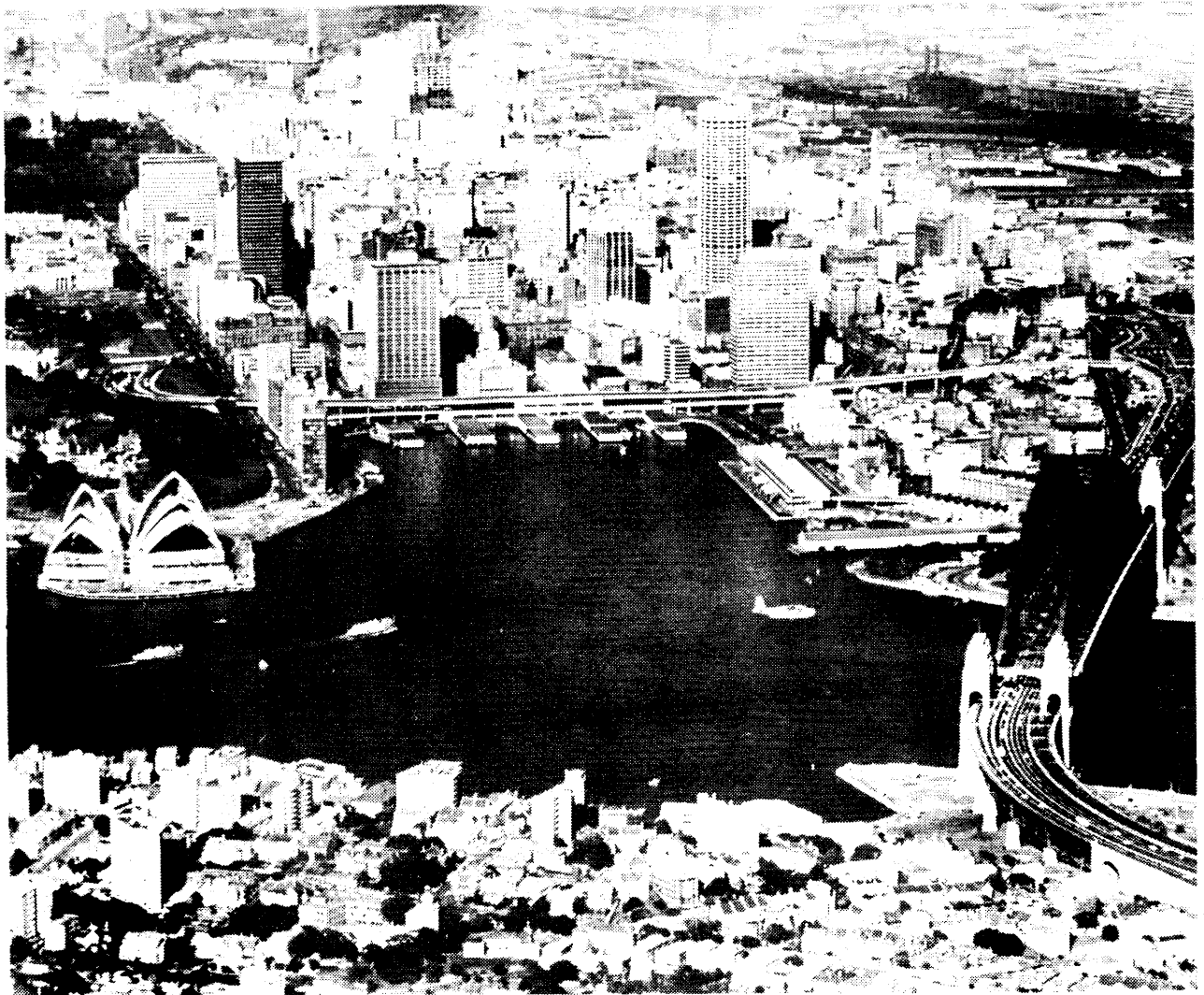


FIRST FLEETERS

Journal of the pioneer families of Australia



Sydney Cove, 1971

Published with permission of the Sydney Morning Herald

FELLOWSHIP OF FIRST FLEETERS

1788 A.D.



AIMS & OBJECTS

- a) To honour and be loyal to our Country - Australia. To acknowledge and honour the Crown and Monarch as Head of State.
- b) To disseminate a deeper knowledge and create a greater awareness of the part played by those Pioneers who arrived in Sydney with the First Fleet on 26th January 1788 and to ensure the accurate and authentic recording of the history of the members of the first fleet.
- c) To ensure that the country's National Day (26th January each year) is celebrated in a manner and on a scale befitting the important event.
- d) To encourage Australian patriotism and to strengthen the bonds of loyalty by all people living in Australia, irrespective of their birthplace or origin, creed or party and to welcome and extend hospitality to migrants and visitors from overseas.
- e) To support and encourage where possible Australian Art in all forms.
- f) To do any and all of those things which are in the opinion of the Fellowship considered beneficial to it and of future benefit and well-being of the Fellowship and the nation generally.

MEMBERSHIP:

The Fellowship consists of -

- Members - with proof of their ancestors having arrived in Sydney with the First Fleet on the 26th January, 1788, and who have attained the age of 18 years.
- Junior Members - possessing proof of the above and who are under the age of 18 years.
- Life Members - Life Membership may be conferred by the Fellowship (in General Meeting) on any Member who has, in the opinion of the Fellowship, rendered signal service to the Nation or the Fellowship.
- Associates - husbands and/or wives of Members having no voting rights.

THE FELLOWSHIP OF FIRST FLEETERS is non-political, non-sectarian and non-profitmaking. The Badge of the Fellowship is a map of Australia (in blue) with F.F.F. imposed thereon in gold letters.

FIRST-FLEETERS

The Official Journal of the
**FELLOWSHIP
 OF FIRST FLEETERS**
 Issued Quarterly—Vol. 2, No. 1.
 September, 1971 50c.
 Editor: Frank J. Everingham
 Post Office Box 267, Pennant Hills,
 N.S.W. 2120
 Tel. 84-2794

SUBSCRIPTION RATES

| | Single Copy | | 1 Year's Subscription |
|---|--------------|-----------|--------------------------|
| | If picked up | If posted | |
| General Public | 50c | 72c | \$2.50 |
| Historical Societies, Universities and Schools..... | 35c | 60c | \$2.00 |
| Members of Fellow- ship of First Fleeters | 20c | 37c | \$1.50 |

OFFICERS

| | |
|------------------------|--|
| VICE PATRON: | Mr. J.H. Luscombe (Town Clerk, City of Sydney). |
| PRESIDENT: | Frank J. Everingham |
| VICE PRESIDENT: | Frederick Daniell |
| VICE PRESIDENT: | Edgar A. Kable |
| HON. SECRETARY: | Mrs Betty Loneragan |
| HON. TREASURER: | Eric S. Blair |
| HON. AUDITOR | J. Bray |
| HON. SOLICITOR | Paul Jurd |
| CHAPLAIN | Reverend Wilbur Chaseling |

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

| | |
|------------------|-------------------------|
| Mrs Thelma Guy | Mrs. Margaret Markwell |
| Mrs. Joan Ross | Mrs. Mary Thompson |
| Mrs. Elaine Haig | Miss Elizabeth Williams |
| Mr. Dudley Oakes | Mr. Vincent Parker |

FLEET COMMITTEE

CHAIRMAN: Mr. E. A. Kable, 52 Fullager Road,
 Wentworthville 2145. Tel: 635 0427.

**SECRETARY
 & "NEWS
 LETTER"
 EDITOR:** Mrs. Betty Loneragan, 11 Kings Road,
 Eastwood. 2122. Tel: 85 3349.

**MEMBERSHIP
 COMMITTEE:** Mrs. E. Haig, 2/D Marshall Avenue,
 Warrawee 2074. (Home 48 6307).

CONTENTS

| | |
|---|----|
| Editorial | 2 |
| Message from the Hon. Don Dunstan, Premier of South Australia. | 7 |
| An early Conservationist — 1803 | 8 |
| Australian — Britain Society | 9 |
| St. Phillips Church named after our first Governor | 12 |
| A maximum of 8% interest in 1804 | 13 |
| Ester Johnston — The Lieut. Governor's wife The amazing story of a Jewish convict girl | 14 |
| The late Mr. H.F.H. Kable, Patron of Queensland Division of the F.F.F. | 30 |
| William Broughton — Pioneer | 32 |

OBITUARY

Our sympathy is extended to the families of

| | | |
|---------------------|----------|----------------------------------|
| Mrs. Eileen Hawes | Ancestor | Joseph Hatton |
| Mrs. Claudia Hayman | | Owen Cavanaugh |
| Mr. Ernest Jurd | | William Douglas & Mary Groves |

| | |
|--------------------|------------------------------------|
| Mr. Milton Small | John Small |
| Mrs. Alma Thomas | Henry Kable |
| Mrs. Maria Thomas | William Nash |
| Mrs. Daisy Waldie | James Lee |
| Mr. Eric Whitting | John Small |
| Mr. Graham Guy | John Small HENRY KABLE. |
| Mr. Clarence Kable | Henry Kable |

EDITORIAL

THE CONTINUING CRISIS

It is certain beyond doubt that all of mankind now alive will live out their lives in a world, now, not only in a continuing crisis but of crises of increasing severity, increasingly intractable, and insoluble in terms of current knowledge.

Equipped only with the wisdom and experience of our forefathers we apply that experience, so often unavailingly to the personal dilemmas of conscience. In vain we apply this experience to the massive problems that now confront the family of man.

The unbelievable expansion of knowledge outstrips the efforts of men of goodwill to find solutions to the ever increasing problems that the expansion of knowledge has brought even into our daily lives. We find increasing perplexities in the immediate communities in which we live and on an international scale they are seemingly beyond our personal comprehension and assessment.

Sombre voices to which we pay little heed have warned us that mankind is rushing ahead into disasters of incomprehensible magnitude.

We have been warned that large areas of the earth's surface may have to be placed in a form of quarantine until the surplus populations therein have been reduced by starvation and massive death to a level where the land may then be able to support the survivors. And yet we are aware that huge food surplusses exist throughout the world.

A natural disaster, perhaps the largest known in recorded human history is said to have drowned some hundreds of thousands of people. Possibly as many died in the weeks that followed from starvation and sickness and they were the unfortunate ones. They survived a short time in the horror about them and knew before they died that they were doomed and beyond human aid.

Yet can it be denied that the wave of horror around the world was followed by an unspoken feeling of relief that the population pressure had been reduced by even this small amount. To this fearful disaster there has now been added the frightfulness of civil war with worse perhaps yet to come. The multiplying human agony is on a scale beyond human comprehension. There may be over 7 million refugees and they will cry in vain for help other than for a few fortunate ones.

Can any man or woman of any colour, of any nation, believing and hoping for salvation in their religion look upon their brothers and sisters and say they are surplus and have no place in the sun.

When we so look upon our fellows our conscience tells us we are looking at ourselves and we are diminished. We are no longer worthy of our belief in Creation, of a belief in God and the hope of the ultimate mercy within death.

It is certain the crises are man made. Neither the Creator, nor the stars, nor a malign fate has brought us to the very edge of annihilation. Equally so we may look in vain to a power beyond man to solve our problems.

Even the most unthinking are dimly aware that the tawdry baubles we prize so much are in some part the temporary rewards of sustaining a weapon oriented society. We are aware that the demands for ever more sophisticated weaponry, and a war, however small, means some prosperity in the terms we understand and so foolishly seek. When we supply armaments and share in the profits we are guilty, and that posterity will so judge us is a matter apparently of little concern. We are at the same time aware of the enormous benefits which could be shared by all mankind if the universal insanity in the pursuit of armaments could be halted.

We are aware that the by-products of our so called affluent society are poisoning our environment. Our affluence, if it be such, is little better than temporary. It is based on the fallacy of a consumer oriented society and the wickedness and extravagance of deliberate obsolescence that wastes the resources so bountifully supplied by nature. We take little heed of warnings that much of our natural resources has now been defined as having a terminal point.

By default and by deterioration of the qualities of life in other nations, Australia is now assuming the appearance of the last paradise left on earth. It is our privilege and ours alone and our duty to establish how this may be preserved.

We cannot elect isolationism in a world of instant communication and intercontinental missiles. We can however establish our priorities to this end and the first of these we already have, and this is the priceless boon and blessing of a society not tearing itself to destruction with class hatreds and the multiplying agonies of a multi racial society.

