigations, and he fitted out a frigate to enable the discoverer to sail to the other side of the world. This is how the story was told to us. Another, whose father knew our great-great-uncle's household in Peckham, writes: "My father has often told me of the intimacy of Admiral Phillip and John Lane, and that the latter advanced ten thousand pounds to Phillip."

Anyhow, Phillip set sail, and in due course reached New South Wales, where he landed, and was met by angry natives at the mouth of the Yarra-Yarra River, who pelted him with nuggets of gold. These nuggets he picked up and brought home. On his return to England, Phillip had the gold made into a chain, which he gave to the daughter of his patron, Harriet Lane, and it was said to be the purest gold ever brought to England. In course of time it came to my great-great-uncle, Captain Charles Gayton (who inherited the house at Peckham) and his wife at the time of Queen Victoria's Jubilee, had a morocco case made for the chain and offered it to Her Majesty, stating its

history. The Queen returned the chain, saying she could not receive presents from persons unknown to her.

Mrs Gayton offered it again to King Edward at his coronation, with the same result.

John Lane had Phillip's portrait painted by Wheatley, and I have seen it hanging in the old house at Peckham, where it remained until a few years ago, when at Mrs Gayton's death, it was left to the National Portrait Gallery. There I saw the vice-president, who was glad to hear how it came about that an unknown lady in England had a signed portrait by Wheatley of the Governor to leave to the nation.

I went three times to see the Hon. Bernhard Wise, who wished me to write a life of Arthur Phillip, with the personal element I was able to give it; but before we had the scheme complete Mr Wise died suddenly, and the matter has never got any further.

With regard to tradition handed down in a family, some will be found to discredit its veracity; but I may say that when I first went to my great-great-uncle's house in Peckham, after I was grown up, I found my mother's description so exact that I could identify everything. There was the little

gilded table, the delight of my mother's childhood, and the short venetian shutters (which are there to this day); there was Romney's picture of the Lane brother and sister; there was Captain Harry Everitt of the Buffs; and there, no doubt, if I could have turned over the papers, was the sketch of Arthur Phillip by the Yarra-Yarra River, and the naked natives running towards him. There today, though the house has passed into other hands, is an old sea-chest left from long ago.

No official record is to be found of Arthur Phillip's voyage in a frigate privately fitted out, but it may be that the experiences he gained then were the reasons for him being chosen as Governor. Phillip was chosen as first Governor to the colony off which it was prophesied that it "would prove the greatest asset to the British Empire"; and he justified the confidence placed in him by laying the foundations of a great Dominion in principles that can never die, the drawing out of the best in human nature, the belief in man's honour and his word, and the never failing hope that good must triumph finally.

"Without Phillip", it was said, "we should have had no Australia, no Anzac Day." Even if we allow for some enthusiastic exaggeration still we can hardly doubt that there must be many both in

England and Australia who will welcome this personal story with interest. Anyhow, if it were not written in our generation, in the next generation the matter would have gone beyond recall.

The fine long chain, the first gold ever brought from Australia, seems as a

link between those far-off days when Arthur Phillip confided his ambitions to his friend John Lane and these days, when in the moment of the world's greatest need, the Dominions rose in their millions, rushing at the call of the Motherland to fight for Home and Honour and God.

The following footnote to the article was added by the editor of "United Empire":

In the absence hitherto of any information about Governor Phillip's early days, beyond the meagre records of his naval service with the British and Portuguese fleets, these personal records of his relationship with the family of Captain Michael Everitt, and associations with Peckham, should be of interest to many both in this country and Australia. The story of his voyage to that country prior to his appointment as its first Governor is startling, but can hardly be dismissed as wholly impossible in view of the statements of the writer. It is hoped that the publication of this article may, as she says in a letter, "bring to light forgotten things".

This year marks the 210th anniversary of what has become known as the Battle of Vinegar Hill and the 160th anniversary of the Eureka Stockade. These events bookend a period of colonial dissent in early New South Wales which takes in the so-called Rum Rebellion and the near rebellion on the Turon river.

