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Please address all correspondence to the Fellowship of First Fleeters,
G.P.O. Box 4441, Sydney 2001.

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From the President

Although in the depths of Winter, it is good to see so many attending our Lecture Nights. This was particularly so in July, when our speaker was a Fellowship Member, Mrs Thea Hosking (Rowe) and the room was full -- to say nothing of the Supper Room! I'm sure everyone thoroughly enjoyed the evening. (Report of the evening elsewhere in this Newsletter).

During July it was a pleasure to address the St George Women's Group at Hurstville, the View Clubs of Riverwood and Rydalmere, the Manly Historical Society and the Beecroft Red Cross.

The response from Members and their friends to the proposal for a group trip to Norfolk Island was good, and I will now go ahead and get more definite plans and prices. Those who have indicated a wish to go will be notified as soon as possible. Meanwhile it is not too late for others to join us.

Though quite a way in advance, a coach tour has been arranged to the Rhododendron Festival in the Blue Mountains for Sunday 11th November -- leaving the City at 9 am, cost \$6 each. Please make your bookings early and thus help the Social Committee in their work.

If there are any Adelaide Members who are free to help with an information table for the Fellowship at the Australasian Congress on Genealogy over Easter next year, would they please contact me?

I look forward to seeing many Members at the Annual General Meeting. Do come along and lend your support.

Beryl Lewis.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Friday 21st September 1979 at 7.30 pm.

Venue: Board Room, Assembly Building, Margaret
Street (entrance at Jamison Street)

July Lecture Evening -- "Rogues and Vagabonds"

The July Lecture Evening was a memorable one, the title "Rogues and Vagabonds", the speaker Mrs Thea Hosking (Rowe), talented actress and expert on the history of Theatre, also First Fleeter.

Thea Rowe took us back through time to the Elizabethan days where actors began as rogues and vagabonds and ended under the patronage of Royalty. Women's parts on the professional stage were played by boys, and the companies toured in rough comedies and interludes. Six men might have to play 26 parts -- not an easy profession.

Then we travelled on to the near-death of drama in 1642, when Cromwell curbed the Court and closed the playhouses. Then on to Restoration comedy, the age of Wycherley and William Congreve.

In the 18th century the theatre public remained large, chiefly drawn to the theatre by the fame of the actors. It is remarkable that the

names of the great players of this age have remained more familiar than those of most of its dramatic authors.

The revival of many of Shakespeare's plays confirms this attitude. People went to see the interpretation of the Prince of Denmark by Garrick, or of Lady Macbeth by Mrs Siddons.

This period concerns the First Fleeters, where London in the 18th century was packed. Terrible conditions existed, and is it any wonder that thieving was rife?

Thea Rowe told of the early Theatre in Sydney and the actors from the First Fleet. Like gipsies they were not welcome apart from their performances.

The theme of the Lecture was then cleverly transformed to modern days, when Thea Rowe talked about her experiences, sometimes funny, sometimes not so funny, with a small theatre group touring New South Wales. She found people's reactions to actors somewhat similar, although in a milder form. One incident was related of her being invited to a dinner party. The hostess made a nervous aside to Miss Rowe, saying pleadingly, "Please do not talk about the stage".

Actors, said Miss Rowe, are a disciplined breed, and need to have energy and drive to be able to interpret a character on stage. "People don't realise how disciplined actors have to be".

Thank you, Thea Rowe, on the wonderful talk you gave us. It was most entertaining and interesting. Shakespeare aptly quotes in his "Comedy of Errors" how dull life would be without theatrical entertainment.

"A trusty villain, Sir, that very oft,
When I am dull with care and melancholy,
Lightens my humor with his merry jests".

Sally Kalina.

Visit to Norfolk Island

On 4th June 1979 I left Sydney for Norfolk Island. I had chosen to go at this time to enable me to share in the celebrations for "Bounty Day". I had heard of the beauties of this tiny island (5 miles x 3 miles) but I was not prepared for the breathtaking grandeur of it. There is little wonder that Gidley King could not find a place to bring the "Supply" in to land -- the sheer rugged cliff face that reaches down to the waterline and shores encircled by reefs make it impossible, even with modern man's ingenuity, to bring a ship into shore. All cargo that cannot be flown in is brought ashore by lighters, sometimes two being tied together to enable large articles to be landed.

