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1817

Feb'y. 1817.

Journal of the Proceedings of a Voyage
to explore and Survey the Coasts of Australia.
Kept by John Septimus Roe, Master's Mate.

Appointment.

On the 4th of February 1817. I received Orders from the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty to proceed as Master's Mate under Lieutenant Phillip Parker King, on a voyage to explore and Survey those portions of the Coasts of New Holland and New South Wales, usually denominated Australia, which had not hitherto been examined by Europeans since their discovery by the Dutch and other Navigators upwards of a century and a half ago.

The French having fitted out an Expedition under Commodore Baudin, for the same purpose, at the commencement of the present Century, had left their examination incomplete about the period of the late lamented Captain Flinders' shameful detention at the Ile of France, where he was several years kept Prisoner of War by Genl. de Caen, while on his return to England in the prosecution of the same Service, and was by that means prevented completing an arduous and laborious undertaking, which he had, till that unfortunate period, prosecuted with signal success and much scientific knowledge. — This unlooked-for interruption in the labours of Captⁿ. Flinders, had left in much, and indeed almost total geographical uncertainty the whole of the Western, North Western, and Northern Coasts of Australia, comprised between Cape Leeuwin and the Gulf of Carpentaria, with much of the North Eastern Coast from Torres' Strait to Breaksea Spit; a knowledge of the whole of which could not but prove highly beneficial both to a rising Colony and to its Parent State. — A French Ship of War under command of Captain Freycinet, who sailed as Commodore Baudin's First Lieutenant, being at this time fitting out at Brest, and on the point of sailing on a Scientific

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Scientific voyage to the South Pacific Ocean, recalled the attention of the British Government to the unfinished service upon which they had several years ago despatched Capt. Flinders; and under the idea that Freycinet was on the eve of sailing to finish the incomplete work of his former Commander, which the reduced number and ill state of health of his Crews had compelled him to abandon, the Admiralty resolved upon sending out Lieut. King with all possible despatch to the settlement at Port Jackson, in the Transport Ship Dick, commanded by Mr. William Harrison, which was then taken up by Government to convey thither a portion of the 48th Regiment. — Another Master's Mate, Mr. Frederick Bedwell, was also placed under the command of Lieutenant King, and we were all borne as Supernumeraries on the books of H.M. Ship Bulwark the Guard Ship at Chatham, for wages only, and allowed to draw our pay Quarterly. — In addition to the established rate of Pay in the Navy, Lieutenant King was allowed 15⁷/₂ p. diem as Surveyor, and Mr. Bedwell and myself 5⁷/₂ each, as his Assistants; to commence on the day of our receiving a fit vessel from Major-General Macquarie, the Governor of New South Wales, to whom all requisite Instructions to that effect were to be carried by Lieutenant King. from the Noble Lord at the head of the Colonial Department. — Our Commander having received his final orders and a supply of Nautical and Surveying Instruments, &c. &c. we embarked onboard the Dick, and sailed from Gravesend on 17th of February, but were detained several days in the Downs by contrary winds, and did not arrive at Cove of Cork till 2^d of April. — Here we embarked a detachment of the 48th Regiment, and sailed soon afterwards for our destination, with every prospect of having the start of those with whom we could not but consider ourselves acting in competition. — This was certainly the most expeditious way in which we could have been sent off, but was attended with considerable expense to us; for, although we were allowed 6 months' pay in advance, which for me, as an unpaid Master's Mate of the Bulwark, amounted to £18.8, we were obliged to pay the Master of the Dick the sum of £60 each for our mess, which the great hurry of our departure prevented our

Gravesend -

Cork -

our

our making any provision for.—

After clearing the coast of Ireland, nothing worthy of particular remark, as connected with the object of our voyage, took place during the usual run towards the Cape of Good Hope, except our passing within sight of Madeira, Palma, and St. Antonio, for the sake of correcting the ship's reckoning.— we had a favorable passage across the Line in about Longitude 22° West, and put into Rio Janeiro in Brazil, where we recruited ourselves for 6 or 7 days and sailed all well, and with renewed ardour for the Dick's arrival at her ultimate destination; which would be the prelude of our entering upon those operations which we were eager to commence.— Our time was not thrown away during this long voyage, as we were fully occupied in the exercise of the pencil and of those instruments which could be used at sea, that would hereafter be brought into action on the Australian Coast.— Every opportunity was also taken of observing the variation of the Compass, &c.; the numerous results of which are inserted in my Log; and the calculation of which and other astronomical observations could not but prove highly useful, as tending decidedly to precision and accuracy.— We passed between Nightingale and Frigate Islands of the Tristan d'Acunha Group, after leaving the Brazilian Coast; and towards the latter end of August, 1817, arrived off the West Entrance, of Bass' Strait which separates Van Diemen's Land from New South Wales: This being our nearest approach to the shores of this Country, my Journal of daily occurrences commences.—

August 26. 1817.— The wind blew fresh all the forenoon from NW to NW by N, with cloudy heavy weather and drizzling rain now and then, for 5 minutes duration.— Some patches of rock weed were passed about noon, and we then obtained the Sun's meridian altitude for finding the Latitude, being the first glimpse we had obtained of the Sun today.— Just after noon the wind veered more to the West; and by the reckoning we were enabled to bring King's Island to bear on the lee bow (starboard), going free; the Capt. intending, should the wind permit, to go to the Northward of that Island; the passage between it and Hunter's Isles to the Southward, not being much frequented, on account of Reid's rocks which are situated in the fair way.— The wind died away as the afternoon advanced, and it was several times nearly calm, with spitting rain: Sights were obtained for the

Rio de Janeiro.

Tristan d'Acunha

Bass' Strait.

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the Chronometers at a fortunate moment, by which and the observed Latitude, we were 53 miles from King's Island, by the nearest watch. — More sea-weed and a large shoal of porpoises were passed in course of the afternoon, and towards sunset the wind veered to the South-westward, but continued light throughout the evening with rainy cloudy weather. — At 4 PM, we struck Soundings in 90 fathoms on a bottom of broken shells, coral, and rotten stones — and the next Sounding obtained was at 11 PM in 48 fms. fine white sandy bottom. — Constant rain with thick weather all night, during which a good look-out was kept for King's Island, which we were steering in for, and a bottle of rum was promised by Captⁿ Harrison to the man who should see it first. —

August 27. —

The morning was cloudy and thick with constant rain, and the wind moderate from the SW. quarter. — At 2 AM we sounded in 48 fathoms, fine sandy bottom, and at 4 in 46 fms. coarse gravelly sand, with pieces of coral: It then rained very hard with thick cloudy weather. — Having steered NW. since midnight, at the supposed distance of 30 miles from the land, we were in expectation of seeing it towards daylight; but the weather being very thick, at 10 minutes before 6 AM, we stood in NW. and in 20 minutes came in sight of King's Id., bearing from $SP\frac{1}{2}E$ to $SP\frac{1}{2}S$, with the highest hill on its North end bearing $SP\frac{1}{2}S$. — This landfall, according to the Chronometers, was extremely good, considering the long run from Tristan d'Acunha, Lieut. King's Pocket Chronometer No. 394 of Arnold's, being only 2 miles of Longitude in error, No. 2054 of Arnold and Captⁿ Harrison's 118 being for 8 miles out, and the box Chronometer Arnold 403 being as much as 20 miles.

Soundings were obtained at 5 AM in 55 fathoms, yellow sand. — Being about 3 Leagues to the Northward of King's Island, we steered East into Bago Strait, with a fine fresh breeze from the Southward, off the land, as the day broke. — As daylight advanced, the rainy thick weather cleared away a little, and we perceived the Sea to break very high upon the Harbinger reefs in 2 places, and the whitish cliffs of the Easternmost visible coast of Van Diemen's Land were plainly visible. — The weather was too thick & Land too much obscured to enable any sketches or observations to be taken with accuracy. — Preserving about the distance of 3 Leagues from the Island, in passing, it appeared to be but of moderate height, and well wooded: — The hill at the North end appeared to be the most elevated part, and is a good object to set as a bearing: — at 8 AM it was set bearing $S\frac{1}{2}W$, and the Easternmost extreme, a low point $S\frac{1}{4}W$. — Towards 9, the breeze died away

and

King's Island -

Baſs Straits

and veered to the Eastward, in which quarter it remained light and variable, with frequent calms, for 7 hours. — $\frac{1}{4}$ past 10 AM sounded in 41 fathoms, coarse sand, broken shells, & pieces of coral. King's Island was at this time out of sight in the haze & thickening occasioned by constant showers of small rain. — At noon we were in 31 fathoms, on a bottom of coarse sand, coral, and shells: — a fresh breeze had sprung up from the Southward about an hour before, & we made the best of it by carrying sail, & keeping our helm to the Southward; the wind having a great inclination to remain in that quarter. — Captain Flinders' Chart of King's Island appeared to be more correct than that of the French by M. Freycinet, in its delineations of the Coast, &c., as our bearings of the North part invariably agreed in the former, which was not the case in the other: — There is also a difference of several miles in their Longitudes; the French placing it 7 or 8 miles to the Eastward of the position assigned to it by Captain Flinders. — The breeze was fresh from the Southward all the afternoon, with dull cloudy weather till about 5 o'clock when it began to clear up, and the evening was fine, with a moderate breeze. — A little before 8 PM we passed not many yards from a large whale on the surface of the water. —

S. Redondo

August 28. While the first watch was relieving at 12 o'clock, the Island Redondo was seen bearing NE, at the distance of 5 or 6 leagues, and shortly afterwards we came in sight of the high land of Wilson's Promontory. — at 1. The former was set at NE $\frac{1}{2}$ N and the Promontory at NE $\frac{3}{4}$ E, and we were in 45 fathoms water, on a bottom of fine light brown sand. — It was calm for 3 hours, and the land was lost in the haze; a breeze sprang up from ENE shortly after 3 AM; at which hour, sounded in 45 fathoms, same bottom as the last. — The morning was hazy and thick — no land visible at daylight, and the wind continuing from the Eastward with rainy weather, we tacked at 8 and stood to the Northward for 2 hours, and afterwards to the ESE, on the wind veering to the NE. — Observations for Latitude and Longitude were obtained, and at noon Sir Roger Curtis' Island bore N 58° E, distant 30 miles. — The afternoon was fine and wind moderate between NE and NNE till 4 PM, when it shifted to the westward, accompanied by thick rainy weather. — At $\frac{1}{4}$ before 7, Sir R. Curtis' Island was seen from the deck bearing about N 60° E, 3 leagues distant; and having a fine breeze from the SW, we steered NE to pass on its South side, and to the Northward of Keate's group of Islands. — Curtis' Island makes like a round hummock when approached from the SW; but on nearing it and altering the bearing, the hummock is perceived to be the highest part and is on the SW end; a deep notch nearly in the middle of the island marks

S. Roger Curtis' I.

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Bapt' Straits.

marks its limits, and interrupts a gradual descent from the summit of the hill to the N.E. point. — At 9. when Curtis' Island bore N.W. the Devil's Tower was seen bearing N.E. 8, but at too great a distance to be seen distinctly: — 10 minutes after 10 P.M. Kent's group of Islands were seen bearing S.W. $\frac{1}{2}$ N, and 10 minutes afterwards Redondo was perceived in the N.W.: $\frac{1}{2}$ before 11. Hogan's group were seen to the N.W. $\frac{1}{2}$ E, and at midnight the following bearings were taken;

Kent's group — S $\frac{1}{2}$ N — Curtis' Island W $\frac{1}{2}$ S — and Judgment Rock S.W.

The night was then fine with a steady breeze from the S.W. —

While passing through Bapt' Straits we were visited by several birds with very beautiful plumage, and amongst them was a species of gull which I do not recollect having seen before: — The body was perfectly white, together with the under part of the wings; the upper part and tail nearly black, with a beautiful blue-coloured head, and yellow legs: — we did not see more than 2, and they were smaller than the common gull: —

The pintadoes left us as we approached the strait, having constantly kept us company since we were abreast of the River Plate on the coast of Brazil.

The albatross deserted us soon after we passed S. St. Pauls in the Indian Ocean; but we were constantly attended by a great variety of birds, and latterly by some of a small size, nearly white: —

August 29. The wind steady at S.W. with fine weather. $\frac{1}{2}$ before 2 A.M. Hogan's group bore N.W. $\frac{1}{2}$ N, Judgment Rock S.W. $\frac{3}{4}$ E. and Kent's group S.W. $\frac{1}{4}$ S. — The wind had died away a little since 12 o'clock, but it again began to freshen up a little, and studding sails being set on both sides we soon hauled to the Northward of Kent's group, steering N.W. $\frac{1}{2}$ E. —

at 4. The center of Kent's group was set bearing S.W. distant 3 or 4 leagues, and 4 hours afterwards they were just visible from the deck at the distance of 10 or 11 leagues bearing S.W. — Our course was prolonged as above, in order to give an offing to the Long Beach, till abreast of Cape Howe, when it was intended to stand in and make it. — An uncommon number of Porpoises were about the ship this morning for the space of a couple of hours, some of which were wounded with fowling-pieces. —

The day was remarkably fine, with a steady breeze from the S.W., and remained so throughout the night. —

August 30. The morning was very fine, with moderate breeze from the S.W. till 5 A.M. when the weather thickened and was followed by heavy rain. — It cleared up soon afterwards and the breeze freshening from W.S.W. brought fine weather. — We had hauled one point to the Northward at 12 o'clock last night, and at 8 A.M. Cape Howe bearing by the Chart N.W. about 15 leagues distant we hauled in North for it, and in an hour got sight of the high broken land between Cape Howe and the Ram Head to the Westward of it: The center bore about N.W. $\frac{1}{2}$ E. from 14 to 15 leagues distant when first seen from the mast head. — I took the view of the land given in my Log at 20 minutes after 10. — from the main-top, whence it was plainly to be seen, though but just visible from the deck.

Long Beach.

Cape Howe

deck with a glass. — The north course was continued, and at noon when observations for the latitude and Longitude placed us 38 miles to the S⁸E of Cape Howe by Chronometers. The Easternmost extreme of land visible from the deck bore N 5 1/2 W, and the western extremity being very distant was set from the Main-top at W 3/4 N. — The day was very fine, and wind moderate and steady at W 1/2 N. — The form of the land altered considerably as we stood to the Northward, detached pieces of more elevated hills having the appearance of islands, coming in sight every ten minutes; and at 1 PM I took another view of the land from the Main-top, which included Ram Head, Cape Howe, and the high land to westward of Green Cape. — By occasional bearings of the land in course of the afternoon, it was ascertained that we were in a southerly current, or in a current setting to the Southward; and at sunset the last bearings taken, were as follows,

Green Cape.

Some hills about Green Cape, which formed the Eastern extreme — N 5 1/2 W
 Some high land between Cape Howe and Ram Head forming the western — N 8 1/2 W
 and the Land about Cape Howe — N 8 1/2 W
 Latitude of the ship on the Chart — 37° 27' 53" S. Longitude 150° 39' E.

