

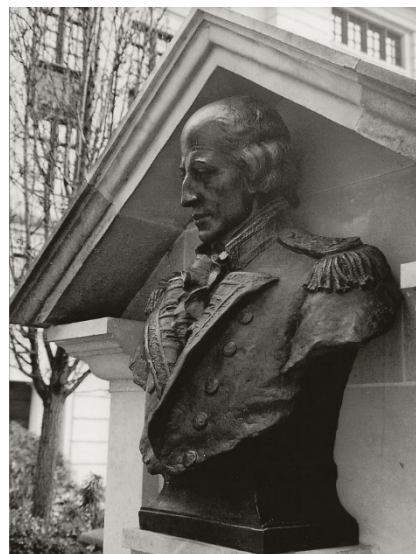
Admiral Arthur Phillip, R.N. (1738 – 1814)

A brief story by Angus Ross **for the Bread Street Ward Club, 2019**

One of the famous people born in Bread Street was **Admiral Arthur Phillip, R.N.**, the Founder of Australia and first Governor of New South Wales (1788-1792). His is a fascinating story that only recently has become a major subject of research, especially around his naval exploits, but also his impact in the New Forest where he lived mid-career and also around Bath, where he finally settled and died. I have studied records from the time Phillip sailed to Australia, a work published at the end of the 19c and finally from more recent research. Some events are reported differently by different observers or researchers so I have taken the most likely record for this story.



Arthur Phillip in later life



His Statue in Watling Street, City of London

I have tried to balance the amount of detail without ending up with too long a story. It is important to understand the pre-First Fleet Phillip to best understand how he was chosen and was so well qualified and experienced to undertake the journey and to establish the colony. So, from a range of accounts written in various times, this story aims to identify the important elements of Phillip's development ending in his success in taking out that First Fleet, made up primarily of convicts and marines, to start the first settlement. I have concluded this story with something about the period after he returned from Australia and what recognition of his life and achievements are available to see today.

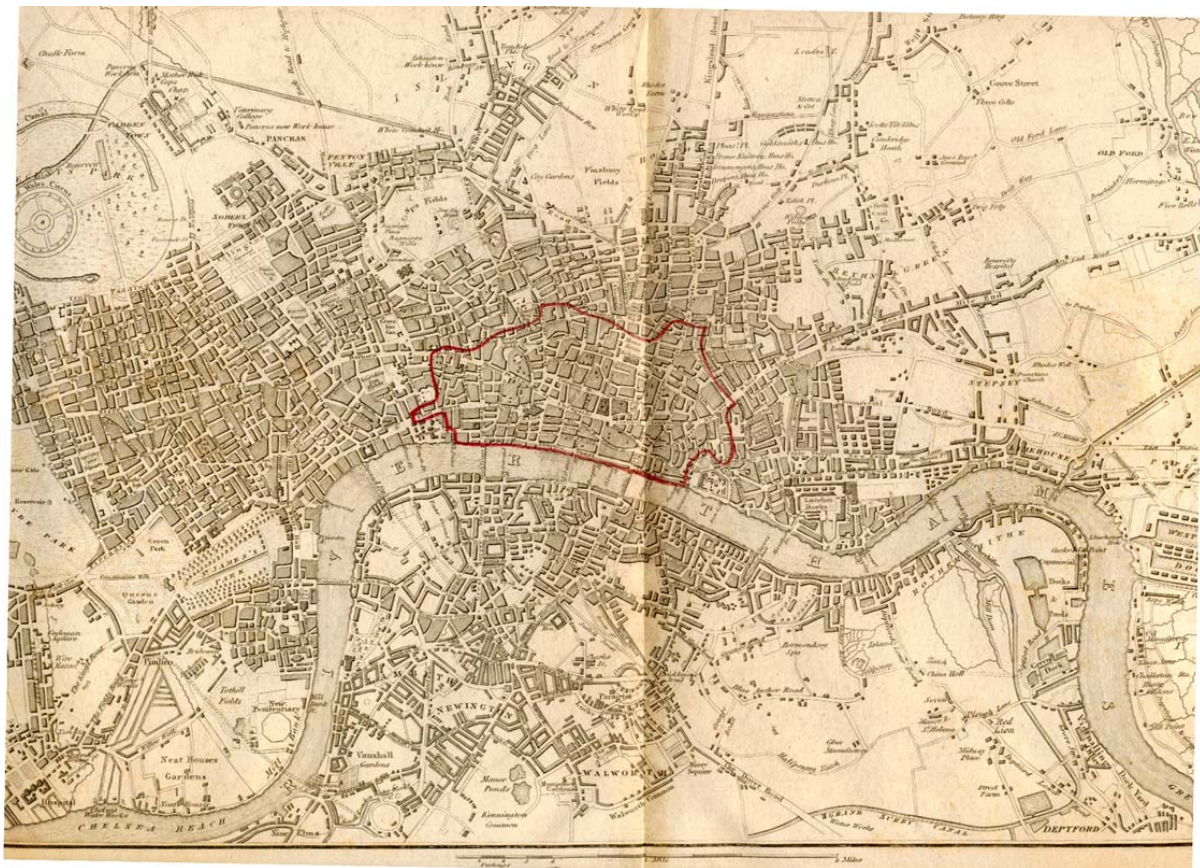
At the start, the scene in England sees George the Second on the throne from 1727 to 1760 and George the Third from 1760 to 1820 and the nation slowly becoming less Germanic; remember George the First had been born in Germany the son of Ernest Augustus of Brunswick-Luneburg and Sophia of Hanover, though he was also the great grandson of James the First. He was on the throne from 1698 until his death.

Politically, in Phillip's lifetime there were 22 changes of Heads of Government and 19 different Prime Ministers, though his time in Australia was within Tory William Pitt the Younger's 1793-1801 Ministry.

Early Life

Arthur Phillip was born on the 11th of October 1738 in Bread Street in the City of London and baptised in the Church of All Hallows in Bread Street one month later.

To give readers some idea of the size of London at that time here are two maps of 1643 and 1815, straddling the time of this story.



Bread Street in those days was a lane running off Cheapside containing many trades and enterprises; bread, wood, honey, milk and poultry, still recognised in street names today. The main two churches in the ward were 'All Hallows' (demolished 1878) and 'St Mildred's' (Considered the finest unrestored Wren church in the City but bombed to destruction in 1941). There was also 'St Matthews' in nearby Friday Street (demolished 1886). Two other churches had not been rebuilt after the Great Fire of 1667.

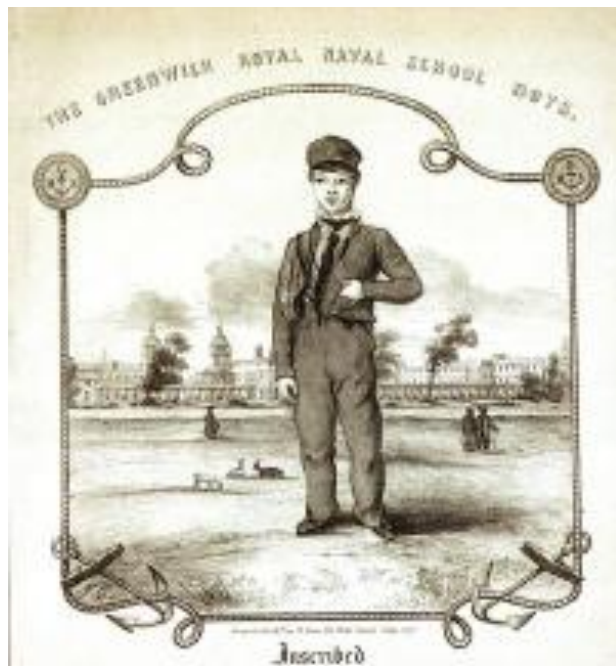
In Bread Street was the 'Three Cups Inn' from where the Bristol stagecoaches departed and arrived three times a week. There was also the 'George' and the 'Star' in Bread Street, the 'Bell' and the 'Saracen's Head' in Friday Street and the 'Crown' nearby in Basing Street.

Phillip's parents were Jacob, who may have been a language teacher from Frankfurt, but possibly a sailor, and Elizabeth nee Breach, widow of John Herbert, a seaman in the Royal Navy who had died of yellow fever in the West Indies. Arthur had a sister Rebecca, a year older of which little is known.

As a tenant, Jacob's contributions to the parish poor fund suggest the family were modestly comfortable.

After teaching his son to speak German and French, his father had disappeared by the time Arthur was nine. His mother turned to a cousin Captain William Everett RN who acted as a second father and even took him to sea as a cabin boy at the age of 9 to experience a 'taste of the sea'!

On 24th June 1751, aged 21, Phillip was enrolled at the Charity School of the Royal Hospital for Seamen in Greenwich. The Chaplain noted his 'diplomacy' and his 'business like perfection seeking'.



The Greenwich Royal Naval School Boys

The school had opened on the site in 1712 to provide assistance and education to the orphans of seafarers in the Royal and Merchant Navies. Boys were lodged, clothed and maintained for up to three years. His education would have focussed on arithmetic and navigation, which Phillip later developed through his career. He left in December 1753.

Since 1933, it has been located near Ipswich. The Head Boy and Girl take part in the annual Admiral Phillip service in St Mary-le Bow church in the City of London.

Start of Naval Life

Straight after Greenwich, he was taken on as a cabin boy by William Readhead, a whale hunter, Master of the whaler 'Fortune'. Readhead went after his catch in the waters around Spitsbergen in the summer and then traded in the Mediterranean in the winter.

Whaling in those days was a major industry with dozens of ships sailing to the Arctic each year. The cargoes brought back were of blubber from which much used whale oil was extracted, and baleen (usually referred to as "whalebone") which people used for backscratchers, collar stiffeners, buggy whips, parasol ribs, crinoline petticoats, and corset stays. A whale's baleen plates play the most important role in its filter-feeding process. To feed, a whale opens its mouth widely and scoops in dense shoals of prey (such as krill, copepods, small fish, and sometimes birds that happen to be near the shoals), together with large volumes of water. It then partly shuts its mouth and presses its tongue against its upper jaw, forcing the water to pass out sideways through the baleen, thus filtering out the food which it then swallows.

In 1755, Phillip joined the Navy, first serving in the 70-gun 'Buckingham', seeing action in the 'Seven Years War' (1756-63). Promotion to Midshipman came in 1759 on 'Aurora' and he re-joined Everitt the following year on the 70-gun 'Stirling Castle', witnessing the slave trade in the West Indies. As a 4th Lieutenant in 1761 he saw more action. He would have witnessed the dire effects of tropical diseases on men, as well as the impacts of the slave trade. As a Lieutenant under Everitt's successor Campbell, he earned a Mention in Despatches. Phillip had taken troops ashore to attack the fort as the British ships could not raise their cannons high enough to destroy the fort.

First break from the Sea

He returned to England in March 1763 following the end of the 'Seven Year's War' and with many other officers was placed on shore leave on half-pay. He did though have the prize money from the ships captured in Havana, some £138.10s. This situation provided Phillip with an opportunity to find and marry into a rich family so he could live the life of a gentleman in England. He was successful later that year, aged just 24, marrying Charlott Denison, nee Tybott, a 41-year old widow of a prosperous property-owning cloth and wine merchant. She had married in 1759, only for her husband to die in less than a year, leaving her an inheritance the equivalent of £20m in today's money.

The nature of naval life in those times meant that onshore officers needed to find a new life, if only temporarily. Phillip and Charlott had started their married life in the Hampton Court area, but as a result of Phillip's desire for a command they decided to live nearer to Portsmouth.

They leased Vernals, a 32-acre farm by Goose Green outside Lyndhurst in around 1765. The house has since been pulled down and replaced. He also acquired Glasshayes in Lyndhurst, the site more recently the Lyndhurst Park Hotel and now a site for redevelopment, having also been owned by Conan Doyle at one point.