Vinegar Hill is less well known than Eureka and the Rum Rebellion, yet it has links to both. At Eureka the password for entry to the rebels' stockade was "Vinegar Hill"; and when troops led by Major George Johnston marched to Government House on 26 January 1807 to arrest Governor William Bligh it was not Johnston's first experience with insurrection, for in March 1804 he had suppressed the short lived uprising near Castle Hill, west of the infant settlement, in ...

MAJOR JOHNSTON'S OTHER REBELLION



Two Artists' Impressions of the Rebellion

Wynyard Square, above Wynyard Station, as the name of nearby Barrack Street acknowledges, marks the site of Sydney's military barracks before Victoria Barracks was built. From this site just after midnight on 5 March 1804 a large force of the 102nd Regiment of Foot (the NSW Corps) set off on a forced march to Parramatta to put down an uprising of convicts. 52 infantry and 37 loyalist militia had been called from their beds while armed sailors and marines from the warship *Calcutta* were brought ashore to guard the town.

THE IRISH POLITICAL PRISONERS

The fourth year of Governor King's administration had seen the arrival in the colony of several hundred political prisoners transported from Ireland in the aftermath of the United Irish Rebellion of 1798, when 10,000 government troops surrounded and defeated 20,000 Irish rebels at Enniscorthy, County Wexford. By the early 1800s a quarter of all convicts were of Irish origin and the *Sydney Gazette* of 11 March 1804 recorded that "there are upwards of 200 Irish prisoners at Castle Hill, sent here for seditious practices in Ireland."

The officers who administered NSW used a special name to distinguish these prisoners: "croppies" ... from the fact that the United Irishmen, following the French Revolutionaries, adopted a close cut or "cropped" hairstyle.

Governor King had established the settlement at Castle Hill as part of the long-standing plan to revive government agriculture. Most of the convicts there had survived summary justice at the hands of the military courts martial after the insurrection in Ireland and some, in due course, received conditional pardons, but they were not allowed to return 'home.' Between 1801 and 1804, despite a number of convict escapes from Castle Hill, the small military garrison was gradually withdrawn, leaving a convict superintendent and a few constables to keep order.

THE PLAN

The arrival at Castle Hill of two Irishmen from Co Kerry, Phillip Cunningham and William Johnston, saw the birth of a secret plot for an uprising. Cunningham, a stonemason, had been transported from Clonmel in 1799 on the ship *Anne* and was reported to have been "active in mutinous transactions on board the vessel." The plan was for simultaneous risings at Parramatta, the Hawkesbury

and Sydney to create an army of 1000 convicts who would first capture the powder and shot arsenal at Parramatta, then seize ships at the Hawkesbury and in Sydney Harbour to take them back to Ireland.

SATURDAY 3 MARCH 1804

Captain Edward Abbott, in command of a detachment of the NSW Corps at Parramatta, took a statement from an overseer, Sloan, who said he had been shown a "paper" which foreshadowed an insurrection of his countrymen. Abbott transmitted the information to headquarters but because a number of previous such plots had been known and come to nothing little notice was taken of it.

SUNDAY 4 MARCH 1804

Abbott and Chaplain Marsden took depositions from John Griffin and Lewis Bulge, Griffin stating that the 4th was to be the day of the rising, the password was 'St Peter' and the slogan was 'Death or Liberty.' Nonetheless, the matter was still not taken seriously and when news of the actual uprising reached Parramatta, Marsden was at home dining with his family and Mrs Macarthur.

THE ACTION

On the evening of 4 March one of the small huts occupied by prisoners at Castle Hill was set alight and the bell rung. Cunningham harangued a mob of 200 prisoners who quickly took the barracks and looted about 100 muskets, plus pistols, swords, scythes and bayonets (to make pikes), along with a keg of spirits.