In the evening the winds were light, sometimes inclining to calm, and veered to the NW? about 8 PM, with fine pleasant weather. — The Sun set in a thick bank of clouds over the land, which gathered in a very short time, and obscured the hills from our view during the whole of the evening. — Towards midnight the breeze freshened up and came more off the land from the westward. —

August 31.

The morning was fine with a moderate breeze from the westward till about 4 AM when it veered to the SW? and became squally with rain. — Cleared up a little towards day break, when the boom of the land was visible to the westward, supposed to be Mount Dromedary or the high land in its neighbourhood. — It blew strong from the Westward all day, with dull cloudy weather and a heavy following sea. — the mercury in the Marine Barometer gradually rising, which led us to expect either an increase of wind from the SW, or a breeze from seaward, according to the observations made by Capt. Flinders on the winds in this part. — The pintadoes visited us today for the first time since our departure from Bass' Strait; as also some large overgrown gulls and a smaller bird entirely black. — At 1/2 past 5 PM the land about Lewis' Bay came in sight bearing about NW, and our course was altered to North. — The wind was from the Southward with cloudy weather, and the sea not running so high as in the forenoon. — A fire was perceived on shore soon after dark, which was supposed to be a little to the Northward of the Entrance to Lewis' Bay, and served in some measure as a Beacon to point out our position on the Chart. — Another fire was seen about 9 o'clock at no great distance from the first. — but they were both very soon lost in the haze which obscured the land. — Sail was regulated according to the

Lewis' Bay.

strength

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Off Port Jackson

strength of the wind, to prevent the ship going more than 5 knots an hour, which it was calculated would bring us within a few miles of Port Jackson Heads by daybreak. — The wind was moderate from the Southw. all night, with cloudy weather and small rain. —

September 1. 1817. — The morning was cloudy, dull, and rainy, with a moderate breeze from the S.W. — At $\frac{1}{2}$ past 5 AM, the day broke, and objects being distinguishable at a little distance, Broken Bay was seen to the NW, the South head bearing NW by N, and the land about Port Jackson, which afterwards proved to be its North head, was about 2 miles distant to the Westward, but we had shut in the lighthouse which was building, & the obelisk, behind it. — The 2^d Mate of the ship, named Jeffries, had formerly sailed out of Port Jackson both as a mate and Master of a Merchant ship for several years, and being the only person on board who had been here before, Captⁿ Harrison, was induced to give him credit for possessing some knowledge of the place: His advice was accordingly taken when positively given, that the level land to the Westward terminating in a bluff point to the Southward (North head of Port Jackson) was the Entrance of Port Hacking, and that the land which afterwards proved to be Broken Bay, was the Entrance to Botany Bay: He was so minute in his explanations and descriptions of the different points, beaches, &c. which presented themselves, that his intelligence and information was not disputed, and we stood to the Northward pretty close to the shore, passed what was called Botany Bay by the Mate, which turned out to be only a small inlet, and he then said that Botany Bay was what he had before called Port Hacking, pointing out at same time what he supposed to be the South Head of Port Jackson. — As we approached the bluff head we looked in vain for obelisk and flagstaff; neither were to be seen, and on rounding the point, we opened what he called Botany Bay; but we could now no longer doubt having been misled by the 2^d Mate, as a small elevated island named Mount Elliot visible in this opening shewed clearly that it was Broken Bay, situated 11 or 12 miles to leeward of the port to which we were destined: we therefore hauled our wind on starboard tack at 10 o'clock blowing fresh from the S.W. — At noon a very good observation gave the Latitude $33^{\circ} 24' 38''$ S. and the Entrance of Broken Bay was set at S.W. — The wind was fresh and variable from the S.W., and having no other alternative we commenced working back again towards Port Jackson, but not without many blessings on the 2^d Mate for the correctness of his information, which it would be useless here to comment upon. — We made short tacks as the wind became most favorable for our purpose, and at 5 PM. being 5 or 6 leagues off shore, its extremes were set bearing NW and S.W. —

The evening was squally, with rain and cloudy weather. —

Mount Elliot

Off Broken Bay -

September 2. 1817. Till 4 o'clock this morning the wind blew fresh from the S.W. with cloudy weather and a heavy swell: it then died away and was succeeded by light baffling air from all points of the Compass, and rainy cloudy weather. The ship remained unmanageable for some time in strong ripplings which occasionally paid the ship's head off although there was a light breeze. At daylight the land was seen through the haze and clouds which partially obscured it, and we were soon convinced of being still to the Northward of Broken Bay by the whitish cliffs on its South head being distinguished to the W.S.W. At 10 minutes after 8. they were set bearing _____ S. 7° W.

The North head of Broken Bay _____ S. 7° W.

Southern Extreme of the Land _____ S. 9° W.

Soundings were obtained at 7 o'clock in 75 fathoms water, and there being no wind at that time the ship drifted fast to the N.E. by the deep sea line. The little progress we made and strong ripplings that were encountered when within 5 or 6 leagues of the land led us to suspect that we were impeded by a Northerly Current, & induced the Master to keep farther off shore, where we had smoother water and no ripplings. About 10 o'clock our curiosity was excited by passing through some considerable quantity of a kind of blubber fish, resembling Portuguese Men of War, extending in a line as far as we could distinguish in a S.S. and N.N.W. direction, which from its distance off shore and the above being nearly the general trending of the Coast, we supposed to be the limits of the current setting along shore to the Northward. Some unsuccessful attempts were made to catch several large but wily sharks which were about the ship this morning, but they would not take our alluring baits.

The wind was baffling and alternately light and squally from the S.W. We tacked occasionally as it favored us, and at 11 AM the North head of Broken Bay bore W. 1/2 S. and its South Head W.S. -

The weather was too cloudy to afford us a noon observation for the Latitude, but at 2 PM. we were gratified with a sight of the obelisk erected on the South head of Port Jackson. bearing S.W. -

The weather cleared up shortly after noon, with a fine breeze from the Southward and S.E., and at 4 o'clock, the following bearings were taken,

North Head of Port Jackson _____ S.W. 3/4 W.

North Head of Broken Bay _____ W.N. 1/2 N.

South Head of D. _____ West.

Mount Elliot, on an island in Broken B. W. 3/4 N.

At this time, 2 remarkable risings on the elevated lands in the distance, which for distinction's sake were called the Paps, from their resemblance to such affairs, were set bearing W.S. 1/2 S.; and if visible from Port Jackson's Entrance, would be a good mark for making the Harbour as they can be seen a long way off: They are very little elevated above the long even ridge of distant hills; and the above bearing was taken by Lieut. King in hopes of being able to cross it with another, for the purpose of fixing the position of these objects on the Chart. - a

gaunt

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Port Jackson

gannet was seen today by us for the first time, as also a number of gulls, and a whale to seaward. — At Sunset, our departure was taken from the North head of Port Jackson, bearing SW & W and South head of Broken Bay — W & N.

We stood off shore till 11 o'clock, when the wind veering round to the SE, we tacked SSW, and looked tolerably well up alongshore. —

The night was squally and cloudy, having sometimes a moderate breeze, and a few minutes afterwards none at all or a fresh one. —

350 The wind was light and baffling all the morning between SE and South, with cloudy weather and showers of rain. — A light was seen on the South head of Port Jackson at 5 o'clock, from the deck, bearing W & W, and the wind being from the Southward enabled us to bring the light ahead; but it soon veered to the W & W, and we stood to the SE for 2 hours, when it again came from that quarter and we tacked to the Westward. — The wind was variable for several hours between SSW and SE, after which it became more steady and fresh from the Southward. — When the South head of Port Jackson bore W & N 4 leagues distant, I took the sketch given in my sketch book No. 1, of all the land in sight at that time. — A brig was shortly afterwards perceived coming out of the Port close upon a wind, & we passed her on opposite tacks, got a pilot on board, & entered between the heads. A whale was blowing very near the North Head, and we passed a shoal of small fish near the surface of the water, among which the birds were committing great havoc. — It was not High water in the Harbour till 2 o'clock, and the Pilot stood off and on for about $\frac{1}{2}$ an hour waiting for its rising a little before he would take the ship through the Channel between a reef of rocks called the Low & Pigs, situated near mid channel, and the main land to the Westward. — While beating through this Channel, Captain Piper the Naval Officer of the Port, came on board to enquire into the ship's Registry, destination, &c. &c. &c. and an English Union Jack was then hoisted at the main top gallant masthead as the established signal that we were from England. — Whilst beating up to ^{the} Town, I was highly gratified at beholding what is justly called the finest Harbour in the known world, being completely land-locked a short time after it is entered, and contains a great many fine Coves, like separate independent Harbours, well sheltered from all winds, and capable of containing all the ships in His Majesty's Navy. — A new Lighthouse is at present building near the site of the obelisk which was erected on the South head as a mark for distinguishing the Entrance of the Port; which is not only considerably larger than the latter, and consequently may be seen at a greater distance, but it has the additional advantage of shewing light to the seaman who chanceth to be off the Port in the night; and for want of which he

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Port Jackson.

he might, to his no small mortification, miss the Port and run to the Northward of it like ourselves; which would also probably endanger the safety of his ship should he be caught with an Easterly gale to the Southward of Broken Bay. — The Lighthouse is of stone, was begun last Christmas and will not be completed till the latter end of the present year, at which time it promises to be a very fine piece of workmanship. — The light was put into it last night, because the Dick had been discerned to the N.E. on the preceding day; and had it been there on the night of the 31st of August, we might probably have been spared our 2 days beat. — It was in part one o'clock in the afternoon before we anchored in Sydney Cove, Port Jackson; where we found the ship Matilda (which we had seen at Rio Janeiro) nearly ready for sea, having arrived a month ago and gained a fortnight upon us in the passage from Brazil. — She was the Head Quarter Ship of the 48th Regiment, and the Lloyds, another ship that left England about the same period, had arrived above a week ago; as also another ship, ^(Bluggal) that had sailed from England 3 weeks after the Dick, and was not more than 10 weeks on the voyage. — They all had very good passages from Rio Janeiro, and kept in the parallel of 33° South being 2° to the Northward of our mean parallel. — But a little allowance is to be made for our not profiting so much as we might have done, by the winds we experienced; as Captain Harrison was not a man for over-pressing his ship with too much sail, and the royal masts were not once aloft after our leaving Rio Janeiro, although the wind was so light as frequently to admit of skysails being set, had the masts been up. —

We searched in vain this morning for the hills or elevations distinguished yesterday by the appellation of the Paps; for their appearance had changed with that of the whole of the adjoining land, and when we were off the Port, they could not be distinguished. They appeared thus  when set yesterday at W.S. & S.; and if  distinguishable would be a good mark for a ship being to the Northward of Port Jackson and abreast of Broken Bay; though the latter may always be distinguished either by the great projection and bluffs of Cape Three Points, or by the high white cliffs on the South Head, and by Mount Elliot on a small island in the Bay; the latter not being visible when it bears to the Westward of N. 21° W. by Compass, as it is then shut in by the North Head; and is shut in by the high cliffy South head of the Bay when it bears to the Eastward of N. 43° E. allowing variation 8° East. — In the afternoon the ship was moored with the 2 Bower anchors, and Lieutenant King went on shore to wait upon Major General Macquarie, the Governor of these Territories, who was at Parramatta, a town 15 or 17 miles from Sydney the Capital. — Mrs. King accompanied her husband thither. — My brother officer Mr. Bedwell intend

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Port Jackson

intend remaining on board the Dick till we receive some intelligence of the Governor's intention of disposing of us, which we expect tomorrow from Captain King. — A good vessel and one adapted to our purpose is at present the height of our ambition, and what we are anxiously looking out for.

The evening was fine with light southerly winds; the mercury in the Marine Barometer falling.

September 4. The weather was fine with light variable winds nearly the whole day. — The mercury in the Barometer rose on the approach of some slight showers of rain, and fell immediately on their being succeeded by fine weather. — Lt. Colonel Osborne of the 48th Regiment came on board at noon to inspect the detachment of his Regiment which had arrived from Ireland in the Dick, and was received by them with 3 cheers. — The Seamen on board were employed unbending and stowing away the sails, unreeving running rigging, cleaning ship, and preparing to refit ready for the reception of a party of the 46th Reg^t. to convey to Madras, being relieved at Port Jackson by the 48th.

September 5. The weather was alternately fine and cloudy with light winds variable from west to N.E. — Lieut. King returned from Parramatta today, having had an interview with His Excellency the Governor, in which it was decided that as there was at Sydney no vessel proper for the service upon which we were to be employed, Lieut. King should wait the arrival of a Colonial brig of 140 Tons called the Elizabeth Macartney, which had sailed for the River Derwent in Van Diemen's Land about a fortnight since, and was expected back with grain in a few weeks. — In the interim, a house has been allotted for our residence on shore, having lately been occupied by the Provost Marshall, but now condemned to be pulled down. — A small coasting schooner arrived in the Cove this afternoon, with a cargo of coals from Hunter's River, about 6 miles to the northward of this Port, where there is a settlement called Newcastle, the neighbourhood of which is very prolific in this useful article. — The convicts deserving further punishment, for flagrant offences committed since their arrival in the Colony, are sent to Newcastle to work these coal mines and load the Colonial vessels, and are worked in irons. — These are the only coal mines hitherto discovered in the Colony and its neighbourhood; & from thence, 3 or 4 Colonial vessels of 40 to 140 Tons burden are constantly employed bringing Coals, Cedar, &c. for the supply of the Government works at the Capital. — The cedar tree grows at that settlement in great perfection and attains a very considerable growth: It is a coarse open grained wood, but some parts of it make excellent furniture, and the whole is fit for working up into any thing it can be spared for: It has not that strong smell so peculiar to the Bermuda West India Cedar which is used for making pencils; but more resembles coarse Mahogany.