His farming did not prove a success after a series of harsh winters and failing crops during 1766-68. This all contributed to the couple's marital unhappiness and Phillip's life as a country gentleman was soon to end.

But, whilst at Vernals, he was assisted on the land by Henry Dodd, who later joined Phillip on the First Fleet and made a significant contribution to the establishment of farms in New South Wales. A neighbour was Sir George Rose, later to become Treasurer to the Navy and possibly an influence in Phillip's appointment as Commander of the First Fleet.

Phillip had been appointed 'Overseer of the Poor' by the church in Lyndhurst, again proving good experience. He found a colleague in Rev Richard Johnson from the nearby parish of Boldre, a man who was to become the Chaplain to the First Fleet and an important support to Phillip.



Boldre Church today, probably little changed from 18c!

At this time, England was the only Protestant European country not to have a specific divorce law. The alternative was a 'Deed of Separation' drawn up by a lawyer for the man and a trustee on behalf of the wife – women then having no legal status! After six years of marriage, Phillip and Charlott concluded a formal 'Indenture of Separation' in April 1769. The lease and all the household goods were sold by auction in 1770 and Charlott moved back to London. The resulting settlement had left Phillip with financial commitments which remained a problem to him until Charlott's death over twenty years later. However, he does seem to have acted honourably towards Charlott throughout this period,

Phillip's languages helped him to gain a commission to spy on the French Navy activities during business trips in the textile trades, probably linked to contacts from Charlott's first husband's business interests. He was still a 4th Lieutenant fluent in French and German; he later added Dutch, Spanish and Portuguese! He first obtained permission to go to St Omer in Flanders. Over the next five years he spent most of it in north east France and in Toulon, then France's principal Mediterranean naval base. His involvement in the textile trade allowed him movement without, it is assumed, suspicion of spying. Meanwhile, it gave him an opportunity to make some money to repay part of Charlott's fortune that he had lost during his farming time.

Back to Sea

He was recalled from France to active service in 1770. The Falklands had only first been occupied in 1764 by the French who then had surrendered their claim to the Spanish. A crisis occurred when a Spanish force took the settlement of Port Egmont, which had been Britain's first claim in the Falklands. Phillip joined the 'Egmont', by chance the same name, a 74-gun ship of the line in London. But by January 1771 a compromise had been reached between Spain and Britain and Phillip was returned onto the half-pay register. He returned to France without even having sailed from home shores in 'Egmont'.



Map showing Port Egmont in north west corner of Falklands

A record held in the Admiralty notes that Phillip's return to France was for 'the recovery of his health'! More likely it was so the British navy could commit to a clandestine operation to find out more about France's aggressive rebuilding of its navy in Toulon. Perhaps it is no coincidence that he was known to Augustus Hervey, the First Naval Lord who had commanded Phillip in the 1762 siege of Havana.

It is likely he first met Isaac Landmann when he was attached to the Ecole Militaire in Paris. From attending his lectures, Philip was to acquire further knowledge of fortification and artillery, another string to his bow. It is recorded that they remained friends when Landmann was later a Professor at the Royal Military Academy in Woolwich.

By August 1774, Phillip was back in London and negotiating with Lord Hervey for more leave of absence so he could serve with the Portuguese navy. After 12 years on half pay, with no home, no wife and money he was still committed to repay to Charlott, this was an opportunity. Looking at his time in the Portuguese Navy in some depth shows it was likely to be one of the catalysts for his later selection for the First Fleet. For England and for Hervey, Phillip was to be highly useful in gaining and sending back information on the Spanish forces.



Augustus Hervey, Admiral and 3rd Earl of Bristol in 1775

Portuguese Navy

So, in 1774 Phillip, with the approval of Sandwich (in his third period as First Lord of the Admiralty) and Hervey, was seconded to the Portuguese Navy. Portugal was Britain's oldest ally from the 14th century - and still is! This was a critical period in developing his ability and leadership. He went to Lisbon in January 1775 where the formalities of his secondment to the Portuguese Navy were finalised. He then sailed in April 1775 to Rio de Janeiro, the centre of colonial administration and the seat of the Viceroy, the Marquis of Lavradio. Phillip was later to land there with the First Fleet, benefitting from the contacts he made in 1775 and the respect the Viceroy had then developed for Phillip.

He went as a 'Post Captain' on double pay, being initially appointed Captain of the 26-gun 'Pilar' which was tasked with keeping the sea lanes open against the Spanish.

He was involved in the battles between Spain and Portugal around establishing where the western extent of Portuguese land lay. Until the Treaty of Tordesillas in 1494, Spain and Portugal had divided the known world between them by to a line of longitude drawn by Pope Alexander VI down the centre of the Atlantic 100 'leagues' (about 320 nautical miles) west of the Azores or Cape Verde Islands'. Whilst this suggested all South America belonged to Spain, Portugal had meanwhile discovered the land we now know as Brazil and a new Treaty moved the line to 370 'leagues' west of the Cape Verde Islands (about 1,184 nautical miles) so ensuring Portugal retained Brazil. It was still a vague line and Portugal had, by the 1760's, annexed Colonia do Sacramento, in what is now Uruguay and across the River Plate Estuary from Buenos Aires. The Plate is in effect the confluence of three great rivers, the

Paraguay, the Parana and the Uruguay and, some 1,200 miles south of Rio. These rivers were all routes for cattle and hides being shipped down and for slaves up the river to mines and agricultural enterprises. Taking advantage of this situation became important to Portugal though there was inevitably illicit trade with Spanish merchants and England was surely involved as well.

He took part in many actions as Captain of the 'Pilar', with two frigates under his command, operating in the sea around Colonia to keep the peace on land, the sea lanes open and the Spanish commanders in check. This continued until he was ordered to rendezvous with a Portuguese squadron at Santa Caterina in December 1776. This was an important Portuguese outpost between Colonia and Rio.

There was controversy why the Commodore of the small Portuguese Squadron, Robert McDouall, did not follow the Viceroy's orders and attack the much larger force of Spanish ships who were intent on capturing Santa Caterina. Phillip was excused by Lavradio for not attacking the Spanish as he had not been shown the full set of orders and was 'tricked' by McDouall. The result was the embarrassing capitulation of Santa Caterina and McDouall facing a Court Martial. But Phillip survived that situation.



The 'San Agustín' was a 74-gun ship of the line launched in 1768

But on April 19th, 1777 Phillip saw that the Spanish 'St Agustin', a 74-gun ship of the line had mistaken the 26 gun 'Pilar' for one of their own. Phillip, with another ship, was able to capture the 'San Agustin', a heavier, faster and more powerful ship than the two Portuguese ships combined. Some achievement!

Phillip was then given command of the 'St Agustin' by Lavradio and he patrolled the Southern Atlantic until the truce of August 1777 and the Treaty of Santo Ildefonso on 1st October which agreed the return of Santa Caterina to Portugal and Colonia to Spain. The 'St Agustin' was to be handed back to Spain. That ship later fought in the Battles of Algeciras and Trafalgar before being wrecked in 1805.

Phillip had carefully studied the coastline, maps and charts and fortifications. In contrast, he acquired a stock of cochineal, an insect secreting a vivid scarlet and crimson dye and used in the distinctive red coats of British soldiers and marines. He also had access to the Brazilian diamond mines where he had the opportunity to observe how slaves in the mines were treated. This surely influenced his banning of slavery in Australia.

Phillip returned to Lisbon in August 1778. His time with the Portuguese Navy was important both for him and the Portuguese. Added to this was the vital information he sent back to England. This period coincided with the conclusion of the Spanish and Portuguese war, and Phillip decided to resign his Portuguese commission and to rejoin the Royal Navy. He was paid off by Portugal on August 24th, 1778 and returned home. Back in England he was often consulted on questions concerning the

Spanish presence in the South Atlantic by Lord Sandwich at the Admiralty. Preparations for a future raid on the Spanish were coined as 'Phillip's Plan'. He was also in contact with the Home Secretary Lord Sydney and with Evan Nepean, both who were by then aware of Phillip's character and his reputation, useful background when the First Fleet was later discussed.



2nd Marquis of Lavradio, Viceroy 1769-1778



Viceroy Vasconcelos, Viceroy in 1778-1790

Back in Royal Navy

Just four days after his return to London in October 1778, he was appointed First Lieutenant (Second in Command) of the 'Alexander', a 74 gun line-of-battle ship crewed by over 600 men. The 'Alexander' sailed as part of the Channel fleet for the next 11 months, operating in the western approaches to meet any threat from the Spanish or French.

This was clearly a successful time for Phillip as on his return to Spithead from the Channel fleet, in September 1779 aged 40, he was promoted Master and Commander of the Fireship 'Basilisk', a ship requiring extensive repairs and under Phillip never to put to sea! Although Lord Sandwich had often consulted with him over his South American experiences and despite Phillip's efforts he received no appointment to a new ship through 1780. After staying in London for some time, a mystery still surrounds Phillip's apparent activities between January and October 1781. One unproven theory was that he was transporting troops and/or convicts from Lisbon to Brazil.

However, his eventual reward was appointment in November 1781 as Post-Captain of the frigate 'Ariadne', a 24-gun frigate, initially patrolling in the Channel, but then sent to escort Hanoverian troops from the Elbe River to India where Britain needed military support. However, Phillip's ship became iced up in Cuxhaven and was only saved by running onto the mud. He was stuck there for two months from late December during which time his fluent German enabled him to set-up the recruitment of sailors for the Royal Navy. So, once the ice cleared, instead of sailing to India he was back in the Channel after delivering the Hanoverian troops to England.

Phillip's naval career continues

Now 1783, Phillip was given command of the 'Europe', a 64-gun ship of the line. He sailed with two other battle ships and a frigate to increase the naval forces in the east. But violent gales and winter seas in around the Bay of Biscay in late January caused all the ships except 'Europe' to return to England. Phillip sailed on, missing the planned first rendezvous in Madeira, and going direct to the Cape Verde Islands. Unbeknown to him, there had been a cessation of hostilities with the truce

leading to the later signing of treaties that concluded the ‘global’ war. Great Britain, France, Spain and the United States signed on 3rd September 1783 and the Dutch on 20th May 1784.

So, after repairs and taking on board supplies, and four women one of whom is said to have ‘captured Phillip’s affection’, Phillip sailed on and reached Rio Janeiro in April 1783. He caused an incident in not stopping outside the fort of Santa Cruz but sailing direct into the main anchorage. He was fired on but his failure to comply with the protocol was quickly resolved. This earned him the respect and later friendship of the new Portuguese Viceroy Vasconcelos, who had replaced Lavradio.

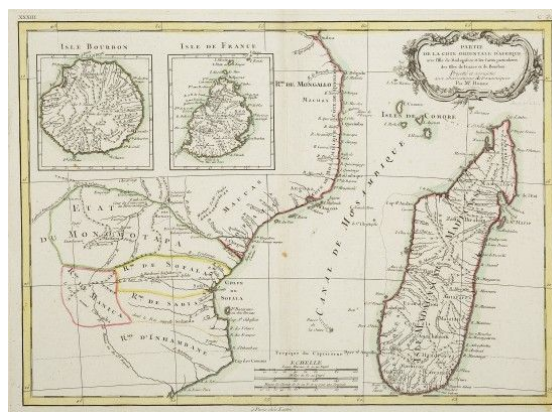
Leaving Rio after twenty days, he sailed to the Comoros Islands in the Indian Ocean off the northern Mozambique coast to take on stores. This was after a chance mid-Atlantic meeting with a ship returning from India when Phillip learnt that there was a truce but no treaty leading him to decide to miss Cape Town.