From the air Phillip Island is one's first view of Norfolk, a bright pink barren island of great beauty, standing just southward of Norfolk proper. On arrival I was met and welcomed by a member of the Administrator's staff, certainly a very happy start to my visit. That night, at his invitation, I attended the Norfolk Island Historical Society meeting and heard a very interesting lecture by Rev. Barry G. Marsh, on "Facets of Norfolk Is. History Between 1856 and 1900." Mr Marsh is an Anglican minister who has lost count of his visits to Norfolk.

The next day Mr Hitch, the man who met me at the Airport, took my husband and I on a grand personally escorted tour of the Island. Everywhere one looks is lush green -- green valleys and green high peaks, and of course the inevitable green pine trees, so old and majestic. Even the place-names sound romantic -- Cascade, Music Valley, Anson Bay, Mount Pitt, Kingston; and at every turn of the road some new wonder to behold. Kingston and its convict ruins held my great interest and really tugged my heart, for here imagination took over, remembering all one had read of those harsh early days.

Bounty Day, Friday 8th June, dawned bright and clear and proved to be an unforgettable day. The celebrations started with the largest picnic possible to imagine (the Island's population is approximately

1300 people and I think everyone must have been there!). And the food! I have never seen anything like it. Family groups, gathered inside the ruins of the old gaol, sat around beautiful linen cloths -- on the ground -- laden with whole sucking pigs, huge fish, all types of meats and salads, and the centrepiece always a very large plum pudding. The women had been cooking for two days! One unusual touch, for a picnic, was the beautiful silver champagne goblets on every "table". What a feast!

Following the saying of Grace, the merriment began. After the meal everyone walked to the jetty to see the Pitcairners, in period costume, re-enact the landing in 1856. They were welcomed ashore by the Administrator and his wife, also in costume. Then everyone followed, and walked to the Cenotaph, including the Australian Minister for Home Affairs, Mr Ellicott, accompanied by Mr Milton Morris, a former New South Wales State Minister. An elderly Pitcairner with the historical name of "Christian" placed a wreath, as did the Administrator and the Minister.

Then started the walk to the Cemetery, informal but dignified. To illustrate the informality, I was chatting to the Administrator and the Minister as we walked along! On arrival at the Cemetery gates a most memorable ceremony took place. The Pitcairners sang hymns, which to me were reminiscent of the negro hymns of the deep south of the U.S.A., a haunting, wailing type of rendition. Then three small children in costume walked the length of the Cemetery and placed wreaths on three Pitcairners' graves. A most moving ceremony, and I noted very few dry eyes.

On returning to Kingston and the picnic site, I was most impressed to find not one piece of litter; the area was completely clean. Australians could certainly take a lesson from this. The celebrations continued with a Ball at night, with an overflow crowd, and everyone voted the day and night a wonderful success.

On Monday 11th June I was received by the Administrator, Mr O'Leary, a very affable man, and had very fruitful talks with him. I was very pleased to receive permission (after months of correspondence without success) for the Fellowship to place a plaque on the grave of "First Fleeter" Thomas Headington. At this time it was a great privilege to be shown the new Legislative Assembly, in a restored building at Kingston, all furnished and ready for occupation in August. It is good to see these old buildings put to such good use.

My husband and I did the usual "Tourist" things -- went to the "Commandant's Dinner", reputed to be as served long ago to the Commandants, an "Island Dinner", typical of the average Islander's home meal, and with each course a commentary on what we were eating! This was held in a delightful old home. We visited the cottage industry "Norfolk Potteries" and what proved to be a real delight, the Melanesian Mission. This Church is so beautiful, wonderful stained glass, magnificent woodwork, pearlshell carvings on the pews and a lovely floor -- adjectives fail me to justly describe it.

Another interesting thing is that cows have the "right of way". They wander free and graze everywhere, even take precedence over cars (of which there are few) in the main street. There are no street lights, and everyone is advised to take a torch. This is really necessary at night to know where to place one's feet after the cows have been there.

I cannot close without mention of the shopping. There are no taxes on Norfolk, therefore everything -- and I mean everything -- is incredibly cheap. One could go "mad" except for the luggage limit on the plane.

It was with sadness we left Norfolk. The people were so hospitable, we were even invited to lunch in a private home, by a casual acquaintance.