Amended in
last month

Port Jackson

September 6. Wind light from the westward during the former part of the day with fine weather; afternoon rainy and wind fresh from the westward with cloudy weather, and in the evening lightning from the S.W. — After breakfasting with Capt. Piper the Naval Officer, Mr. Bedwell and myself inspected the house allotted to us, and prevailed upon the owner to set hands about repairing broken windows, and stopping 3 or 4 leaks which came through the ceiling in places deficient of plaster. — As these defects cannot be made good immediately, we shall on Monday morning enter into lodgings for a week elsewhere. —

Sunday. Sept. 7. The wind blew fresh from the Southward and Westward, and moderated towards the afternoon, with fine weather all day. — Lightning to the Eastward (Seaward) in the evening —

September 8. Fresh breeze from the Westward during greater part of the day, with fine weather. — A detachment of the 46th Regt. embarked on board the ship Matilda, commanded by Lieut. Somerville, R.N., for Madras, and it is expected will sail for that destination on the 14th, but being the Regimental Head Quarter ship, it appears probable she may be detained still longer, on account of Lt. Col. Moller commanding the Regiment, having arrested Mr. Darcy Wentworth, Police Magistrate and Chief of the Medical Department here, for having issued some scandalous reports injurious to the character of Col. M. as Lieutenant Governor of the Colony, and which he was desirous of having cleared up by a Court Martial on Mr. Wentworth, previous to sailing for India. — Mr. Bedwell and I took possession of our new lodgings, at 95 Pitt Street, adjoining the Adam and Eve, this afternoon, and found them sufficiently commodious and convenient; consisting of 4 furnished rooms for Lieut. King & ourselves — the terms £2.12 p. week. —

Provisions are exceedingly high here at this period, Pork being sold at 13^d p. lb. — Mutton 10^d — Beef 10^d — Fowls 5^d the couple — ducks 4^d — a goose 5^d to 7^d — Bread 5^d p. lb. — Butter 4^d — Cheese 5^d — Potatoes 20^d p. cwt. Eggs 4^d p. dozen — ale 3^d p. bottle — indifferent Colonial Porter 2^d — very bad wine 5^d — Spirits 25^d p. gallon — and every thing else in proportion. —

Every article of European manufacture is excessively dear; and any thing with only 100 p. Cent. added to its original cost is considered cheap. —

September 9. Wind fresh from the Westward, with fine weather through the day. — The Dick's detachment of the 46th Regiment disembarked from that ship this afternoon, as did also those from the Lloyds, giving 3 cheers on quitting their respective ships. These 2 vessels are to convey to Madras part of the 46th Regt., the Matilda taking the remainder. — The Elmorah also landed a party of Convicts brought from England. — We conveyed our Chronometers on shore today to our lodgings, together with Webster No. 118 belonging to the Dick, to ascertain its rate by comparison with our own. —

Intelligence arrived at the Capital today, of the Colonial Surveyor General, Lieut. F. Oxley, R.N. having reached Bathurst Settlement, on his return

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return from an expedition of 19 weeks into the interior country, for the purpose of exploring the source of the River Lachlan, & which he had previously discovered running in a N.W. direction, from the Blue Mountains. He succeeded in tracing this River, if such it might be called, to its termination in a low swampy or overflowed country, in Lat. ~~32~~ 33° 50' S. Lon 148° 52', towards which it was running in a S.W. direction, and appeared to form a kind of drain to the land it passed through; which was low and level, not affording the Lachlan any tributary stream for the space of more than 120 miles. Want of provisions obliging the Expedition to look homewards, on their return, they fell in with another River in about 32° 35' S and 148° 45' E. of greater magnitude than the Lachlan and running to the N.W. - Mr. Oxley attached greater importance to this River than to the Lachlan, and named it the Macquarie, in honor of the Governor; the Lachlan having been called after His Excellency's Son. - This River was traced upwards of 70 miles to Bathurst, where the Expedition arrived in tolerable good health, although in very great want of Provisions, shoes, clothes, and every comfort. - Great credit is due to the indefatigable Oxley for his persevering exertions and arrangements on this arduous undertaking, & particularly for bringing back in safety the whole of his party, which consisted of 14 or 15 men with about the same number of pack-horses, from a country possessing very few natural resources, and more prolific in barren unprofitable wastes, than entirely destitute of water, than in fertile plains or vallies that could be rendered useful for the purposes of agriculture and tillage. - Very few of the aborigines of this country were met with, and indeed living creatures of any kind were far from being abundant; all the moveable creation preferring a more hospitable region.

September 10. Weather fine - with a moderate breeze from the Westward and S.W. Mr. Bidwell and I accepted an invitation from Captain Piper to spend the afternoon at his domain Eliza Point, a way towards the South Head, where he was giving a parting dinner to Colonel Molle and the officers of the 46th Regiment, about to quit the Colony for Madras. Shortly before one o'clock we all assembled on board the Alert, a very fine Merchant Brig which her Commander and owner Mr. Brodie, had obligingly volunteered for the occasion, and with a fine breeze sailed down the Harbour, to the infinite delight of the Ladies, who were further gratified by the enlivening band of the 46th Regiment. The Brig came to an anchor in a beautiful little sandy Cove adjoining Eliza Point, where the liberal owner is erecting a very handsome stone building, which, when finished, promises to be one of the greatest ornaments this Colony can boast of. - The debarkation was effected without the slightest accident, and we were soon summoned to dinner under a very large tent, formed of flags and colours, among the most conspicuous of which were that national standard and union, which all felt proud should afford them shelter. - About 150 or 160 persons, including of course all the beauty and fashion of Sydney and the adjoining neighbourhood, sat down under these flattering auspices

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auspices to an elegant and sumptuous entertainment, perfectly in the English style; Captain Piper filling the President's chair, and Captain Pansworth, 40th Regt, that of the Vice President. Mirth and festivity reigned fore and aft; and the cloth being cleared away, various and numerous were the Toasts which emanated from the chair & elsewhere, the greater part of which were drunk with three times three, accompanied by appropriate tunes from the excellent band of the 40th, stationed in a cluster of trees a few yards distant. Among the many friendly good wishes which were in this way dispensed to every quarter, it was gratifying to observe that the service upon which Lieutenant King was about to be employed was not forgotten, & that an early opportunity was taken by the President, of expressing those patriotic sentiments on the occasion which appeared to be universally prevalent among the whole party. The greatest harmony and good will prevailed during this hospitable entertainment, and at 5 o'clock we joined the ladies in their ramble round the domain, when dancing commenced on the green and was kept up for an hour with great spirit, when the closing day gave warning of the time for departure, and we all began to assemble again onboard the Alert, in order to reach Sydney Cove before the evening closed in: a fine breeze had set in from the Southward before the Buz weighed, but soon afterwards fell off to nearly a calm, and boats were sent ahead to tow. There was far from being any expression of regret at the failure of our breeze, for dancing re-commenced on the Quarter Deck of the Alert, and continued till all the ladies were disembarked, which was not accomplished till 11 o'clock the Alert having been obliged to anchor at some distance from the Town. Every guest departed highly gratified with the kind attentions of their host.

About noon - a signal was made from the Southhead for a ship being off the Harbour; and it was generally supposed to be the Lord Eldon, with Convicts from England, or a ship called the Harriet (formerly the Orinoko, American) from New Zealand, with Timber, both ships being daily expected in this Port. At a place like this, so remote from the Mother Country, where all have Relations and Friends, from whom they have been separated from various and different causes and under widely differing circumstances, the anxious look out which is kept for the arrival of ships from England, cannot for a moment be wondered at; and more particularly among that class of society who have atoned for their crimes by banishment from all that is near and dear to them. With this being considered for one moment to advocate the cause of guilty criminals who have justly incurred the penalties of the laws of their Country, I cannot help adverting to the peculiar feeling with which a man in that unfortunate situation, mixes with the crowd on the landing wharf on the day of any ship discharging her prisoners; and with a view perhaps at first of merely enquiring what news from any particular quarter, or what is more probable, of seeking after the face or fate of some old associate in iniquity; he is suddenly embraced by an affectionate wife or daughter who has braved even the chance of an ignominious death for that of joining him; or his ears are saluted with the curses and imprecations of a hardened and wicked son, who has followed

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followed but too implicitly the counsel and ways of his Father, and now presents himself, a thorn in his Parents side, either to urge him on in despair to acts of greater atrocity, or "to bring down his grey hairs with sorrow to the grave." Such scenes, known only to those who experience them, I am told frequently take place on the landing of any prisoners from England; and the whole of that class of people are in commotion, with the meetings of near relatives & friends, and the anxious but secret & half stifled enquiries of others, respecting any recent disclosures or apprehensions among their old confederates. — Human nature shrinks from the contemplation of dark deeds which disgrace it; but human nature will ever preserve its character, and while it deeply deplores the hardened depravity of vice, will ever find a considerable portion of pity for its unfortunate victims. —

September 11. The day was fine, with a fresh breeze from the Southward. Early this morning the ship seen yesterday off the Port, entered the Harbour, was boarded by the Naval Officer, and proved to be the Harriet from New Zealand, with a cargo of upwards of 1000 spars from that country, to be delivered here. The pine of that island is admirably adapted to the use of shipping, as masts and spars, provided the outer rind of the timber is not too much cut away in the formation of the spar required. The inside of a large piece of New Zealand timber will not answer for any thing but planks and boarding, being soft and weak. There appear to be several different kinds of pine in New Zealand, but that which grows on the sides of the hills is said to be the best and indeed only kind fit for masts, yards, booms, &c., and that the trees which grow in swampy lands imbibe so much moisture from the soil, that when dry and free from sap, they are very soft and soon decay. — There is a species of hemp or flax produced in great abundance in New Zealand, which is used by its native inhabitants for making mats, cordage, &c., and produces most excellent rope when well manufactured: It is said that this hemp will not take tar, but of this I have great doubt. —

The Ship Pilot dropped out into a fair way for sailing with 280 Convicts to Van Diemen's Land, where it appears men are wanted for the purposes of cultivation and other labour: They will be assigned over as servants to those Colonists who apply for them. — In consequence of the 48th Regt., under Lt. Col. Proskine, C.B. mustering little more than 400 strong, it is understood to be the Governor's intention to detain part of the 46th till his request for more troops from home can be complied with, or answered; and until that period, the different detached parties of the 46th at the outposts will not be relieved.

September 12. Weather very fine with a breeze from the Northward. — Lieut. Col. Proskine, 48th, took the customary oath as Lieut. Governor of these Territories in the room of Lt. Col. Molle, about to embark for India. — The Governor gave a dinner to the Officers of the 48th Regiment. —

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September 13. Early this morning the brig Lynx from Bengal, arrived in the cove. — The new Lieutenant Governor, Lt. Col. Brodrie, entered upon the duties of his office, and was honored with a salute of 13 guns from Dawes' Battery. — The brig Alert, Brodie, sailed today for Batavia, via Torres' Strait, which separates New Guinea & New South Wales. —

Sunday Sept. 14. 1817. weather very fine with moderate breeze from NW to NE. — The ship Pilot sailed this morning for the River Derwent with 200 convicts for that settlement, and the ship Portsea for Chili in South America. — Previous to these departures and at present, there are more vessels in Sydney Cove than have been known for several years. — At this time there remain in the Cove, the Matilda, (expected to sail for Madras in about a week with part of the 40th Regt., or as soon as the differences between Col. Mollie and Mr. D. Wentworth have been settled by a Military Court Martial, which is ordered for tomorrow, and will consist of 7 senior officers of the 40th Regt., Lt. Col. Brodrie, President,) the Dick and Lloyds, (refitting to convey the remainder of the 40th to Madras,) the Canada and Chapman, 2 fine ships (the latter awaiting the issue of a trial by the Colonial Government, of her Master, Mr. Drake, for his conduct on the outward passage of that ship from England, when in a reported attempt of the convicts under his charge to knock off their irons and take possession of the ship, 11 of them were shot and several more wounded by the firing of the guard,) the ships Elmorah and Harriet, brig Lynx, several small coasting schooners and sloops, the Colonial brig Lady Nelson repairing on a slip, and several brigs on the beach. — The Lady Nelson is the vessel that was made use of for a short time by Captain Flinders as an assistant in his survey of Terra Australis, and having been built under the immediate superintendence of Commissioner Shauk upon a peculiar construction, with sliding keels to haul up in shoal water, &c. &c., appears well adapted for such a service, but she is now entirely out of repair, with rotten main keel, &c. and by no means fit for service in the capacity we should require her. Her sliding keels were found not to answer exactly the purpose for which they were originally intended, and have been taken away; she is also said to sail very indifferently, and in this particular was much complained of by Capt. Flinders, who eventually sent her back to Port Jackson rather than suffer the detention she occasioned him. — This vessel, which is moreover only 60 tons burden, having been suggested to Captain King for the prosecution of his surveys, induces me to make a Memoir of these particulars respecting her, and to the above I must add, that anxious as we all are to commence upon our labours, it is too obvious what

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and inhospitable Coast, in a rotten bad sailing vessel: We must therefore call Patience to our aid, and trust to the speedy arrival of some of the Colonial vessels, amongst which it is to be hoped that one at least will be found to answer our purpose.

A small schooner arrived in Sydney Cove this afternoon from Port Stephens with Coals.

The evening was cloudy and sultry, with a light breeze from the Northward.

September 15. Weather dull and cloudy all day with small rain before noon and an unusually dark night with much lightning and some thunder. Wind blowing a moderate breeze principally from the Southward.

The members of Mr. Wentworth's Court Martial were sworn in today at the Court house in the General Hospital, and adjourned to tomorrow.

Dined today at the Regimental Mess of the 48th Regiment. Our proposed residence, No. 1 Cambridge Street, at the North end of the Town, not being ready for our reception, we intend remaining in our present quarters another week.

Sept. 16. Weather fine throughout the day, with a moderate breeze from the SE quarter till 11 AM, when it shifted to the Northward.

The Court Martial on Mr. Wentworth commenced sitting today at 10 AM and adjourned at 3 PM without having come to any decision: The points at issue are of an extremely delicate nature. It was afterwards decided that Mr. W. was not subject to Military Law, and the Trial was in consequence abandoned.

The evening was cloudy with much lightning, and wind moderate from the Westward.

Sept. 17. A fresh breeze all day, from the Northward in the forenoon, with fine weather, and from the Southward in the evening, with cloudy weather and lightning.

Removed the greatest part of our luggage from the Dick to our house in Cambridge Street, Sydney, where a servant man (Wignmore) has been engaged, and is to sleep in the house in company with another man, Thos. Stevenson, who, with the Governor's permission is to sail with us as sailmaker, and William Clarke, a discharged Sergeant of Marines, who will fill the situation of Master at Arms, &c. Clarke appears to be a sober steady man, is a very good house Carpenter, and willing to turn his hand to any thing.

It is of course to be expected that there are always a great many rascals privatising in such a place as this, which makes it necessary that we should keep a good lookout: Last night some villains attempted the residence of Adjutant Wils. of the 48th Regt., not far from our own, but were foiled, and obliged to retreat.

Sept. 18. A fresh breeze from the Southward, with fine weather all day. Employed as yesterday, transporting our luggage on shore from the Dick.

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September 19, 1817. The early part of the morning was foggy and cloudy, with a light breeze from the S. - It cleared up as the sun attained a moderate height, and the remainder of the day was fine, with a moderate breeze. Our intended residence in Cambridge Street is undergoing a thorough cleaning and airing.

The uncertainty of arrival, with many other considerations, renders it necessary that we should turn our attention without delay to the object of our visit to this Colony; and with that view, the Lady Nelson is being prepared for a survey on Wednesday next, and if capable of receiving repairs expeditiously, will be allotted to us by the Governor, for the completion of the examination of Terra Australis, and proper hands will be set about repairing and fitting her according to the directions of Lieut. King, who has received the Governor's sanction to make what alterations and additions he may think fit in her accommodations and equipment. - I have minutely examined her inside and out, several times, and have no reason to alter my opinion of her being a fine little vessel though exceedingly small for our purpose; but the repairs and alterations she will require, must occupy at least 3 months, and we shall probably see the end of the 4th month before we get sight of the outer heads of the Harbour. - This is however mere conjecture, and I shall anxiously await the decision of those who will be more competent judges of the brig's defects.