He eventually reached Madras on 18th July 1783 with his ship in a bad state from the storms and long crossings. He was ordered back to England with 11 other ships, reaching Table Bay on 9th December 1783 finding there that throughout the whole fleet there were around 1,800 men suffering with scurvy. His first sight of Cape Town and appreciation of the effects of scurvy proved valuable for his later expedition. He also observed the local more ethnically diverse slaves. He also met the Dutch Governor and the Garrison Commander, a Scot with links to the naturalist Sir Joseph Banks – see later.

Sailing from the Cape on 20th February 1784, he arrived back in Spithead on 22nd April.



Spithead in the Solent
18c



Comoros Islands off east coast of Africa in

Another time away from the Navy

Back in England there was increasing concern at France’s naval build-up and its objectives in the Far East, vying with the British and Dutch. Pitt as PM saw the need for better intelligence. In the Home Office, Nepean turned to Phillip with his experience and fluency in French, German and Portuguese. He was granted 12 months leave from the Navy from October 1784. On the excuse of ‘personal affairs’ Phillip went to Toulon in November 1784, sending back to Nepean his observations, confirming the build-up of naval power. He was paid from the ‘Secret Service Ledger’!

In all Phillip spent two years in France most likely visiting and reporting from Toulon, Brest, Rochefort, Le Havre, Cherbourg and Dunkirk. His work finished in August 1786, and he returned to England.

Political Situation in England

Around this time there were significant government changes in England. From 1770 to 1782 the Tory Lord North was Prime Minister. In 1782-3 first the Marquess of Rockingham and then Earl Shelburne formed Whig administrations before the Duke of Portland became a Tory PM in 1783, only to hand on to the 24-year-old William Pitt the Younger later that year. Pitt was to hold the position until 1801.



William Pitt the Younger, PM from 1783-1801



4th Earl of Sandwich

The figures most involved with Phillip's advancement and then his selection for the First Fleet were the Earl of Sandwich, Lord Sydney and Evan Nepean.

The 4th Earl of Sandwich (John Montagu) (1718 to 1792) was First Lord of the Admiralty for the third time from 1771 to 1782. In this period Britain had to counter the French, Spanish and Dutch threats through Europe and the Americas. He consulted Phillip about his South American experiences whilst not ensuring his appointment to any ship after 1786.

Lord Sydney (Thomas Townshend to 1783) (1733 to 1800) had no close party connection and succeeded Lord Shelburne as Home Secretary when the former became PM in 1782. After a gap he resumed as Home Secretary from December 1783 to June 1789. He turned to Phillip for assistance in planning an 'expedition' against Spanish Settlements in South America.

Evan Nepean (1752 to 1822) went from joining the navy in 1773 to being promoted Purser in 1775. In 1782 he was, at age 29, appointed Permanent Under-Secretary of State for the Home Department. He later became an MP, rose to higher government positions and was Governor of Bombay 1812-1819. He became a Baronet in 1802. He was in contact with Phillip on many occasions.

Also involved were:

George Rose (1744-1818) Under-Secretary of the Treasury from 1783 to 1801. He had been a neighbour of Phillip in Lyndhurst in the New Forest. Rose was a steadfast supporter of Pitt.

Lord Howe (1726 to 1799) became First Lord of the Admiralty in 1783 under Shelburne and after resigning was reappointed under Pitt in 1783, remaining in post until 1788.

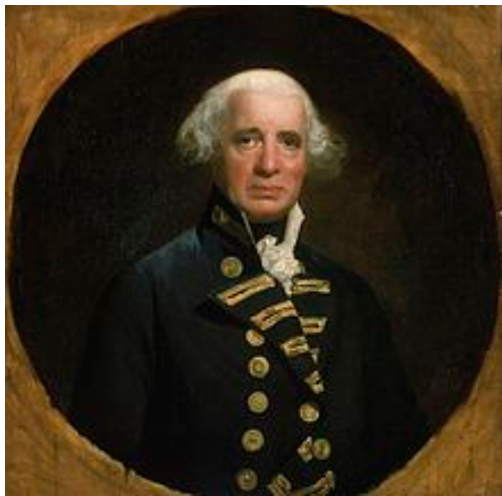
Philip Stephens (1723 to 1809) was Secretary of the Admiralty from 1763 to 1795. During these 32 years, Stephens was one of the most powerful men in Britain. He sent out a cavalcade of navigators to explore the Pacific Ocean, including James Cook on his three voyages.



Lord Sydney



Evan Nepean



George Rose



Lord Howe

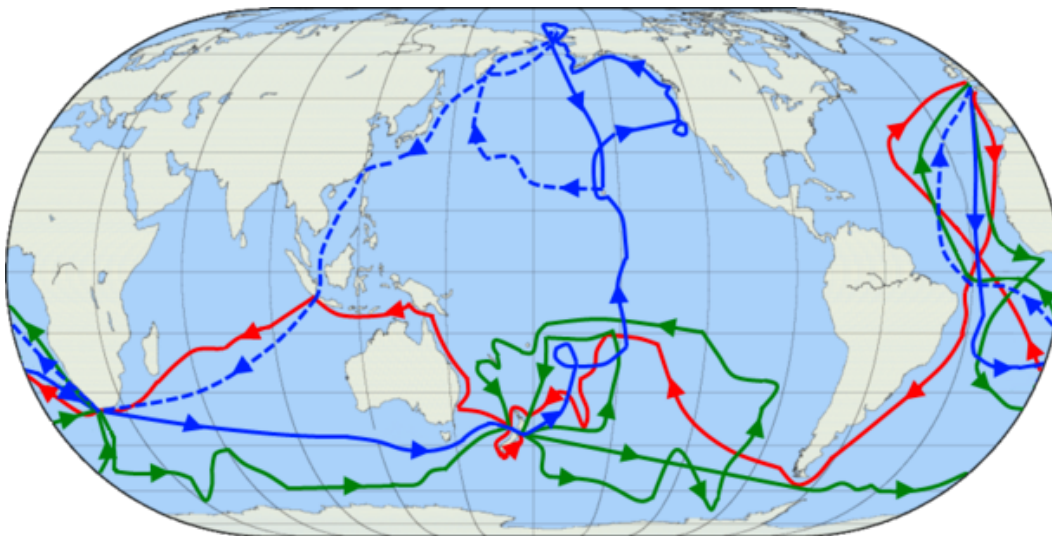


Philip Stephens
Planning the First Fleet

It is important to understand how the First Fleet came about.

Firstly Pitt had serious concerns that England's prisons were overcrowded. Derelict ships in the Thames and southern ports had become floating prisons and the threat of the plague was ever present. A thousand convicts per year had been transported to the American Colonies (in total over sixty thousand!), but losing the American War of Independence in 1776 brought the need for an alternative. One such was Lemane Island in the Gambia River in West Africa, somewhere Burke described by quoting Milton a place where "all life dies, and all death lives". Plans to use Lemane were soon dropped.

Both the Portuguese and French were seeking a base in Australia, despite Captain Cook's land claims after his 1770 voyage. The Dutch and Spanish were also possible claimants. A nation's claim to 'uninhabited' land required more than a bare proclamation or merely the hoisting of a flag. Cook's earlier visit was not enough to secure the east coast of 'New Holland'.



Cooks voyages – 1st in red, 2nd in green, 3rd in blue

Also, the remaining active British fleet were old ships, with the resources to build replacements in short supply. A 74-gun ship-of-the-line used about 40 miles of rope, rigging and cordage requiring around 168,000 pounds of hemp, an acre of sails and wood from 3,400 trees from 75 acres of forest.

New sources were needed, and New Holland was considered a possibility, as was Norfolk Island, New Zealand and New Caledonia.

Nepean understood the strategic and commercial objectives as well as the convict need of a settlement. Sydney saw this proposed settlement as ‘a means of preventing the emigration of our European neighbours to that quarter’. So, the idea of the First Fleet grew.

How did Phillip’s appointment come about?

Three people were mainly responsible for Phillip’s selection. First, back in 1782 (aged only 29) Evan Nepean as Permanent Under-Secretary of State for the Home Department had responsibility for naval and political intelligence. So, he would have been aware of Phillip’s experience. He was the person to whom Phillip later sent reports during his voyages, including naval intelligence about the Spanish when the fleet stopped on route at Rio de Janeiro.

Second was Lord Sydney, Secretary of State for the Home Department, who was maybe influenced by George Rose, Under-Secretary of the Treasury who had been Phillip’s neighbour in Lyndhurst.

Last was the First Lord of the Admiralty, Lord Howe, who was to require some convincing about Phillip. Philip Stephens at the Admiralty was also involved in the planning, but it was the Cabinet in August 1786 that made the decision to form a settlement in New South Wales. Effectively though it was an executive decision by Pitt, Sydney and Nepean.

On 12th October 1786, Phillip received his commission as ‘Governor of New South Wales’, his territory stretching from Cape York (North East corner of Queensland) in the north to Van Diemen’s Land (now Tasmania) in the south and west to Longitude 135 degrees (that area now includes all of New South Wales, Queensland, Victoria, Tasmania and half of South Australia!); a greater area than Cook had claimed. It is likely 135 degrees was chosen to respect the line drawn to separate Spanish, and so Dutch, claims under the 1777 Treaty of Santo Ildefonso (see Page 8).

The *London Gazette* reported that “the King has been pleased to appoint Arthur Phillip, Esq; to be “Captain-General and Governor in Chief of the Territory of New South Wales”.

That sounds rather grand, but the reality was that Phillip had to take the First Fleet, with over 700 convicts and the regular sailors and some marine officers to Botany Bay, discovered by Captain James Cook in 1770, before he could start that new colony. His powers as Governor would only follow if that Fleet arrived safely.

Further, his commission was expanded in April 1787 to include that he should govern the territory himself without a council, but to have the support of a civil court and a court of criminal jurisdiction.

The assessment of Phillip was possibly expressed at the time as:

- *40 years of experience in navigating the North Sea, Mediterranean, Caribbean, Arabian Sea plus the Indian, Atlantic and Pacific Oceans*
- *First-hand knowledge of the Canary Islands, Rio de Janeiro and Cape Town where supplies taken up enroute and where Arthur’s fluency in languages would be of immense value*
- *Proven leadership skills*
- *Excellent administrator and organiser*
- *Specialist in artillery*
- *Good knowledge of farming*
- *First-hand knowledge of the Spanish Settlements and their function*
- *Experience as ‘Overseer of the Poor’ would help in planning a new Community*
- *Experience in transporting convicts to South America*
- *Being a covert agent in France, understanding its threat*

- *Confidence gained from the politicians in Whitehall*
- *A scholar, professional and reliable with high moral principles*
- *Egalitarian outlook derived from relatively humble beginnings*

Some CV! In effect, he was to have the same powers as the Viceroy of India and Phillip was only a Naval Captain. It was said he was to experience the classic British custom of identifying an important objective, then committing small forces with inadequate funds and resources in an attempt to achieve it! Against this, one can only judge the eventual outcome!

Although his efforts at the time to gain promotion to Commodore had met with continued opposition and eventual refusal, he did succeed in being awarded a salary of £1,000 a year as Governor. This was considerably more than a naval captain's pay of £200 to £400. Nepean only received £500 and only one of the 7 Lords of the Admiralty received more than £1,000 a year!

Preparations for the First Fleet.

From October 1786 to the following May Phillip was engaged in preparations for the expedition. Most officials could not understand his task and to recognise the need to cater for convicts, soldiers and settlers. Also to be aware that on landing there was no 'receiving station' and that it would be some years before the settlement could be self-sufficient. He had to deal with the Navy Board, Victualling Board, Sick and Hurt Board, Board of Ordnance and Board of Longitude. Some task!

