

The Garrison Gazette

Summer 2009-2010



Welcome to the
Summer 2009 - 2010
issue of the Gazette.

Thanks to the contributors for this issue, Anne Davey, Mark Koens, Julie Sleigh and the prolific Ron Ray. Ron's extract from Alexander Huey's journal is very timely in relation to the bicentenary of the 73rd's arrival in Sydney on New Year's Day, 1810.

All contributions gratefully accepted. All contributions should be sent in a plain unformatted Word document. If you attend an event or have some information, or interest, write something and send it to the [editorial desk](#) (or via the 73rd Orderly Room).

The Editor
Dave Sanders



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Upcoming Events

6th December - Windsor Commemoration of the Naming of the Five Towns by Gov. Macquarie.

Bicentennial of the landing of the 73rd Regiment of Foot in the Colony of NSW.

26th January - Australia Day, Camden

Please contact the Orderly Room or the contact details at the end of this publication for more detailed information on these events.



Christmas Report 2009 by Mark Koens

I thought it timely to put pen to paper with the Bicentennial anniversary of the 73rd Regiment of Foot's landing in Sydney 1st January 1810 upon us but I digress.

I would like to commend the regiment on its deportment in the field. I have been particularly impressed with people's efforts at every level from our youngest colonial impression from Adam through to John Dunn's erudite and amusing emails. I thank each and every member who has given their time, and effort into creating such a great club to be a part of.

It has given me the greatest of joys to witness the support that members have given the committee through attendance but also at a broader level through helping the ANA in creating the bigger skirmish events such as Lithgow and History Alive in QLD.

I would like to thank a number of people personally who have made the running of the club that much easier this year for us all. They are:

- ❖ The Committee who barely change year in year out and keep our Firearms Registry Office paperwork and firearms club information check not to mention Department of Fair Trading and our finances.
- ❖ Dave Sanders who has kept churning out our Garrison Gazette now for 3 or is it 4 years? It is a great read and a mighty effort. Thanks to those of you who have been regular contributors.
- ❖ Bill Lincoln, Sol Solomon and Brad Manera who have been working solidly on the new colours project. Your research and efforts are valued.

- ❖ Our new members for 2009 Daniel Daley, Anna Hobson, Young Adam and Mark Vanettekoven. Thanks for your commitment and new enthusiasm! It is great to see.
- ❖ Nat Barbuto who has been promoted to Corporal. Your constant attendance is outstanding.

My Personal highlight this year was attending Waterloo with John Dunn who was a great mate to have with Gabrielle and I at the event. Our hosts the Gordon Highlanders were very accommodating. I would recommend any member if considering going to an international event to go for it. It is a wonderful experience. It was the first time an Australian took on the role of Chief of Staff. A task that was a great learning curve for me and I look forward to adding what I can from the trip to our events. A picture is included of the British Staff at Waterloo this year.



I have noticed that the deportment of the battalion on the field has been improving at recent events. I'd like to thank the NCOs for this. We can improve this by getting ready a little quicker at events and falling in as soon as possible. The changes in cartridge boxes and greater use of buff leather has created a greater uniformity and better look to the unit.

I wish everyone well for the festive season. Enjoy your break, take care and be safe. I look forward to seeing as many of you on the field as possible in our bicentennial year. If we do not have the opportunity to catch up on the 1st January please raise a glass to those men and women who landed from the Hindustan and the Dromedary. Once your're done raise again to your own regiment who have worked to keep the spirit of the 73rd alive for the past 14 years.

See you on the field,
Mark Koens



Extracts from the Journal of Ensign Alexander Huey on the Voyage of the 73rd Regiment of Foot to Sydney in 1809 (National Library Npf 910.4 HUE)

On the 5th May 1809, the 73rd Regiment of Foot received orders to march from Collwell Barracks, Isle of Wight, to Yarmouth, there to embark on His Majesty's Ships the *Hindustan* of 50 guns and the *Dromedary* of 38 guns.

The 7th being the day fixed for the embarkation, the Regiment marched from Collwell Barracks at 5 in the morning and arrived at Yarmouth at 7, where they found the boats waiting for them.

The Grenadier Company with the band and the Colours went in the first boat. When the boat began to move from the shore the men of the Regiment gave three cheers, the band struck up "God save the King".