September 20. The morning was cloudy with rain, hail, and thunder storms: wind chiefly from the S. shifted to N. in course of the morning and about 2 o'clock we had a very heavy thunder storm accompanied by hail stones of larger dimensions than I ever before witnessed; but I was disappointed in not being able to measure any of them, as the violence with which they fell broke the greater part and completely flattened the remainder. I consider that some of these hail stones did not measure less than an inch and a half in circumference. - A much severer storm was experienced at Parramatta a few days ago, in which I was assured that the hail stones fell in great masses, and the circumference of some was about 2 inches; the violence with which they beat down broke a great many windows and otherwise did considerable damage.

Mr. Bedwell and I were this day introduced by Lieut. King to His Excellency Governor Macquarie at the Government House, Sydney, and were received with much condescension and cordiality. - Notwithstanding the delicacy of giving an opinion respecting a Governor, I must make a Memo. that the General is about 48 years of age, with a tall military appearance, very affable though not too free, and appears to command that respect and esteem, unmingled with fear, which is due to his rank and situation in life, and which in my opinion secures the regard and goodwill of those who may have the honor of his acquaintance, much more than the harsh austere behaviour of a great many in a similar station.

It gave me great pleasure to hear him re-assure Mr. King of his wish to forward

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forward our views with respect to the Lady Nelson, and of his intention to hasten her repairs with all possible despatch, in the event of next Wednesday's report being favorable; of which I entertain very little doubt, and am in great hopes of speedily being enabled to put to sea. — His Excellency very politely invited us to his house at Parramatta where he resides at present with his family, and I shall take the earliest opportunity of availing myself of it. — Lieut. Col. Moller, the late Lieut. Governor, embarked today on board the Matilda, for India, under a salute from the Batteries and Shipping and the loud & repeated cheering of an immense concourse of people assembled on the occasion. He embarked from the Governor's wharf at the head of Sydney Cove, and was attended by a large military guard and every person of respectability in the Town, who all appeared to feel the separation, and the Colonel himself was sensibly affected at these proofs of attachment to his person. —

A small Schooner arrived in the Cove, this afternoon from Port Stephens with coals. — In course of the evening, the Ship Lloyds received on board her detachment of the 46th for India. —

The evening cloudy with Lightning —

Sunday, 21 September 1817. Wind from the S.W. with cloudy weather all the morning. — The weather became finer towards noon, and the wind veered to the Southward; from whence it blew fresh and was rather squally. — I had intended riding to Parramatta today on a visit to the Governor, but was disappointed in my company, & obliged to defer it, not knowing the road. — Corn is at present so scarce that the hire of a horse for the day is 15^s. — Supplies of grain are shortly expected from the River Derwent in Van Diemen's Land, but the time of those arrivals is very uncertain, and the Governor is endeavouring to hasten the refitting of the Dick, in order to have her detachment of the 46th Regt. for Madras, embarked on the 27th. — The Matilda dropped out into a fair way this morning, & would have sailed in course of the day for Madras, had not the wind hung from the Southward. —

September 22. The morning was fine with a moderate breeze from the S.W. quarter. — After breakfast we conveyed all our luggage, instruments, time keepers, &c. to No. 1 Cambridge Street, Sydney, which we took possession of at 9 o'clock, and the day was employed adjusting ourselves in it. — Dined with a party on board the Dick. —

The night was cloudy with a fresh breeze from the N.W. quarter with rain. — The Matilda has remained stationary all day. —

September 23. The morning was cloudy and wet with a light westerly wind. — The Matilda cleared the Harbour about noon, intending to proceed Southabout, for Madras. — A Schooner arrived with coals from Port Stephens. — The afternoon was wet with much thunder and lightning, which cleared up as the evening approached, and at 8 o'clock the weather was fine, though unsettled. — In the afternoon, the Lloyds dropped out into a fair way preparatory to sailing. —

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September 24. 1817. The day was fine throughout, with a moderate breeze from the Westward. — A brig arrived early in the morning. — At 10. the Lady Nelson was surveyed by 3 gentlemen appointed for that purpose, as was found in so sound a state that with a new deck, main keel and stempost, and a few other repairs, she might be got ready for sea in a few weeks. — Her old rigging has been condemned, and arrangements made for equipping her with, masts, yards, spars, sails, &c. &c., which with the repairs and alterations in her hull and accommodations will be commenced immediately. —

At our house we have had hands employed setting the place in order, & have engaged a cook. — From a verandah which occupies 2 fronts of it, we have a beautiful view of the Cove of Sydney, with all the shipping in it, and an extensive lookout to the Eastward towards the Entrance of the Harbour, which enables us to see any vessel that arrives from sea, very shortly after they enter the Port. — The situation is extremely good and healthy, and the house fronts the sea breeze from the Eastern half of the Compass. —

Sept. 25. The day was fine with a moderate breeze from the Westward in the morning, which gradually died away towards noon, when it was very light, approaching to a calm. — A small Schooner sailed this forenoon in company with a brig, for Port Stephens, and the Lloyds for Madras, by the Southern route. — All three were in sight from this house at noon, and the Lloyds came to shortly afterwards off Garden Island. — The sea breeze set in strong from the NE at 2 o'clock and continued throughout the evening. — We have been employed setting our house to rights, and Lieut. King commenced a series of Altitudes in an artificial horizon for ascertaining the rates of our Chronometers. — He left Town shortly afterwards for Parramatta, with the intention of consulting with Governor Macquarie about the Lady Nelson, whose preparations for repairs are in progress and will be considerably forwarded shortly, when a proper number of able hands are engaged to work on her, instead of 6 or 7 apprentices that are now employed. —

The evening was fine with a moderate breeze from the NE quarter.

Sept. 26. The morning was cloudy with a moderate breeze from the NE quarter, which gradually veered to the Southward towards noon, accompanied by fine weather. — The Ship Lloyds got under weigh from her anchorage off Garden Island last night or early this morning, and was not in sight from this place at 5 o'clock. — The Schooner and brig likewise sailed.

This is the only market day in the week at Sydney; and 5 or 6 o'clock in the morning being recommended as the best time to attend it, I went thither at the latter hour, and found the prices of articles nearly as much, and in some instances more than at shops in the Town: It is held in a field near the East end of the Town, and confers the name of Market Street on a long road adjoining, which leads to Parramatta and the Interior. — The market exposes for sale, Poultry, Butter, Eggs, Pigs, Cheese, Indian Corn, Vegetables, Fish, Tobacco, Crochery, China, Earthenware

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and Lin wares, Hosiery and Haberdashery, Soap, Candles, and indeed something of every kind; It was very badly attended, and the general cry was that the Officers of the 46th Regt. had bought up all the disposable poultry for their sea stock to Madras.

The evening was fine with a moderate breeze from the Southward, -

Sept. 27. The day was cloudy, with intervals of fine weather. - Wind in the morning moderate from the WSW, and at noon light from the NW with fine weather. - A detachment consisting of 180 Officers & Men of the 46th embarked today onboard the Ship for Madras, and are expected to sail on 1st of October. - About 2 past 2 PM. the clouds had gathered to the Southward and wore a very black aspect - the distant thunder approached us nearer at every report, and we looked for a shift of wind from that quarter; which accordingly took place at 3 o'clock, and a light NW easterly wind then blowing was succeeded by sudden and violent gusts from the Southward. This brought such clouds of sand and dust along with it as completely to darken the atmosphere. - These violent squalls off the land continued with unabated fury for about 2 an hour, when the heaviest of the clouds had passed over, and the wind veering to the Eastward became moderate. - During this protracted squall, the weather was sultry and close, and did not affect the Marine Barometer in any unusual degree. - The weather afterwards became serene and fine, with a moderate breeze, which continued during the remainder of the day, accompanied in the evening by much lightning from all points of the Compass. -

Sunday, Sept. 28. The morning was dull and cloudy with a light breeze from the Westward, which freshened towards noon, with fine weather. -

I accepted a kind invitation from Lieut. King's Sister & Brother in Law, Mr. and Mrs. Hannibal McArthur of Vineyard Cottage, $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile below Parramatta, to spend a day or 2 there. - I started from Sydney Cove with the Commander of the Ship, in his boat, but having wind and tide against us, it was 2 past 1 before we reached the place of our destination, about 17 miles distant. - The tardy passage of the boat afforded us ample time to survey the beauties of the river's banks on either hand, which in many parts were truly beautiful and picturesque, and compensated for the delay. - For the first 6 or 7 miles, the projecting points in the scenery were very rocky & somewhat more elevated than higher up; the common tree of the Country, called *Bacalypta* or gum tree, growing from the interstices of large rocks and stones where there appeared to be not a sufficiency of soil to nourish the smallest shrubs, overhung the boat in many places, and afforded a retreat for numerous birds of gay and lively plumage, whose peculiar notes added greatly to the entire novelty of the surrounding scenery. - As we advanced, the banks became lower and more contracted, and the better soil displayed in every direction the labours of man, who had cleared them of timber and reduced them to a state of cultivation which amply repaid him with bountiful crops of Corn, wheat, barley, oats, turnips, potatoes

potatoes, and indeed every production of an English farm, though with greater rapidity and luxuriance — The natural productions of this County in the vegetable world, are far from wearing that beautiful lively green which charms the eye in a higher latitude, and naturally calls forth from a new Comer, many comparisons between the dead green or brown foliage of an Australian wood, and the never-to-be-forgotten noble forests of Old England, where every tree is a picture by itself, and when combined presents a scene which cannot but elate the heart of every lover of his Country: This feeling is heightened in the breast of an Englishman when he contrasts the "true heart of oak" of his native forests with the comparatively useless woods before him: for their growth is so rapid on account of the quick vegetation in this County (Lat. $33\frac{1}{2}$ S.) that the interior of every large tree, and of 4 out of 5 of the others, is completely decayed, and converted into mould: leaving merely an outer rind of a few inches thickness to maintain its growth, till the weight of the ponderous branches can no longer be sustained: — it then falls to the ground, and either by fire or rapid decomposition assists in manuring the land, or falls under the ravaging hand of man, to make room for plants more suited to his wants. — The lively green of the Orange and Lemon trees which decorate a portion of every estate, contribute greatly to the beauty of the scenery, and prove not only useful but ornamental in the highest degree. — To attempt a description of the several farms and objects which cannot but attract notice during an excursion of this kind, would far surpass the ability of my humble pen, which must now rest contented with recording that we arrived safely and without the interposition of any obstacle at the delightful spot called Vineyard Cottage, where the kind hospitality of Mr. and Mrs. McArthur can alone be considered to equal the loveliness of the scenes we had witnessed. — To meet with such kind friends at so great a distance from Home is truly gratifying, and I shall ever remember the hospitable attention with which, as a total stranger, I was treated at this earthly little Paradise. — At least a little more knowledge of this part of the country will enable me at a future opportunity to say something more about it.

A sea breeze from the NE set in during the early part of the afternoon, with heavy rain, thunder and lightning, which cleared away on the wind veering to the westward in the evening; & from that quarter it continued to blow a moderate breeze all night, accompanied by fine, though unsettled weather.

Sept. 29. The morning was fine with a light breeze from the Southward, which was succeeded by the Sea breeze from the NE. about 2 o'clock in the afternoon, and the weather soon afterwards became squally with frequent thunder storms of rain. — The evening dark

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dark and cloudy with a light breeze from the Southward - Remained all day at Vineyard Cottage where we had much rain, and in the morning a heavy thunder storm of hail. - Just after sunset a vessel was seen in the offing from the South head -

Tues. 30th

The wind was from the westward all night, with fine weather, and between 2 and 3 o'clock in the morning, signal guns, supposed to be for a Pilot, were distinctly heard from the ship in the offing - She came to anchor in Sydney Cove at 1 PM and proved to be the Lord Eldon, Lumber, with Convicts from England: Mr. Geo. McArthur, so justly celebrated in this country for his valuable breed of sheep, arrived by this opportunity with his 2 youngest sons, after an absence of nine years. - At 10 AM the Sloop Mermaid, Christianson, with a cargo of dry goods arrived from Bengal and the River Derwent. - The middle of the day was fine, with a foggy afternoon - and light easterly breeze -

In the afternoon the ship Almorah dropped out into a fair way off the Saluting Battery in readiness for sailing in a few days for Batavia -

Wednesday. October 1. 1817

The day was very wet with short intervals of fine weather. - In the afternoon we were all extremely gratified by the arrival of the Colonial Brig Elizabeth Henrietta from the River Derwent in Van Diemen's Land, whence she brings a timely supply of Corn. Recent floods have rendered that article of consumption very scarce indeed, and some painful apprehensions were entertained for the consequences: Beef being in great plenty, in some measure counterbalances the evil, and the proportion of both that is issued from the Commissariat Stores to the people employed by Government and to the Convicts is 10 lbs of Beef and 3 lbs of Flour to each man per week; no bread being issued. -

Two small schooners arrived in the Cove in course of the afternoon from Van Diemen's Land -

The evening set in dark and cloudy with much rain, thunder & lightning at 7 it blew hard from the SE, then shifted suddenly to the Westward, from which quarter it continued to blow with great violence, and in course of an hour veered again to the SE - Continuing variable in that quarter during the remainder of the evening, it blew strong for some time and then moderated, with lightning to Seaward

Oct. 2^d

Light westerly winds with frequent showers of heavy rain during the morning - At 10 AM, I left Vineyard Cottage with Mr. Hannibal McArthur in his boat, and in 3 hours arrived at Sydney, after partaking of several showers and escaping many more - Fresh southerly breezes in middle of the day - & the evening dark cloudy and wet. -

Port Jackson

Oct. 3.

Every object was involved in a very thick fog till 8 AM, when it was cleared away by a moderate breeze from the westward (off the Land) and the weather became fine. The Dick, Transport, shifted out into a fair way, preparatory to sailing for Madras with part of the 48th Regiment. At 10 o'clock, being Market day here, the awful sentence of Death was carried into execution upon a man only 22 years of age, for murdering a Constable in Van Diemen's Land a short time ago. He was launched into the other world amidst a great assemblage of people, at the gallows erected on a rising spot to the Southward of the Town of Sydney where the 48th Regiment were in attendance to maintain tranquillity. The unfortunate sufferer was interrogated several times by the Clergyman and others in attendance, concerning 3 other men under trial as accomplices in the same affair, to which he declined making any reply, but shewed the greatest hardihood and unconcern till the moment he was turned off. Two or 3 other men are at present under sentence of Death here, and it is understood will shortly be executed, together with several others whose trials are fast approaching, and it is feared, will stand a poor chance. Trial by Jury not having yet been instituted in this Colony, Criminal Causes are tried by a Court of 8 Officers of the 48th Regiment, assisted by the Judge Advocate, who has the casting voice. Civil cases are tried by the Judge of the Supreme Court assisted by 2 Housekeepers that are Magistrates.

The weather was very fine throughout the day, a moderate sea breeze setting in from the N.E. shortly after noon, and continuing throughout the evening. The late rainy weather, which has done a great deal of good in forwarding the parched vegetation, appears now to have cleared up for the present, but the sky is at no time perfectly free of clouds, and more wet would be still be acceptable to the farmers. Although the dew falls very heavy during the absence of the Sun below the horizon, its re-appearance quickly dries up the ground again, and renders it incapable of being saturated without heavy rain or a continuance of wet weather.

The evening was dark and cloudy with a light sea breeze.