In summary I must say the scenery is breathtaking, the people extremely

friendly, the historical interests unbounding, a trip on a glass bottom boat, to view the coral, completely fascinating, the convict ruins haunting but beautiful, and Bounty Day unforgettable. If I could instil a microscopic amount of the patriotism and sense of heritage of the Norfolk Islanders into Australians I would feel my time on this earth was justified!

As we soared skyward on take-off I looked back with mixed feelings of sadness and gratitude. Sad to be leaving, but grateful to have seen so much beauty, and only four hours from Sydney. I know I will return -- Norfolk Island now is really a beautiful magnet.

Beryl Lewis.

Membership Report

We are pleased to welcome the following Members to the Fellowship:

Mrs Marie E. Fardell, Dubbo. (John Herbert - Deborah Ellam)

Mrs Maureen Granger, Harden. (Nathaniel Lucas - Olivia Gascoigne)

Mrs Joan B. Playford, Elizabeth Downs, S.A. (Matthew Everingham)

Mr James L. Bragg, Normanhurst. (William Tunks)

Mr Kenneth Tunks, Miss Karen G. Tunks, Stephen J. Tunks, Gosford.
(William Tunks)

Mrs Berenice Workman, Gordon. (William Broughton)

Miss Megan E. Blackie, Five Dock. (Andrew Fishburn)

Mr Jack L. Chalmers, Roseville. (Hugh Hughes)

Mrs Joyce A. James, Fairfield. (William Tunks)

Mr Warren W. Jobbins, Miss Jennifer N. Jobbins, Miss Judith L.
Jobbins, Warren B. Jobbins, Greensborough,
Victoria. (Matthew Everingham)

Membership Committee.

Plaques for St Matthews, Windsor

Donations are requested for the Fellowship's project to place plaques on the graves of First Fleeters buried at St Matthews, Windsor. Please assist if possible. A "search day" is to be held at St Matthews this coming Saturday (25th August). Names of known First Fleeters buried at St Matthews were given in the July Newsletter.

Family Trees, Lucas Descendants

Family trees of Lucas descendants are required for collation in a family book. Please send details, as soon as possible, to:

Miss Betty Taber, Headmistress, Nelson Bay Public School, Wangunyan Road, Nelson Bay, N.S.W. 2315.

Left Address

The July Newsletter sent to Mr W. R. Edwards, P.O. Box 69, Jesmond, N.S.W. 2299 has been returned marked "Left address". Would any Member know Mr Edwards' current address, please?

Request to Contact Relatives

From Mrs Maureen L. Goering, 1066 West 500 South, Orem, Utah, U.S.A. 84057: My mother is crippled with arthritis and finds it extremely difficult to write, and has asked if I could see if I could contact any members of her immediate family, as she wishes to correspond with them. I would like to contact the descendants of Prosper Joshua Kable and his wife, Annie Dean, also the children of Cyril Prosper Kable and Williamina Edgar.

Coming Events:

Aug. 25: "Search Day", St Matthews Church, Windsor.

Sept. 19: Lecture, Val Ross, "Writing the Book" (Matthew Everingham and the Hawkesbury Story)

Sept. 21: Annual General Meeting.

Early Encounters Between Europeans and Aborigines in N.S.W.

(Continuing Ena Harper's papers on the subject, reprinted by kind permission of Ashfield Historical Society and Ena Harper. The previous instalment concluded with references to the first contacts with the natives on the shores of Port Jackson).

Lieut. William Bradley tells of another friendly encounter next day when he went with Capt. John Hunter on a survey of the harbour:

"....we saw several of the natives on the upper part of the rocks who made a great noise and waved to us to come on shore; there being a great surf we could not land at the point we wished, which they observing, pointed to the best place to land and came down unarmed to meet us".

It becomes obvious that Phillip's attitude to the Aborigines had become known in the Port Jackson area, and that is why they were all friendly in the beginning. And, of course, curiosity drew some of the bolder spirits to the encampment right from the start of the settlement. Capt. David Collins, however, seems to have been surprised that the camp did not have more visitors. He gives his impressions of the situation:

"It was natural to suppose that the curiosity of these people would be attracted by observing that, instead of quitting, we were occupied in works that indicated an intention of remaining in their country; but during the first six weeks we received only one visit, two men strolling into the camp one evening and remaining in it for about half an hour. They appeared to admire whatever they saw, and after receiving each a hatchet....took their leave apparently well pleased with their reception. The fishing-boats also frequently reported their having been visited by many of these people when hauling the seine, at which labour they often assisted with cheerfulness, and in return were generally rewarded with part of the fish taken."