The morning was fine so that the whole Regiment was embarked in less than an hour. The numbers embarked on the *Dromedary* were soldiers 368, women 54, children 41, officers 10. The sailors and ships officers numbered 102.

On the *Hindustan* 602 soldiers embarked.

These two ships were to be the home of the 73rd until 1st January 1810 when the Regiment landed at Government Wharf, Sydney – a journey of 8 months.

Ships Standing Orders

At 8 o'clock pipe to breakfast, at 12 o'clock to dinner, the grog always to be served at 1 o'clock and at half past 4 in the evenings; hal(f) an hour to breakfast and a full hour to dinner, the people never to be disturbed at these meals if possible.

No clothes to be hung up to dry in the rigging, but ropes to be kept for that purpose fore and aft between the fore and main masts.

No naked light under any circumstances to be taken into a store room.

The Warrant Officers are never to convert or expend any stores, not even a nail, without first obtaining consent of the duty Officer.

The ship's company and soldiers are to be mustered at Quarters every evening at sunset and everything ready for action to prevent being surprised in the night.

The watches at sea to be mustered - sailors by the officers and soldiers by the sergeants. The sergeant to report to the officer of the watch any absentees.

The Voyage

After lying two days at anchor at Yarmouth we sailed to Spithead where we lay waiting for Governor Macquarie for near a fortnight. On the 21st morning we weighed anchor and sailed through the harbour expecting the Governor at any moment. He at length came at 4 in the afternoon, attended by Colonel O'Connell and Captain Pasco and Mr Bent the Judge Advocate General.

We received him in all the state circumstances would allow – the guard consisting of 40 men was drawn up on the Quarter deck and the Band was stationed on the Poop. The moment the Governor came on the Quarter deck, the band struck up and the guard presented arms with the officers taking off their hats.

On the 27th it began to blow fresh about 9 o'clock in the morning and continued increasing till night; so much that we could only carry close reefed sails. The Gun Room where we slept, was ankle deep in water which rushed in through the rudder case every minute. In this pickle we slept or rather continued awake all night.

On the 29th about 1 o'clock a strange sail appeared standing N.W. The Commodore having made signal for us to give chase, we made all sail after her and came up with her about 6 in the evening. She was a Swedish vessel and had been 5 days in the possession of the French and was therefore a lawful prize. She carried about 400 tons and was laden with rice and cotton. We computed her cargo to be worth about 45000 pounds. Captain Pasco put a lieutenant with a party of sailors on board of the prize and sent her to England the next day.

4th June – The *Magician* made signal for the *Hindustan* to send a boat on board and Captain Pasco accordingly lowered the jolly boat with nine men, but a thick squall coming on, she was swamped in an instant. Three of the men were drowned. One of the poor fellows who had just been saved, seeing two of his comrades drowning exclaimed "damn my eyes! they shall drink grog with me in Plymouth yet" and immediately jumped into the sea again and rescued them both at the risk of his own life. A subscription was immediately set on foot on board the *Hindustan* to reward the poor fellow for his courage, which amounted to 30 pounds.

On 10th, the Quarter Master brought something stowed up in a hammock and laid it down on the gangway. I immediately recollected it was the body of the ship's Tailor who had died the day before. Captain Pritchard having advanced with a bible in his hands, read a verse or two and the

Quarter Master launched the body over board. Such is the burial of a sailor.

On 11th June we came to anchor in Funchal Roads and saluted the Portugese with 15 guns which they returned. While we lay at Funchal it was very hot, the thermometer standing commonly at 75 and rising to 86 where exposed to the sun.

The band performed on the Quarter Deck every evening at 6 o'clock. At 8 the drums and fifes began to play and the soldiers and sailors danced till 10.

Two days after we left St Iago a large ship appeared on our starboard quarter bearing down upon us with studding sails set. The Commodore held on his course and made signal for the *Dromedary* to lay to for her and see what she was. At dusk of the evening she got up with us and hoisted Americal colours. It was well for her she did so, for we were just going to pour a broadside into her. She was a vessel of about 700 tons.

On 25th the Commodore made signal to send Dr. Carter on board. He went and found the *Hindustan's* sick list increased to 59 soldiers, 20 sailors, 5 women and 2 children. The same day he cut off the leg of a boy below the knee.