Phillip's experience had made him acutely aware of the effect of scurvy. Although back in 1747 a Scottish physician had recognised that citrus fruits were an effective antidote, the reason for contracting scurvy was not then understood. It was only later in 1795 that the need to provide citrus fruits was properly recognised, maybe gaining from Phillip's experience. He also recognised and implemented the benefits Cook had found to give those on board, where possible, fresh meats, vegetables and plenty of water together with taking exercise and the ventilation of sleeping quarters.

Whilst convicts sent to the States had effectively become white slaves, Phillip ensured the First Fleet convicts were to be recognised as potential settlers. He was given the power to release convicts whenever their 'good conduct and disposition to industry were deserving of favour'. And he could then grant them land – 30 acres for a single man and 50 acres for a married man. Before he sailed, it was made clear that every incentive and practical assistance was to be given to encourage convicts to embrace independent agricultural development or other essential skills the settlement needed.

Phillip had also to deal with the gender imbalance. His instructions included to 'procure' women from Pacific Islands, but Phillip rejected this and suggested it might be best to permit female convicts to receive visits from male convicts at certain hours and under certain restrictions!

To him only two offences would carry the death penalty; murder and sodomy. His opposition to slavery was already evident, having seen it in practice in many parts of the world.

Sir Joseph Banks had been on Cook's first voyage and had advocated Botany Bay as the place for a settlement. He became a valuable contact for Phillip, having influence as the President of the Royal Society from 1778 for 41 years. He advised on the trees and plants to take to New South Wales, as well as receiving specimens back. He acted as a government adviser on matters relating to Australia.

Phillip's commission read "...We, reposing especial trust and confidence in your loyalty, courage and experience in military affairs, do, by these presents, constitute and appoint you to be Governor of our territory called New South Wales, extending from the northern cape or extremity of the coast called Cape York, in the latitude of 10 degrees 37' south, to the southern extremity of the said territory of New South Wales or South Cape, in the latitude 43 degrees 39' south, and all the country inland and westward as far as the one hundred and thirty-fifth degree of longitude, reckoning from the meridian of Greenwich, including all the islands adjacent in the Pacific Ocean, within the latitude aforesaid of 10 degrees 37' south and 43 degrees 39' south, and of all towns, garrisons, castles, forts and all other fortifications or other military works, which now are or may be hereafter erected upon this said territory. You are therefore carefully and diligently to discharge the duty of Governor in and over our said territory by doing and performing all and all manner of things thereunto belonging, and we do hereby strictly charge and command all our officers and soldiers who shall be employed within our said territory, and all others whom it may concern, to obey you as our Governor thereof; and you are to observe and follow such orders and directions from time to time as you shall receive from us, or

any other your superior officer according to the rules and discipline of war, and likewise such orders and directions as we shall send you under our signet or sign manual, or by our High Treasurer or Commissioners of our Treasury, for the time being, or one of our Principal Secretaries of State, in pursuance of the trust we hereby repose in you.

Given at our Court at St. James's, the twelfth day of October 1786, in the twenty-sixth year of our reign. By His Majesty's Command SYDNEY.

The voyage

Eventually everything Phillip saw as achievable had been put in place and the 'First Fleet' assembled at Spithead ready to depart in May 1787. At that time, Phillip was allegedly full of optimism.

The fleet consisted of 11 ships, some hired. Only one broker had tendered to provide ships and crews. The commercial brokers of London were not initially excited by this new opportunity, nor the East India Company! There were three ships provided from whaling investors, two being Aldermen!

The fleet comprised remarkably small ships, the longest being only 132ft, the shortest 70 ft.

His Majesty's ships: 'Sirius' 20 guns, 612 tons, 160 men The Flagship of the First Fleet.
and 'Supply' 8 guns, 170 tons, 50 men

Transports: 'Alexander' 452 tons, 30 seamen 35 marines, 194 convicts
and 'Lady Penrhyn' 333 tons, 30 seamen, 3 marine officers 101 female convicts
and 'Charlotte' 335 tons 30 seamen 42 marines, 86 male and 20 female convicts
and 'Scarborough' 430 tons 30 seamen, 44 marines, 205 male convicts
and 'Friendship' 274 tons, 25 seamen, 46 marines, 76 male and 21 female convicts
and 'Prince of Wales' 350 tons, 30 seamen, 29 marines, 2 male and 47 convicts

Victuallers and Agent's ships: 'Fishburn' 378 tons with 22 men
and 'Golden Grove' 335 tons with 22 men
and 'Borrowdale' 275 tons with 22 men

Phillip sailed with Marines Major Ross (aged 47) as Lieutenant Governor, Captain Hunter & 2nd Lieutenant King, both later Governors of New South Wales, Lieutenant Collins as Judge Advocate, later Governor of Tasmania, and Augustus Alt, aged 56, as Surveyor General with Lieutenant Dawes his Assistant. The Fleet's agent John Shortland, aged 48, sailed with his two teenage sons.

Many convicts had been chosen as they were mechanics or husbandmen (In England then these were free tenant farmers or a small landowners, i.e. practitioners of animal husbandry). With an average age of around 27, the eldest convict was a woman of 82, the youngest a boy aged 9 who was a chimney sweep condemned to 7 year's transportation for petty theft. The Marines were charged 'to enforce due subordination and obedience....and as a defence against the natives'.

Phillip set off on the fifteen-thousand-mile journey with a variety of plants recommended by Banks. Also on board were around 10,000 bricks, 4,200 religious books and bibles, 40 dogs, a few cats, cattle, pigs, horses, goats, geese, ducks, chickens, rabbits and the surgeon's piano, hoping that most would survive the passage. Rev Johnson was the only minister, with no priest for the 300 or so RC convicts!

'Sirius' carried the very important navigational aid of a Chronometer, as invented by John Harrison only some 40 years before. This was invaluable for timekeeping to aid determining longitude accurately. Phillip ensured a rigid routine was established to daily wind the clock at noon to ensure its accuracy, though he also insisted there were constant cross-checks against readings from lunar measurements. It also carried Surgeon George Worgon's piano which has survived to this day!

The First Fleet left Spithead on Sunday 13th May 1787.

At sea there was a great contrast between the physical day-to-day work of the seamen and the cramped inactive lives of the convicts. Early on, Phillip had laid down strict rules banning unnecessary beating of seamen to make them work harder and he severely punished those exceeding his limits. This also demonstrated to the convicts that he was even handed and that he was aware of their conditions.

Tenerife. The fleet arrived here on 3 June 1787. The fleet anchored at Santa Cruz. Fresh water, vegetables and meat were brought on board. The only fruits available were figs and mulberries, but no citrus. Phillip and his chief officers were entertained by the local Spanish Governor Branciforte. Meanwhile one convict had escaped, but was successfully recaptured. So, on 10th June, they set sail to cross the Atlantic to Rio de Janeiro, taking advantage of favourable trade winds and ocean currents.

Rio. On 2nd August 1787, Phillip's convoy made landfall 50 miles west of Rio at Cape Frio, then reaching Rio where they arrived to a 13-gun salute, recognising his standing from his time there with the Portuguese Navy. This volley was by tradition a way of showing 'partial disarmament', so showing no hostile intent. His reception compared well with Cook's arrival as he was suspected of having more sinister intents than the stated 'observation of the transit of Venus'. Phillip established good relations with the Viceroy who had sent his guard to receive Phillip. He and his naval senior officers were given permission to move freely around Rio, almost unheard-of in the security conscious city. But his merchant captains, seamen and the marines were denied that privilege. Whilst there Phillip, with his contacts from his time with the Portuguese navy obtained information about the Spanish presence around Montevideo which he sent back to England.

Some seamen and convicts were already showing signs of scurvy but a ready supply of citrus fruit in Rio soon led to that disease receding. Supplies taken on board included fruit trees and plants to be cultivated in the new colony, as recommended by Banks. Also loaded were rum, wine, some medicinal plants and the bread substitute casada. The casada was in flax sacks which Phillip saw would also be useful as clothing for the many convicts who already had virtually no clothing; a thoughtful benefit. The Fleet set sail from Rio on 3rd September after a month's stay, receiving a 21-gun salute on departure.

Cape Town. The last call was to be the Dutch port where they arrived on 13th October 1787 following a rough sea journey. Despite encountering reluctant Dutch hospitality, Phillip was still able to procure goods, though it took over a week before the Governor, Van de Graaf, agreed that he could purchase food and livestock. They took on 80,000 pounds of flour, 60 bushels of wheat, 8,800 pounds of barley and 18,000 pounds of bread. Also, many animals were bought in the Cape, including 2 bulls, 3 cows, 3 horses, 44 sheep, 32 hogs and goats and poultry. Lastly, Phillip took on flora, medicinal species, oak, myrtle and fruit trees and vine plants, the last possibly to become the foundation of the Australian wine industry. The Fleet set sail from Cape Town on 12th November

Final leg. Once in the South Indian Ocean, Phillip moved himself to 'Supply' and with 'Sirius' 'Alexander', 'Scarborough' and 'Friendship' he hoped to make haste without the slower store and transport ships. He took the chronometer to 'Supply'. They sailed close to Latitude 40 degrees south, aiming for Van Diemen's Land (Tasmania), a route then rarely taken by British sailors.

The Fleet had a stormy passage with both heavy gales and some huge seas. Water broke over the vessels and was shipped drenching bedding etc on many occasions. It was a very difficult passage, especially affecting the livestock, causing the death of many including calves that had been born on the voyage.

Arrival in Australia

After rounding Van Diemen's land, then not understood to be an island, Phillip saw that his course compared favourably with Cook's record of Longitude. So he headed north. The complete fleet arrived and moored in Botany Bay between 18th and 20th January 1788. It was estimated 1,350 persons arrived including 598 male and 138 female convicts, 294 marines & civil officers, 27 wives and 37 children.

There was surprise after only four days when two French ships, the 'Astrolabe' and 'Boussole' under the command of Comte de Laprouse, appeared at the entrance to the Bay. They were investigating whether the British had established a presence! The French had no offensive intentions, nor were equipped themselves to establish a colony. Phillip avoided direct contact and the French soon withdrew.

At Botany Bay Phillip quickly found the saline nature of the water at the river mouth and the poor soil inland not to be ideal for the settlement. Back in Portsmouth he had identified nearby Port Jackson as a possible alternative. Phillip's views had been researched despite Banks' praise of its fertile soil and plentiful water and food to a Parliamentary Committee; for reasons which are difficult to understand! So, on the 25th January, Phillip went on there with three longboats to reconnoitre.

Phillip had 'the satisfaction of finding the finest harbour in the world, in which a thousand sail of the line may ride in the most perfect security'. In addition, he found tall trees, exotic flora, birds and on the water's edge many members of the Eora tribe of Aboriginal people.

So, on 26th January 1778 the First Fleet finally settled in Port Jackson, only some 13 miles to the north of Botany Bay. This date has become Australia Day, marking the founding of the then new colony of New South Wales. However, the reading of the 'public commissions' and the taking of possession of the colony did not take place formally until the 7th February 1778. Phillip named the place 'Sydney Cove', after Lord Sydney, the Secretary of State for the Home Department. Not long after arriving, Phillip wrote to Lord Sydney that "This country will prove the most valuable acquisition Great Britain ever made" - how prophetic.

The move from Botany Bay to Port Jackson was to prove a critical part of Phillip's success in forming this new colony. The landing site is now close to the Sydney Opera House.

Settling in

Phillip's success had been to navigate so precisely and also to arrive only having lost 1 marine and 24 convicts, compared to the then 10% norm for a voyage of that length. Of course, the arrival was not the end of his problems and only provided the start point for the essential skills that he would have to display to establish and develop the colony.

Everyone started in tents, but progressively they were housed in more durable dwellings which included a hospital, barracks for the marines, quarters for the convicts, store houses, a prison, community buildings etc, as well as a Governor's House for Phillip. But he had arrived with only one stonemason, one brickmaker, three plasterers and five bricklayers and few carpenters.