The master of the Almora (McKissock) sent 2 box chronometers to be compared with our 3.

Oct. 4.

The day was fine, with a moderate breeze in the forenoon from the Westward, which was succeeded about 1 PM by a sea breeze from the N.E. The repairs of the Lady Nelson are proceeding with by men who work 3 hours later than the usual hour of leaving off (3 o'clock), for which they are allowed additional rations from the Commissariat Store. On proceeding to take out the main keel it was found to be perfectly sound internally, and fitted in a much superior manner than could have been done at this yard; it was therefore resolved that with the exception of one piece that had on a former occasion been hastily put in here, it should not be removed, as replacing it would not only risk its being substituted by an unsound piece of wood, but the workmanship would be much

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much inferior, and the length of time requisite to complete her, considerably prolonged. — The timber of this country is I understand

very bad, and has defects not visible to the eye, which in addition to its great weight and diminutive length renders it very indiffrent for ship building, and it is seldom made use of when other wood is to be procured. — The best species of timber, and that generally made use

of at this place for building and repairing shipping is the Eucalyptus or Blue gum wood, and cedar; the latter being used for plank and slight work, but very seldom for timbers. — An order from the Governor Major General Macquarie is now in force to prevent any of the latter being cut except under certain restrictions, its growth having been considerably checked by being cut too young. —

The evening was dark and cloudy with a light breeze from the North. —

Sunday 5th a fine day throughout with a moderate westerly wind in the morning, succeeded about 10 AM by a strong sea breeze from the NE which continued during the day, and in the evening blew strong and squally, accompanied by a dry haze to seaward. — At 8 AM The Dick got under weigh for Madras, and the Canada occupied her berth near the Blumrah preparatory to sailing in a few days for India; but the former made but slow progress in working out of the Harbour and was obliged to anchor before dark. — The wind freshened considerably as the afternoon closed

and after the sun had set it blew strong and squally from the Northward with a thick haze and cloudy weather till 11 PM. when it moderated and was succeeded by fine weather. —

6th The early part of the morning was cloudy with a thick haze all round — wind light from the Westward. — A small schooner sailed for the Coal River about 9 o'clock and was taken aboard off Garden Island with the sea breeze so early as 9 o'clock. — The NE wind continued to blow all day, was very light with fine weather after the sun had passed the meridian, and freshened towards the close of the day. —

7th This day was very sultry but fine — wind principally from the Westward blowing fresh in warm gusts, with a haze all round. — About 10 o'clock in the forenoon, the wind came from the WSW in such hot blasts as to cause the Mercury in the Thermometer to rise upwards of 9° in less than $\frac{1}{2}$ an hour, in the coolest room of our house, causing the air to appear tainted and respiration unpleasant. — It veered to the Southward and became a little more tolerable towards the evening, blowing fresh with a reddish haze all round to the height of 20°. — Early in the morning the signal was made from the South head for 2 vessels being in sight to the Southward, one

of.

Port Jackson—

of which being distinguished as a colonial vessel was supposed to be the *Big Jupiter*, absent on a trip to the Derwent. — Lieut. King arrived from Parramatta in readiness to attend a survey to be held tomorrow morning on the *Mermaid*, cutter, that arrived here on the 30th ult. mo., and in the event of being found a fit vessel for his purpose, the Government will purchase her and she will be fitted out for our Expedition instead of the *Lady Nelson*. — The *Mermaid* is a very fine little vessel of 85 Tons burden, only 9 months old, was built at Calcutta of teak wood, is very well finished, strong & durable, sails fair, and is said to take the ground well; qualities which will make her a valuable vessel to us in the situation she will occupy during our first trip, when the principal object in view will be to make a rough and hasty but correct outline of the yet unsurveyed parts of the Coast while running along it: This will ensure to us the credit of being the first explorers, and will abundantly answer an important object till more complete examination can be made. —

8th The day was very fine throughout with a light breeze from the westward in the morning, succeeded about noon by the sea breeze which set in fresh from the N.E. and continued till late in the evening with fine weather. —

The Cutter *Mermaid* was surveyed this morning by 3 residents in the Town of Sydney, nominated by the Governor, namely, Messrs Brooks & Birnie, formerly Masters and at present owners of ships, & in the Merchant Service, and Mr. Moore the Master of the Dock Yard, together with Mr. Gosar the Master Builder. — The vessel's hold having been purposely cleared for the occasion, she underwent a careful examination and was found to be in a perfectly good and sound state, together with the greatest part of her equipage and stores — but an objection was started as to her being a fit vessel for the purpose in view, on account of having but one mast, which it was urged would be found extremely inconvenient for hoisting boats in an out so constantly as we should require — and she was also supposed to be too sharp for taking the ground well. — The former is certainly an inconvenience, but very far from an insuperable one, and carries many advantages along with it which greatly over-rule the objection: In the first place the facility with which a vessel of her description is got under weigh and manœuvred is well known to any person the least acquainted with sea affairs; and in the event of circumstances requiring that most of her crew should be absent in boats, 2 or 3 hands might with ease work the vessel: As she sails very fairly there appears great chance of being able to keep off a lee shore; added to which, her draught of water is only 9 feet, when deep; and those who have made the trial affirm that although sharp she takes the ground very well: This however may be tried before purchase. — As far as I am able to judge, the *Mermaid* certainly ought to claim a decided preference.

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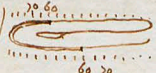
preference to any other vessel at this place for Lieut. King's Expedition, both on account of the foregoing advantages, and to save so much time which would otherwise be lost by waiting for the Lady Nelson; during which others would probably be laying a just claim to that national credit which we are so anxiously seeking. — After running down the coast and accomplishing the main object of our first trip, if the Mermaid is found to be an unsafe, or improper vessel to risk close inshore for the purpose of making a more minute examination, she will certainly prove a most valuable acquisition to the colony, and may be exchanged for the Lady Nelson or any other vessel on the Colonial Establishment that may be ready for sea and fit for our purpose. — The Surveyors have valued the Mermaid at £2000 as she stands with all her sails, rigging, stores, &c. &c. — which is 200 less than the sum demanded by her Captain, whose sole motive for disposing of her at all is the lateness of the season for proceeding on to China, whether he had purposed taking a cargo of Trepan. — A brig of 120 Tons called the Queen Charlotte, built at this place some short time since arrived today from Otaheite with Sandal-wood, Pork, &c. &c., together with a schooner from the Southward. — The former has been recommended by some (but principally those who are in a peculiar way interested) as a fit vessel for our purpose, and she has in consequence been examined: Her accommodations are good, but in addition to her very dull sailing rendering her incapable of keeping off a lee shore, she draws when loaded 12 feet water, which is 3 feet more than the cutter, and she invariably carries lee helm, occasioned probably by the masts being placed 4 or 5 feet ^{too} far forward; This might however be remedied by shifting the masts farther aft: In other respects she appears to be a very good vessel, is said to take the ground very well although rather sharp, and is built entirely of the woods of Australia.

9th The day was ushered in as usual by a land breeze from the Westward, which fell away as the Sun attained a moderate height, and was succeeded by a very oppressive calm for about 3 hours. During which a Thermometer in the Sun stood at $114\frac{1}{2}$ of Fahrenheit, and in a room at 95. — In the afternoon a sultry hot land wind from the NW quarter succeeded the calm and blew fresh in hot blasts during the remainder of the day. — At 8 PM the clouds which had been gathering to the Northward all day, now produced very vivid lightning and much distant thunder, with some of the latter very close to us as the clouds blew over. — They did not produce any rain, and the air was very warm — wind strong and squally at NNW with dark cloudy weather, moderating a little towards 10 o'clock, with much lightning. —

Nothing material has transpired today concerning the Mermaid, the Governor

Governor not having yet received the Report of Survey on her, and it cannot be answered till the expiration of 2 days, as the Governor is up the Country.

Two prisoners condemned today at the Criminal Court for a robbery
 Port Jackson. - contrived to make their escape from a lock-up house in front of the Court house where Prisoners are kept, and made their escape towards Rush-cutting Bay, where they stole a boat, crossed the water pursued by another boat, effected a landing near Bradley's Head, and escaped into the woods.

Oct. 10. The weather at commencement of this day was dull and cloudy with a moderate breeze from the Westward, which veered to the N.W. quarter about 9 o'clock, and at 10 blew warm and fresh from the N.W. - There was very little wind at noon, when Fahrenheit's Thermometer in the coolest room in our house was as high as 78° , which is the greatest elevation it has attained in the shade since our arrival here, and has been gradually rising every day since the 4th inst. - The season and weather appear to be undergoing a quick change at this period, the summer is advancing fast, and the weather becoming warmer every day: During the last 3 days the Thermometer has risen 20° , its average height being now about 77° , and at the latter end of last month it was 57° . - The Mercury in the Barometer fluctuates between the limits of 29.80 and 30.10 inches, seldom varying more than half the difference during 24 hours; and although situated in a very proper part of the house does not appear to shew the smallest indication of a change in the weather - notwithstanding which it is generally on the move and seldom steady for 8 hours together: That however may be accounted for by the very variable and unsettled weather we have had here, which in a good Barometer ought to keep the Mercury in motion while the weather is unsteady, in the precise manner in which we have experienced it. - The Marine Barometer which we make use of is a very good one, and on former occasions has predicted a change in the weather with great promptitude and exactness: It was supplied by Capt. Sherrin, R. N. Hydrographer to the Admiralty, together with the greater part of our Thermometers, 2 of which are on an excellent plan of construction by Sir, by which, instead of a bulb, there are 2 extremes to the Mercury in the glass tube (bent in form of a long Flemish coil)  - These 2 extremes, which are here represented at 60° , remain uppermost, and when one extreme of the Mercury rises the other falls the same quantity, on account of the quicksilver being in one undetached body; and the degrees being counted upwards on one side of the scale and downwards on the other side, both extremes of the Mercury will invariably stand opposite the same degree on each scale - After being read off, the Thermometer may be set by means of a small piece of iron suspended inside each end of the Tube by a fine hair twisted round it; and these being brought close to

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to the mercury with a Magnet. easily yields to its pressure, and at the end of any period will point out the extremes at which the Thermometer has stood since it was set with the Magnet - for one iron piece will shew its elevation and the other the depression by remaining suspended at the extreme to which they have been forced by the mercury. - They appear to be very good and are extremely useful for pointing out the extremes of temperature during any interval that a person has been absent from his Instrument. -

At 2 PM the sea breeze set in fresh for $\frac{3}{4}$ of an hour accompanied by fine weather - it then veered to the Northward and afterwards to the NW? blowing warm with sultry cloudy weather. -

The departure of so many vessels from this Port and the arrival of a few instead, has lowered the prices of articles of consumption lately; and the following were the average prices at this morning's market, which was very well attended: Wheat $\frac{1}{2}$ s. 3 d. per Bushel, Maize 28 Shillings per Bushel, Potatoes $\frac{1}{4}$ s. per Cwt., Fowls 4 s. per couple, Eggs 15 p. per dozen, Butter 2 s. 9 d. per lb. and other things in proportion. -

11th New Moon early this morning. - The weather was fine with a moderate westerly wind during greatest part of the forenoon, which freshened up in squalls, veered to the NW?, and became warm with sultry weather. - Wind light with sultry weather in the afternoon, and at 9 shifted in a sudden hard gust from an oppressive light air from West, to a strong and cool breeze from the South?. It remained squally during the evening, and at times blew strong. -

This evening an unfortunate man belonging to a wood boat fell overboard in Sydney Cove while stepping out of her and was drowned: The attempts of a medical man to restore animation proved ineffectual. -

Sunday 12th - A moderate SW wind with warm weather continued till about 1 PM when the sea breeze set in fresh from the NE quarter and the weather became very pleasant throughout the remainder of the day. -

13th - Between the hours of 2 and 5 this morning some villains who appeared to be accompanied by a female made an attempt to enter our house, but were fortunately frustrated by the continued barking of a vigilant watch dog who defeated every attempt to enter either gate. The servants who heard them, having no weapons but sticks, thought proper to remain quiet. -

A sea breeze from the NE quarter blew strong all night, and had increased to a gale this morning accompanied by squally cloudy weather and a thick haze on the summit of the Land and upwards. - The mercury in our Barometer has been rising considerably the last 64 hours, occasioned probably by the NE wind which now blows; as the mercury now begins to fall, although the breeze continues to blow very strong, and is at times extremely squally. - The

Ship

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Ship Canada drove about $\frac{1}{2}$ a mile towards Benilong or Cattle Point during the night, but without receiving any injury, and has this morning shifted into her former berth near the saluting Battery.

It was decided today in consequence of the Report on the Merman that she shall be purchased for our Expedition by Government for £2000, and arrangements being now in progress for delivering her up, we are in hopes of speedily entering upon our new duties and getting her ready for sea: she will not require the smallest repair in the hull, but stands in need of sails, a bowsprit and topmast, with some rigging, and the stores requisite for the peculiar service on which she will be employed.

The sea breeze did not moderate till the evening, when it still blew fresh with fine weather. — This day the Officers of the 40th Regt. opened their new Mess Room, and we had the honor of being present at their first dinner.

14th — a fresh breeze has been blowing from the SE all day with cloudy unsettled weather, threatening rain. — A brig called the Campbell Marquise, built at and belonging to this Port, arrived in the Cove this afternoon with Tea, Coffee, Sugar, &c. from Batavia; and not possessing a License from the British Government or the E.I. Company, she was seized by the Naval Officer Captⁿ. Piper, and must await the decision of a Court of Admiralty.

15th — The morning was dull and cloudy with a moderate Southerly wind which at 8 am shifted suddenly to the Northward in a heavy shower of rain that continued with little intermission during the forenoon, and was cleared away about one o'clock by the breeze freshening up from the Northward. — The Thermometer has been lower today than for the last 8.

There appears no present probability of our being in want of a crew for the Merman, numerous applications being made from Able Seamen bearing good characters, among whom are several who have been many years on the Coasts of this Country, and therefore capable perhaps of affording some useful local information.

A fresh sea breeze from the NW continued throughout the evening with fine pleasant weather.

16th — Fine weather during the early part of the day, with a light Southerly wind, which increased rapidly as the Sun approached the meridian, and by 10 PM was blowing fresh from the SE.

