

My dear Capel, it has long been my
intention to choose you for a correspondent
so well knowing that any thing concerning
us is most interesting to you. I will
begin from the period of our first landing
at the Swan to the present time.

When our things were first brought
on shore I not being well was left
behind with Pearce to look after them
while John Charles and Alfred went
up the river to see the Governor about
a grant of land. While I was alone
Captⁿ Burn used to pay me frequent
visits in the Evening, & lecture to yourself
the Tent where we used to set the pole
was surrounded with guns three
double barrells, two single and three
rifles, over them were hung four brace
of pistols and two cutlasses. the table
a slab of wood supported by three
disks and our seats consisting of a
(Sauspan

saw pan and a bucket turned upside
down and the door crowded with dogs
who were not allowed to come in
knowing too well the way to the Sugar
and biscuit bags. I had not been in this
situation two days when an unlucky
occurrence happened which was the
losing a great part of our goods the only
things we had for building a temporary
house to shelter our goods from the rainy
season, the way it happened was this
having had some heavy rains during
the night the river was more than
usually high and they were floated
away. Pearce and I went early the
next morning to look after them,
but only found a very few. On
returning conceive our despairing the
tent our only hope of shelter at a
moment when from the rain we
(were)

were ~~were~~ miserably wet, was blown
down and every thing that had been
stowed inside exposed, the next thing
to be done was to change our situation
as fast as possible for the river continued
to rise and the tent was nearly
surrounded with water, for we had
fortunately chosen a little hillock to
place it on we had just got it and
all the things moved by dark. The
next morning John Charles and Alfred
came down the river, after a hard
night's pull, determined upon going
to the Blackwood the Governor having
strongly recommended it to them.
After about six weeks delay at the
Swan we started for our destined
spot accompanied by Capt^l & Mrs
Malloy Mr & Mrs Turner & family
a boat's crew and Mr Dawson a
midshipman this being all our little
Colony

Colony contained, none of us wished
to divide our force so we took small grants
on the place fixed for the town just inside
the mouth of the river, it is a very pretty
place with good soil close down to the
beach. The rainy season just commencing
we set to work about a garden by way
of saving seed for the following year
but there was such an abundance of
stone that we did not get much done
Melons however Cabbages and carrots
we managed to grow on a small scale.
While these were getting on under the
superintendence of Hervey an old
man Charles and Gile in with on
our passage from London to Portsmouth
perhaps you remember our having
spoken of him we turned our thoughts
towards building a house. The first
thing we did was to get the frame up
and that is it with wishes which we have
(in

in great abundance much to the
convenience of new settlers it was in
thatching this house that John hurt ^{his} ~~his~~
little finger by constantly pulling on
a small twine in tying the rushes to
the laths which so injured the tendon
that I am sorry to say he has completely
lost the use of it. While John was laid
up we proceeded but slowly with the
house he being chief in the business
department, as soon as he got well
Charles returned to the garden while
we three continued with the house.
Having a nice roof over our heads we
were able to work without interruption
from rain. We commenced a large
farm house chimney with the stones
that came from the garden but only
having a wheelbarrow to convey
them in it was a most tedious
work using nothing but red clay
(for

for mortar and rubble stones we according
to Mr Herings recommendation built the
walls exceedingly thick such as he told us
he had often seen in Rutlandshire where
lime is scarce and stone abundant.
As the rainy season was very far
advanced and the tent from constant
exposure had ceased to be water tight
we pitched it under the roof and
made up our minds to leave off
building till the fine weather.

About this time the Sailors were
recalled and we had a detachment
of Soldiers an Officer and a physician
with the latter two we soon became
most intimate indeed they spent
the greater part of their time with us.
We now commenced to get down
some of the trees behind the house
(which

which are of the most prodigious size
as you can imagine. When we began
upon the first we merely cut a few
of the roots thinking that when we let
the one behind fall upon it it would
crush it over however in this we were
mistaken. Dr. Simmons and Mr. Cloud
for those were the names of our new
friends, were still very constant in
their attendance and now began to
take great interest in these two trees
which seemed to threaten a house
in which they had passed many
pleasant evenings they used therefore
to come and help us to fell another
tree, to fall upon those, which mutually
propped each other, was our next
expedient, this however failed, but
started the first one at the roots,
considerably,

considerably, and by the aid of the Jack
in the box an instrument I will not
describe as any Naval man can give you
a full description of it we threw them all
over quite clear of the house much to the
satisfaction of the Doctor who fully expected
they would have fallen and crushed
that splendid piece of masonry as he
used to call the chimney. And Miss
Sulphur came in about the time
bringing an order to Dr. Ferriarone
to return to head quarters and in
his stead a Mr Green a fellow
passenger of ours on board the Wharfedale
He also brought down six months
provisions for this part of the Colony
Luckily for us for we began to run
rather short of cash and Government
is not preparing for immediate