Whilst physical order was being put in place, Phillip had also to establish civic order. The convict's behaviour was very varied with some being indolent, whilst others saw their opportunities. Adding to his difficulties, Major Ross, as the appointed Lieutenant Governor and senior marine, would not allow his marines to accept responsibility for the supervision of the convicts, seeing that policing the settlement was not their duty, despite their original orders back in England. Ross's appointment had proved to be a failure. He was described as 'perverse, sullen, litigious and unhelpful', hardly the support Phillip required. It was said some of the marine officers were little better than the men they commanded. It is likely Phillip had not had any hand in their original selection.

To protect the scant food supplies, Phillip had to quickly set up a criminal court and early on three convicts were sentenced to death and one to 300 lashes for theft from the public stores. Whilst Phillip later reprieved most convicts sentenced to death, he showed no mercy to six marines sentenced for plundering the stores. It seems ironic, if inevitable, that Phillip set up a night watch of twelve 'worthy' convicts to prevent robberies from the stores and vegetable gardens.

The convicts, other than those who re-offended, were not kept behind prison walls, could wear their own clothes and could build their own huts. Food shortages continued to be the major issue and Phillip had to reduce everyone's rations, including to himself. This egalitarianism was not the norm then.

Phillip had to deal with the added complication that he had not been given the length of sentences for many of the convicts which created legal and procedural problems. The first civil court sat on 1st July of 1788, comprising the Chaplain Johnson, the Surgeon White with the Judge-Advocate Collins.

By July Phillip was directing the creation of the first town plan including a wide avenue from the harbour where there was to be a public square. Also, there were plans for the construction of a Governor's residence whose foundation plaque referred to the 'first settlers', not to the convicts!

In those early days, Phillip was well supported by the Reverend Richard Johnson, who Phillip had first known as the Curate at Boldre church in the New Forest, but who had then become a preacher in London before his appointment as Chaplain to the First Fleet.

Relations with the Aborigines

The Aborigines local to Sydney were from the Eora and went around naked; male and female. They did not cultivate but relied on fish, fruit and roots. There was no predictable pattern in the meetings between the Eora and the English and notably many but not all of the Eora were inclined to violence.

Phillip tried to develop cordial relations with the Aborigines to 'live in amity and kindness with them'. It was to prove a very difficult balance with the settler's preconceptions of relating to natives, Phillip's innate humanity and the fact that the settlers were progressively appropriating Aboriginal lands and ruining their hunting and fishing grounds. After a year, Phillip decided to have one close to him, forcibly taking one of the Eora at nearby Manly Cove, named Arabanoo. Phillip continued to punish the settlers who had formed vigilante groups seeking reprisals for the occasional Aboriginal attacks.

But it was the Aborigines who suffered the first calamity when smallpox struck in late spring 1789 causing the death of at least half of those living close to the harbour, though not affecting any settlers, convicts or marines. Phillip visited a sick Aboriginal family with Arabanoo, who himself succumbed in mid-May that year. Finding where this outbreak had originated proved difficult. One theory was it had come from the Macassan fishermen who sailed from what is now Sulawesi, Indonesia and who traded trepang (sea cucumbers) with the Aborigines.

There was shock when in September 1790 an Aboriginal man without apparent warning or provocation launched a spear at Phillip. It struck him near his shoulder only closely missing his spine. Luckily it missed any major organs, but it was at first feared Phillip would die. He had bled profusely but the assistant surgeon Balmain managed to stop the bleeding, to remove the spear, clean the wound and bandage him up. It was a close shave and it took Phillip six weeks before he could get up and around.

However, Phillip did not seek reprisals. In fact, one named Bennelong joined Phillip which later helped him open the settlement to the Aborigines, so improving relations. Later, Bennelong had a house built for himself at what became Bennelong's Point and here in the November 1790 the Eora staged their first 'corroboree' (A dance with music and costume with bodies painted in different ways and wearing various special adornments). The British were invited.

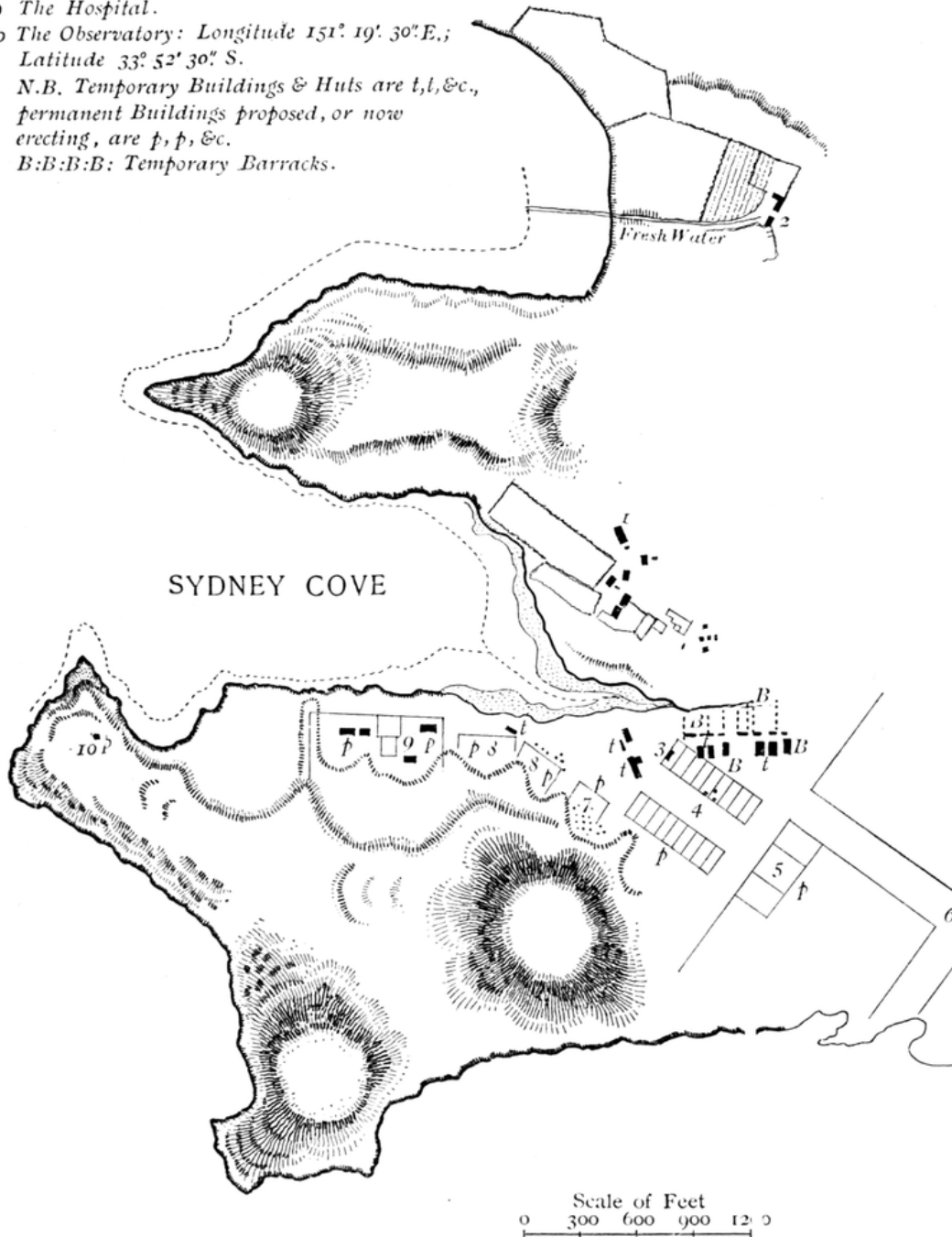
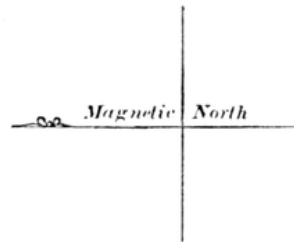
Other incidents occurred with the Aborigines, but Phillip's generally benign approach enabled a reasonable co-existence, in stark contrast to his successors. He believed around 1,500 lived in the area.



Sydney Cove in 1788

REFERENCES.

- 1 A small House building for the Governour.
 - 2 A Farm: 9 Acres in Corn.
 - 3 Lieutenant Governour's House.
 - 4 The principal Street marked out.
 - 5 Ground intended for the Governour's House;
Main Guard and Criminal Court.
 - 6 Ground intended for buildings hereafter,
 - 7 Ground intended for the Church.
 - 8,8 Ground intended for Storehouses.
 - 9 The Hospital.
 - 10 The Observatory: Longitude $151^{\circ} 19' 30''$ E.;
Latitude $33^{\circ} 52' 30''$ S.
- N.B. Temporary Buildings & Huts are t, t, &c.,
permanent Buildings proposed, or now
erecting, are p, p, &c.
B:B:B: Temporary Barracks.





Aborigines view Phillip arriving



'Charlotte' on First Fleet voyage



“Sailed the Charlotte of London from Spithead the 13 of May 1787 bound for Botany Bay in the Island of New Holland. Arrives Teneriff the 4 of June in Lat 28.13N Long 16.23W depart.d it 10 Day arrived at rio janeiro 6 of Aug in Lat 22.54S Long 42.38W depart,d it the 5 of Sep arrived at the Cape of good hope the 14th Oct in Lat 34.29S Long 18.29E depart.d it the 13 of Nov and made the South Cape of New Holland the 8 of Jan 1788 in Lat 43.32S Long 146.56E arrived at Botany Bay the 20 of Jan the Charlotte in Co in Lat 34.00 South Long 151.00 East distance from great Britain Miles 13106”

The Charlotte medal commissioned by Surgeon-general John White made by forger Thomas Barrett



Food

The Fleet had been provided with what was considered sufficient food to last for two years. As a result of substantial amounts going bad and the lack of rainfall for new crops, semi starvation threatened the settlers until at least 1791. Realising that it would take some time to establish farming around Sydney, Phillip continually wrote to Lord Sydney asking for a regular supply of provisions from England.

An essential element of establishing food self-sufficiency was grain farming and the planting of the wheat, oats, corn, maize and barley brought with the fleet. By the November of 1788, the rich dark loams of Rose Hill (named after George Rose from the Treasury and now named Paramatta) had been discovered and Phillip sent Henry Dodd, who he had known first as a farm servant when he was in Lyndhurst, to set up the foundations of their agricultural development. Dodd proved very able and by February 1790 at least some corn was being successfully grown. This then led to Philip being able to issue land grants where convicts could truly become settlers and improve their lives by farming.

Phillip was frustrated by the late arrival of the relief ships bringing in replacement supplies. HMS Supply had been dispatched to Batavia in the April and returned in October 1789. However, being only a small ship, she carried a fraction of the food needed for the settlement. In addition, sickness in the crew meant many sailors had to remain in Batavia, later to die there; something Phillip heard in December 1790 together with the news that war had been declared between England and Spain.

Meanwhile three more transports arrived that April with, when they left England, over a thousand more convicts, though almost 400 died on the voyage or very soon after arrival. Phillip's letter to Lord Sydney on the conditions on that voyage noted that "a want of duty not to say that it was occasioned by the contractors having crowded too many on board those ships and their being too much confined during the passage." A contrast to Phillip's convoy.

Phillip had needed to increase the rationing of supplies until in April 1790, over two years after arriving, rations per week per person were down to 4 lbs flour, 2 ½ lbs salt pork and 1 ½ lbs of rice. Also, stocks were then only predicted to last to the late summer. He had dispatched 200 convicts to Norfolk Island to reduce the numbers to feed. Then in June 1790, 225 more convicts arrived on the 'Lady Juliana' after an 11-month passage. However, they brought mail and also news of George III's madness and recovery and of the French Revolution. However, over that 11 months voyage most of the supplies the ship had carried had perished.