On 29th the Commodore made signal that the boy whose leg had been cut off, had died of a lockjaw.

At 8 o'clock next morning a strange sail hove in sight right ahead, standing on the same course as ourselves. The Commodore made signal for the *Dromedary* to give chase. We could plainly perceive her to be a brig. At 2 o'clock we came within gun shot of her and fired three shots at her which brought her to. Sent Mr. Cleveland on board her in the jolly boat. She proved to be a Portugese slave ship with 540 female slaves on board from Benguela in Africa bound for Rio Janeiro. 50 of the slaves had died since they left the coast of Africa. The Portugese Captain told Mr. Cleveland that when a slave took ill he had him thrown overboard immediately lest the disorder should spread.

August 6th arrived in Rio Janeiro.

August 15th. Lieutenant Crane and Ensign McLain went ashore in their kilts, to the great wonder and admiration of the Portugese, who flocked from all quarters to see them.

While we lay at Rio Janeiro two soldiers who were prisoners on the poop made their escape during the night in the jolly boat which was then lying astern. They got ashore at the west end of the harbour and made into the interior of the country.

One day as Lieutenant Shotton and I were walking behind the palace one of the princesses

came out on the balcony. We looked up and saw her legs as far up as the thigh, she had no stockings on.

The day before we sailed we took on board 15 live oxen for the use of the ship's company and soldiers.

On 30th we exercised the men at the Great Guns and dried a quantity of cartridge paper in the sun. The Governor issued an order that the men should be exercised every day at the Great Guns in future as it was very probable that we should fall in with the *Cannonin* French frigate before we reached the Cape.

On 1st September at 3 o'clock our Carpenter Mate fell overboard and was drowned. Both ships lowered their boats to save him but all to no purpose.

On 3rd September Mr. Sullivan our Signal Master fell overboard at the poop while two large sharks were swimming round the ship. He saved himself by swimming to the gangway.

On September 14th after parade a general search was made through the soldiers and sailors chests. Three soldiers were confined. Next day at 11 o'clock two of the prisoners were flogged.

September 23rd anchored at Cape Town.

While we lay at the Cape fresh bread and mutton was served out to the men every day.

On October 24th fresh provisions were served out to the men for the last time, our 120 sheep being consumed since we left Cape Town. 2 men, 1 woman and 3 children had died since we left England.

At 6 in the evening punished two soldiers for fighting with a dozen lashes each.

On 2nd November we had only 150 tons of water remaining. We expended 2 tons a day. Allowance of fresh water was one quart a day for each man.

At this stage we had 51 children on board having started with 41.

8th November we were put on short allowance of fresh water, only one pint a day to each man having only 50 days water on board and being 4000 miles from our destination.

On 24th the soldiers paraded in their new clothing and were inspected by the Governor. White trousers were served out to the soldiers. Lime juice was served out to the soldiers.

On December 3rd we were 1300 miles from Sydney Cove. This day we began to live on salt provisions, our stock of sheep and pigs being all consumed.

December 21st, soldiers were busily employed cleaning their arms and accoutrements.

This day we got the Colours of the Regiment out and aired them in the sun.

On 27th we saw the South Head of Port Jackson on Flagstaff Point 8 or 9 miles distant. The Commodore fired a gun and hoisted the Red Ensign. Saw two guns fired at the Signal Post and two flags flying.

At 9 o'clock a boat came to each ship with two pilots. At half past nine we were obliged to drop anchor at the entrance of Port Jackson, the wind being against us. After lying two or three days at anchor at the entrance, the wind came fair. We weighed anchor on Sunday and sailed up the harbour. Arrived in Sydney Cove at 3 o'clock.

Arrival in Sydney

Sunday 31st December the Governor landed.

The 73rd Regiment was drawn up in marching order on board the ships. The yards were manned. Captain Pasco and Colonel O'Connell came on board the *Dromedary* to accompany His Excellency on shore. When his Excellency came out of his cabin to get into the boat, the Regiment presented arms, the Colours dropped and the jolly tars gave three cheers. When the boats shoved off, the ships fired a salute of 15 guns each. The 102nd Regiment formed a street to receive His Excellency when he went ashore.