The 200 men then divided into three raiding parties, each of which set off in a different direction to surprise settlers during the night, build up a small armoury and collect recruits (willing or otherwise). The plan was to meet at daybreak near Parramatta atop Constitution Hill, the rebel rallying point (near today's Wentworthville) which had a view of both the Parramatta and Windsor Roads. One party was to storm Parramatta gaol, capture its armoury and free its prisoners. After breakfast the whole force was to march to the Hawkesbury to be joined by further insurrectionists so as to total approximately 1100 men. They were then to return to Castle Hill on Tuesday, move on Parramatta and eventually proceed to Sydney where they would have men in sufficient strength to enable them to leave the colony by ships then in the harbour.

At midnight on 4 March the threat to the colony was very real and civilians fled to the protection of Parramatta barracks or Sydney town. Yet the plan unravelled, for two reasons:

- the resolute response of Governor King and the NSW Corps; and
- failure of sympathisers in Parramatta to carry out their part of the plan.

THE GOVERNOR'S RESPONSE

In Sydney, Governor King, upon hearing that the prisoners at Castle Hill had broken out and rebel columns were advancing towards Parramatta, proceeded to Annandale, the property of Major George Johnston, who was aroused at midnight and informed "the croppies are in arms to a number of 500 or 600." By 1.30AM Johnson had departed for Parramatta, leading an advance guard of the fifth detachment, the remainder following in four divisions.

King then proceeded to Government House, Parramatta, where he declared the districts of Parramatta, Castle Hill, Toongabbie, Prospect, Seven Hills and Baulkham Hills to be in a state of rebellion and established martial law, the first time martial law had been proclaimed in the colony.

THE PARRAMATTA CONFEDERATES

The rebels' plan to capture Parramatta partly depended upon confederates within the town who were to set fire to part of the Macarthur homestead at Elizabeth Farm, thereby drawing the Parramatta garrison out of the town to the east and leaving the town unprotected. Thus the rebels would not be caught on two fronts if reinforcements arrived from Sydney. Another fire was to be lit in Parramatta itself to summon the rebel force to join in with the rebels in the town in sufficient numbers to overwhelm any opposition.

For reasons unknown, the confederates in Parramatta failed to light the fires and their failure to do so was the turning point of the revolt. From this point the actions of the rebels under Cunningham appear improvised and uncertain and in contrast to their first moves.

Farms had been raided as planned in the Field of Mars and Prospect regions resulting in the capture of 136 muskets, 14 pistols, some bayonets and pitchforks, but one of a group of insurrectionists lost its way and Abbott, forewarned of the attack on Parramatta gaol, had it well guarded. The result of all this was that the rendezvous at Constitutional Hill was

hours behind schedule and the rebels were at low strength.

Major Johnston's party arrived at Parramatta at about 5AM and was ordered to go to Toongabbie and Castle Hill in quest of the rebels. Arriving at Toongabbie Johnston was informed 400 rebels were "on the top of Sugarloaf Hill, all well armed." He divided his force into two columns, one under Lieutenant Davey to approach Castle Hill on the right flank while Johnston himself, with 26 rank and file plus Quartermaster Thomas Laycock and Trooper Thomas Anlezark, along with 47 constables, overseers and settlers, a total of 75, caught up with the stragglers near what is now Rouse Hill.

Johnston marched in pursuit of the main body and sent Anlezark on ahead under a flag of truce. The rebels refused Anlezark's call to lay down their arms and rejected a similar plea from Father James Dixon (who had also been transported on suspicion of being an active member of a revolutionary body). Johnson himself then went forward and met with Cunningham who, upon being asked what he wanted, replied "death or liberty." Johnson immediately took Cunningham into custody at pistol point and ordered the detachment to advance. In what has been described as "the only Napoleonic conflict on

Australian soil" firing commenced on both sides and the rebels fled in all directions. In a battle lasting about 20 minutes 15 rebels were killed, six or seven were wounded and 26 were taken prisoner together with an assortment of pistols, cutlasses, bayonets, bikes and pitchforks. There were no casualties among Johnston's troops. Johnson then pursued the survivors towards the Hawkesbury settlement, gathering prisoners and arms as he went. In Johnson's view, had the rebels reached the Hawkesbury they would have been joined by three or four hundred others.