Agreeable to directions given by His Excellency the Governor last night from Windsor, the Merman was purchased by his Secretary, Mr. Campbell, on account of the English Government, for the sum of £2000. — At 10 am accompanied Lieut. King onboard to take charge, and Mr. Milton the Boatwain of the Dockyard attended with a party of hands and transported her alongside the wharf, for convenience of clearing and refitting — she

was

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was safely secured in this position by 3 warps and her chain cable, and we felt extremely happy in having at length obtained a vessel for the prosecution of our labours; especially one which we all imagine will be so well calculated for the service:— A pendant and Ensign were then hoisted, and as we all are subject to the Naval Articles of War, she will henceforth be called His Majesty's Cutter Mermaid. Arrangements are in progress for supplying her with proper boats, altering the accommodations below, and for getting her ready for sea with all possible despatch. Her late crew, consisting of 16 Lascars exclusive of Commander & 2 mates, will embark tomorrow on board the Ship Chapman for a passage to India.—

The evening closed in with a fresh northerly wind, and was fine and clear.—

17th. A light westerly wind with fine weather during the early part of the forenoon, was succeeded by the Sea breeze setting in fresh about 10 o'clock, and cool pleasant weather.—

Being Market day, 2 Men were executed this morning at the usual place to Northward of the Town, for Robbery and Murder in a house. The peculiar atrocity of their crime had procured them the sentence to be hung in Chains, and the latter were conveyed to the gallows in a cart with the criminal, but this part of the sentence was remitted, at the petition of several respectable inhabitants of that neighbourhood, whose houses have been so far extended by the rapid growth of the Town, as to be in full view of the scene of degradation:—

The spot which was formerly appropriated to this purpose is now occupied by a house, that now forms a part of Castlereagh Street, and it is supposed that the same cause which induced the Governor to change the station at that period will speedily operate in a similar way again.— The Criminal Court is composed of 5 or 6 of the Officers of His Majesty's 48th Regiment stationed here, who take their turns to fill the disagreeable office, and have at this time plenty of business on their hands for several days.— Scarcely a day passes without exposing the hardened depravity of some of the numerous villains in this sink of iniquity, and it is expected that several more will speedily follow the same road as the above 2 unfortunate culprits, and atone for their heinous offences with the expiation of their lives.— The very peculiar situation of this Colony has not yet admitted of its enjoying that pride and glory of every Englishman, the inestimable Trial by Jury, nor does it appear likely that it can do so with propriety for several years to come.— The urgent reasons for adhering to the present mode of administering the Criminal Laws of such a Country as Port Jackson, must be too obvious to need detail; and in the present regulation, the constant attendance of the Judge Advocate to the Colony (Ex. Wyllie Esq.) to explain points of Law, must give a decided check to any attempt at insinuating that there can be a preponderance of Military or Martial law in the scale of their deliberations.—

Some Dock Yard Artificers have been employed today making good a

few

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few slight defects below, and commencing the alterations in the Culvert accommodation, while her stores have been inspected according to Inventory by the Boatwain of the Yard. —

The night was fine with a fresh northerly wind. —

18th The morning was fine with a light southerly air, which freshened up at 10 o'clock and veered to the S.E., whence it blew strong with cloudy unsettled weather threatening rain all day. — The Boatwain of the Yard with a party of his men overhauled our tubs and rigging today. I found little repair necessary but were obliged to desist at 10 o'clock, as all Government Men are allowed after that hour to pursue their own avocations. — This is the day (Saturday) on which they receive their weekly ration of Provisions from the Commissariat Stores; but it does not appear to be a good regulation, the Convicts generally finding means of disposing of the whole quantity before it has been in their possession many hours, and are then obliged to find subsistence for the ensuing week in the best manner they are able. : This of course done by pilfering and stealing. — Lieut. King would have entered some Haulen as part of our crew to proceed with the vessel's refit. had he the Governor's sanction for doing so at the advanced rate of wages, which it will be found necessary to give; but His Excellency being at present at Windsor, 40 miles distant on the River Hawkesbury, making a general Muster of the Inhabitants of his Territory, we are under the necessity of waiting with patience a day or 2 longer. —

There were more Native Inhabitants in the Town today than I remember having previously seen together at any one time — and their increased number I am given to understand was occasioned by a grand dance which is to take place in the evening among the Kissing-Point Tribe, near Eliza Point. These dances are generally succeeded by a fight between 2 or 3 of the performers, which quickly spreads through the whole party till men and women are closely engaged, dealing out clumsy blows on each others heads with short clubs and sticks. — Several shooting parties, each having a native for a guide, went out sporting this morning, and sent in several fawns, kangaroos, &c. as the produce of their excursions. —

The evening was very cloudy and heavy with a fresh S.E. breeze, and a little sprinkling rain towards midnight. —

Sunday - Oct. 19. Very early this morning it rained exceedingly heavy for the space of an hour, during which time our house leaked like a sieve in every part. to our no small inconvenience — The wind blew fresh from the Southward all the morning, with very unsettled heavy weather. — at daylight we were very much gratified by observing the signal at the South Head for a ship from England being off the Port, and the wind veering to the S.E. shortly before noon brought her to an anchorage off the Cove, and we found she was the whaler Foxhound, with Spirits, Porter, &c. consigned to Mr. Birnie, of this place. — we were however greatly disappointed at finding she brought no more than 3 letters, and no news of any consequence — by which we conclude the ship must have left England in great haste. —

The day was very cloudy throughout with a strong S.E. breeze threatening rain, which at 4 o'clock commenced in smart flying showers, succeeded by heavier ones which

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which continued with but short intervals till forenoon when they were nearly expended. The wind then blew very strong in squalls, accompanied by cloudy unsettled weather and appearances of rain during the night. - Barometer very steady - Thermometer lower than we have experienced for many weeks and the weather consequently considerably cooler, obliging us to have a fire in our room for the first time since our arrival here, although we ought to be leaving winter behind us. - The evening was rather finer, but the wind blew strong in squalls, & weather appeared unsettled. -

Mon. 20th The former part of the day was cloudy with unsettled weather and a fresh southerly wind, which towards noon veered to the S. E. quarter and blew very fresh with fine weather. - The whaler *Lophanthus* (late *Atter* ship of that name) and brig *Queen Charlotte* warped up the Cove this morning, the latter having been discharging sandalwood on board the *Plumora* for India. - Mr. Milton, the Boatswain of the Naval Yard has been occupied with a party of his hands refitting and tarring the Cutter's rigging, and 2 Carpenters demolishing Cabins, &c. in readiness for rebuilding them upon a new plan. - The afternoon and evening were fine with a moderate breeze from the S. E. quarter. -

21st Day very fine throughout with a moderate breeze from the W. S. W. during the early part, and from N. W. at 10, from which point it remained steady and blew strong all day. - Early in the morning a vessel was in sight from the South head, bearing to the S. E., but contrary winds had prevented her gaining the Entrance of the Port, when the evening closed in. - During the day, Carpenters have continued the work of demolition below, while some Shipwrights have been placed to work making a new bowsprit and topmast from 2 staves of New Zealand fir, purchased at Mr. Campbell's rate, at the rate of 3¹/₂ p. foot. - The keel of a whale boat to measure 25 feet over all, and of another to measure 20 feet, have been laid in the Yard, & when finished will be carried on each side of our deck, bottom up. - To prevent any unnecessary delays in the equipment of the *Mermaid*, Mr. Spelling Governor Macquarie has granted permission to all concerned for Lieut. King's drawing for any stores, &c. he may find requisite, without his demands being subjected in the usual manner to the Governor's approval: Orders have therefore been issued by him to the Officers in Charge or trust of the various departments, to act accordingly. -

A very interesting Trial came on today before Mr. Justice Field in the Supreme Court - of which, more when concluded: The Reverend Samuel Marsden, principal Chaplain to the Colony, Magistrate, &c. brings an action against Mr. Campbell, the Governor's Secretary, for a libel under the signature Philo free -

The night was fine with a fresh northerly breeze. -

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22^d. a very thick fog obscured every object from view till 8 o'clock this morning when the wind increased to a moderate breeze from WSW and dispersed the mist. — Two hours afterwards a sea breeze set in very strong from the NE evening afterwards to NW with a cloudy but fine day. — The vessel seen off the Harbour yesterday, is still 5 leagues distant from its Entrance unable to beat up. — In addition to the employments of yesterday at the Dockyard, 4 Sailmakers have been assisting our own (Thos. Stevenson) in drawing Stones and cutting out 2 Jibs, and a blacksmith repairing and fitting the rammed stanchions for the securing a boarding netting which Lieut. King intends shall, when occasion may require, be triced up all round the vessel, about 5 or 6 feet above the gunwales. —

23^d. The heavens were overcast with clouds all day and at 10 AM they broke into very heavy rain with thunder and lightning that lasted till 2 PM with a little abatement at intervals, and again commenced in Torrents at 8 o'clock with very vivid lightning and loud claps of Thunder following each other in quick succession. — At 10 PM it cleared up a little, but the clouds hung very heavy and weather appeared as yet unsettled. — Wind round the compass with exception of the NW quarter during the day, blowing moderately from the Northward till 10 AM when the rain commenced — at which time it shifted to NW in a shower, and remained in that quarter while the first rain continued, veering to the NE when it cleared away at 2 PM, and shifted to the SE when the heaviest rain, &c. came on at 8 o'clock. — After this it felt nearly calm as if quite exhausted, and the dark black clouds hung as it were in solid masses, threatening another Deluge every moment. — The Thunder and Lightning which accompanied the rain between 8 and 10 this morning was the severest I have hitherto witnessed in this country. — The very unfavorable state of the weather has considerably retarded the operations of our workmen, but 3 additional hands (convicts) have been added to the 5 who were previously employed about our sails, though the amount of their united exertions is not equal to the labour of one efficient workman. — The vessel seen to the SE^d for the last 2 days &c. here today, and proved to be the Ship Pilot, with corn & potatoes from Van Diemen's Land. — Another vessel to the SE^d has been announced from the Signal post. — The night proved fine with a moderate Southerly wind. —

24th. A fresh breeze during the day increased to a squally gale by 8 o'clock in the evening with heavy rain. — The heavy clouds having been hanging over our heads all day, burst forth into Torrents of rain about 8 PM accompanied by sudden gusts, which ceased only momentarily to renew their onsets with greater violence, till the rain concentrated into one continued heavy shower. — The night was very squally — blowing hard from the Southward. — Onboard the Mermaid, Carpenters have been occupied building Cabins, &c. — but the boardship that was making for us at the yard has been

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been found to be bad, and we are in consequence to have another.
Tide & this afternoon about 4 o'clock.

Sat. 25. The weather was heavy cloudy and threatening all day, with a fresh southerly wind, which increased towards noon, and at 2 was accompanied by rain for the remainder of the day. The evening was comparatively fine. This being Saturday, all convicts ceased working for government at 10 o'clock as usual, and very little was in consequence done towards the equipment of our little vessel. Col. Davey, R.M., late Lieut. Gov. of New Guinea's Land, having been superseded by the appointment of Lt. Col. Sorell from Home, landed from the Pilot this afternoon under a salute from that ship and the Battery, previous to his return to England. We were very considerably disappointed at not hearing another salute fired to day on the occasion of its being the anniversary of His Britannic Majesty's accession to the Throne, and were prevented doing so from the *Mermaid*, only by the absence of guns and powder, with neither of which is the little vessel yet supplied. The evening turned out very fine - with little or no wind.

Sunday 26. A light southerly wind during the early part of the morning veered to the S.W. at 8 o'clock with very fine weather, and was succeeded by a fresh sea breeze from the N.E. at 10 AM, which continued with beautiful weather all day and veered to the Northward at 4 o'clock in the afternoon, blowing strong, with a red sky here to 30° above the horizon. At 10 it moderated to a gentle breeze, and the evening was beautiful and serene. The ships *Canada* and *Elmorah* sailed this morning for Batavia and India, whither all the convict ships that deliver their charge in this country generally proceed in search of return Cargoes, or other freight.

27th. A light breeze from the Westward during the early part of the morning, shifted to the Southward at 8 AM, and a bank was then rising fast in that direction - it soon spread - the wind increased in less than an hour to a fresh gale - and the sky which before was fine and clear became overcast with heavy clouds, threatening rain and dirty weather - but it continued fine in every other respect, with a brisk gale all day, and a reddish haze about the land and upwards. The brig *Lynx*, Reed, sailed this morning for Macao in China, by the passage Port of New Guinea, the Moluccas & Philippines. Our proceedings onboard and for the *Mermaid* recommenced today, and proceeded apace till 3 o'clock, the usual time of leaving off work; after which the rigging was set up and spayed in readiness for rattling down. The strong southerly wind that has been blowing all day has kept away the sea breeze, and in the evening it moderated with cloudy weather. The Mercury in our Marine Barometer has been rising since 8 AM.

28th. A light land breeze from the Westward was succeeded at $\frac{1}{2}$ past 8 by a southerly wind, and 2 hours afterwards by a fresh sea breeze from the N.E., which gradually

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gradually hauled round to the Northward, and in the latter part of the afternoon blew very fresh, increasing in the evening but with fine weather. — At the Dock Yard a party of convict seamen were employed fitting rigging, Shipwrights finished our new bowsprit and the painter gave it a priming coat. — The other Artificers were employed as usual, and in the sail-loft 6 jibs of different sizes were completed up to this day, ready for roping. — We have also laid the foundation of the Mermaid's crew by entering as Boatswain — Brombey, who volunteered from the Convict Ship Lord Eldon, where he was a Boatswain's Mate; and Mr. Miller was entered as a Seaman; The latter having formerly been a Boatswain in His Majesty's Service but sent to this country a prisoner, and now recommended to Lieut. King by the Boatswain of the Yard. —

29th A light land breeze from the westward veered to the NW quarter towards noon, with fine weather, and was followed shortly afterwards by a warm land wind from the Northward, causing a Thermometer in our coolest room to stand at $70^{\circ}\frac{1}{2}$ — in the air and shade at $78^{\circ}\frac{1}{2}$ — and in the sun at $98^{\circ}\frac{1}{2}$. — During the last 10 days the Thermometer has been variable between the limits of $58^{\circ}\frac{1}{2}$ and $66^{\circ}\frac{1}{2}$ — and during the 10 preceding days between 65° and $82^{\circ}\frac{1}{4}$, its greatest height at the latter period being occasioned by the warm land wind. The afternoon was sultry with fine weather and a red dry haze all round, particularly to windward where it was at times very thick. — The evening was fine with a moderate breeze from the Northward. — The equipment of the Mermaid proceeds as usual, and 2 more seamen were this day entered for her, Ben^r Harris and Wm. Jackson; the latter understanding the use of a palm & needle will immediately lend a helping hand to the sailmakers.