Payments

pay must six months however passed
and a Merchantman came but we
received no letters. We laid out all the
money we had but two pounds which
with short allowance gave us another
six months provisions fully expecting
the next intelligence would bring us
letters, but we were not to be so fortunate
and an accident which happened to a
part of our stock, and which I am
about to relate rendered us upon the
most arrival more than ever in distress.
I must tell you then our old enemy
the sea which had before washed away
our deals, now undermining the
land completely buried a cargo containing
all the provisions by way of meat
which we had laid in by the last
opportunity and all our efforts to
find it were in vain; our vexation

(at

at this was extreme for we had nothing
to look forward to but to live on the means
of the country. Our expectations being
very much damped by frequent ^{and} disappointments
and a vessel having hove in sight we
started for her before she had anchored
to see if she had brought us any news
but alas! no tidings and to add still
more to our calamitous situation
on returning home the boat was
upset on the bar luckily no lives
were lost but the boat has never been
recovered John had just put her in
thorough repair and had spent a
great deal of pains and trouble
on her in this destitute situation
we determined to part with her
till we should receive news from
home we applied to Capt. Molloy
who

who very kindly took him and at the
same time offered his boat if we
should like to go up the country to
our large grant. We accepted his offer
for more reasons than one the first
was that we should have land left
wooded which would allow us to be
much more rapid in digging and
thereby enable us to have a crop of
Indian Corn the ensuing summer
and the second reason was it would
enable us to get clear of always being
invited and never being able to give
an invite. the day after we had made
this determination Mr. Liod came
riding up to the door as usual and
saw that gloominess was the order
of the day he asked what was the
matter, we then told him how we
(were)

were situated and that we were
going up the river to live upon what
the country afforded, he volunteered
to make a second party in his boat to
help us up with our things and in a
few days we started. I do not think
any of us will forget this departure
it was about midnight the rainy
season had commenced and we
left our house which had now been
finished for some time again to
endure the tent. Our proceedings
in this second part of colonization
was totally different from the first,
in three weeks we built a very
comfortably sized room by forming
the walls with rushes and constructing
a chimney of Turf. We soon found
it was the worst time of the year

(6)

to be supplied by the country in food
for since the River had become fresh
the fish had deserted it and as to game
there were only Parrots which were so
very shy that we seldom got any so
that we were obliged to have an
allowance of two ounces of meat a
day each. We still had flour and
rice and managed to rub on as
Mr. Brad always came up on
Sundays to stay for two or three
days we were never long ignorant
of the arrivals at Augusta. We
had not been more than three
months in this situation when
~~Mr. Brad not making his appearance~~
as usual we began to think that
there was something in the wind
and were not deceived for a few
(days

days Green and two Soldiers came
~~up~~ and told us that W. Cloud had
been ordered off in such a hurry,
that he was not able to wish us good
by, and that he had made us a
present of his boat. We ^{were} all very
sorry for his sudden departure,
for he certainly was a truly kind
and attentive friend. Charley
was fortunate enough this time
to be appointed Government
Storekeeper for which he had Sixty
pounds a year, House and
provisions which again enabled
us to live comfortably and to
receive Pearce. I must now wish
you good by as there is a ship

(expected)

expected in every day and if my
letter is not at Augusta at the
time she arrives it most likely
will not be able to be sent for -

Remember us to all most freen-
tly to the Petersfield people
Emily and the Monbays I suppose
all our family are on their voyage
out, and I do not think it
impossible that you may be too

I at all events will run the risk
of this letter tho' I hope most sincerely
it will never reach you unless
it be on the Blackwood. Believe
me my dear Chapel to be truly

Yours Vernon Russell

This letter has been written a

(long

long time but as I have not another
in readiness I am obliged to send it
[we have received letters from home by the
Egyptian and the books as well as some
doors and windows but by whom
the two letters were sent we have not
any idea, the net arrived quite safe
and has been of the greatest use as
there has been a general scarcity,
this is the first time we have
received any intelligence of our
money and were delighted to hear
that it has been remitted regularly
to us. I hope my dear little brother
will not be obliged to remain
behind for another year for they
will be so much more comfortable
on their voyage of all together if she
(does

does stay preparatory to her embarking
she must lay in a great store of Rasp-
berry vinegar, it being the only thing
that will take off the taste of the bad water
which is most horrible and also a
considerable portion of ginger bread
Coffee ready ground and some butter
slightly salted. V.B.