This first priority in our way of life will sustain attacks of ever increasing severity from nations distracted with the insoluble problems of their multi racial societies. To succumb to such attacks, and they will come from within our own people as well, will be to part forever from the uniqueness, the mystique of a people, and which we barely comprehend ourselves, a people who are at home wherever they find themselves within the largest island continent on the face of the earth.

It is doubtful if we can any longer support even a minute immigration program. It is a priority to reduce immigration to a mere token. Not to do so is to ignore the warnings so recently uttered by distinguished academics, economists, demographers and the most eminent leaders in commerce and industry. Only the natural growth of population can sustain our standards and way of life and support our obligations.

It is a priority to establish our obligations to a world society in the travail of today and a worsening tomorrow, to the family of man in his near infinite variations. That we have obligations is self evident and unarguable.

It is doubtful if we can make a meaningful contribution to the ancient societies of the Northern Hemisphere and their continuing crises. They are repetitive problems deriving from ancient tribal hatreds reappearing in every generation, and in what ever form clearly identifiable as having arisen before.

England, the nation from whence we came, can accept a million or more unemployed as part of an economic reconstruction and may well be planning a massive migration program. The possession of a British passport should no longer mean to the holder of that passport that he may enter at will and live permanently in the Commonwealth of Australia irrespective of his racial origins. The concept that British nationality rests on a passport can no longer be held as valid for entry and residence in Australia. It may well be that the first few years of British membership of the Common Market may be more than unacceptable to many British people. The ultimate and continuing success of proposed entry to the European Economic Market is at least doubtful. British migration and migration from any country can only be acceptable in the future if such migration is not subsidised by the Australian people and if they are self supporting in every respect from the date of entry.

From even the most cursory study of our history there emerges the conviction that from 1788 those who sought a new life here and contributed in that seeking were self supporting and self reliant from the start.

The so called wide open spaces of our country will be regarded as an ever more tempting solution to the population problems of increasingly industrialised nations of the Northern Hemisphere.

Twice this century, in two generations, Australia and New Zealand have made a massive contribution in blood, manpower and treasure to the convulsions of the Northern Hemisphere. We have contributed to the League of Nations and the United Nations and from the former we received a mandate and accepted the responsibility for New Guinea and its people. The critics of our management from wherever they come may be dismissed out of hand.

We have contributed to the Atlantic Charter and the Declaration of Human Rights, surely the lineal descendant of the Great Charter and a testament to the belief that all men have a place in the sun and it has now seemingly become as Dead Sea Fruit. Yet it remains in looking backwards as a veritable beacon, surely the highest expression of man's belief in the dignity of man. It is a testament to the belief of men and women that they may seek beyond themselves and from this belief has arisen the United Nations. It is a testament to the belief that man may live in peace with his neighbours and give and receive help with human dignity. It matters little how far the achievements have fallen short of the ideal. It remains a priority for Australians in their relationships with their neighbours to assert their belief in the Declaration of Human Rights.

The other life with which we share this wondrous planet and over whom we have determined our domination are disappearing under our relentless and insane persecution. That this should cease is a priority for every man, woman and child in Australia, and for every nation throughout the world. Unless this priority is established the generations to come will gaze on an increasingly dull and sterile world and curse their ancestors for their brutality.

We may not expect that the continuing crises within our own nation will not increase in incidence and severity.

It is a priority for a reassessment of the benefits or otherwise of development capital from overseas and an appraisal of what benefits may accrue to our posterity. The industrial unrest and the daily and dire warnings of economic crisis hardly justify assertions of prosperity and affluence. With the ever increasing flow of North American capital we will import the philosophy and sickness of that economy. We should take heed of the words of the late President Eisenhower "In the councils of government we should guard against the unwarranted influence, whether sought or unsought by the military industrial complex. The potential for the disastrous rise of misplaced power exists and will persist".

How much of the natural resources of our country so far known and, more importantly, what is yet to be discovered, is now owned by overseas interests is apparently still a matter of conjecture. The uncertainty of not knowing may be a contributing factor to industrial unrest. The natural resources of our country and the rational exploitation of such resources might well provide the basis to implement a national social security program.

Multi national corporations with annual budgets larger than many countries, owning neither allegiance to any country nor loyalty to the traditions of any people, concerned only with the maximisation of profits, may well be in the near future the ultimate dominating and directing force within the Commonwealth. Our children and grandchildren as yet unborn may find themselves tenants in their own country and the employees of absentee landlords.

We have sustained the testing by a European power of nuclear devices in the Pacific Ocean adjacent to the Australian coastline. It is a priority for the Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia, every State Parliament and the Opposition within those Parliaments and every candidate for Parliamentary office to pledge their opposition to this gross intrusion.

The intrusion is based on the tattered and discredited philosophy of the nineteenth century that European Powers may acquire colonial empires. The tattered remnants or "presence" is now no more than a continuing excuse for the exploitation of national resources. It does not constitute a continuing right to test nuclear devices in the Southern Hemisphere. It should be opposed, not only on behalf of the people of Australia, but all the people of the South West Pacific and if we should do so we shall earn the goodwill not only of those people but of the people of South East Asia.

It is asserted that our land is a part of Asia, and the question may well be asked of what part of Asia are we a part? This island continent is unique and every criteria that seeks to establish otherwise has failed.

The criteria is based on expediency and fear as the colonial powers retreat to the Northern Hemisphere and we become the loneliest white nation on the face of the earth.

It is not incompatible with the christian ideal nor the Declaration of Human Rights that Australians should assert their identity and insist on its continuity. Such identification is not inimical to the interest of our neighbours. The Colombo Plan may be seen at work in our universities and the Asian students now returned to their homeland may well testify that if Australia became a multi racial society, not only the desire but the ability to assist might not only diminish but disappear entirely.

That the course of world history is without beginning and end, is aimless and capricious, is a proposition forever debateable. To believe so is to deny the martyrs of our Anglo Saxon heritage. Our temporal traditions began in antiquity and flourished in Christianity. The struggle has been forever upward and we can take courage for the future when we look back to those who died to testify to their belief in the essential dignity and freedom of man. Compatible with the eternal truth of the greatest good for the greatest number are the Anglo Saxon laws under which we live.

The struggle was carried here to this ancient land, transplanted, and has flourished. Our heritage is Anglo Saxon and can it be denied that we began as England beyond the Equator and have continued as such. The disoriented in every generation since, and now, who would deny our heritage keep us aware of whence we came and aware of our destiny.

We are Australians and yet we have amongst us people descended from those who lived, fought and struggled with Boadicea, with Hereward, and those who accepted the Christian faith, and those who knew the valour of St George, St Patrick and St Andrew. This incredible heritage will never be cast aside as of little value.

To retain and assert our heritage is a priority. To do so will earn the respect of our neighbours. It will enable us to make an ever increasing contribution to the community of the Southern Hemisphere. History would indicate that we are more likely to be able to do so than if we accept the current and unproven belief of a minority, and the certain pressure to come of powerful nations that we must accept and assimilate those who are unwanted, and those who would flee the future and ever increasing strictures of their native countries.

Our history has a beginning and it began with the First Fleet and those who came afterwards and brought with them a hope for a better life and they found it here. They were changed and altered by the land to which they came and their survival was a contribution to our present and this is our heritage.

Our destiny is within ourselves and is a continuity from antiquity and this we should cherish. To cast it aside for fear and expediency is to deny the past, reduce the present and forfeit the future.



PREMIER'S DEPARTMENT
STATE ADMINISTRATION CENTRE
VICTORIA SQUARE, ADELAIDE
SOUTH AUSTRALIA

From the first days of settlement in this country, Australians have been excited by the thought that this was a new land in which a new society could be made - a society free from the social rigidity that blighted the traditional societies of Europe.

Australia has developed in the last two hundred years as one of the most stable countries in the world, but the spirit of youth and vigour which characterised Australia in the early days still remains and the concern for liberty and freedom is as strong now as it was in the days of the fight for self-government.

We are standing at a point in our history where the choices we make are going to determine the course of our future. If Australia is to keep pace with progress in the rest of the world, Australians must continue to examine new ideas and technologies with a spirit of open-minded enquiry and a willingness to seek and to accept change.

We cannot afford to reject new ideas without careful consideration. To act in set patterns is easier than to create new ones; but it leads to stagnation and eventual death.

Australia has tremendous potential. We must do all we can to see that it is not wasted.



Don Dunstan
PREMIER.

AN EARLY CONSERVATIONIST

Due to reproduction difficulties, only part of this extract from the Colonial Secretary in letters are reproduced below. The exact wording is given in the text hereunder.

This is perhaps the first official document in Australia which establishes the thinking of our pioneer administrators of their desire to preserve our flora.

If anyone can produce an earlier document, we will gladly publish it.

The Editor.

*4th October 1803

"From the improvident method taken by the first Settlers on the sides of the Hawkesbury and Creeks in cutting down timber and cultivating the banks many Acres of Ground have been removed, lands inundated, Houses, Stacks of Wheat, and Stock washed away by former floods, which might have been preserved in some Measure, if the Trees and other Native plants had been suffered to remain, and instead of cutting down, to have planted others to bind the soil of the Banks close, and render them less liable to be carried away by every inconsiderable Flood, nor is this the only evil, the public convenience having suffered by the the numerous large Trees lying in the Stream and fallen across, rendering Water Carriage on the Creeks almost impracticable, and in some parts of the Hawkesbury very dangerous.

As several Settlers have been, and are now fixing on the lower part of the Hawkesbury and along the Nepean, South Creek, and Georges river in Situations where the above Evils may be prevented It is hereby directed that no Settler or other Person to whom ground is Granted or Leased on the sides of any River or Creek which, where timber is now growing, do on any account cut down or destroy by Barking or otherwise, any tree or shrub growing within two Rods of the Edge of the Bank, except for an opening, One rod wide, to have access to the Water.

Mr Evans, acting Surveyor of lands is directed to communicate this Ordinance to those lately settled, and to give the Governor a list of those who have not yet cut any timber down in the above situations, that it may be a condition in their Grant, and should they not be sufficiently sensible of the general and Individual Benefit arising from this necessary Regulation.

The Magistrates are hereby required and directed to levy a fine of fifty shillings for Each tree cut down, the penalty to go to the Informer prosecuting to Conviction before two Magistrates.

Within the two Rods of timber left on the Banks, another Rod is to be left for a Public Road, along the sides of the River or Creek or Creek, which three Rods are not in future to be measured in the respective Allotments.

It is Earnestly recommended to those who already hold farms by Grant, situated on the side of any River or Creek, liable to floods, and which have been cleared of timber, to Replant the Banks with such binding Plants and Trees as they can procure.

Reproduced with permission of the Archive Office of N.S.W., The Public Library of N.S.W.

4th October 1803



From the improvident method taken by the first Settlers on the sides of the Hawkesbury and Creeks many Acres of Ground have been removed, lands inundated, Houses, Stacks of Wheat, and Stock washed away by former floods, which might have been preserved in some Measure, if the Trees and other Native plants had been suffered to remain, and instead of cutting down, to have planted others to bind the soil of the Banks close, and render them less liable to be carried away by every inconsiderable Flood; nor is this the only evil, the public convenience having suffered by the numerous large Trees lying in the Stream, & fallen across, rendering Water Carriage on the Creeks almost impracticable, and in some parts of the Hawkesbury very dangerous.

As several Settlers have been, and are now fixing on the lower part of the Hawkesbury along the Nepean, South Creek, and Georges river in Situations where the above Evils may be prevented

AUSTRALIA-BRITAIN SOCIETY

The Australia-Britain Society has been established to foster the good relationships which have existed between the peoples of Australia and Britain over the past 200 years.

The National Committee proposes to undertake activities which will promote opportunities for people from all walks of life to visit and work in the United Kingdom, as a means not only of developing friendly personal relations, but also of exchanging ideas and of creating a deeper understanding of our traditions and our ideals. It also plans to promote an annual Britain Week throughout Australia, the focal point of which will be a distinguished guest from Britain.

GENERAL ADMINISTRATION OF THE SOCIETY

A National Committee has been established to assume full responsibility for the conduct of the Society throughout Australia. A Master Plan drawn up by the National Committee will be carried out by Regional Committees in each State of the Commonwealth and the A.C.T.