In contrast, later that month a transport 'Justiana' arrived with a larger load of provisions which were in better condition, having made the passage in only 5 months, missing calls at Rio and the Cape.

The overall lack of provision prompted more robberies. Phillip continued with his night watches manned by 'good convicts'. They received no reward or gratuity. They had powers of apprehending and securing those found robbing. Even in 1791 rationing continued after another drought. Even with more supply ships arriving, food supply continued to be a problem, not helped by the continuing arrival of more convicts.

On a lighter note, Phillip enjoyed his first crop of grapes in January 1791 from vines brought 3 years before from the Cape.

By October 1791 there were estimated to be 213 acres of crops and 126 farm animals, but a year later there were over 1,000 acres of crops, still insufficient for the settlement to be self-sustaining. Near the end of his time in Sydney, Phillip had seen the arrival of the 'Gorgon' in September 1791, with 2 stallions, 6 mares, 2 colts, 16 cows and one bull-calf (the last under pressure to secure the future of the cattle, two bulls having died during the passage from the Cape!).

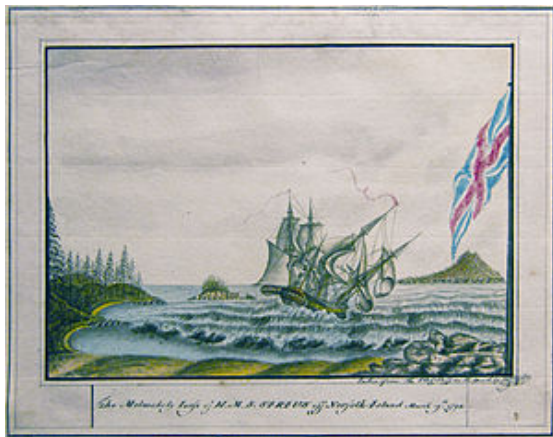
By this time an increasing number of convicts were being granted land by Phillip, either to carry out their trades or to farm.

Norfolk Island

Norfolk Island was 1,000 miles east of Sydney and Phillip had planned it to be part of the potential source of food and materials for the settlement. He had been tasked to secure the island to prevent its occupation by any other European power, but also to develop flax cultivation.

As soon as Philip had seen the French ships in Botany Bay and after arriving in Port Jackson, he sent his trusted Gidley King in 'Supply' to return to Botany Bay to pay respects to the French but also to ascertain their intentions. King was then to sail with some marines to occupy and secure Norfolk Island, colonising it in March 1788. On his return journey, King was to land on Lord Howe Island to see if turtles could be found to supplement meat and salt for the settlers, but only three were brought back.

'Sirius' left the colony at Port Jackson on 2 October 1788 to return to the Cape to get supplies. The complete voyage took more than seven months and she returned only just in time to save the near-starving colony. Two years later, on 19 March 1790, 'Sirius' was wrecked on a reef at Norfolk Island while trying to land stores there.



*Loss of 'Sirius' off Norfolk Island March 1790
By George Raper*



Anchor from 'Sirius' erected in 1907 in Sydney

Phillip as Governor

As we have seen, Phillip had to deal with issues of discipline as well as the failure to secure early crops for the settlement and suffer the long delays of supplies arriving from England. Very soon after arrival, on 7th February 1788, he addressed everyone. To the convicts he laid down how he would expect them to behave, noting some would see the opportunity the settlement could offer, but noting that the greater number "... are innate villains and people of the most abandoned principles"!

The Marines commander, Major Robert Ross, had a continuing difficult relationship with Phillip. The detachment's official objectives were "...not only to enforce due subordination and obedience among the settlers, but were also for the defence of the settlement against incursions by the natives". Because of Ross's refusal to deal with the settlers, his rancorous disposition and his carping criticism of Phillip, he had become a problem, even though the Marine's overall good reputation remained. Eventually Ross was returned to England where he was never promoted and died in 1793. He had been unfitted for the role, especially as tact and good temper were not in his character.

Phillip's approach to the aborigines was to assume the best, not the worst. It is said he hoped to impress them and to give them a 'High Opinion of their New Guests'! When homicide occurred, his view was that the life of an Aboriginal man was equal of any Englishman. Under Philip's jurisdiction, only the same two crimes continued to merit the death penalty (see Page 15).

Only a quarter of the convicts were female, but Phillip had ignored the original instructions to 'procure' women from Pacific Islands. He honoured his plan to enable convicts to become settlers at the end of their sentences if they had behaved. It was said '*In so numerous a community, many persons of perverted genius and of mechanical ingenuity could not but be assembled*'. A difficult balance.

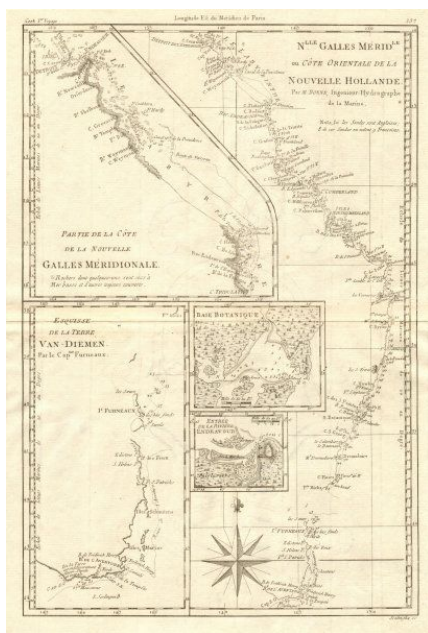
Phillip led and later promoted several expeditions from Port Jackson, the first in February 1788 to Broken Bay and inland up a river, later named Hawkesbury, to Richmond Hill where potatoes, maize and vegetables were planted. A second found a wide river which was named the Nepean. It was later discovered these rivers were linked. A third further convinced Phillip that Botany Bay and the coast south from there was not land to be cultivated. Many other expeditions followed.

Building permanent houses, civic buildings and stores as well as a Governor's and Lieutenant Governor's house around a town plan became in importance only second to establishing food supplies. Bricks and tiles were increasingly produced locally. He kept Sydney up to date on his town plan.

As more transports arrived the situation gradually improved, but it is testament to Phillip's principles and management that he had lost only 40 on the First Fleet. Of three ships that arrived in mid-1790, of 1,038 convicts who embarked 273 had died in transit and 486 had arrived sick with 124 of them dying in Sydney. However, later two transports with 342 convicts on board only lost 12.

So, gradually Phillip established all the elements of the settlement and gradually extended the development of food self-sufficiency. He also encouraged the opportunity for convicts to become settlers and obtain land for farming and to exercise other skills they had brought with them. He had only lost a few military men and convicts from execution, excessive toil and lack of food. He had survived his brush with the Aborigines and instilled his vision of living side by side with them. He had dealt with offenders with compassion and understanding, much in contrast to the punishment practices exercised then in England and other 'western' countries. By 1790, 59 children had been born.

Phillip had detected that transport shipowners had tried to benefit from sending contraband onboard and he wrote to the Commissioners of the Navy asking them to check ships before departure. He suggested that these ships carried limestone ballast for use in Australia, with ships returning with local stone. He also promoted the idea of whaling as ships had reported seeing many to the south. This activity grew after Phillip's departure and became second only to the wool trade for the first half century there.



East Coast Australia 1790
Impact of Events on Phillip



Bennelong, here shown in European clothes, and another Aboriginal accompanied Governor Phillip when he left the colony in December 1792 headed for England. Bennelong was the only one of the three to return to NSW in 1795.

Bennelong

All this work took its toll on Phillip's health. In March 1791 in a private letter to Lord Sydney, he said that he had never had a week free from pain in his side. He thought it came from an inflammation in the kidney (later thoughts it might have been kidney stones, an occupational hazard of seafaring life). This condition continued into April 1792, but already by the end of 1791 he had made his first official request to resign his commission

Phillip wrote to Lord Grenville, by then then Foreign Secretary (1791-1801), *"It is not without concern that I find myself obliged to request His Majesty's permission to return to England. A complaint in the side and from which, in more than two years I have seldom been free, has impaired my health, and at times puts it out of my power to attend to the charge which His Majesty has been pleased to honour me in the manner I wish, and the state of the colony requires."*

Henry Dundas had replaced Lord Grenville as Home Secretary in June 1791 and had already approved Phillip's request. Phillip left for England in December 1792.

After all the issues Phillip had with the Lieutenant Governor, Major Ross, he did have some relief when in early 1791 Major Francis Grose had arrived to take over from Ross. On his departure, Phillip handed over the administration to Grose, who proved a very different Governor with more 'traditional' ways for considering disciplinary matters and dealings with the Aborigines. Good order and public peace were seriously undermined under Grose, this not being helped by an increase in drunkenness.

Phillip's return to England

Phillip had arrived at Port Jackson on 20th January 1788 and he then embarked on the 'Atlantic' on 10th December 1792 for his return journey, a sick and exhausted man, if with a clear conscience. One of his last acts was to increase the weekly food ration in Sydney. He had spent almost 4 years on land in New South Wales.

On his journey back, he was accompanied by four kangaroos, dingos and with other animals, plants and timber samples. Also, he brought back with him the Eora man Bennelong who back in England met George III, returning to Sydney in 1795 and dying in 1813. With Bennelong, Phillip also took another younger member of the Eora people, one Yemmerrawanne who did not survive long in England, dying aged only 19 in 1794. His remains are thought to be in St John the Baptist Church in Eltham where there is a gravestone.

Phillip suffered a hard return passage and it was not until early February 1793 that the ship reached Rio. Here, Phillip heard of the increased tensions with France, but only heard of the revolution and the execution of Louis XVI when they later encountered a Portuguese ship in April. So, on 19th May 1793 Phillip came ashore in Falmouth, almost exactly six years after he had sailed with the First Fleet.

Back in England

To complete his story, it is interesting to follow Phillip's life back in England until his death in 1814. After a gruelling ride from Falmouth to London, Phillip spent time with his banker and his doctor, recovering from his ailments. He learnt that his wife Charlott had died the year before. To his relief her Will released Phillip from the obligations he had entered into when they married and then separated.

He formally resigned his office to Home Secretary Henry Dundas on 23rd July 1793. Dundas consulted Pitt before granting Phillip a pension amounting to half his Governor's salary and back dated from when he left Sydney. He was therefore getting £500 a year in addition to his naval pay.

With Dundas's agreement, Phillip took a house in Bath at 3 South Parade, hoping that taking the waters there would assist his recovery. He spent time reading and studying in a nearby library where

he met and in the following year married Isabella Whitehead, the 43-year-old unmarried daughter of a cloth merchant. The wedding was on 8th May 1794 at St Marylebone in London. Isabella's father has been High Sheriff of Lancashire, so he married into an influential family. For the next two years, their time was spent between Bath and London.

He did apply for permission to return to Australia to "*complete my work there*", but the Admiralty refused. Initially, Phillip declined any further service but still discussed matters of the colony with the government. But when his health was fully restored, he did return to naval service, still as a Captain.

Because of the Napoleonic Wars and other hostilities, the navy strength had grown from 14,514 men and officers in 1787 to 128,930 in 1799! The number of ships grew from 411 to 722. In early 1796, now fully fit and 57 years old, Phillip was recalled to active service to command 'Atlas' a 98-gun ship of the line. It had been 12 years since he relinquished his last command, 'Europe'. But on arrival in Portsmouth he found another captain was already in command.

However, he was given command of 'Alexander', a 74-gun ship of the line. By chance, when 'Alexander' had been captured by the French, Watkin Tench, the marine had been on board. There was little action and the ship got no further than Madeira. Then, after a very brief period on half pay, Phillip was then given command of 'Swiftsure' another 74-gun ship in October 1796. Phillip patrolled with the Western Squadron. After the famous battle of Cape St Vincent, Admiral Jervis ordered Phillip to escort a convoy to resupply Gibraltar before then joining the blockade of Cadiz for 4 months.