On Monday, 1st January 1810, the 73rd Regiment landed at the Government Wharf, Sydney at 10 in the morning and marched up to the Barracks where the 102nd was drawn up. They saluted us as we marched past them. Both Regiments formed a hollow square. After standing at attention for near half an hour the Governor and his lady came into the square attended by Colonel Patterson, Colonel Foveaux, Captain Pasco of His Majesty's Ship *Hindostan*, Captain Pritchard of His Majesty's Ship *Dromedary*, Ellis Bent, Esq., Judge Advocate and his lady, John Thomas Campbell, Esq., Secretary to His Excellency, Captain Cleveland, Major of Brigade, Captain Antill, aid de Camp and the Principal Gentleman of the Colony.

The Regiments gave a general salute, which was repeated after the Commission was read. The Governor addressed the troops and the inhabitants in a short and able speech. The 73rd wheeled into line and marched off to Grose Farm Camp about three miles from Sydney.

When they arrived at 2 o'clock, they found all the tents ready pitched. Nothing to eat this day but potatoes. Our breakfast in general consisted of potatoes and water. However, in the course of a week we could procure bread and coffee or tea.

Two large snakes were killed in the camp.

The whole Regiment was busily employed burning the stumps of trees which prevented the regiment drilling.

On 6th January, Lieutenant Gunning, Captain Murray and Ensign Campbell went with a detachment to Parramatta.

On the evening of Saturday 13th the Governor came to see our encampment.

On Sunday 14th the Regiment paraded and we had Divine Service performed by the Chaplain of the Colony.

On 17th Commodore Bligh arrived in His Majesty's Ship *Porpoise*. The 102nd was drawn up on the wharf to receive him, but he refused to come on shore and said he would not be received by those who had so lately threatened to cut his throat.

The following day at 11 in the morning, Commodore Bligh came on shore and was received by our flank companies, who had marched into Sydney for that purpose. The ships fired a salute of 15 guns each which was answered by the batteries on shore. At 12 noon His Excellency Governor MacQuarrie and his lady with Commodore Bligh, Captain Pasco of His Majesty's Ship *Hindostan* and Captain Porteus of His Majesty's Ship *Porpoise* came out to our camp. The 73rd saluted and fired three volleys.

On 27th Major Gordon, Captain Renny and Lieutenant Rose embarked with a detachment of 60 men for Port Dalrymple in Van Deiman's Land. Lieutenant Crane with a detachment of 28 men embarked for Norfolk Island to act as Commandant until further orders.

On the night of the 12th it rained incessantly. The water came through our tents in torrents. Not a man of the Regiment but was all wet. Those who had not trenches dug round their tents were completely overflowed.

On 28th the *Ann* came in from England with Captain McLaine's detachment of 50 men belonging to the 73rd. She had 200 convicts on board. Lieutenant Purcell had been under arrest since their departure from Rio Janeiro in consequence of some misunderstanding between him and Captain McLaine.

On March 8th at 4 o'clock a fire was discovered on board the *Dromedary*. It broke out in the breadroom and burned until 10 at night.

On 10th April the New South Wales Corps embarked on board His Majesty's Ships *Hindostan* and *Dromedary*. Two or three days later the 73rd broke up the camp at Grose Farm and marched to Brickfields where the left wing encamped and the right wing marched into the barracks at Sydney. A

few days later the *Hindostan* and *Dromedary* and *Porpoise* sailed for England.

A few days later the left wing of the 73rd marched into the Barracks at Sydney, their tents being all rotten with the incessant rain which had fallen at Grose Farm Camp.

DIARY ENDS

Contributed by Ron Ray



Commentary on the Poor Conduct of the 73rd Regiment of Foot

.....I am now obliged to state to your Lordships that the conduct of the 73rd Foot has been in the most culpable degree disorderly and mutinous and in some instances outrageous.

Two privates have been convicted by General Courts Martial of assaulting their officers. One received sentence of death and the other a conditional pardon from his youth and former good conduct and in the hope that it was the first offence in the detachment and an act of mercy would have a good effect on the Regiment's minds.....the soldiers being allowed to work at all kinds of civil employment not only forget their military habits and duties but are thrown into contact and society with the convicts.