30th Having very little wind the weather was cloudy and sultry till near noon, when it commenced raining and continued with little intermission till 6 o'clock in the evening, after which it was fine with a continuance of a light easterly wind that has been blowing all day. —

The equipment of the Cutter goes on as before, with little alteration, but with that spirit of carelessness and indolence which has so conspicuously marked the conduct of all the workmen since they have been employed for us: Being mostly Convicts, they receive no other pay than the daily rations they draw from the Store, and therefore require a very sharp eye to look after them — especially the Carpenters employed between Decks fitting up Cabins and accommodations, for the very little work they do in course of the day is entirely by constantly watching them, and when finished is a disgrace to the hand of a mere apprentice boy. — The bowsprit was got on board today and rigged out, and a party of seamen have been employed with our own in fitting rigging. —

31st There was very little wind till the sea breeze set in at 9 am, and during the afternoon it blew fresh with fine weather. — The colonial brig Elizabeth Henrietta sailed in course of the evening with a supply of provisions for the Settlement of Newcastle at Port Stephens. — This day, the seamen have been occupied about the rigging, Artificers making a Toprail & Topgallant yard & mainsail, painting mast heads and as found necessary. — William
Stumms,

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Summs, a Colonial lad of 19, has been entered as a boy. — A picnic party having been given today by some gentlemen at Eliza Point, we accepted an invitation to attend it. Spent a very pleasant afternoon: The scene of festivity and mirth being the same as that of 10th Sept^r, the company repaired thither in a large boat fitted up for the occasion with an awning, the 48th band, &c. and were saluted while passing, some of the merchant ships in Sydney Cove, who were answered with the national Anthem of "God save the King". A fresh sea breeze blowing against us, we did not land at Eliza Point till $\frac{1}{2}$ past 2 o'clock, soon after which a sumptuous dinner was served up to about 40 ladies & gentlemen, with the hospitable Captain Piper as President: — Time passed as it ever should on such an occasion, and several appropriate toasts having been drank after dinner, we rejoined the ladies on the green at $\frac{1}{2}$ past 5, where dancing commenced with great spirit and good humour, and with the assistance of the band, was kept up till near 9 o'clock, when it became necessary to close the scene and re-embark on board the boat: The evening being very fine with a favorable breeze, we glided rapidly along on our return, and the enchanting sweetness of the ladies' numerous songs made everyone regret the extreme shortness of the passage: — Having happily landed without meeting with any accident, we escorted the ladies to their respective homes, highly gratified with the afternoon's amusements. — The weather was very fine throughout, though rather warm; and in the evening the wind veered to the Northward.

Saturday, November 1. 1824. — The weather was cloudy throughout the day and wind light from the SW quarter till the sea breeze set in from NE at 10 AM, when it freshened up and remained in that quarter till 7 PM. — The clouds had been gathering in the South for about an hour and a half, and when the sun disappeared behind the land, burst out into rain, thunder and very vivid forked sheet-lightning, the wind at same time shifting to that direction blew very hard for nearly an hour. — Between the squalls the wind was moderate from the SE with sultry weather, & this kind of weather continued throughout the night, the clouds hanging very heavy till they burst with vivid lightning and loud thunder. — On board the Mermaid the convicts have worked in their usual dilatory manner, and 2 or 3 of them have in consequence been put into confinement by their principal Superintendent, instead of being allowed the remainder of the day after 10 AM to follow their own pursuits: Many of the Government workmen make a common practice of totally neglecting their allotment of labour and carrying on private jobs instead, with His Majesty's nails, tools, & materials, which they will always succeed in when not closely watched, to the infinite prejudice and delay of the Service, and to defeating the main object of making their residence in this Country a punishment instead of the contrary. — This day we fitted the Solmast, crossed square sail yard, and rove the running rigging of it, which added greatly to the respectable appearance of our little Man of War. — The Moon entered her last quarter this evening about 10 o'clock. —

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Sunday 2^d. There was very little wind during the early part of the morning - but the weather was fine, & a sea breeze set in from the N.E. at $\frac{1}{2}$ past 8 AM. - The evening squally from N.E. & S.W. with rain, much thunder & lightning.

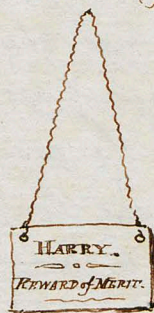
3^d. - The morning was fine with a moderate land wind from W.S.W. till got 10 o'clock, when the clouds having been fast collecting in the South, the wind came from the S.E. with rain, thunder, and lightning. This, with short intervals, continued throughout the evening. - The cutter was hauled on shore at the head of the Cove, today, for the purpose of ascertaining how she would taste the ground and behave if left dry by the tide: The evening ebb left her nearly dry with a great heel to port, and it has been resolved to have moveable shores fitted for her Channels - at the Dock yard, Artificers finished our 2 whale boats with the exception of their iron work, are making studding rail booms, ring-bolts, boom irons, Coppers, Treenail & mainail, and Carpenters on board fitting up accommodations. -

In the afternoon we were highly amused and diverted with a "Carawbee" or dance, performed by some natives of the Kissing Point Tribe who sought shelter in our house from a Thunder storm: There were present, Bidjie - Bidjie the chief with his wife Sally; Carrang-gy, or Mary, aged about 56, the oldest native female about this part of the Country, with her husband Black Harry, and an unmarried daughter about 16 years of age, beside 16 or 18 Natives of both sexes: But they made such a confounded noise and clamour when all together that only 8 were permitted to dance at one time: Their music was vocal, in which every one took a part, with one man to lead and beat time with one stick against another or against the floor: It was not of course very harmonious, being indeed like so many people screaming and crying out in great agony; which their frantic gestures tended more fully to confirm. - The Dance was always commenced by the wife of the chief, a comely looking damsel about 20 years of age, who was very soon followed by the rest, jumping or stamping on the ground, and keeping time to the tune: One kind of step was preserved throughout, being moderate at first but towards the conclusion increasing to such a pitch of extravagance and wildness as would induce a stranger to imagine they were worked up into a most violent passion. - Towards the conclusion they raised their voices and stamped with both feet together as loud as they were able, till having brought them both to their knees, they all stopped short together, a dead silence for a moment was followed by a deep hollow groan, and the dance was over. By this time they were completely out of breath and nearly exhausted, but a small quantity of very weak Spirits and water speedily revived the whole party, though it had the unlooked-for and no less unpleasant effect of setting them all by the ears: - Bidjie - Bidjie having with our permission sat down to tea with us, was so closely beset and abused by the rest on his reappearance among them that I apprehended his being rather roughly handled - for although he is their Chief, they appear to pay very little attention either to him or his threats, and he does not appear to possess sufficient authority to enforce obedience by blows. - He is in person the handsomest native I have seen, about 33 years

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years of age, 5 feet 9 inches high - has his hair dressed perfectly in the English style, and prides himself not a little in having acquired a few of our manners and maxims - particularly a step or 2 in dancing, which he was very anxious we should notice, and was eager in his application for our praise when it was over: He is a very great mimic, speaks tolerable good English, and was very useful in assisting a party of the 40th Regt. that was sent out into the country a few months ago in quest of several convicts that had absconded themselves from their several employments, and were committing great depredations upon farmers, &c. in the Interior: These desperadoes go by the name of Bush-rangers, and several of their haunts were discovered by Bidjie, who in common with his countrymen, are very great adepts at tracing footsteps through woods or plains, and have astonishing quick sight. - His wife Sally is the best of his life, having the most violent, sulky and horrible temper that was perhaps ever possessed by one person, but I attribute it in a great measure to her being so much younger than her husband and having no children - for she openly accused him before us, and without any very nice and scrupulous feeling of delicacy, of inability to do his duty! - To preserve good order and create a spirit of emulation in good behaviour among the native aborigines in the immediate neighbourhood of the Colony at Port Jackson, Governor Macquarie has appointed a Chief to each Tribe from among their own number, who is answerable for the conduct of all those under his care; and as a badge of authority and honourable distinction above the rest, he wears a brass plate in shape of a crescent, suspended by a chain round the neck, to hang down over the breast: on the plate is engraven the name of the Chief and the Tribe over which he presides: It is about 8 inches in diameter and kept as bright as gold - Other honorary rewards and marks of distinction have been conferred by the Governor on several other natives for their good conduct on particular or general occasions; one of which is possessed by Black Harry, who bears the



character of being a very quiet good man in his way, and belongs to Bidjie's Tribe, whose nominal Territory of Kissing Point is about 10 miles up the River towards Parramatta. - This second badge of honor is a long square piece of brass as represented above, with name engraven in large letters over "Reward of Merit" - It is worn by a chain round the neck in a similar manner to the last and kept equally bright, being prized by their Possessors above every thing else, and I believe to be parted with only with life. - a native named Bongasee, who accompanied Capt. Linders in his Surveys of these Coasts in H.M. Ship Investigator, is Chief of the Broken Bay Tribe and is generally allowed to be the best disposed man that has yet been met with. - He is now about 50 years of age, but carries it very well and keeps his Tribe in excellent Order. - As we are of opinion that a native

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will prove of essential service to us in forwarding our intercourse with any natives we may fall in with on our approaching Expedition. Morking has obtained the Governor's permission to take Bongaree, who is very willing to embark again, and we are in hopes will prove very serviceable both in the above respect and by the information he appears likely to give with respect to the Coasts. — The quickness of sight possessed by the Natives of this Country is astonishing: I was assured by Mr. Christensen, late Commander of the *Mermala*, that his Cook, who is an Australian, could perceive a vessel at sea with his naked eye, when another person could scarcely discern her with the aid of a glass; and I have been eye witness to astonishing proofs of a similar kind during our short residence here. — Their honesty is likewise unquestionable: for Sugar, Rum, & Tobacco, articles of which they are passionately fond, may be placed in their way for several hours together, and they never attempt to take any without previous permission: and if once refused will not repeat their request for the same article — a circumstance somewhat remarkable when it is for a moment considered what a set of villains and rascals they are in the midst of, whose total disregard of private property and the circumstances of its owner must frequently subject these poor miserable to the loss of fish or any thing else they may possess that is considered worth carrying off: — It might therefore naturally be feared that the philanthropic views of His Excellency and the Committee for civilizing the aborigines of this Country and instilling into their tender minds, when young, the principles of the Christian Religion, would meet with a decided check, by their experiencing a very opposite treatment from that which is held out to them as most proper and becoming, and guiding that as far as respects honesty and good faith, they possess a decided superiority over that class of white people with whom they generally mix and associate: It is also to be taken into consideration that the rude uncivilized savage has not always that ample share of moral agency which enables other people to discriminate between those who fill the upper ranks of society in New South Wales, and the mere convict who has been banished there from his own country for the expiation of his crimes; but to him, all white men are frequently looked upon and considered on a scale of general scale of equalization, and an injury from one of them usually inspires a savage with feelings of revenge and distrust against the whole: This inimical feeling must also acquire additional strength when they reflect that white men are constantly urging upon them those rules and precepts which they are themselves unable to observe. — The natives who are continually strolling about the Town are in general very well treated by the respectable inhabitants, who give them clothes, &c. and allow them to sleep in their outhouses — an indulgence they never abuse, as every article is found on the following morning in the precise situation in which it had been left. —

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Tues. Nov. 4. 1817. The day was very cloudy throughout with a moderate breeze from WSW till 8 AM, when it veered WNW, and was succeeded by the NE breeze from the NE at $\frac{1}{2}$ past 10, which continued throughout the day. Heavy rain at 11 continued till 1 PM. The Tide not rising high enough to float the Mermaid she was onshore all night, and on being left again at 8 AM, she took a great heel over to port and brought the water within 2 streaks of the larboard channel, confirming the former supposition of shores being necessary for her support. It was nearly High water at $\frac{1}{2}$ past 3 PM, when the vessel was secured in her former berth off the Dock Yard. We had the pleasure of seeing our 2 whale boats launched today and hauled up to be painted in another part of the Yard: they appear to be very fine serviceable boats, and are built of the cedar of the Country, which is procured in abundance from the Settlement at Newcastle, and is used for the greater part of the Government work. Onboard the Mermaid Carpenters have been employed about the accommodations, Seamen fitting rigging, while artificers at the Yards have been occupied about the sails, 2 kedg anchors, boats grapnels, &c. The Governor with his lady, son, &c. arrived in Town today to reside a short time, His Excellency being about to muster the inhabitants of Sydney, to complete the general Muster of the different Settlements, undertaken by order of the Secretary of State for the Colonies.

5th a sea breeze set in from the NE half an hour after noon, accompanied throughout the day by fine weather. Another 25 feet whale boat is in contemplation for us to carry out in frame, packed away in the hold; and a jolly boat is also engaged to be built, and will be carried over the stern.

The equipment of the Mermaid has proceeded as usual, except that the Carpenters employed in fitting up the accommodations were worked till 6 instead of 3 PM, for being found by the Builder stretched out on the benches "taking a caulk". William Cobby was this day entered as the Cutter's Cook. He is a prisoner in the country, with what is called a Ticket of leave from the Governor, which enables him to set up for himself in any part of the country without being liable to a call from the Government unless bad behaviour shall incur a forfeiture of the Ticket of leave: His Excellency has promised him a pardon to return to England, should Lieut. King's report of him prove favorable. The number of hands now belonging to the Mermaid as part of crew, exclusive of Officers, amounts to 8, and numerous applications are daily made for being entered - but there being every prospect of the Seamen's berths and berthing being completed by Saturday next, which is the next issue day for Provisions, it is proposed to complete the number of the crew to 18 on that day, till when there will be no place to lodge them. In course of the day a small schooner arrived with wheat, potatoes, &c. from the Derwent River. The evening was fine with a light easterly wind.

6th Light westerly breezes with fine weather, shifted after 8 AM to the southward, blowing fresh with rain, lightning. The carpenters employed

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employed onboard the Mermoid have been permitted to work till 5 PM every day. for additional rations from the Commissariat - and on shore the keel of our new whale boat has been laid, and other work proceeding as usual. The Cutt's main boom has been found to be nearly rotten in a Sun rent which extends nearly the whole length, and it has in consequence been condemned by the Master Builder.

Frid. 7th A fresh southerly wind with wet weather was succeeded by a sea breeze from the N. at 10 am and fine weather. - At 8 PM it again shifted to the Southward with rain. - The Mermoids' outfitment is getting on as usual, and all artificers work with their accustomed ease. - This being market day, 4 men suffered sentence of death for felony, and were executed in the usual place Northward of the Town - Nine more are under the same sentence, and it is expected 4 of them will suffer next week, as atrocious crime appears to be greatly on the increase. - The generality of articles are getting much cheaper here every week as the season advances, and it is gratifying to have before us the prospect of an abundant harvest. - At the Market today, considerable reduction took place in the principal articles of consumption. - The average price of wheat was $1.3\frac{1}{2}$ p. bushel, Maize $1\frac{1}{2}$ p. bushel, Potatoes 8 p. p. bwt. and on account of a plentiful supply from the River Derwent in Van Diemen's Land some even went off at 5 p. - On our first arrival here in the beginning of September, they were at the enormous price of 25 and 28 p. p. bwt., with a great chance of being bad - A couple of fowls at today's market sold for $3\frac{1}{2}$ - one dozen eggs $\frac{1}{3}$ - one pound fresh butter $2\frac{1}{3}$. - NB. At this period Fresh Butter is sold at the Derwent, at the rate of $\frac{1}{6}$ p. p. bwt.