Each of these Regional Committees will be semi-autonomous in that it will have the responsibility for working out details for the effective operation of the Society within its State.

It is also intended to form a Women's Committee and a Junior Committee to assist in achieving the aims of the Society.

RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHER COMMONWEALTH SOCIETIES

The present activities of all existing Commonwealth societies which assist in Australia-Britain activities will be respected and as far as possible any overlap will be avoided.

Members of these societies are cordially invited to become members of the Australia-Britain Society.

RECIPROCITY WITH THE UNITED KINGDOM

The National Committee of the Australia-Britain Society will work in close liaison with the newly constituted Australia Society in the United Kingdom to ensure that there will be an exchange of personnel in occupations and in study groups and opportunities for promoting and supporting activities including social gatherings, discussions, dinners, meetings, conferences and talks on

topics of current interest. In this way it is hoped that good personal relationships will be developed and that additional interest will be stimulated in such matters as historical, professional, industrial and sporting activities, literature, the systems of law and government, local administration and other national and international activities of common interest.

PROJECTS

Examples of the kinds of projects which may well be undertaken include:

- ★ An exchange of school leavers whereby those involved will meet and work with their opposite numbers overseas, thus gaining a wider social experience as well as a knowledge of recent developments and experience in their intended vocational field.
- ★ Exchanges between groups of school children, teachers and teacher trainees.
- ★ An interchange of groups of students from fields of tertiary education with opportunities for work while abroad in their chosen categories.
- ★ Reciprocal arrangements for travel and work abroad by young men and women in commerce and industry.

SELECTION

The selection of the men and women who will participate in the various projects arranged by the Society will be by the National Committee who will seek advice and recommendations at both National and State levels, as well as information from specialists and referee reports from experts throughout Australia.

In the main the initial selection and recommendation of those participating in the various projects of the Society will be in the hands of the State Committees, and it is anticipated that wherever possible successful applicants will be required to return to their own State or Territory in Australia so as to disseminate as widely as possible the information and ideas gained while overseas.

The number of applications selected will depend on the nature of the project, the amount of assistance available from within Australia; and the reciprocal benefits offered from overseas.

MEMBERSHIP

Application forms are available from the National Office, Post Office Box 478, Canberra City, A.C.T. 2601

An approach is being made to the Federal Treasurer to request that donations be made allowable deductions for Income Tax purposes.

AUSTRALIA-BRITAIN SOCIETY

NATIONAL COMMITTEE:

| | |
|---|---|
| PATRON-IN-CHIEF | His Excellency the Right Honourable Sir Paul HASLUCK, G.C.M.G., Governor-General of Australia. |
| PATRON: | The Right Honourable Sir Robert MENZIES, K.T., C.H., F.R.S., Q.C. |
| NATIONAL PRESIDENT: | Sir William KILPATRICK, K.B.E. |
| DEPUTY NATIONAL PRESIDENTS: | A. F. DEER, Esq., B.A., LL.B., B.Ec. Norman G. WILSON, Esq., C.M.G., B.C.E., F.R.A.C.I. |
| NATIONAL VICE-PRESIDENT: | Sir Arthur LEE, K.B.E., M.C. |
| PRESIDENTS: | |
| NEW SOUTH WALES: | A. F. DEER, Esq., B.A., LL.B., B.Ec. |
| VICTORIA: | Norman G. WILSON, Esq., C.M.G., B.C.E., F.R.A.C.I. |
| QUEENSLAND: | The Hon. Mr. Justice CAMPBELL, LL.B., M.A. |
| SOUTH AUSTRALIA: | Robert E. PORTER, Esq. |
| WESTERN AUSTRALIA: | The Hon. Sir Thomas WARDLE |
| TASMANIA: | R. W. HENRY, Esq., B.Sc. |
| A.C.T. | The Hon. Mr. Justice FOX, LL.B. |
| NATIONAL CHAIRMAN FINANCE COMMITTEE: | A. F. DEER, Esq., B.A., LL.B., B.Ec. |
| HON. NATIONAL TREASURER: | Sir Edwin HICKS, C.B.E. |
| HON. NATIONAL SECRETARY: | R. D. MALCOLMSON, Esq., M.B.E., B.Sc. |
| HON. SOLICITOR: | L. C. SHAW, Esq., LL.B. — MIDDLETONS. |
| NATIONAL EXECUTIVE OFFICER: | Dr. Ivor G. MEDDLETON, B.Com., B.Ed. (Qld.) Ph.D. (Lond.). |

ST. PHILLIP'S CHURCH, CHURCH HILL, SYDNEY

Named after our first Governor of N.S.W.,

Reproduced hereunder is a facsimile of an original document signed by Governor Phillip Gidley King to be found in the archives of the Mitchell Library with whose kind permission it is reproduced below, not as a challenge to those who say St. Phillip's was not named after our first citizen, but with the object of bringing to light other documentation on this subject.

The Editor.

23rd July 1862

His Excellency is pleased to direct that in all Spiritual Judicial and Parochial proceedings, transactions, deeds, instruments and registers; the Districts of Sydney, Petersham Bula naming Concord and Liberty Plains, be comprized within a Parish to be henceforth named "Saint Philip" in honor of the first Governor of this Territory —

— The districts of Paramatta Prospect Hills, Banks town Toon Gabbe, Seven Hills Castle Hill, Eastern Farms, Field of Mars, Southern Boundary, Ponds and Kissing Point, be comprized within a Parish, to be henceforward named "Saint Johns", in honor of the late Governor Captain John Hunter and that the Churches now Building at Sydney & Paramatta be respectively named St Philip and Saint John.

THE MAXIMUM OF 8 PER CENT INTEREST

Fixed by the Governor of N.S.W., Phillip Gidley King, in 1804.

15th July 1804

Whereas, much litigation and many vexatious suits at law, have accrued for want of an Established and fixed rate of interest on Loans and other Advances within this Province and its Dependencies. It is hereby Ordained that no Persons do, directly or indirectly, for any Bills, Bonds or Contracts to be made after the publication of this Ordinance, take for the loan or use of money or any other Commodities above the value of Eight pounds Sterling for the loan or performance of one hundred pounds Sterling or the value thereof for one Year, and so proportionally for a greater or less sum, any Custom or Usage to the contrary notwithstanding, and of any Person or Persons whatsoever at or after the Publication of this Ordinance, receive or take more than Eight pounds per cent for interest on any Bill, Bond or Contract as aforesaid, upon Conviction thereof they will be subject to the Penalty of the laws of England respecting the same, which is a forfeiture of double the value, to be appropriated to such public good or Purpose as the Governor may direct.

Signed

Phillip Gidley King

We are glad to publish this article in full with permission of the Australian Jewish Historical Society published in their proceedings September, 1966.

It portrays some of the difficulties and riggers of the times and circumstances that surrounded our pioneer families.

The Editor.

ESTHER JOHNSTON

The Lieutenant-Governor's Wife

THE AMAZING STORY OF A JEWISH CONVICT GIRL by

GEORGE F. J. BERGMAN, D.Ec., LLB (Munich), J.P.

The story of Esther Johnston tells of the most amazing fortune of a Jewish convict girl. Deported to N.S.W. in the First Fleet, Esther Abrahams-Julian subsequently became the wife of Lt.-Colonel George Johnston, Commanding Officer of the N.S.W. Corps and one-time Lieutenant-Governor of the Colony.

The Trial of Esther Abrahams

The Old Bailey Records of 1786¹ relate that on 30th August, 1786, before the 1st Middlesex Jury and Mr. Justice Rose, Esther Abrahams, of St. James, Westminster,² was indicted "for feloniously stealing, on the 27th July, 1786, twenty-four yards of black silk lace, value 50/-, the property of Josef Harrop and Charles Harrop, privily in their shop."

The shop-woman Hannah Crockett (sworn), alleged that Esther had come to the shop to buy black lace and that, whilst she had turned to measure the selected lace, Esther took two pieces of lace out of the box. Miss Crockett said that she immediately missed a piece of black lace. Esther then declared that she would give no more than a guinea for the lace which she had selected, although the price was £1/4/9 and went out of the shop. She got two doors from the shop and Miss Crockett went after her and accused her of taking four pieces of lace. She denied it, but put her hands down and dropped two cards of lace. "I heard them drop", said Miss Crockett, and I said: "There you wicked devil, you have dropped two cards of lace." Miss Crockett was cross-examined by Mr. Garrow, Esther's counsel, who especially tried to prove that the lace which allegedly had been stolen, had dropped from the counter and that its value was less than 50/- and that it was a remnant. His arguments met, however, with little success, because a witness, Mrs. Elizabeth Smith, another customer in the shop, said that the lace had dropped close to Esther and that Miss Crockett had said: "I insist on having this woman searched" and that Esther then immediately put her hand under her cloak and that she then saw the lace on the ground.

According to the Records, Esther only said in her defence: "I leave it to my counsel", and, although she

called three witnesses who all gave her a very good character, she was found guilty of stealing, "but not privately".

After the conclusion of the Session, the Court passed sentence on Esther Abrahams—to be transported for seven years.³ She was to sail in the First Fleet to the new penal settlement of New South Wales.

At Newgate Gaol

Esther was taken to Newgate Gaol, awaiting transport to New South Wales.

Among the ships selected for the First Fleet were two ships, designated for the transport of women prisoners, the *Friendship* and the *Lady Penrhyn*.

Esther appeared first on a list of female convicts intended for the *Lady Penrhyn* and for whom bonds and contracts had been signed, but who were not on board at the time when the contractor, Mr. William Richards, reported on 31st March, 1787, to Lord Nepean the list of women on board the ship.⁴ According to the "List of Felons" at Newgate Prison for April, 1787, she was still at the gaol. The reason for this delay was due to the fact that embarkation of the first prisoners on the *Lady Penrhyn* at Woolwich on 6th January, 1787, was a tragic one.

When Esther was taken to prison after sentence had been passed on her, she felt that she was with child, and in her anxiety she petitioned the Home Secretary, Lord Sydney, for Royal Mercy in February, 1787. The petition was sent by Lord Sydney to the London Recorder for his opinion about the trial, and if she should be subject to Royal Mercy.⁵ The answer of the Recorder of London was forwarded to Lord Sydney on 26th June, 1788,⁶ at the time when Esther was already on her way to Australia. There was no explanation, why sixteen months had elapsed since the petition was made. The Recorder's report would not have helped Esther anyhow, because it was negative. It said that "the offence was proved by clear evidence, but the Jury in favour of life, acquitted the prisoner of the private stealing (with which she had been indicted), which appears to me," as the Recorder said, "as much mercy as the prisoner was deserving of. She was sentenced to be transported for seven years and I cannot see any good gained to recommend a remission of that sentence."

It may be assumed that, in her petition, which, unfortunately, could not be found either in the Public Record Office or among the Recorder's Papers at the Corporation of London or at the Middlesex Record Office, a desperate Esther had mentioned her state of pregnancy, but obviously

this did not impress the authorities. The Newgate Records show that on 18th March, 1787, the unfortunate girl was delivered at the prison of a female child.⁷ The Governor of the prison did not wait for Lord Sydney's answer, and on 30th April, 1787, Esther Abrahams "and child" were "discharged" from Newgate Prison "to be sent to New South Wales."⁸

Deported

The *Lady Penrhyn* having already left Woolwich, Mr. Richards sent Esther with her daughter together with 36 other women prisoners to the *Prince of Wales*.⁹ The log of this ship recorded under date 3rd May, 1787, that the turnkey of Newgate brought on board 37 female convicts and one child (female). (Admin. 51/4376, Part 8). There is no doubt that this was Esther's daughter, because on the same day Major Ross mustered the women and noted on his return to Mr. Ewan Nepean, later to be Lord Nepean, Secretary at the Home Office, "Esther Abrahams and child".¹⁰ On a date not recorded, but probably before the *Lady Penrhyn* sailed from Portsmouth on Sunday, 13th May, 1787, Esther was transferred to the ship to which she had been originally indented.¹¹ The *Lady Penrhyn* had been chartered by the East India Company to proceed to China for tea, after she had transported the female convicts to New South Wales.¹² On board this ship was Lieutenant Arthur Bowes, a ship's surgeon, who kept a diary which has become famous.¹³ To Bowes also fell the duty to muster the crew and the convict women on the ship. In his register of the convict women he noted: Esther Abrahams, aged 20, a milliner whose "crime" is stated as "shop-lifting". Bowes also noted the children "brought out or born on board ship",¹⁴ but curiously enough, in this list Esther's daughter is not mentioned. Maybe he did not believe the baby worth mentioning, or perhaps she had hidden the child away.