At the time, Admiral Thompson was under Jervis's command (as was a Commodore by the name of Nelson!). Thompson was recalled to England by the Admiralty after he had made a public attack on Jervis. His ship, the 'Blenheim', a 90-gun three-decker was given over to Phillip.

Jervis sent Phillip with the 'Blenheim' to Lisbon for repairs, but his sub-plot was so Phillip could be there to command the British naval force if France and Spain attacked Lisbon and the Portuguese did not resist. But Phillip's command was soon taken from him with the arrival of Rear-Admiral Frederick with his own Captain.

Phillip was most upset by this episode and told Nepean so, although it must be recognised that by then he was considerably older than the other captains. He arrived back in England on 2nd March 1798.

So ended his long and varied life as a seagoing naval officer.



Admiral Jervis CinC Mediterranean Fleet 1796-99



Sir Home Riggs Popham

A new career on land

Although not tired of the sea and still closely following events in New South Wales, Phillip accepted a shore appointment as commander of the 'Hampshire Sea Fencibles', one of the first five captains appointed. So, in April 1798, he, with Isabella, made his headquarters and their home in Lymington.

The Sea Fencibles organisation had been formed on 14th May 1798 by Admiral Sir Home Popham, then an RN Captain (he was the 15th child of Joseph Popham!). At that time there was a real threat of an invasion by France. The role can be described as a form of naval home guard.

This task was to take up most of Phillip's next six years. In January 1799 he had reached the top of the Captain's list and was promoted Rear Admiral of the Blue. Phillip supervised the recruitment and training of the local volunteers, inspected the men and their posts and undertook the considerable administrative work involved.

Recruits were volunteers in coastal areas, the incentive being that recruits had immunity from militia service or from press gangs! They were "*for the protection of the coast, either on shore or afloat; comprising all fishermen and other persons occupied in the ports, and on the coast, who, from their occupations are to be unpressed.*" They eventually grew to have 40 districts in the UK and another 22 in Ireland. When the French threat was believed to be over, the force was disbanded in 1810.

In 1803, Phillip was also appointed the Inspector of the Impress Service as well as the whole Sea Fencible service. In this capacity, from December 1803 and February 1805, he and a secretary toured the outposts of England and parts of Scotland to report on the strengths of the various posts, writing reports and making proposals to improve the service.

He did not accept an offer by St Vincent (Jervis) to command the naval forces based in Ireland. In preparing for life after the navy, he and Isabella looked for a home around Bath, with Isabella moving first to be with friends in nearby Bathampton, missing Phillip on his travels around the country.

Eventually in February 1805 his Sea Fencibles appointment was at an end. By the custom of the day, even after retirement, admirals continued through their ranks on promotion. Phillip reached full Admiral of the Blue in the year of his death in 1814. Known as the '*the last nine stages of increasing splendour*', it was a reward for length of service! And with it went ever increasing rates of half pay.

The Navy was divided into three squadrons Red, White and Blue in order of seniority. Admirals were appointed to these squadrons and therefore their rank and squadron split the seniority into 9 bands with 'Admiral of the Fleet' forming a tenth senior to all others.

<i>Seniority was therefore</i>	<i>Phillip's promotion</i>
<i>1. Admiral of the Fleet,</i>	
<i>2. Admiral of the Red Squadron)</i>	
<i>3. Admiral of the White Squadron</i>	
<i>4. Admiral of the Blue Squadron</i>	<i>1814</i>
<i>5. Vice-Admiral of the Red Squadron</i>	<i>1810</i>
<i>6. Vice-Admiral of the White Squadron</i>	<i>1809</i>
<i>7. Vice-Admiral of the Blue Squadron</i>	<i>1807</i>
<i>8. Rear-Admiral of the Red Squadron</i>	<i>1805</i>
<i>9. Rear-Admiral of the White Squadron</i>	<i>1804</i>
<i>10. Rear-Admiral of the Blue Squadron</i>	<i>1801</i>

In 1805, Phillip and Isabella retired to Bath, he as a Rear Admiral at the age of 67. They settled at 19 Bennett Street in a fashionable quarter of Bath near to the Assembly Rooms. He was active locally and nationally in support of New South Wales.

On a cold night in February 1808, Phillip suffered a stroke. Remarkably he made a good, if not complete, recovery. He then regularly visited friends in nearby Bathampton.

He died on 31st August 1814, aged 76 and was buried in Bathampton's St. Nicholas' Church. It is interesting his choice was there rather than Bath Abbey, suggesting he followed '*the uniquely English tradition of the country's elite being buried not in a grand metropolitan church but in the local parish*

church'. Knowledge of his burial place appears to have been lost for 83 years after his death until the tomb was found in Bathampton.

Isabella died in 1823, Phillip having left her a generous income.

Reflections

An opponent of slavery, he was regarded as owning an energetic, cheerful, optimistic and humane character, was modest, accurate and precise, but maintained a firm hand on the tiller and was a strict disciplinarian. Able to communicate in five languages, he had little use for correspondence other than that of an official nature. He was described as being small with a thin aquiline face, but with a sharp and powerful voice. It is of note that Phillip was not knighted, nor given any other honours.

Arthur Phillip – Current and Recent Recognition

It is interesting to look at how Phillip has been recognised since, and especially in recent times.

Australia

Over the years there has been strong recognition of Phillip's part in establishing New South Wales. Recently, Australians have become even more aware and have seen re-published contemporary writings, especially by the fascinating Watkin Tench, a Captain-Lieutenant Marine on the First Voyage who wrote extensively about the voyage and the first years in New South Wales having been commissioned by a Piccadilly publisher. His two books were first published in 1789 and 1793, the latter after he returned to England. More recently there have been new studies in books by Australians.



note.

His portrait was used on the Australian 1960 £10



Selection of many stamps depicting the First Fleet



Sydney now

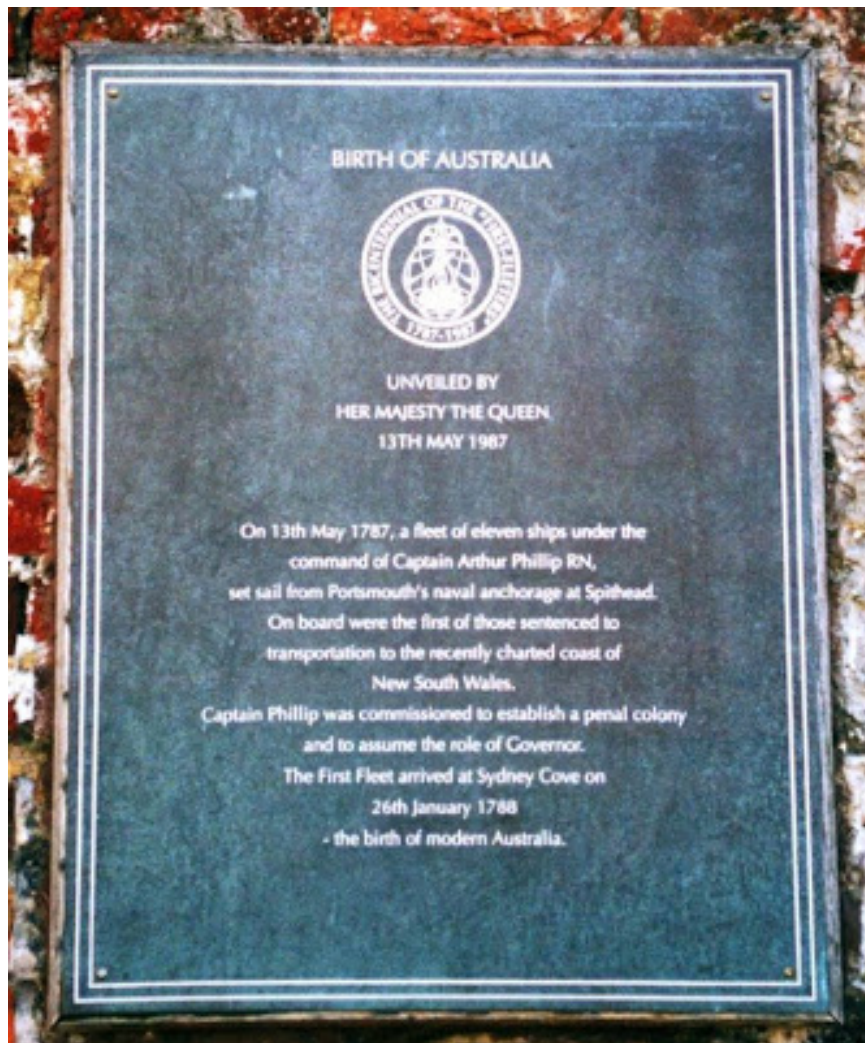
Her Excellency Professor the Honourable Dame Marie Bashir unveiled a bronze memorial bust of Phillip at the Museum of Sydney on 28th August 2014, the 200th anniversary of Phillip's death. Also the local 'Fellowship of the First Fleeters, Arthur Phillip Chapter', held a bicentenary event at 'First Fleet Park' which is of heritage significance being near the site of the landing of the First Fleet in 1788.

In 2005, the First Fleet Garden, a memorial to the First Fleet immigrants, was created on the banks of Quirindi Creek, north of Sydney. There, stonemason Ray Collins carved on tablets along the garden pathways the 1,520 names of all those who came out to Australia in the First Fleet in 1788.

England

English recognition has been less publicised and only really took off with a few notable people promoting the 200th anniversary of Phillip's death in 2014. However, in 1987 the Queen had recognised the 200th anniversary of Phillip and the First Fleet's arrival in New South Wales by unveiling a plaque in Portsmouth.

Before that in 1899 a series of eight books under the generic title of 'Builders of Greater Britain' contained ones on Raleigh, Maitland, Cabot, Wakefield, Clive, Brooke, Raffles and Phillip! So the Victorians had recognised him.



Plaque unveiled By the Queen 13th May 1987

Westminster Abbey 2014

The most prominent of recent events in Britain was the celebration of the 200th anniversary of his death held in Westminster Abbey. His Royal Highness The Duke of Edinburgh attended this Service to Dedicate a Memorial to Admiral Arthur Phillip RN on Wednesday 9th July 2014. Also present and giving an Address were Dame Marie Bashir, Governor of New South Wales and the Dean of Westminster Abbey The Very Reverend Dr John Hall. Also present were many other dignitaries and representatives of many organisations together with a number of members of Bread Street Ward Club.



*Stone by Ken Thompson in County Cork
The Phillip plaque in Westminster Abbey*

The First Fleeters from New South Wales read at the Westminster Abbey ceremony:

IN MEMORY OF ADMIRAL ARTHUR PHILLIP RN An exceptional Leader Commander of the First Fleet First Governor Colony of New South Wales Founding Father of the Australian Nation
--

Bath and Bathampton

A service, arranged by the Britain Australia Society, West Country branch, is conducted every October in the St Nicholas Church in Bathampton near Bath where Phillip is buried. It marks the anniversary of his death and is always attended by Australians from their High Commission in London. The local Primary School pupils always attend. A commemorative lunch in Bath follows the service.

A commemorative sculpture has been designed and carved by Somerset based sculptor Nigel Fenwick with a bronze armillary sphere with an internal globe by the internationally renowned sun dial designer and maker David Harber. It is sited in the Assembly Rooms garden in Bath near Phillip's Bennet Street home.