At this stage everything is going very smoothly, with no interference from the Aborigines. Indeed, from the above account, there is a certain amount of co-operation between the two races. Bradley continues this account of events on January 9, in the same vein:

"We were soon joined by a dozen of them and found three amongst them with trinkets, etc, hanging about them that had been given to them a week before by the Governor, on his first visit to this place. Our people and these mixed together and were quite sociable, dancing and otherwise amusing them. One of our people combed their hair, with which they were much pleased".

Then appear the significant words:

"The Governor's plan with respect to the natives was, if possible, to cultivate an acquaintance with them, without their having an idea of our great superiority over them, that their confidence and friendship might be more firmly fixed".

They desired friendship, but they felt a great inequality. There is no doubt that the Europeans did have superior scientific knowledge and equipment, a complex social fabric and a rich accumulation of the written word. The Aborigines seemed perty-stricken. Men like David Collins were intrigued by the customs and ceremonies of the Aborigines, but they seem to ignore the fact that the Aborigines must also have had a vast store of wisdom behind them to have survived for so long on this isolated continent. In a book on early Australia, "The Land That Waited", we read these words:

"From the complex and mysterious tribal life of the Aborigines, the inheritors, or rather usurpers, of the vast continent could have learned how to survive in almost every corner of a country as big as Europe. The comic tragedies, the grotesque errors, the blind heroism, the waterless

"Early Encounters" (Continued)

agonies, could have been mostly avoided if only the conquerors had realised that these people, the Aborigines, knew the waiting land".

It is all very well to speak with hindsight, but we must ask the question, "Did the Aborigines want to pass on their knowledge to the white man?" And another point to consider is, "How was the information to be collected when the Aborigines were so elusive?"

It was not long before the black man began to covet the more efficient tools and other possessions of the white man, and this led to trouble right from the beginning. Reports of other more nasty incidents began to trickle in. Bradley continues the story, March 9:

"Landed in a cove above Spring Cove and in Camp Cove, in which last, we saw several of the natives, who ran away all but two. Those stayed on the beach and one of them showed us the mark on his body where he had been beat and also cut on the shoulder by the people (Englishmen) who land here from two boats. He made signs to us that the barbed spear had been jabbed several times into his shoulder".

This is the first account of violence, and there is no direct evidence of what caused it. However, it does appear that the Aborigines were the victims of attack, and they were quick to retaliate. On the same day Phillip's gamekeeper, Mr Allen, found a missing sailor in the woods. The sailor said

"that he fell in with a party of natives who stripped him and pelted him with stones".

He tried to get to the ships he saw lying in Botany Bay, but was always threatened by the natives

"who would, he believes, at last have murdered him, but he ran into a swamp up to his neck, and there lay concealed among the rushes".

Even Governor Phillip found it difficult to deal with the Aborigines once they had begun to know European goods and the benefit they would be to them, even though they had been managing well enough without them before the Englishmen arrived. One of the women wanted Governor Phillip's greatcoat, and Surgeon Charles Bouchier Worgan reports her actions:

"....as she could not influence him to give it to her, by soft persuasions in her own language, she tried what jumping, capering and various wanton antics; but these not succeeding....she began to weep, in a most lamentable strain".

But Phillip, who had already developed a severe pain in his side from sleeping on the damp ground, would not give her the coat.

There was another unhappy incident on the same day. Governor Phillip saw a large crayfish, which the Aborigines had caught, and he gave the owners of the fish a hatchet and distributed small presents to the other people there. As he was walking to the boat with it, one of the natives walking towards him snatched it out of his hand. Governor Phillip got into his boat, and shortly afterwards the man appeared calling out and holding the fish, as his friends must have told him that it had been sold to Phillip. Worgan concludes by saying:

"The Governor and the gentlemen went on shore again, would not accept of the fish, but went up to the huts where he got it, and took back all the presents he had given them. This conduct was a great matter of surprise and mortification to them".

Also we cannot forget that the Europeans had progressed beyond the stage of being food-gatherers and nomads. For centuries they had lived a settled life in villages, towns and cities, and this way of living required the growing of crops like wheat, corn, barley and oats and the raising of cattle and sheep. As a settlement they could not regress to reliance on gathering berries or killing an occasional kangaroo.

(To Be Continued)