However, it is a fact that Esther's daughter is not mentioned any more in any later report. Neither does she appear in the 1800 Muster. Her identity becomes lost in mystery and only many, many years later, do we hear of her again.

On the "Lady Penrhyn"

It was a pitiful crowd of 102 women who had embarked on the *Lady Penrhyn*. Many came from the hulks and were so naked and filthy that, when sent on board, their condition caused many illnesses. The state in which he found them, in the words of the forthright Captain Phillip "stamped the magistrates with infamy" and "nothing but

clothing could have prevented them from perishing". But little clothing was forthcoming and five deaths occurred even before sailing.¹⁵ Most of the women were thieves. Their offences ranged from pick-pocketing, shop-lifting and stealing to defrauding, robbery and felony.¹³ They were the scum of London's slums, many of them professional prostitutes. They were difficult to control and prostitution could hardly be prevented. According to Lt. Bowes¹³ the women were punished on board for thieving, fighting and abusive language by having thumb-screws or iron fetters put on their wrists. On 16th April, 1787, five women were put in irons for prostitution and the Second Mate dismissed the ship. But it was nearly impossible to keep the women and the sailors apart.

Among this motley crowd of prostitutes, how must the young Jewish woman have felt, nursing her baby as the only precious good left to her, thrown into a world and atmosphere which was certainly not her own?

Esther's Age

How old was Esther when this catastrophe in her life occurred? We have several dates to check her age which, however, do not agree with each other.

In the 1828 Census, Esther gave her age as 54, which would mean that she was born in 1774 and only 12 years old, when sentenced. This was obviously not her correct age. Much more credible seems to be another calculation. When she died in 1846, on her death certificate, her age was stated as 75. She would therefore have been born in 1771 and the sentence would have occurred when she was nearly 16. At the time of sailing, although she told Bowes that she was aged 20, she was probably 17 years old. Travelling with an illegitimate child, she might have thought it opportune to advance her age, and the child might have protected her from molestations by the sailors. But the question what will happen to her and her innocent child might have often been in her thoughts when she lay open-eyed, crying, down in the stench of the ship's hold, where the women were kept at night to prevent them from mixing with the sailors.

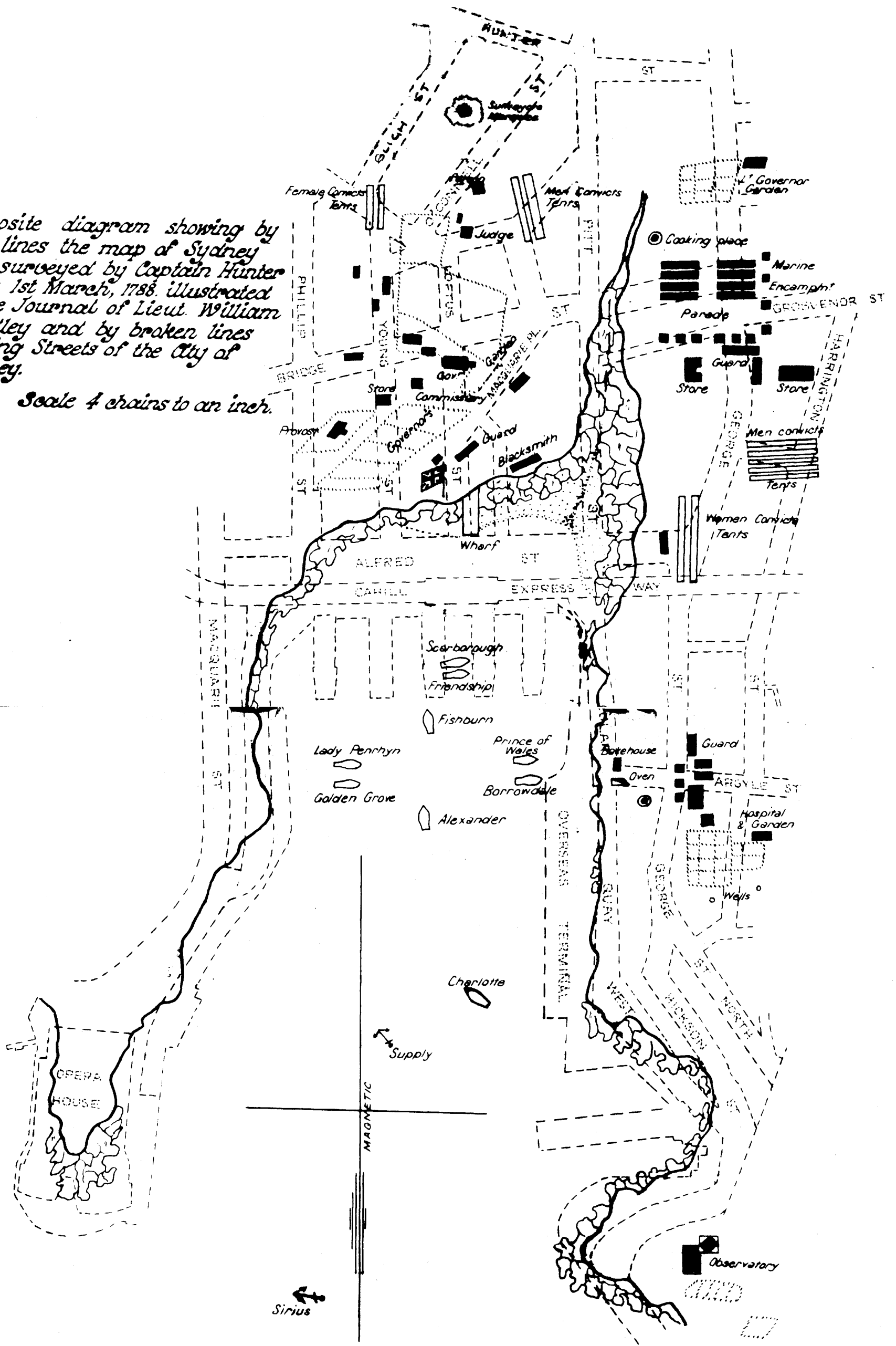
Yet fate was to be kind, indeed, extraordinarily clement to her.

George Johnston

Also on board the *Lady Penrhyn* was George Johnston, First Lieutenant of the Marines who was later appointed Aide de Camp to Captain Phillip and Adjutant to Captain

Composite diagram showing by firm lines the map of Sydney Cove surveyed by Captain Hunter about 1st March, 1788. illustrated in the Journal of Lieut. William Bradley and by broken lines existing Streets of the City of Sydney.

Scale 4 chains to an inch.



Courtesy of Mr. J.H. Luscombe, Town Clerk, City of Sydney.

Hunter. A member of an old and renowned Scottish family,¹⁶ Johnston had obtained a Commission as 2nd Lieutenant of the Marines in 1776 at the age of 12. After having seen service in the American War of Independence and in East India, where he was badly wounded, at the end of 1786 he had been commissioned as First Lieutenant and transferred to the 59th Company of Marines, intended to form the Garrison at the Convict Settlement at Botany Bay.

He was aged 23 when the fleet sailed, a tall, blond, very good looking young man.

No wonder that the pathetic sight of the lovely young Jewish woman who, holding her babe in her arms, and probably also decently clothed, seemed so utterly out of place among the rabble of the other women and whose behaviour probably contrasted with that of the many prostitutes on the ship, soon attracted his attention. Maybe he had pity for her and started talking to her, and she told him her sad story. Be it as it may, a romance which lasted a life time started on board this convict ship.

Arrival in New South Wales

On 5th August, 1787, the fleet reached Rio de Janeiro and after a month's stay in the harbour continued her way via the Cape. Here live stock was bought and the women from the *Friendship* transferred to the *Lady Penrhyn*.¹⁷

On 26th January, 1788, the fleet sailed into Port Jackson. The women of the *Lady Penrhyn* disembarked on 6th February, 1788,¹⁸ at Sydney Cove and a new life started for Esther Abrahams, the convict girl. George Johnston took her under his protection and she went with him. Nobody seemed, before or afterwards, to object to this alliance. She became his mistress, later his de-facto wife and finally, many years afterwards, his legal wife.

George Johnston, Jun.

The Records show that Johnston, from the live stock acquired at the Cape had bought a she-goat whose milk was important, because Esther was soon expecting another child. In May 1789 the goat was stolen and eaten by some convicts.¹⁹ Sometime at the beginning of 1790 Esther's first son, George, was born. The date of his birth is not recorded,²⁰ but the child was baptised on 4th March, 1790, and later entered in the Church of St. Philip's register as "Abrahams or Johnston, George, son of George Johnston, Captain-Lieutenant of Marines and Esther Abrahams, convict".²¹

At Norfolk Island

Two days later, on 6th March, 1790, Johnston left Sydney in the *Supply* with a detachment of Marines under the command of Major Ross and 190 male and female convicts for Norfolk Island, where a new convict settlement had been founded in 1788.²² As he did not want to be separated from Esther and his son, he took them with him. They arrived at Norfolk Island on 14th March, 1790.²³ It is interesting to note that at Norfolk Island Esther was obviously not treated as an ordinary convict woman, but as a privileged person. In the "Norfolk Island Victualling Book" she is not entered in the regular way as a convict woman, but obviously added later in pencil between No. 88 and 89 on page 55b. George Johnston jun., here called "George Abrams" had also been recorded in pencil only, without any number on top of the list of the "convict children". There were no entries made about the days on which they were victualled, as this was done for every other person on record.²³ Esther did not, however, take her daughter with her to Norfolk Island. According to Mr. Rumsey²², Captain Johnston saw service with his company "clearing and cultivating Charlotte Field at Norfolk Island from 19th June to 17th July, 1790, but was returned in February 1791 because of ill-health". Esther followed him on 13th May, 1791, when she left the island in the *Supply* with her child for Sydney.²³

The Children

There was a happy reunion, when she returned to her lover's arms at the end of May, 1791, and on 9th March, 1792, her second son, Robert, was born.²⁴ He was Captain Phillip's only god-son. Robert Johnston became the first Australian-born officer of the Royal Navy and a renowned explorer; he discovered during his excursions in the Illawarra District the source of the Warragamba River. In January, 1796, George Johnston was sent to Norfolk Island again, to take charge of a military detachment on the island. He arrived on 13th February, 1796, in the *Reliance*.²⁵ This time Esther remained at home, but young George accompanied his father and stayed with him until 9th July, 1796, when they returned to Sydney in the *Francis*, because Johnston was again afflicted with bad health.²⁶ The six year old boy had now been entered in the Norfolk Island Victualling Book not any more as the "convict child, Geo Abram", but as the "military child, Geo Johnston".²⁷

Their third son, David, was born in 1800. He later became a well-known grazier at the family's Georges River

estates, living at "George's Hall" near Bankstown.²⁸ During the following years the couple was blessed by four daughters, Maria (born 1801),²⁹ Julia (born 1803,³⁰ Isabella (born 1804), who died in childhood,³¹ and Blanche (born 1809).³²

With so many children, a large household and big estates to care for, life must not have been easy for Esther. To handle the numerous convict servants which had been allotted to the Johnston estates was certainly a problem. By 1800 Johnston had 16 servants assigned to him,³³ one of the largest number of convict servants assigned in the colony. Many of these men and women were troublesome. They were certainly aware of Esther's own precarious and illegal position and for this reason it might not have been very easy for her to impose discipline.

Annandale

In February, 1793, George Johnston had, as one of the first officers, received a grant of 100 acres on the road to Parramatta,³⁴ to which later 290 more acres were added.³⁵



ANNANDALE HOUSE

It was on this grant which he called "Annandale" after his birthplace in Scotland, that in 1799 he built "Annandale House", his residence, one of the first large brick buildings in the colony. The house stood on the hill which Parramatta Road crosses just opposite the end of the present Johnston Street, Annandale. The entrance to the

property was where the Annandale Branch of the Bank of N.S.W. now stands in Northumberland Street, Stanmore. With its large collection of outhouses the house resembled a little fortress. It was like a miniature township with slaughter-house, butchery, bakery, smithy, stores, etc.³⁶ At one stage the property even had an extensive orangery and vineyard. Annandale Farm was in 1832 considered "one of the most complete farms in the neighbourhood of Sydney".³⁷ The house had been built by convicts, the bricks being made on the premises. It was of one storey with wide verandahs and an imposing hall, a typical colonial mansion, which for more than a century remained the showpiece of the district. The entrance avenue was lined with Norfolk Pines which Johnston had brought from Norfolk Island and which were the first to be planted on the mainland. In 1903/4 these remarkable trees fell to the builders' rapacity. When 'Annandale' was demolished in 1905, the estate had already been sold in portions from time to time and almost nothing was then left of the original grant.