8th Last night was wet, dark, and cheerless, with much lightning, and at 2 am some of the heaviest rain I hail fell that I remember to have witnessed since we arrived here, and which it is feared has considerably damaged the standing corn. - In the afternoon a southerly gale came on, accompanied by much lightning throughout the night. - The Brig Campbell Macquarie dropped out into a fair way, preparatory to sailing on a voyage for seal skins and oil to a small island recently discovered in Lat. about $53^{\circ} 30'$ S. and Longth about $159^{\circ} 40'$ E. and named Macquarie Island in honor of his Excellency the present Governor of these Territories. - It is said to be tolerably elevated, but very swampy from its summit to the beach, and entirely destitute of wood of any kind; but its shores which are every where rocky, particularly on the western side, abound with fur seals, sea elephants & lions, which afford an abundant harvest to parties of men that are left upon it for 3 or 4 months with wooden habitations, whose occupation for the whole long dreary winter is to obtain the skins of the former, and render down the blubber of the elephants & lions into oil; using

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using for fuel and light on every occasion. the blubber of these animals with which the sea in their immediate neighbourhood so plentifully abounds. This solitary and dreary island abounds with albatross, numerous species of gulls and other oceanic birds, together with myriads of penguins, shags, gannets, divers, and a few land birds, including some small parrots of beautiful green plumage, that of course cannot perch upon trees. — The men who engage in this undertaking enter into the service of their employers upon the lay, as is practised in whalers, where the profit of every man's labour is regulated by his exertions. To keep themselves warm during the inclement weather that may naturally be looked for in 53 and 54 South Latitude, they sleep in long cribs of feathers and down of birds, which is easily procured, and abundantly answers the desired purpose. —

Sunday, 9th. The early part of the day was very fine with a fresh breeze from the West till 10 o'clock when it veered to the Southw^d? and continued throughout the day to blow alternately from all points of the Compass without being steady for one hour together.

A partial eclipse of the Sun was visible here shortly after noon, and its termination was found to be at 1^h. 48^m. 15^s. 48^m Apparent time. — It continued upwards of an hour, but the time of the Eclipse in the Nautical Almanac being for its center, we were not prepared for its commencement, & therefore lost that observation.

The Ship Duke of Wellington arrived this afternoon from England, last from the Derwent, with a cargo of sundries — having on her passage traded at Rio de Janeiro, Cape of Good Hope, and Van Diemen's Land. — Several passengers arrived in her from England, &c. and among them 2 fair ones on speculation from the Cape of Good Hope. — but she has brought us no letters and very little news. —

10th The day was fine throughout with a moderate southerly wind, which after 11 AM became variable from N^W? — Towards the Mermaid's equipment we have been watering, fitting rigging, making new main boom, weather cloths, sails and otherwise employed as necessary. — The evening was fine with a fresh northerly wind. —

11th a fine day with moderate N^Wly wind — Mercury in the Thermometer higher and in Barometer lower than we have had it for a considerable time. — Very little has been done for us today, the novelty of the Mermaid's fit out being now over, which makes us apprehensive that with all our spurring and hastening them, she will not be ready for sea under 5 weeks from the present date. —

The Sloop Black Lobe sails this morning on some secret expedition to the Northward, of which nothing has yet transpired: It is of a private nature, and under charge of Lieut. Ritchie, R. N. —

12th a warm land wind throughout the day rendered the weather very oppressive and sultry, and is the second day of our being deserted by the sea breeze, which on account of its refreshing and salubrious qualities is emphatically called by the inhabitants the Doctor. — The wind was variable all day, and at Sunset the

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the Heavens bore a red burning aspect, with a thick dry haze all round the horizon, the sun setting in these quarters directly to windward. —

The artificers at the Dock Yard, &c. having been working in their usual dilatory manner, repeated complaints to that effect have been made to Captain Gill of the 40th Regt., Acting Engineer and Superintendent of Public Works, but to no purpose, and there appears every prospect of its soon becoming absolutely necessary to lay a statement of facts before His Excellency the Governor, who is led to believe by those in Office that the equipment of the *Mermaid* proceeds rapidly and that she is in a state of great forwardness. — Such statements not only differ very widely from the truth, but are rendered more shamefully reprehensible by the fact that artificers whose names are returned as working for the *Mermaid* are employed upon various private occasions by that very officer who should be the first to check such proceedings, and whose official situation in the Colony makes it his imperative duty to put us in a condition for sailing hence with all possible despatch. — The above Officer in principal Superintendence of the Government works, and amongst them of the Dock Yard, being unfortunately for that department of the Public Service a Military Officer, cannot for a moment be supposed capable of forming a just conception of what is or is not requisite for fitting out the *Mermaid*, and must therefore be totally unfitted for a judge in Nautical Affairs; yet with all our inclination to allow things to proceed in a quiet way we cannot but feel greatly annoyed that the Service should suffer so materially from such palpable misconceptions and blunders with respect to Nautical Matters as pass almost daily within our observation. — I will merely adduce a single instance of this kind which occurred only a day or 2 ago on board the Colonial Brig *Elizabeth Henrietta*, commanded by Mr. Whyte, who according to the custom here applied to the Acting Engineer for a survey on one of that vessel's cables which had been much chafed and rubbed by rocks and was reported unfit for trusting the vessel's safety to: An altercation of course ensued, which ended in Mr. W. being ordered to take the cable another trip, without being subjected even to the form of a survey; and the natural consequence of this mistaken and ill judged economy, to say nothing of its inhumanity, was the loss of an anchor and cable the next time they came into use, and very nearly indeed of the Brig. — This has happened twice to the same vessel and plainly shews the existing necessity for a Naval Officer here, to superintend as Commissioner or Master Attendant, by which means the Naval Affairs of the Colony would be conducted with much real instead of imaginary economy, by a seafaring man, who would be much better able to carry on that species of duty than one who never served afloat, and who cannot tell the main topbowl line from the signal halliards. —

Every day being an object with us, nothing has been omitted on our part to get our little vessel ready for sea. — Since we have commissioned her she has been completely stripped of all her rigging, which has been examined, repaired, and

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and replaced over the Masthead - new rigging fitted to the bowsprit, topmast, yards, &c. - new running rigging rove fore and aft - the hold cleaned, whitewashed, and completed with water as fast as we can get the casks from the Cooperage, which is very slowly - and Lieut. King now only waits the dismissal of the Carpenters from onboard to haul alongside of the Commissariat Store for Provisions. - The Blacksmiths have yet a great deal to do, and only this morning drew sheet iron from the Store for making our Boilers & Cabouse, which they received orders about a week ago and were now supposed to have very nearly finished - Selected and caused to be sifted 4534 lbs of very good English Biscuit for our Sea Store, which Mr. Geo. Johnston the Storekeeper has very obligingly put aside for us; the greater part to be stowed in Casks for its better preservation, and the remainder in bags for immediate use and the convenience of stowage. - The Government mechanics work at a place in the Town which is called the "Lumber Yard", and to this place the Casks that had been selected for the above purpose, were sent a few days ago for examination and repairs: They were returned to us yesterday as complete and fit for use, but on taking out the heads they were all found to be in such a state as to endanger the spoiling of the Bread if put into them - The Coopers who had so completely finished their work were punished by the Superintendent with "let along, you deserve a good flogging"! and we have selected some other Casks, which of necessity must be sent to the same place; and are in hopes that the very exemplary punishment inflicted by the Engineer will operate very forcibly in expediting their repairs. - Onboard the Mermaid, the Seamen have been employed whitewashing their births & the hold, watering from the North Shore, and as found necessary, while Artificers at the Yards have been working upon sails, weather-cloths, an iron grating for skylight, and some belaying pins, and 2 or 3 others are nominally employed upon our new main boom - A very good and complete Cabouse of English manufacture, that would precisely answer our little vessel, was at the request of Lieut. King examined by the Acting Engineer, who, however declined purchasing it, upon the plea of expense - although the Cabouse that was afterwards made for us at the Lumber Yard, besides being of very inferior workmanship, cost more than a halfpenny per lb. more than the proposed purchase, without taking into account the length of time they took in completing it, and the great inconvenience we were put to for want of one. - I could most sincerely wish there were no saffers by these economical plans, and that they really proved what they are supposed to be: in that case I should be one of the first to cooperate most cordially in forwarding them. -

Thurs. 13th - A warm land breeze variable to the westward of the meridian rendered the weather very sultry during nearly the whole day. - A fresh sea breeze set in at half past 5 PM. but shifted to the Southward at 6, and again became variable as at the early part of the day, with a haze all round the horizon. - All the Dockyard Artificers having to attend a general Muster of the Governor did not commence work till 10 o'clock, and

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and at the close of their day's work, most of them were treated with a night's lodging in the watchhouse for the zeal and activity which they had displayed throughout the day in the discharge of their various duties. They had however been anticipated nearly 24 hours in that pleasure by one of our painters who got gloriously drunk on the preceding evening, and was perhaps in good moralising train to receive his companions. — It would be doing a great piece of service to all concerned if more of these people were served in a similar way, for they are upon an average the larriest set of blackguards in the shape of workmen that ever got together, with the exception of a few willing hands among them, who are deterred from doing as much as they otherwise would, by witnessing how little attention is paid to complaints that are made of the others. — Finding that the duty on the part of the Carpenters and others continues to be carried on in that relaxed and careless manner which will considerably prolong the time of our stay here, Mr. King has found it absolutely necessary to trouble the Governor with a letter on the subject, stating the length of time we have already been here, and how little has been done since we have had possession of the *Mermaid*, towards enabling us to go to sea — which it is hoped will have the effect of changing their conduct, and convincing those gentlemen in office at some of the real cause of our detention. — According to the opinion at the Admiralty and Colonial Office previous to our quitting England, we were led to expect that a vessel fit for our purpose would be here all ready for us to embark in, get on board Provisions, Stores, water, &c. and sail in her immediately to prosecute the object of our Expedition. — This being the feeling at home it is naturally to be feared that some disappointment will be felt if not expressed at our having been here 3 months, and half that time fitting out a small vessel that requires no repairs whatever in her hull: we shall therefore be perfectly ready to state particulars when called upon, and can clearly make it appear in what quarter blame is attachable —

Frid. 14. The Mercury in our Barometer having fallen to 29.42 inches this afternoon, was succeeded by a fresh northerly wind, which brought clouds of smoke from the hills in that direction which have been fired by the natives for the purpose of hunting out the kangaroos, and have been burning for the last 2 days. — A most daring attempt was on the point of being made, last night by about 40 Convicts to gain forcible possession of the whaler *Porhound* that arrived here on the 12th inst. and is now lying near the head of Sydney Cove. — The plan was laid and partly headed by a man that had been a Lieut. in His Majesty's Navy, but dismissed the service for swindling; His subsequent conduct procured for him a passage as Convict on board the *Lord Eldon*, where he laid several plans for seizing the ship, which were fortunately for humanity, frustrated by timely discoveries. In the present instance he was in consultation with his party as to the

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the best and most effectual method of cutting or disposing of a chain cable with which the ship was secured, when one of his party gave information of the whole affair, and by the prompt exertions of the Magistrates and others the greatest part of the gang were secured and safely lodged in gaol: Their trials will come on when the next Criminal Court assembles. —

At the Dock Yard. Artificers have been employed as usual. —

Sat. 15th It blew hard today in squalls between NNE and NW, with very hazy cloudy weather. — Thermometer at 80° of Fahrenheit in the evening, with calm and hard squalls of warm wind from the NW, which made the weather sultry and oppressive. — We got on board our new main boom today, and fitted a suit of sails, which were afterwards unbent and stowed away. — Dock Yard artificers worked only till 10 o'clock this morning according to custom on Saturdays. —

A seaman lately belonging to the ship Duke of Wellington, that arrived here on the 9th inst. and was drowned while bathing alongside that ship, was this day picked up near the Government wharf, much disfigured, and interred on shore. —

The ship Lord Eldon drove a short distance from her anchorage in Sydney Cove last night, and was this afternoon sending an anchor out to windward for the purpose of resuming her station, when the boat employed on that service filled and capsized: There were only 2 seamen in her at the time, who immediately struck out till assistance arrived from the Foxhound, Chapman, and their own ship, which picked them up together with the boat. — I am occupied at this time preparing blank charts for our approaching surveys, on the scale of 12 inches to a degree, or 5 miles to an inch.

Sunday, Nov. 16. The weather was rather warm all day, without any sea breeze, the wind blowing strong and variable between SW and NNW with fine weather and a dry haze all round. — The trees and shrubbery on the North side of the Port have been on fire all day, and when the evening closed in presented a perfect illumination and had a very grand appearance, the distant land westward from Bradley's Head being a connected chain of large sheets of fire throughout an extent of 4 or 5 miles. — The land about us is mostly covered nearly to the water's edge with trees and bushes, which by the present warm weather have been so dried up and parched as to burst forth into one general conflagration when set fire to in any part by the natives. — For the present grand illumination we are indebted to Bongaree, Chief of the Broken Bay Tribe of natives, who with some of the neighbouring tribe are burning the bushes to hunt out the kangaroos which resort there in tolerable numbers; on igniting from the burning woods they are struck with slender spears about 9 or 10 feet long, pointed and barbed with bone or hard wood, or are hunted down by strong dogs of the greyhound species trained for the purpose. —

We found it necessary to keep our sailmakers at work till 1 o'clock today completing a new mainsail. —

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Mon. 17th It blew strong from the Westward during greater part of the day with fine weather - and in the evening died away to a calm, a thick mist obscuring from view the opposite shore of Sydney Cove. - At the Dockyard, Artificers have been working as usual; Blacksmiths making iron belaying pins, boat shawl-pins; Shipwrights making sweeps; Carpenters fitting up a bed place in Lieut. King's Cabin; Sawmwatering, fitting sails, stowing the hold, and about the rigging. The painters have been occupied 10 days in doing the work of less than 2 days, and the boats they took in hand on the 5th inst. are now scarcely two thirds finished. The drunken blackguard of a painter's mate that has been in the watch-house the last 4 days returned this day to his duty in the Yard and it is hoped will improve his hand by experience. On application to the Principal Superintendent of Convicts Mr. Hutchinson, the Blacksmiths employed for us have been ordered to work 3 hours later than the usual time 3 o'clock, and are to receive additional rations. - A square topsail and a gaff topsail are in hand, together with our boilers, &c. Cabin Table, water & bread casks under repair, & various small things making. -

Tues 18th Fine weather, with sea breeze from the N. at noon, and foggy weather in the evening with moderate breeze from the Northward. - A 25 ft whale boat was this day finished by the boat builders and will receive a coat of paint previous to being pulled to pieces again for stowage. They have also finished a handy little jolly boat which promises to be of great service to us. These 2 men Pakin and Foster are free men, and undertook to build these 4 boats by contract at 5/- a foot, having every thing found them. They appear to have done justice to their work, and to have turned very good boats out of hand. - This day Governor Macquarie acquiesced in the scale of pay proposed to him by Lieut. King for our crew, being as follows, viz:

To Boatswain, Quarter master, Sailmaker, Sergeant -	£ 2. 10. 0 p. month
- Other men, suppose able Seamen -	2. 0. 0
- Boys -	1. 0. 0
- Prisoners, if any -	1. 10. 0

And in addition to the above, the prisoners have been promised their emancipation from the Governor, should their conduct merit a favorable report from the Commander. - Although these are the wages of a First rate Man of War several of the men are not contented with them, particularly the Boatswain, who in a very artful manner became Spokesman for the rest; but the business will be adjusted tomorrow and no person taken in the trap that is not perfectly satisfied. - Lieut. King, Mr. Bedwell and myself are paid according to the established scale for a 3^d rate, and receive an additional salary for Surveyor and Assistants. -

We received this day from the Colonial Brig, Elizabeth Macartney, a very handy serviceable brass 2 pounder for the Mermaid; besides which it is the intention of Lieut. King, to mount only 2 Canonades of 6th each, in order to save room, and carry 2 boats amidships. -