My dear Capel. Ashamed as I am
for not having forwarded my last
letter which has now been written
more than four months and is still
in my desk I nevertheless intend
sending it; as this is to be a con-
tinuation of it. you must not
set it down for neglect that it has
not been sent before, for really I
have often thought of it but never
(in

in the right time; however I must
not attempt to make any more
excuses seeing plainly the more I
say the more palpable my negligence
appears. Trusting that when you see
these two long letters, which if a vessel
does not arrive before this is finished,
I shall send together, you will forget
and forgive I will proceed. We
have taken two thousand acres of
our grant on the Blackwood the
place we have fixed upon to commence
is a peninsula of forty acres,
between two and three hundred
yards across the neck, which we
have fenced with a post & rail
of split Mahogany. Our house
(which

which is outside the fence consists
of four rooms Alfred's ~~and~~ mine,
the drawing room and kitchen
John has his detached which is
a very pretty little cottage called
the Library having all the books
ranged round it, Charles has
not a room he being storekeeper
is obliged to be down at Augusta
every fortnight and therefore has
not had time to build one, for you
must know that these rooms are
not built in public, but in private
time merely the hours before
breakfast, and two hours in the
middle of the day, all the rest of
the day is set apart for fencing
(digging &c)

so that you see we keep ourselves
pretty well employed, but I think
by the time we have our garden for
this year in good training, the public
that is all of us will feel called
upon to build Charley a room, so
that you see we shall have plenty
of room for the girls and Len
when they come. how sorry I am
that my poor little Mother is not
coming with them, which of the
girls remain to come with her? So
William has made up his mind
to stay in England, but he may
perhaps be induced to come out
with Mother, I hope he will for
there is little doubt of his getting

a situation how well I can imagine
him building his room adding another
wing to the present house. We have
now about five acres under cultivation,
but our crops have not succeeded
well this year, on account of our
sowing the seed too soon after the
first turning up, for the land
requires to be fallow some time
however it is all ready for the
next year, and by that time, we
shall have added seven or eight
more to it, that is if we all of us
remain here, but perhaps it will
be advisable for some of us to go
to the Cape where we have taken
3700 Acres the remainder of our
(grant)

What a pity we did not know of
that country before how much labour
it would have saved us, no trees to
get up the land rich bearing nothing
but grass, in fact it resembles an
English Park, only instead of deer
you see an abundance of Kangaroo,
you cannot imagine any thing
so beautiful but then the Blackwood
is open to the westerly winds which
in the summer time makes it a
most delightful climate, whereas
Geographe Bay is open to the
northerly so that our peninsula
may be a nice cool retreat in
the hot weather. I don't think therefore
that we shall ever desert it indeed

(2)

Hope we shall not for I have formed a
regular attachment to it, having
seen it gradually improve, the
forest by degrees leveling to the ground
a good garden rising paths made
to the most frequented parts instead
of the thick jungle that used to be
and a good well of water & considering
all this and that it is the work of
our own hands you will not
wonder at the attachment. I think
now I have told you all the news of
the Blackwood. When are we to be
joined by the rest of our family?
it seems as if the time is never to
arrive, it is now three years and a
half since we parted, who would
(have

have conceived it would have been
so long; but the time must be at hand
when we shall all meet with what
pleasure shall relate our different
adventures; you should be here my
dear Capel, but I will not attempt
to persuade you, for you know best
why does not Cousin Bob come out?
Uncle Bowker and Seymour? we
will undertake to supply them
with wheat at a very cheap rate.
I must now wish you good by -
Give our best love to all tell
Emily her seeds are most acceptable
English cabbage seed giving larger
hearts than the Colonial she must
be particular in getting true
sorts Believe me to be ever truly
Yours Vernon Burfell

December 22nd 1832