Johnston's Other Land Grants

In 1805 Johnston received as a reward for his outstanding behaviour at the Irish rebellion a grant of 2000 acres near Fairfield,³⁸ which he called "The King's Gift",³⁹ followed by 2000 acres in the Nepean District,⁴⁰ and 1500 acres in the Illawarra District.⁴¹ These with a further 444 acres in the Bankstown District⁴² and 1100 acres at Bankstown⁴³ and Cabramatta⁴⁴, which had originally been grants to George Johnston Jun., but which in 1820 after his death went to his father,⁴⁵ made the Johnstons very rich landowners.

George Johnston—Pioneer

George Johnston has often been maligned, but his decriers omitted to recognize that he was one of the first great pioneers of the country. In 1804 the Second Duke of Northumberland, who was his life-long friend, despatched to him the first pure-bred Spanish Merino ram, three years before John Macarthur imported merinos to Australia. Also as a present from the Duke, he brought out in 1802 from England the first thoroughbred stallion and it was Johnston who sowed the first clover in Australia at his Illawarra grant, the seeds of which he had also received from the Duke of Northumberland.⁴⁶

George Johnston's Career

This is not the place to deal fully with George Johnston's career. However to show, on the one hand, his



LT. COLONEL GEORGE JOHNSTON
(By courtesy of the Mitchell Library)

social prominence in the colony and, on the other, the difficulties which Esther had to face by his prolonged absences from the colony, a short sketch of his life may be allowed.

Johnston, who in 1789 had been promoted to Captain-Lieutenant and in early 1800 to Brevet-Major,⁴⁷ quarrelled with Colonel Paterson, the Commander of the N.S.W. Corps to which Johnston had been transferred from the Marines. He was put under arrest by Paterson, but, on his protest, was sent to England for trial. As it was found that he could not be tried in England, he was returned in October, 1802, to Australia, where a reconciliation with Paterson took place, and the case against him was dropped. During his absence, Esther lived at Bankstown where she is listed in the 1800 Muster as "Hester Julian" and as being victualled there from Government Stores.⁴⁸ In March, 1804, Johnston became the national hero of the colony, when he crushed the Irish convict rebellion at Rose Hill. On 15th October, 1804, when Colonel Paterson

took command of Van Diemen's Land, Johnston was appointed Commander of the N.S.W. Corps. On 13th November, 1806, he was commissioned Major of the Corps. In 1804 he had also become a Magistrate of the County of Cumberland. His historical hour came, when he, now virtually in command of the Military Forces of the Colony, on 26th January, 1808, led the troops which deposed Governor Bligh. For six months he assumed the title of Lieutenant-Governor, until in June, 1808, Lieutenant-Colonel Foveaux arrived from England and took over the Governorship of the colony. In April, 1808, Johnston received his commission as Lieutenant-Colonel.

It must have been a curious feeling for Esther, the poor Jewish convict girl when she realised that she had—unofficially at least—become the "First Lady" of the colony and remained so during the six months of Johnston's Governorship.

Sent to England for trial for the deposition of Bligh, Johnston sailed on 23rd March, 1809, in the *Admiral Gambier* and the *Sydney Gazette* recorded that he received full military honours at his departure. His court martial at Chelsea lasted from 5th May to 5th June, 1811. He was found guilty of mutiny, but received a very mild sentence in as far as he was only cashiered. The general opinion was that he had acted in good faith in an endeavour to avoid larger troubles for the colony and that, on the other hand, he was probably only a tool in the hands of John Macarthur in the struggle for power. He was allowed to return to N.S.W. as a settler and one can imagine Esther's joy and relief, when in April, 1813, after an absence of 4 years, he finally returned to his home and family. He was not deprived of his spacious land grants and after the new Governor, Lachlan Macquarie had seen that Johnston had no intention whatever to make trouble in the colony, the Governor became his trusted friend and the protector of his family.

Esther as Business Woman—Her Land Grants

Esther, during her husband's long absences from the colony had often had a hard time full of trying experiences. Numerous advertisements of "caution to trespass annandale"⁴⁹ show that unscrupulous people tried to take advantage of George Johnston's absence. But with great courage she faced her difficult tasks and was able to stand up to her duties of educating her children and administering the large estates.

It appears that Johnston had always allowed her to have money and property of her own, probably because he

wanted her provided for in case anything should happen to him. We learn from the records that among bills, drawn by Commissioner Palmer on the Lord Commissioners of H.M. Treasury, dated 1st April, 1803, was one for £238.10.0 for grain and swine's flesh, made out to her under the name of Esther Julian.⁵⁰ She was probably a good business-woman and her success in farming and business attracted envious people. When on 13th October, 1809, an otherwise unknown Mr. T. Browne⁵¹ complained in a letter to Viscount Castlereagh about the corruption which, in his opinion, had followed Captain Bligh's deposition, he also accused Esther, saying that "Johnston's woman, a Jewess, offered to sell, since he went, 10 hundred weight of kidney fat, taken out of Government bullocks, at 2s. 6d. per pound. This she saved during his Government".⁵² Needless to say this was pure slander, and the bullocks from which the fat had been extracted, were in all probability kept grazing on her own land which had been granted to her in 1809. It is a notorious fact that Johnston and his defacto wife profited least from the "Rum Rebellion". His contemporaries have already testified that Johnston "fulfilled his arduous and expensive office without requiring any remuneration".⁵³

The only favour which Esther received after her husband had been sent to England for trial, and when her future seemed bleak, was a land grant. On 30th June, 1809, Colonel Paterson granted 570 acres at the Georges River near Bankstown, adjoining George Johnston's farm in this district to "Mrs. Esther Julian."⁵⁴

After Governor Macquarie's arrival, he declared all grants and leases received during the time of the "interregnum" as void and illegal.⁵⁵ Like many others who had received grants from Colonel Paterson, Esther, too, on 30th October, 1810, in a memorial to the new Governor "prayed" for the confirmation of her land grant, saying that she "got a large family and as it is her intention to settle in the Country", that she "has received a considerable stock of cattle which will be a serious loss for grazing ground for, if deprived of the said land".⁵⁶

The memorial bears only a short note in Macquarie's handwriting:—"Inadmissible".

The confirmation of the grant was therefore refused, although it seems that Esther continued to "squat" on the land. At this time Macquarie had probably been advised that she was Johnston's mistress and as he disapproved of



ESTHER JOHNSTON (née ABRAHAM JULIAN)
wife of Lt. Colonel George Johnston, of Anandale.

(From a picture in possession of Mrs. Rita Lingham, of Mosman, a descendant of Commodore Robert Johnston, R.N., son of Esther).

illegitimate unions⁵⁷ and his opinions of Johnston were then, to say the least, not the best, the refusal was to be expected. Three years later, however, after Macquarie had become an intimate friend of the Johnston family and had met Esther personally, he changed his mind and on 1st November, 1813, the grant was unconditionally confirmed by him.⁵⁸ The Parish map of Bankstown, registering the original grants, shows still Esther Julian as grantee of the land.

Esther "Julian"

The fact that bills of sale were made out and land granted to Esther "Julian" and not to Esther "Abrahams" needs explanation.

The identity of both names for the same person is beyond any doubt. Suggestions only, however, can be offered for the reasons, why from 1800 onwards, Esther never used the name "Abrahams", but declared her surname to be "Julian" and why she is mentioned under this name exclusively in official documents. She must have had very good reasons to use the name "Julian" and not the name "Abrahams" under which she was sentenced and deported.

"Julian" is a Hispano-Jewish name, fairly common among Maranno-Sephardic families⁵⁹ and was originally spelt Juliano. The name occurs several times in the London Bevis Marks Synagogue Ketubah Book⁶⁰ often in association with the Henriquez family.⁶¹ The Van Diemen's Land convict record of Ann Solomon, the wife of the notorious Ikey Solomon, whose life was allegedly used by Charles Dickens to serve as a model for Fagin in his "Oliver Twist", shows that she had declared her father to be "Moses Julian, a coachmaster of White Chapel."⁶²

Marriage

In any case, when in 1814 George Johnston finally legitimated his children and married his de-facto wife,—and this was, indeed, rather a silver wedding, because they had lived 25 years happily together,—a marriage licence was granted by Governor Macquarie to "George Johnston of Annandale and Mrs. Esther Julian of the same place."⁶³

Macquarie, after he had been agreeably surprised, when Johnston after his return from England devoted his interests only to his land and his family, had become a close friend of the couple.⁶⁴ It is fair to assume that he was instrumental in getting Johnston to legalize his relations with Esther, because Macquarie held very strong views on

this matter. On 24th February, 1810, he had addressed a proclamation against "the scandalous and pernicious custom so generally and shamefully adopted throughout the territory of persons of different sexes cohabiting and living together unsanctioned by the ties of matrimony which is a scandal to religion, decency and all good government."⁶⁵

He warned of the consequences of such behaviour, the woman having no title to the property of the man, if he died intestate, and neither favour nor patronage could ever be extended to them.

Whereupon some days later, the *Sydney Gazette*⁶⁶ illustrated the consequences of this state of affairs by the touching story of a girl, called "Clorinda" who, the paper wrote, had been a girl of more than ordinary beauty, who had reached the colony "under unfortunate circumstances." She became the mistress of a young man for whom she bore five children. They prospered, but her companion drowned. When an uncle of the deceased successfully claimed his worldly goods, the widow and the five orphans were ejected. . . . True or not true, this story must have been constantly on Esther's mind, and so finally Johnston, who also had every reason to please the Governor, who may even have approached him himself on this matter, decided to get legally married.

It may be noted that the licence was issued to "Mrs" and not to "Miss" Julian. This fact and the continuous use of the name "Julian" by Esther gives thought to the assumption that, before her transportation, she at least regarded herself as married to a Jew named Julian who was also the father of the daughter who had been born at Newgate Prison. Although Jewish marriages in England in the 18th century were normally performed under the auspices of the Synagogues no trace has been found in the registers of the Bevis Marks Synagogue, where the names of Julian and also of Abrahams, who were also of Hispano-Jewish stock, appear, of her marriage;⁶⁷ Jewish religious law as such maintains that a man can take a wife unto himself in private ceremony.⁶⁸ It is possible that under these circumstances, when Esther became pregnant, she regarded herself as married to this man Julian, although the marriage had not yet taken place. "Abrahams" was probably her maiden name. It is even not impossible that she herself had delayed her marriage to Johnston for such a long time, because she thought her "first husband" was still alive, and that she finally consented to marry Johnston out of regards for the future of her children and herself.

The full truth of her secrets will probably never be known. George Johnston's diaries of three leatherbound volumes, which he wrote from the day he left England to the time of his death, were left to his son, Robert. They were inherited by his grandson, Percival Johnston, who in his turn bequeathed them to his great-grandson Mr. Douglas Hope-Johnston. These diaries would have shed light on all these matters, but they have unfortunately disappeared.⁶⁹

The marriage between George Johnston and Mrs. Esther Julian took place on 12th November, 1814, at Concord, and was celebrated by the Reverend Samuel Marsden. Witnesses at the wedding were Mr. Isaac Nichols and his wife, Rosanna Nichols.⁷⁰

Rosanna Abrahams-Julian (Nichols)

Isaac Nichols had arrived in the colony as a convict in 1791.⁷¹ But at the time of Johnston's marriage he was already a well-to-do emancipist who in June 1810 had been appointed the first Postmaster of the colony.

It was, after all, very puzzling that George Johnston should have called on a former convict and his wife to provide the witnesses for his wedding. Although Johnston's relations to the "Exclusives" after his courtmartial were not the best, he was still one of them, a rich landowner and the former military commander of the colony, and one would have thought that he would have chosen a more important personality than Nichols to witness his marriage.