As it was, the rebellion was over less than 24 hours after it began.

The battle has often been dismissed as a skirmish or a rout rather than a real military contest and in *The Sydney Morning Herald* of 28–29 February 2004 John Huxley questioned "whether too much fuss is being made of an event which, after being forgotten for so long, is suddenly being spoken of in the same terms as the Rum Rebellion or the Eureka Stockade." But the rebels' plans were well crafted by articulate, experienced military leaders. They operated in columns and gathered a powerful arsenal of weaponry. The 1804 painting, by an unknown artist, is a relatively accurate portrayal of how the rebel army was arrayed. It shows a

rebel line with distinct wings of pikes and a centre of musketry. One writer suggests their downfall was in part due to belief that the British would treat them as an armed enemy rather than just escaped convicts.¹

WHAT BECAME OF THE PRINCIPAL PLAYERS?

Phillip Cunningham was hanged without trial from the staircase of a store at Windsor (then called Green Hills).

William Johnston was executed and his body hung in chains near Parramatta.

Eight other rebels were sentenced to death, one of whom was reprieved and the other seven executed, including Timothy Hogan for the attempted murder of Thomas Bates, a constable in the loyalist militia. The gun “flashed in the pan” (ie, misfired).

Governor King, who wanted to separate the rebels from the main body of convicts, foreshadowed the immediate reopening of the (abandoned) settlement at Coal River (now the Hunter). The settlement was re-established on 30 March 1804 under the command of Lieutenant Charles Menzies and became a place of penal exile and

isolation for the men who took part in the Vinegar Hill Rebellion. It was the beginning of Newcastle.

Thomas Anlezark, a former convict who had received a conditional pardon and been appointed mounted trooper just nine months before the uprising, was rewarded with a full pardon for his role in putting it down. He died at Liverpool on 3 April 1834 and is buried in Liverpool Pioneers Memorial Park.

Thomas Laycock was praised for his actions in supporting Major Johnston and served as a member of the court martial which tried the captured rebels. However, after his wife left him a year later erratic behaviour cruelled his career and he was eventually adjudged mentally incapable of managing his affairs. He died on 27 December 1809.

George Johnston, who suppressed one rebellion but later led another, was court martialled in England for his role in the 1807 Rum Rebellion. Convicted and cashiered, he was allowed to return to New South Wales as a free settler under Governor Macquarie. He lived at his farm, Annandale, giving his name to the principal artery in the suburb now built on the site, and died there on 5 January 1823 aged 58. He was buried on the estate in a vault designed by convict architect

1 Stephen Gaps in *Broadsword*, issue 5 at page 21

Francis Greenway which became the first private burial ground in Sydney to be consecrated. His remains were re-interred in Waverley Cemetery after the vault was demolished, along with Annandale House.

Eighty seven years later his great-grandson, Douglas Hope Johnston, founded the Australasian Pioneers' Club.

John Lanser

REFERENCES



The Memorial at Rouse Hill to the Vinegar Hill Rebellion

Silver, Lynette: *The Battle of Vinegar Hill*, Doubleday, 1989

Symes, James: *The Castle Hill Rebellion of 1804*, Hills District Historical Society, 1979, revised 1990

Whitaker, Anne-Marie: *Unfinished Revolution*, Crossing Press, 1994 [Ch 5]

Lemcke, Geoffrey: *Reluctant Rebel*, Aussie Press, 1998 [Ch 12]

Roberts, Alan: *Marine Officer, Convict Wife*, Annandale Urban Research Association, 2008 [Ch 6]

Any opinions expressed in this publication are those of the authors and not necessarily those of the Australasian Pioneers' Club. Every care has been taken to attribute articles and images reproduced in this publication, and copyright permission has been obtained where necessary.



Australasian Pioneers' Club
GPO Box 3533
Sydney NSW 2001