Sculpture in Bath Assembly Rooms grounds

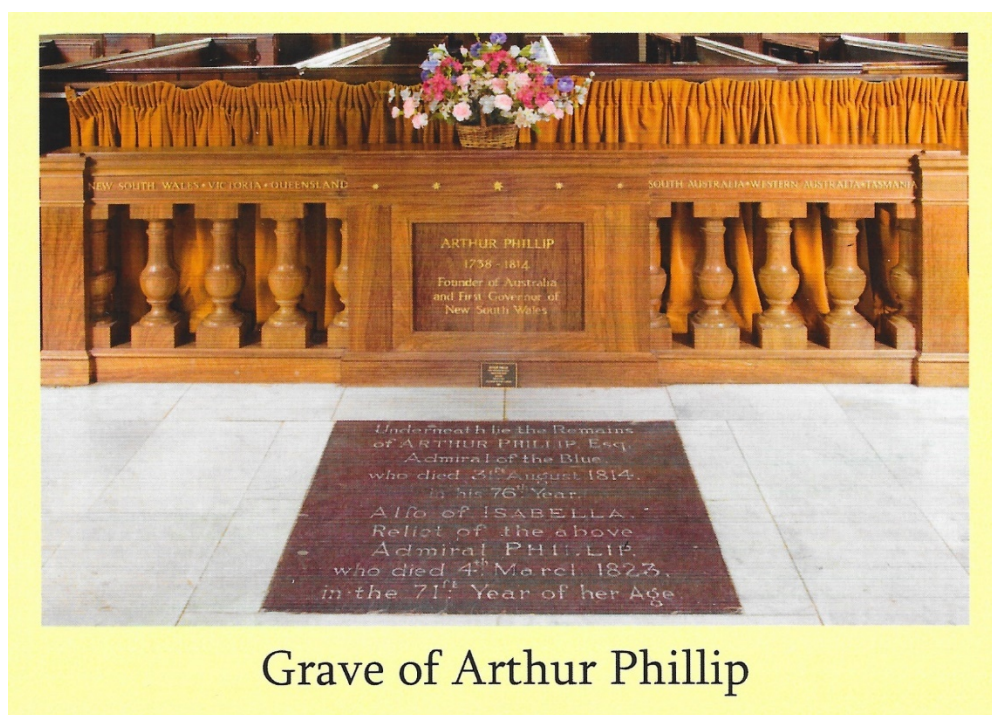


19 Bennett Street, Phillip's home in Bath, showing plaques by front door



Bathampton Church

In 1975 'The Australia Chapel' was Dedicated by the Bishop of Bath & Wells in Bathampton Church.



Grave of Arthur Phillip

New Forest

On the 14th July 2014, the Governor of New South Wales, Her Excellency Professor The Honourable Dame Marie Bashir, together with an Australian delegation visited the New Forest. They attended a

reception at the New Forest District Council offices in Lyndhurst and a tree was planted in the grounds of the offices in Appletree Court. The tree was an Acacia Dealbata placed near the Eucalyptus planted in 1988 to mark the bicentenary of Phillip's voyage to Australia. At the New Forest Centre, the party were shown the Oversees Account and Rates book containing Phillip's signature as 'Overseer of the Poor'.

The party also visited Boldre Church (see page 6) where Rev Richard Johnson was curate before departing with Phillip on the First Fleet as chaplain. Lastly, they unveiled a plaque on the current building in Lyminster on the site where Philip lived from 1798 to 1803 on his return from Australia. Local coast guards and the RNLI provided a guard of honour.



Plaque on the wall showing site of Phillip's House in Lyminster and the current building at the corner of Ashley Lane and the High Street. The house was rebuilt and is now a shoe shop. The blue plaque commemorating the Arthur Phillip connection was unveiled in Ashley Lane by Dame Marie Bashir in July 2014.



Eucalyptus and Acacia Trees planted in 1987 and 2014 at Appletree Court.

In Lyndhurst



The Bench dedicated to Phillip in 2014

Then, on January 2017 a ceremony was held in Lyndhurst to honour Phillip as a New Forest man and a plaque was unveiled outside Phillip's former home outside Lyndhurst at Vernalls which he had bought around 1765. This was attended by Captain Shane Craig, Royal Australian Navy, then Naval Adviser in the Australian High Commission in London. Also present were the Chairman of New Forest District Council and Dan Snow, TV Historian.



Back in London

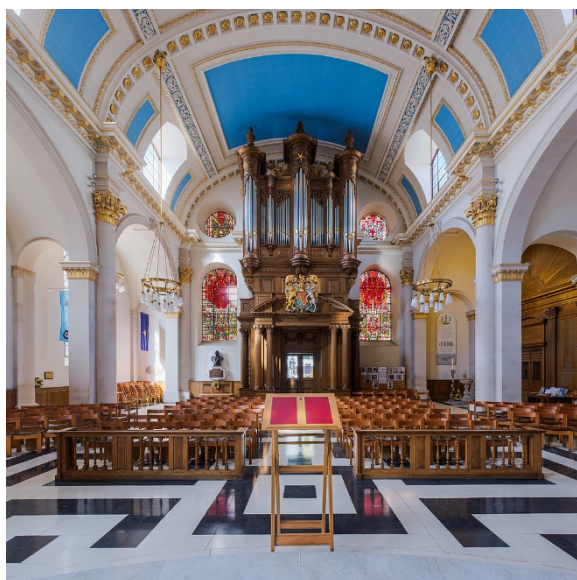
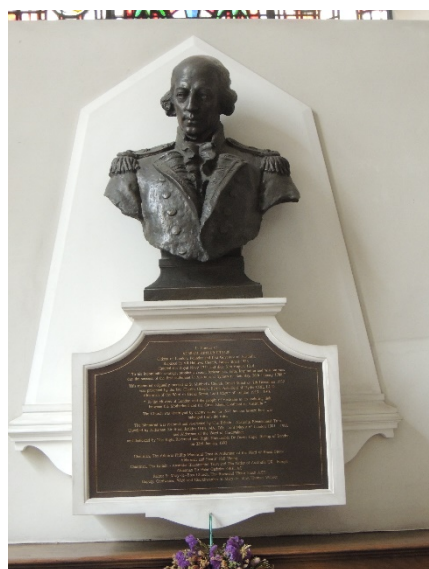
Bread Street

Phillip's memory is now celebrated every January with a service in St Mary-le-Bow church in the City of London, very close to the house on Bread Street where he was born. This service is open to anyone.

This is arranged by the Arthur Phillip Memorial Trust whose Trustees invite the High Commissioner for Australia, Britain-Australia Society members, the Aldermen of Bread Street and Cordwainer wards with the Bread Street Ward Beadle, the Head Boy and Girl from the Royal Hospital School, Members of Bread Street Ward Club and others. There follows a formal lunch held for some years in the Grocers' Hall, with attendees paying for their own meal.

The service always includes an address about Phillip by someone with experience about him, the First Fleet or the early colony. Over the years this address has been given by a wide variety of prominent people with different backgrounds to Phillip's life. Copies of every Address since they started in 1992 are included in our Bread Street Ward Club website alongside this history.

Originally a splendid memorial existed in St Mildred's Church in Bread Street, only parts of which survived the 2nd World War Blitz in 1941 and was salvaged from the rubble. The bust is now in St Mary-le-Bow Church and a wreath is placed there during the January service.



The interior of St Mary-le Bow church with Phillip Memorial

Previously this memorial was unveiled by his late Royal Highness Prince George, NG, GCVO, RN on 7th December 1932, and presented by the late Charles Cheers, Baron Wakefield of Hythe CGE, LLD, Alderman of the ward of Bread Street, Lord Mayor of London 1915/16 to the citizens of London and the people of Australia as an enduring link between the motherland and the great island continent of Australia. The church was destroyed by enemy action in 1941 but the bronze bust and plates were salvaged from its ruins. These were first placed on the building previously on the site of the Fidelity offices.

This re-erected and re-sited memorial was unveiled on May 8th, 1968 by His Excellency the Honourable Sir Alexander Downer, KBE, then High Commissioner for Australia and re-dedicated by the Right Reverend Francis Evered Junt, Bishop of Stepney

Present for the dedication on May 8th 1968 were:

Alderman of Bread Street ward: H Murray Fox, MA
Common Councilmen: S.R. Walker, CBE, Deputy,
R.M. Simon MA, LLB,
G.D. Trentham,
R.N. Steiner, MA

C. McAuley,
O.S.R. Rawson
Ward Clerk: S.D. Plummer, OFC

There is now a Memorial Bust standing in Watling Street close to the 'recent' Fidelity building (Fidelity have moved to another nearby building). See pictures overleaf.

Inscription

{On the west side, beneath the relief depicting a scene with 5 people on a shore:}
The discovery and fixing the site of Sydney on Wednesday, 23rd January, 1788.
Reading from left to right:

Surg. J. White, R.N.,
Capt. Arthur Phillip, R.N., founder,
Lieut. George Johnston, Marines A.D.C.,
Capt. John Hunter, R.N.,
and Capt. David Collins, Marines.

{On the east side, beneath the relief depicting a ship and rowing boat:}
The founding of Australia at Sydney on Saturday, 26th January, 1788.
Figures in rowing boat leaving H.M.S. Supply are:

Capt. Arthur Phillip, R.N.,
Lieut. P. Gidley King, R.N.,
and Lieut. George Johnston, Marines A.D.C.

{On the stone below the bust:}

In honour of Admiral Arthur Phillip R.N., Citizen of London, founder and first governor of Australia.
Born in the ward of Bread Street 11th October 1738. Entered the Royal Navy 1753 and died 31st August 1814.

To his indomitable courage, prophetic vision, forbearance, faith, inspiration and wisdom was due the success of the first settlement in Australia at Sydney on Saturday 26th January 1788.





The Admiral Phillip Memorial in Watling Street

Final Relections

There are a variety of books available on Arthur Phillip and some divergence of facts and opinions in them. I have tried to use what appears the most believable but, who knows! See the Bibliography.

There sometime seems to be more recognition of the voyages of Captain James Cook, who was the first European to land on the east coast of Australia at Botany Bay in 1770 in HMS Endeavour, claiming it for Britain. In 2018 the Australian Government spent £26m on celebrations to mark his landing in Botany Bay. It is perhaps ironic that Phillip found Botany Bay unsuitable and quickly moved north to Port Jackson, now part of the Sydney harbour area.

From this time, the city of Sydney and Nepean River, and Bennelong Point near the Sydney Opera House are now prominent names in New South Wales, as are:

Port Phillip Bay, Philip Island and Point Nepean near Melbourne,
Port Arthur as well as Cape St Vincent in Tasmania
East of Canberra on coast is Jervis Bay
North of Brisbane is Hervey Bay

It is noteworthy that from the start of Phillip's First Fleet, in total over 162,000 criminals were transported to Australia on 806 ships over the next 62 years.

To me, Phillip demonstrated all his experience right from his time at the Royal Hospital for Seamen, his slow advancement up the naval ladder, his time, sometimes on half pay, as a linguist, farmer, trader and spy as well as a naval officer, and his ability to learn from his experience to form the

resilient leader, the strong administrator and his natural empathy for all manner of people, so different from many leaders of his time.

A study of Phillip exposes a complex man in confusing times for European nations. He lived a varied life between the Navy, his ventures and adventures when not at sea. His eventual selection and brilliant execution of taking the First Fleet to Australia and setting up that first community made up largely of convicts is a remarkable testament to a remarkable man.



*Arthur Phillip by Francis Wheatley 1787
Commissioned as the significance of the First
Fleet took hold in 1786/7*



Watkin Tench 1758 – 1833

Acknowledgements

I am indebted to those in the Bread Street Ward Club who encouraged me to undertake this task and to Michael Evans in the Club and Robin Donald in Bathampton for their careful proof reading and help and recommendations.

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All these publications have been read and some of the information used without quoting from them to contravene any copyright where applicable. Pictures have either been taken by myself or taken from open parts of the Internet.

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Angus Ross, Alderman William Russell and Michael Evans



Robin Donald in Bathampton Church

Angus Ross 2019