The reason for this curious choice will doubtless be found in the person of Isaac Nichols's wife.

After his first wife had met a tragic death in October, 1804,⁷² the Register of the Church of St. Philips shows that, on 18th February, 1805, he married Miss Rosanna Abrahams⁷³ whilst the *Sydney Gazette* of 24th February, 1805, reported the conclusion of this marriage as between Mr. Nichols and "Miss Rosanna Julian". In the register of St. Philips the name of the bride had been entered by the Clerk as "Rosanna Julian", but the Reverend Samuel Marsden who celebrated the marriage, had crossed out the name "Julian" and replaced it with "Abrahams" and the bride had then signed the register as "Rosanna Abrahams".⁷⁴

This marriage provides the solution for at least one of the mysteries of Esther Abraham's life.

Both the Musters of 1806 and 1814 confirm that Rosanna Nichols came "free" to the colony in the *Lady*

Pourhyu. This ship, after having transported the convict women in the 1st fleet, never returned to Australia. She was put on the London-Jamaica run and captured in the West Indies in 1811.⁷⁴ Rosanna must have therefore travelled in the same ship as Esther. There is no doubt whatever that she was the "child" born to Esther at Newgate, and mustered by Major Ross and not heard of for 25 years. The fact that until her marriage with Nichols in 1805 Rosanna's name is nowhere to be found in the records and especially not in the 1800 Muster, shows that she was not living in Esther's household. Esther also did not take her to Norfolk Island in 1790. It might have been that her presence constituted an embarrassment in her relationship to Johnston and that, therefore, shortly after their arrival in Australia, the baby-girl had been entrusted to the care of a reliable family to be brought up, separately from her other children. After Rosanna had grown up and, at the age of 18 married Isaac Nichols, she was probably fully accepted by the Johnston family as Esther's daughter. Rosanna certainly knew her mother's sad story only too well and as Esther's only relative in Australia, her mother chose her to witness her final and well-deserved rehabilitation.

Although the Reverend Samuel Marsden had crossed out the name Julian and replaced it with Abrahams when Rosanna married Isaac Nichols, he did not dare to do so, when he married Esther Julian to Johnston.

The two families, the Johnstons and the Nichols, continued to have friendly relations with each other, and when on 20th June, 1819, Isaac Nichols made his will, he named George Johnston, together with Captain John Piper and Robert Campbell, executors of his will.⁷⁵

After Nichols' death on 8th November, 1819,⁷⁶ his widow announced in the *Sydney Gazette* of 27th May, 1820,⁷⁷ that she intended to leave the colony for Calcutta. She changed her mind, however, and renounced this doubtful venture and decided on a more secure future. On 13th August, 1820, Rosanna was married for the second time at St. Philips by the Reverend William Cowper to Mr. James Stuart,⁷⁸ a farmer who had just received a land grant.⁷⁹ A close friendship had in the meantime developed between Rosanna and the Johnston girls and when she married James Stuart, it was her half-sister, Blanche Johnston, who served as one of the witnesses at her wedding.⁷⁸ Rosanna's children lived subsequently for different periods with the Johnstons at Annandale.⁷⁹

Esther's "Status"

Although Esther's seven years' sentence had expired in 1793,⁸⁰ it remained to petty officials to humiliate her for many years and to show that her convict past was not so easily forgotten. In the N.S.W. Musters of 1817⁸¹ and 1818⁸² she is still listed, despite her legal marriage to Johnston in 1814—under the name of Julian, here written "Julien", and as a "female convict". The 1817 Muster even gave her, very wrongly, a 14 years' sentence "expired in 1800", and in the 1818 Muster she is, whilst other married women are generally referred as "married to . . .", degradingly designated as "housekeeper",⁸² in spite of the fact that the 1811 Muster had already, and again wrongly stated, under the heading "Disposed of" that she was "married".⁸³ In the 1816 Muster she was, although still as "Esther Julian", mentioned as "Landholder, Sydney".⁸⁰ The 1819 Muster made, perhaps on Johnston's intervention, an end to this state of affairs and recorded her, this time honourably as well as incorrectly as having come "free" to the colony. In this Muster, too, she is mentioned as "Landholder, Sydney".⁸⁴ All the wrong entries show, incidentally, how little even these important records can be trusted.

Death of George Johnston, Jun.

Life went on and the children grew up. Her eldest son George seemed especially destined for a promising career. After his father's unsuccessful attempt to secure a military career for him,⁸⁵ he helped his mother during his father's absence to supervise work on their large estates. His great abilities soon attracted Governor Macquarie's attention. Macquarie was notoriously short of good administrators and thought that an administrative career would offer great scope to the young man. In 1814, at the age of 21, George Johnston jun. was appointed to the Commissariat General Department as a Clerk. Although an obviously malicious report by the then Deputy Commissary General Frederick Drennan⁸⁶ existed about his alleged incompetence as an accountant in the Department,⁸⁷ the Governor appointed him on 17th July, 1819, Superintendent of Government Herds and Flocks.⁸⁸ He proved to be a very able man. He devised a plan for taming wild cattle.⁸⁹ As a letter which he wrote on 1st March, 1813, to Mr. W. C. Wentworth, who was then in London, shows, he was a man with wide interests.⁹⁰

The family's hopes were shattered, when on 19th February, 1820, they were confronted with the sad news that George had been killed by a fall from a horse, whilst

mustering Government cattle at Brownlow Hill near Camden. This was a terrible blow to all who had known him, and among those who mourned him most was the Governor, Lachlan Macquarie.

Immediately, when he heard of the accident, Macquarie wrote to the father,⁹¹ expressing hopes that the accident might have not been fatal, and when George's death was confirmed, in a letter of sympathy to George Johnston, sen., Macquarie wrote that his son "had been one of the brightest ornaments and the most promising and respectable youths that N.S.W. ever gave birth to or, perhaps, ever will give birth to". "His equal," Macquarie said, "I never expect to meet again in N.S.W. I most deeply deplore the loss, both as a Public Officer, and a private friend—, for such I truly considered him."⁹²

And in his diary, Macquarie noted:—"This afternoon died in the Cow Pastures, universally regretted and lamented, Mr. George Johnston, Superintendent of Government Stock. The death of this most useful, active and intelligent young man is a great public loss, as his place cannot easily be supplied, being a young man of very superior talents, and by far the most rising and promising young man to which this country has ever given birth."⁹³

This appreciation, as well as the notable career of her other two sons, gives also great credit to Esther, who had to bring up and educate her children for many years without her husband's assistance.

On 22nd February, 1820, Macquarie attended the funeral at Annandale and noted in his diary that "the poor father and family were in deepest distress."⁹³

George Johnston jun. left no will, but Macquarie waived the rights of the Crown and his properties were transferred to his father.⁹⁴ Macquarie also notified George Johnston, sen., that he would be happy to appoint his second son, David, as Superintendent of Government Stock.⁹⁵ David Johnston received this appointment shortly afterwards and accompanied the Governor on his tour of inspection to the Western and Southern parts of the country.⁹⁶

George Johnston's Death

Three years later another and heavier blow fell on Esther, a blow, from which she probably never entirely recovered. On 5th January, 1823, her beloved husband died after a short, but severe illness.⁹⁷ His death occurred

just when the War Office was getting around to giving sympathetic consideration to his appeal for compensation.⁹⁸

George Johnston was buried in the family vault at Annandale. After George Johnston junior's death, Macquarie had instructed his architect, Francis H. Greenway, to draft designs for an elaborate family vault on the estate. Built with convict labour, it was a very fine piece of work in classical style and stood at what is now the intersection of Northumberland and Corunna Roads, just off Parramatta Road, Stanmore. When the estate was subdivided, the vault was dismantled and the coffins transferred to a large new family vault at Waverley Cemetery on the Northern path of the Church of England section, leading down to the Ocean, near the vault of Sir James Martin.⁹⁹

In his will¹⁰⁰ Johnston left to his wife "Esther Johnston or Julian", the "mother of his children Robert Johnston or Julian, Julia Johnston or Julian, David, Maria and Blanche for the term of her natural life the estate of Annandale with the whole of the buildings upon it" and everything which was on the estate. It might again be noted that the name "Abrahams" has been completely discarded. Stipulation was made in the will, a clause which proved to be fatal for Esther, that "Robert Johnston should inherit Annandale on the decease of his mother." David received the properties of George's Hall, Johnston's Flat and David's Bank on the George's River and the livestock to be equally divided among Esther and all the children. Administration of the estate was granted on 4th November, 1828, to Esther and her sons, Robert and David.

The Census of 1828

When in 1828 the first Census was held in New South Wales, Esther finally achieved the goal to be mentioned as a "free settler", in possession of 2460 acres of land, living at the Annandale Estate of Petersham together with her son Robert, aged 30, and her daughters, Julia, aged 25, and Blanche, aged 19.¹⁰¹ It may be assumed that Robert helped her in the administration of the estate, a fact which soon was to become a source of trouble and tragedy. Julia had remained unmarried. As already mentioned, on the occasion of the 1828 Census, Esther gave her age as 54, which hardly could have been the truth. In reality she was about 58 years old at this time.

Esther Declared "Insane"

It was in the following year that tragedy struck and misfortune overwhelmed her again, destroying for ever

her happiness and the way of life which she had built up during a lifetime.

After the death of her husband in 1823, Esther found herself alone in Annandale with two grown-up daughters and her self-willed son, Robert, who was probably discontented that he should have to wait until his mother's death to be the master of Annandale, whilst David was already on his own at the large George's River estates. Esther soon discovered that she had to fend on her own and to fend against great odds which, as subsequent events proved, were too great for her failing health and strength. Disagreements developed soon between her and Robert, maybe also with her daughters who sided with Robert, and it came to quarrels and even violence. Esther, sensing that Robert wanted to deprive her of the management of the property became eccentric, and even tried to soften her misery by drinking. In her despair she found the way back to her own people. There lived near her property an old Jewish convict, Jacob Isaacs, who had arrived in the colony in 1815. He had received a ticket of leave and owned land at Petersham.¹⁰² From 1824 onwards, when her troubles developed, she went often to his farm,¹⁰³ craving protection, showing him, as Isaacs later said "various bruises and kicks and described other acts of violence she had allegedly witnessed".¹⁰³

Things went from bad to worse and finally she could not stand it any more and decided on a desperate step. She planned to return to England.

On 10th February, 1829, she put an advertisement in the *Australian*, saying that she wanted "to mortgage her property for her lifetime". Probably on legal advice, she altered this advertisement some weeks later and advertising in the *Monitor*¹⁰⁴ that she wanted to mortgage the Annandale property for five or seven years, at the same time giving notice of her intention to return to England and requested that any claims against her should be immediately presented to her.

This was the last straw for Robert who acted at once.

He issued a writ "de lunatico inquirendum" against Esther and asked the Court to declare his mother insane.¹⁰⁵

The inquiry was commenced on 11th March, 1829, at the residence of, as the *Australian* wrote, "this unfortunate lady", where a number of witnesses were examined to prove the fact of lunacy. At a late hour in the day, however, the solicitor Mr. David Poole¹⁰⁶ who was noted for his sympathies for the Jews, many of whom had intrusted him

with their interests, and who also later acted as an Honorary Solicitor for the first Jewish congregation, appeared before the Inquisition on behalf of Esther. He contended that the proceedings were unconstitutional, which, indeed, they were and should be conducted in open Court. Thereupon the Commissioners Messrs. John Stephen, G. Bunn and A. B. Sparke directed an adjournment to the 16th March, 1829, when the inquiry was conducted in open Court by a Jury, consisting of Messrs. Dickson, Terry, Hughes, Wiltshire, Blaxland, Maziere, Wood, Chisholme, Daniel Cooper, Joseph Underwood, G. Paul, Pritchett, Robert Cooper and Hosking. Mr. W. C. Wentworth appeared on behalf of the appellants in this case, and from the word "appellants" one may deduce that Robert had induced his sisters to join with him in the fight against their mother. Mr. Poole who appeared for Esther was assisted by Mr. S. Stephen. Mr. Poole requested that the depositions taken at the first meeting might be read, as he was most anxious to cross-examine the witnesses, but was overruled by the Court. The main witness produced by Mr. Wentworth was Dr. William Bland, the physician.¹⁰⁷ Dr. Bland said that "he had known Mrs. Johnston upwards of twelve years, a great part of that time intimately, that she is a woman of rather eccentric habits, hasty in temper and has an abrupt mode of expressing herself, but that he does not consider such a mode of expression to be the effect of insanity, whilst such habits would very likely merge into insanity". He admitted, however, that "passion is only a temporary madness." Later, cross-examined again, he said that he had known Esther "in a state of excitement for weeks together, that this might be caused by drinking, that he cannot say whether a person, labouring under mental anxiety, occasioned by supposed oppression or ill-treatment, this would have a similar effect". He had seen her "driving most furiously through the streets and deem such behaviour an act of madness." He admitted, however, that "a woman, doing such acts as these, might, nevertheless, be very capable of managing her house and farming concerns." Yet finally Dr. Bland concluded that, in his opinion, "Mrs Johnston is not sane". He considered her "to be in such a state that she ought to be under personal restraint", whilst on the other hand he had to admit that "she is at times lucid and perfectly composed", and that "he had to distinguish between excitement, caused by drinking and that which is the effect of insanity." And he finished his deposition with the astonishing conclusion that Esther's "extravagant

behaviour proceeds from mental imbecility" and that she is "in a state of alternate imbecility and fever."

Mr. Stephen, in his address to the Court, contended that Esther, "by her exertions and judgment during many years past had succeeded in accumulating an extensive property". "This", he said, "was certainly no proof of insanity", and pointing straight to the real objective of the writ of lunacy, he made it quite clear that "a wish to wrest that property from her appeared now to be the motive which influenced the parties instituting the present inquiry." The learned Counsel, "in a speech, replete with humour", as the *Australian* reported, "contended that the eccentric habits of the lady, even admitting them to have been heightened by the occasional practice of drinking too freely, presented no grounds for pronouncing her insane and depriving her of the property she had by her industry acquired. If all persons in the habit of drinking or committing extravagances in consequence were to be supposed mad, he believed it would be difficult to find Jury men enough to decide upon their cases."

The Commissioners declined Mr. Stephen's proposal to examine the witnesses who had given evidence on the 11th, "all those witnesses having agreed in imputing acts of insanity to the party". Whereupon Mr. Stephen said that he had been led to expect to cross-examine them. He said that he had about forty witnesses to call on his side and suggested, as these witnesses were not in attendance, an adjournment.

In consequence of a hint, given by the Jury, Esther who was during the whole procedure in attendance, now rose and declared her willingness to give any explanation required, and the Foreman of the Jury having asked her, what was the cause of her extraordinary conduct imputed to her, "she proceeded to accuse her relatives of a series of what the unfortunate lady termed violent and oppressive acts and declared that she could bear it no longer and wanted to quit the colony altogether".

It was perhaps unfortunate that the only witness she seemed to have brought with her, was Jacob Isaacs, the sixty years old Jew. Isaacs told the Court, how Esther had often taken refuge in his house and complained about the treatment indulged by her children. He, the neighbour, could testify, he said, that "she had accumulated her property by hard struggling, that it was not the red jacket (George Johnston) who got the money. He had seen her within the few last years, and even months, personally superintending the concerns of the farm" and he "con-

sidered her a woman fully capable to minding her own affairs, or of managing those of any other person". He admitted that he "knows that she takes a glass, so do we all, the higher classes as well as the lower." Unfortunately this sincere evidence did not have any effect on the Jury, because, as the *Australian* commented: "This witness kept the Court in long continued laughter by his very precise, but comical manner of delivering himself". The drama was to become a tragic comedy.

The following witnesses, two assigned convict servants of Robert Johnston, had, of course, never seen any ill-treatment on the part of her master towards Mrs. Johnston.

Finally, Robert was not ashamed to call Esther's grand-children to the bar. Her grandson Charles Nichols, Rosanna's youngest son, declared as the last witness had, that he and his brother had lived in his grandmother's family "for some years on and off"¹⁰⁸ and had left in October last. "His grandmother", Charles Nichols said, "was always a stirring industrious woman, but of late she had become altered." He "had only occasionally met her on the streets, where she had frequently complained to him of things occurring at Annandale and raving against her son, Robert", but "that he has every reason to doubt the truth of those sayings".

The proceedings now came to an end. Mr. Poole spoke at length on the expediency of the Court and Jury exercising patience before putting an hasty termination to this inquiry, involving as it did such important results to all parties, especially to his client and prayed again for an adjournment. Mr. Wentworth then addressed the Court and Jury on the "proofs which had been adduced of Mrs. Johnston's actual insanity and pressed for a decision on the question". After Mr. Stephen had spoken again, the Jury retired and "after a lapse of one hour, during which much anxiety pervaded the auditors", returned with the finding that "Mrs Esther Johnston is not of sound mind, nor capable of managing her affairs." The verdict stated, however, that she had lucid intervals, that she was possessed of property to the amount of £489 per annum and that Robert Johnston, Esq., of Annandale, was not heir at law.¹⁰⁹

The last sentence shows very clearly that Robert Johnston had also contested his father's will and that the **sole** purpose to have his mother declared insane, was to **take** the administration of the estate out of her hand and **to prevent** her from mortgaging the property and return

to England. Whilst Robert attained the last object, the Commissioners seem to have put a bar to his main object, to get hold at once of the property, because the *Sydney Gazette* reported that "it is said that an application is about to be made to appoint Trustees to the Lady's estate."¹⁰⁹

The Jury, respectable citizens all, had obviously based their verdict on Dr. Bland's "professional evidence". From his whole evidence and from Esther's own behaviour it becomes quite clear that there could not have been any question of real "insanity". She was not even "senile", she was just extravagant, easily excited and full of temper, and the motives of this excitement, her undoubted quarrels with Robert, even if "violent" treatment was only allegation, had got on her nerves, had led her to the only possible solution, to leave the country and children who did not honour her any more as their mother, and who were probably even ashamed that their mother had been a Jewish convict girl who now consorted with old Jewish convicts. Was it any wonder that this had become too much for a woman of nearly sixty—and at these times a woman of sixty was an old woman—, a "pioneer woman", who had borne eight children and whose life had been, despite material wealth during the last twenty years, one of hard work? No modern Court would have declared her "insane" on such evidence, neither would a modern psychologist have come to Dr. Bland's conclusions on the evidence provided.

How did Esther take this condemnation to a "civil death" which deprived her of everything she had worked for during her lifetime? She had, as the *Australian* commented, "sat at the table during the whole progress of this inquiry, sometimes interrupting the witnesses with a little impatience, but in a very quaint and pertinent manner." Did she rave and curse her ungrateful offspring or did she resign herself to the inevitable? We do not know of her reactions to the cruel verdict, nor what happened afterwards. She never went, of course, to England. Some time later she was removed, either by force, or with her agreement, to her son David's Estate at George's Hall.

Death

And now the curtain falls on the life of Esther Abrahams. Fifteen long years passed, until, on 26th August, 1846,¹¹⁰ she died at George's Hall. Her body was

sidered her a woman fully capable to minding her own affairs, or of managing those of any other person". He admitted that he "knows that she takes a glass, so do we all, the higher classes as well as the lower." Unfortunately this sincere evidence did not have any effect on the Jury, because, as the *Australian* commented: "This witness kept the Court in long continued laughter by his very precise, but comical manner of delivering himself". The drama was to become a tragic comedy.

The following witnesses, two assigned convict servants of Robert Johnston, had, of course, never seen any ill-treatment on the part of her master towards Mrs. Johnston.

Finally, Robert was not ashamed to call Esther's grand-children to the bar. Her grandson Charles Nichols, Rosanna's youngest son, declared as the last witness had, that he and his brother had lived in his grandmother's family "for some years on and off"¹⁰⁸ and had left in October last. "His grandmother", Charles Nichols said, "was always a stirring industrious woman, but of late she had become altered." He "had only occasionally met her on the streets, where she had frequently complained to him of things occurring at Annandale and raving against her son, Robert", but "that he has every reason to doubt the truth of those sayings".

The proceedings now came to an end. Mr. Poole spoke at length on the expediency of the Court and Jury exercising patience before putting an hasty termination to this inquiry, involving as it did such important results to all parties, especially to his client and prayed again for an adjournment. Mr. Wentworth then addressed the Court and Jury on the "proofs which had been adduced of Mrs. Johnston's actual insanity and pressed for a decision on the question". After Mr. Stephen had spoken again, the Jury retired and "after a lapse of one hour, during which much anxiety pervaded the auditors", returned with the finding that "Mrs Esther Johnston is not of sound mind, nor capable of managing her affairs." The verdict stated, however, that she had lucid intervals, that she was possessed of property to the amount of £489 per annum and that Robert Johnston, Esq., of Annandale, was not heir at law.¹⁰⁹

The last sentence shows very clearly that Robert Johnston had also contested his father's will and that the sole purpose to have his mother declared insane, was to take the administration of the estate out of her hand and to prevent her from mortgaging the property and return

to England. Whilst Robert attained the last object, the Commissioners seem to have put a bar to his main object, to get hold at once of the property, because the *Sydney Gazette* reported that "it is said that an application is about to be made to appoint Trustees to the Lady's estate."¹⁰⁹

The Jury, respectable citizens all, had obviously based their verdict on Dr. Bland's "professional evidence". From his whole evidence and from Esther's own behaviour it becomes quite clear that there could not have been any question of real "insanity". She was not even "senile", she was just extravagant, easily excited and full of temper, and the motives of this excitement, her undoubted quarrels with Robert, even if "violent" treatment was only allegation, had got on her nerves, had led her to the only possible solution, to leave the country and children who did not honour her any more as their mother, and who were probably even ashamed that their mother had been a Jewish convict girl who now consorted with old Jewish convicts. Was it any wonder that this had become too much for a woman of nearly sixty—and at these times a woman of sixty was an old woman—, a "pioneer woman", who had borne eight children and whose life had been, despite material wealth during the last twenty years, one of hard work? No modern Court would have declared her "insane" on such evidence, neither would a modern psychologist have come to Dr. Bland's conclusions on the evidence provided.

How did Esther take this condemnation to a "civil death" which deprived her of everything she had worked for during her lifetime? She had, as the *Australian* commented, "sat at the table during the whole progress of this inquiry, sometimes interrupting the witnesses with a little impatience, but in a very quaint and pertinent manner." Did she rave and curse her ungrateful offspring or did she resign herself to the inevitable? We do not know of her reactions to the cruel verdict, nor what happened afterwards. She never went, of course, to England. Some time later she was removed, either by force, or with her agreement, to her son David's Estate at George's Hall.

Death

And now the curtain falls on the life of Esther Abrahams. Fifteen long years passed, until, on 26th August, 1846,¹¹⁰ she died at George's Hall. Her body was

brought back to Amundale and buried there on 31st August, 1846, in the family vault. And when the new vault at Waverley Cemetery was built, her coffin, too, was removed there, where she now lies by her husband's side as just "Esther, his relict".

Esther's Personality

The extraordinary story of Esther Johnston, unique in Australian, as well as in Jewish history, is a very moving one. Her melodramatic life offers material for a first class novel. From the depth of utmost despair and degradation, destiny allowed her to climb to the heights of social respectability, only to deprive her in her old age again of everything she had fought for, and of every one she had loved.

A tragic fate, indeed, for a woman whose career showed that she possessed an indomitable will to live, who was intelligent and industrious, but at the same time modest and reticent. Although married to one of the richest land-owners in the colony, one of the friends of the Governor who, as Macquarie's letters in the Dixon Library show invited Johnston and his family often to Government House,¹¹¹ she seems to have effaced herself and stayed in the background, as she probably thought proper and fitting in view of her humble past. It might have been this attitude which won her the respect of those who otherwise would have despised her. We never read a word about her in the newspapers of the time, critical chroniclers have ignored her, she was never mixed up with any of the numerous scandals in the colony and only once, as I have shown,¹¹² she was derogatively criticized and designated as "Johnston's woman, a Jewess". That after her husband's death she became eccentric, when abandoned by her children, she stood suddenly alone and, as the lunacy enquiry showed, practically defenceless, can surprise no one. Great injustice was done to her, when she was declared "insane" by a verdict which was solely based on the twisted evidence of a medical "expert" whose impartiality was doubtful and whose qualifications as a psychologist probably nil, because this branch of medical science did not exist at this time. This seems to have been felt also by the reporter of the *Australian* at the enquiry, who throughout this report treated her as "this unfortunate lady".

An "unfortunate lady" she was, indeed, because she had not only lost her beloved husband and her fortune, but

also all her children, none of whom came to her rescue at a time, when she needed them most. They either attacked her or stayed away from the inquiry. If after this dreadful experience she would have despaired of her life, nobody would have wondered, but yet, she clung to life for another fifteen years after this fateful evening of March, 1829.

Esther had been a very attractive woman, and as a young girl must have been of exceptional beauty. When she might have been about 35 or 40 of age, an excellent artist painted an admirable portrait of her. We have the good fortune, to possess a reproduction of this portrait,¹¹³ but the whereabouts of the original could not be traced, neither is the name of the painter known. According to the expert views of Mr. Hal Missingham, Director of the Art Gallery of N.S.W., the picture might have been painted by Richard Read, a painter who was active in Sydney around 1810-1820. There were two painters of this name, Richard Read Sen. and Jun. in Sydney whose style were very similar and it is, of course, difficult to judge, who of the two painted Esther's portrait.¹¹⁴ The portrait shows Esther's fine and noble features, typical of a woman of Sephardic descent, with black hair, a long face, almond shaped eyes, small lips and a long straight nose. Energy, but also a certain sadness are the characteristics of her face, a face which seems to have been given little to laughter. She is dressed in expensive finery. Her head is framed with fine lace, that lace, which, irony of fate, had moulded her destiny. She is wearing a brooch with the miniature of her husband who had been the focus of her life and whose death threw her again back into the depths of despair from which he had once rescued her. In a feature article in the Sydney *Daily Mirror* an anonymous journalist once wrote of George Johnston that he had "already early married a girl whose only known name was Esther."¹¹⁵ I have identified this "unknown girl" as Esther Abrahams-Julian, a Jewish convict woman of the First Fleet.

Whatever might have been her shortcomings or failures, one can well say that, embodying the traditional qualities of a good Jewish wife and mother, deeply devoted to the man she adored and to her children whom she loved and whose ingratitude must have thrown a dagger into her heart, shunning all publicity, she achieved, what a Scottish chronicler wrote of her, namely, that "through civil and through good report she remained the faithful wife and companion".¹¹⁶

THE AFTERMATH

George Robert Nichols, Esther's Grandson

Esther Johnston's story is not only the touching tale of the fate of a Jewish convict girl, but has some important, but little known significance for Australian Jewish History; it was one of her descendants who was prominent in the fight for equal rights for the Jews in New South Wales.

In his paper, "The Story of State Aid to Jewish Establishments in N.S.W.," published in this Journal in 1943/44,¹¹⁷ Rabbi Dr. I. Porush pointed out that Mr. George Robert Nichols¹¹⁸ made himself the "champion" of the cause for the Jews and pleaded in 1854 in the Legislative Council that the Jews were entitled to be placed on the same footing with persons professing the Christian faith, since they contributed equally to the revenue of the colony. Nichols was successful in his endeavours and finally the sum of £200 was placed on the estimate for the payment of a stipend of a Minister of the Jewish congregation in Sydney. The thankful Committee of the York Street (Sydney) Synagogue consequently presented Mr. Nichols with a silver cup and a testimonial the text of which as well as Mr. Nichols' answer have also been published in this Journal.¹¹⁷

George Robert Nichols who was an accomplished speaker, was highly regarded in the colony. In 1856 he became Auditor General and Secretary of Lands in the first N.S.W. Ministry under Mr. Donaldson, after the granting of Responsible Government in N.S.W. He occupied high offices in N.S.W. Freemasonry and had vast political influence.¹¹⁹ This was probably one of the factors which enabled him to gain Parliament's support for the Jewish community.

Rabbi Dr. I. Porush in a footnote to the article¹²⁰ noted that "Mr. Nichols is said to have had a Jewish mother". This was indeed true, because George Robert Nichols was Rosanna's second son, Esther's grandson, who having known his grandmother¹⁰⁸ and her sorry fate, was certainly aware of his Jewish descent and heritage. Through his action the coming to Australia of Esther Abrahams-Julian became a blessing for Australian Jewry.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I wish to acknowledge the valuable help given me by Mrs. Marjorie Hancock, actg. Mitchell Librarian and by the Staff of the Mitchell Library, Sydney, and the support I found from the following persons:—

The Secretary, Public Record Office, Sydney.
The Deputy Keeper of Records, Corporation of London.
The County Archivist, Middlesex County Record Office.
The Deputy Registrar General, Sydney.
The Registrar of Probates, Supreme Court of N.S.W.
The Hon. Secretary, Historical Committee of the Australian Pioneer's Club.
Mr. A. J. Gray, Hon. Research Secretary, Royal Australian Historical Society.
Mr. Hal Missingham, Director of the Art Gallery of N.S.W.
Mr. Alexander T. Yarwood, Lecturer, University of N.S.W.
Mr. W. Richardson, Principal Librarian, Public Library of N.S.W.
Mr. Walter Nichols, Gyneea Bay.

And especially Mrs. W. A. Lingham, Mosman, for allowing me to consult certain family papers, for permission to reproduce the picture of Esther Johnston which she kindly supplied and for her interesting suggestions in regard to the paper in general.

Acknowledgment is also made to the Trustees of the Public Library of N.S.W. for the reproduction of photos and prints from the Mitchell Library.

NOTES

1. E. Hodgson, *Old Bailey Shorthand Records*, 1786, No. VII, Part I, Case 664, p. 994.
2. *Middlesex County Records*.
3. E. Hodgson, as per (1), p. 1155.
4. C.O. 201/202, p. 286.
5. H.O. 13/5, p. 59.
6. Home Office Judges' Reports of 1788. (H.O. 47/7).
7. List of female felons at Newgate Prison (Pri. Com. 2/175).
8. List of Convicts sent to N.S.W. in 1787 in *The Voyage of Governor Philip to Botany Bay*, London, 1789.
9. C.O. 201/2, p. 334.
10. C.O. 201/2, p. 328.
11. Adm. 51/4376, parts 8 and 9.
12. Charles Bateson, *The Convict Ships*, Glasgow, 1959.
13. 'A journal of a voyage from Portsmouth to New South Wales and China in the *Lady Penrhyn*, Merchantman, William Cropton Lever, Commander, by Arthur Bowes, Ship's Surgeon 1787-1788-1789.' (MS. at Mitchell Library).
14. Bowes (13), p. 8.
15. (See 12).
16. George Johnston was born at Annandale, Dumfries Shire, Scotland, on 19th March, 1764. About his life see:—*Australian Encyclopaedia*, Vol. V, p. 138/9, also Dr. George Mackaness, *The Life of Vice Admiral William Bligh* (New York-Toronto 1936), *Bonwick Transcripts Biography*, Vol. III, p. 775a, 776 (Mitchell A., 2002/3), *Johnston Papers* in the Dixon Library.
17. According to the Log of the *Prince of Wales* (Adm. 51/4376, part 8), on 28th August, 1787, whilst the ships were at Rio de Janeiro, 4 women were transferred from the *Prince of Wales* to the *Lady Penrhyn*. But it seems certain that Esther was already transferred whilst in England, because Lt. Bowes noted her in his Register at the beginning of his diary.
18. John Cobley, *Sydney Cove 1788* (Sydney, 1962), p. 57.



Hector Francis (Frank) Hamilton Kable, J.P., of Ormiston, Qld., is a great-grandson of William Nathaniel Kable, the eighth of Henry and Susannah's children, who married Elizabeth Charlton. He was born in Mackay in 1897, and saw overseas service in both World Wars. In the 1939-45 conflict he served with the R.A.F., and for a period commanded the secret Advanced Flying Boat Base at Addu Atoll, Maldive Group, in the Indian Ocean. Frank is a retired accountant and Company Secretary. He is a past President of the Toombul sub-branch of the R.S.L., a past Queensland State Treasurer of R.S.L., past Secretary of Brisbane Legacy and member of the United Service Institute. Until his retirement, he was a member of the Australasian Pioneers' Club. He is married with two sons, John and Robert, and three grandchildren.

Patron of the Queensland Division of the F.F.F. since its inauguration.
Died 12th December, 1970.

PIONEERS OF AUSTRALIA

The names hereunder are those of people in the First Fleet. The members of the Fellowship of the First Fleet are descended from these pioneers.

| | |
|---------------------|------------------------|
| Henry Kable | William Tunks |
| John Small | William Douglas |
| William Nash | Edward Miles |
| Mathew Everingham | Mary Wilkes |
| Frederick Meredith | Ann Forbes |
| Anthony Rope | Dr. John White |
| James Squire | James Morrisby |
| William Broughton | Harry Parsons |
| Phillip Gidley King | Joseph Palmer |
| Dr. Thos. Arndell | George Johnston |
| Owen Cavanaugh | Edward Garth |
| James Bloodworth | Jacob Billett |
| Thomas Lucas | James Ruse |
| William Roberts | Ann Powell |
| John Bayliss | Thomas Halfpenny |
| James Shiers | Thomas Risdale Crowder |
| Joseph Hatton | Wm. Eggleton |
| David Kilpack | John Drummond |
| Phillip Devine | David Collins |
| John Palmer | Catherine Johnson |
| Dr. Thos. Jamison | John Herbert |

The above roll is incomplete as applications for membership are being received and researched continually. The next issue of "First Fleeters" will contain many new names and the number of descendants of each pioneer listed.

WILLIAM BROUGHTON. - - - - FIRST FLEET.

Public servant and settler, William Broughton arrived in the Transport "Charlotte" accompanying Surgeon White as a servant -- Dr. White being Surgeon General to The First Fleet. Son of Sarah and Henry Broughton, William was born in Chatham, Kent in the year 1768. Soon after arrival William became storekeeper at Rose Hill (now Parramatta). In the same capacity he was appointed Acting Deputy Commissary of Norfolk Island in 1800, then Deputy Commissary of stores in Sydney. William was warmly praised by Governor Macquarie for his control of the commissariat. In the year 1814 he became Acting Assistance Commissary General and was sent to take over from Hogan in Hobart Town.

William was a J.P. and Magistrate, and for a brief period a Director of The Bank of N.S.W. of which he was a shareholder in a large way.

Five children were born to William and Elizabeth Heathorn (with the alias of Ann Glossop), between 1792 and 1807, namely -- Mary Ann who married Lieut. Carne, Sarah (m. Charles Throsby Smith), William (m. Mary Ward), and Elizabeth (m. Charles Throsby). Their mother came out in "The Pitt" in 1792 after being sentenced to seven years transportation, at Welshpool in Montgomeryshire. The youngest child Elizabeth (Betsy) left Australia with her mother in 1809 on the "Boyd" which was attacked by Maoris at Whangaroa, New Zealand. Most of the crew and passengers were killed. The only ones left were a Mrs. Morley and new baby, Betsy aged 2 and a 15-year-old boy, Thomas Davis. All four were rescued by Alexander Berry.

William Broughton in 1810 married Eliza Charlotte, widow of Captain Roger Simpson, and daughter of James Raworth Kennedy of Nettlestead, Kent. Eliza arrived on the "Sovereign" in 1795 with her father. The five children of the marriage were James, Frances, Emma (from whom the writer is descended), John and Robert.

The Broughton family home was named "Lachlan Vale", situated in the Appin district approximately 3 miles from the Cataract River in N.S.W.

William died in 1821, and his wife in 1843 at Wollongong.

In "Forestry House", Sydney is a very interesting item from the "Boyd". It is known to have been there for well over 40 years. There is no record of it's donor. The inscription reads:-

" RED MAHOGANY. Eucalyptus resinifera.

The wood in this lectern formed part of the cargo of the British vessel Boyd which left Sydney on the 8th November, 1809. She was attacked and the crew and passengers were massacred at Whangaroa, New Zealand, by the Maoris in the same year, many being eaten, whilst the vessel was set on fire and burned to the water's edge."

THE GRAVE STONE OF WILLIAM BROUGHTON -- FIRST FLEET,
WAS PHOTOGRAPHED BY MR F.M. BAILEY (ASSOCIATE MEMBER
OF "THE F.F.F."), HUSBAND OF MARY G. BAILEY, GREAT-
GREAT GRANDDAUGHTER OF WILLIAM BROUGHTON.
THE GRAVE IS IN ST LUKE'S CEMETERY, LIVERPOOL.