References:

Society of Australian Genealogists
Historical Record of the 73rd Foot – Rex Nan Kivell
Collection NK6300

Under a Tropical Sun : Officers of the 73rd
Regiment in Ceylon

Contributed by Ron Ray



Interesting Facts About Men of the 73rd Regiment of Foot

The Death of Private PITCAIRNE
(30 May 1818) - A most heroic instance of gallantry was displayed by a soldier of the 73rd, who sacrificed his own life rather than desert his wounded companion.

A small party of troops was attacked by a greater number of rebels, lurking in the jungle. A private of the 73rd had his thigh broken by a musket ball. He fell and was unable to move. Private Pitcairne attempted to assist the wounded soldier who said "It is of no use, you must leave me here to die." Pitcairne said "No, I will never leave you" and he remained with the wounded man, defending him as well as he could while under constant fire. Both were eventually overpowered by the enemy and killed. This man encountered certain death for the sake of a brother soldier.

Execution of *Private John JENNY* (27 October 1817) - Pursuant to the sentence of a General Court Martial, having found him guilty of mutinous conduct in striking his superior officer, Captain Smith of the 73rd Regiment. The prisoner, attended by the Reverend Twisleton, was conducted to the parade ground under escort and he passed slowly down the line of soldiers, preceded by his coffin. The troops were formed into three sides of a square, the fourth side being open to the sea. In the centre was placed the unhappy man who prayed for a few minutes before the death warrant was read out. He then underwent sentence administered by a firing squad of six men.

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Sir Maurice Charles Philip O'CONNELL

Entered the British Army as Captain Irish Brigade 10 October 1794

Captain 1st West India Regiment 1800

Brevet Major 5th West India Regiment 1805

Major 73rd Regiment 1806

Lieutenant Colonel 73rd Regiment 1809

Served in NSW

Brevet Colonel 1819

Major General 1830

Knighthood in 1834

Lieutenant General 1841

Colonel 81st Foot 1842 and Lieutenant Governor of NSW

Commanded the forces in NSW 1838-1847

Died 25 May 1848 in Sydney (grave in Camperdown cemetery)

NB 8 May 1810 married Mary Bligh the daughter of Governor Bligh the deposed Governor of NSW.

Thomas ATKINS (1785-1848)

Lieutenant of 73rd Foot 1811

Cashiered by General Court Marshall in Colombo for being drunk on duty and other misdemeanours (1815)

Served in NSW

John BEWS (17** - 1851)

Paymaster 1st Greek Light Infantry 1811 (there a few 73rd Officers who served with the Greek Light Infantry)

Full pay with 73rd Foot 1819

Retired on half pay from 73rd 1836

Served in NSW

Aldworth BLENNERHASSETT (1797-1854)

Ensign 73rd Regiment 1814 without purchase

Lieutenant 1815 without purchase

Captain 38th Foot 1834

Served in NSW

Served in Ceylon

Fought at the Battle of Waterloo

Jeremiah CAMPBELL (1785-1852) – aged 67 years

Enlisted as a Private 73rd Regiment 1804

Corporal 1807

Sergeant 1807

Sergeant Major 1809

Quartermaster 1814

Served in NSW

Retired 1824

John CAMPBELL (17** - 1817)

Ensign 73rd Regiment 1815

Served in NSW

Died : Drowned in Colombo harbour 27 January 1817

William Conyngham COANE (18** - 1817)

Ensign 73rd Regiment 1815

Served in NSW

Died : Drowned in Colombo harbour 27 January 1817

Barrington HASWALL (1797-1817) – Aged 20 years

Ensign 73rd Regiment 1815
Served in NSW
Died : Drowned in Colombo harbour 27 January 1817

27 January 1817 – deaths of CAMPBELL, COANE and HASWELL

On Monday the 27th about 8 o'clock in the evening, a Cutter from the *Iphigenia* was upset at a little distance from the shore battery. There were on board Lieutenant Saunders of the *Iphigenia*, Mr Windsor a Midshipman, eight seamen and a boy, with Lieutenant Foster of H.M. 2nd Ceylon and Ensigns Campbell, Haswell and Coane of the 73rd Regiment.

Lieutenant Foster, the Midshipman and 6 seamen were saved, but Lieutenant Saunders, all 3 of the officers from the 73rd, 2 seamen and the boy unfortunately perished.

The night was clear and the moon shone bright, but the wind was blowing fresh and the sea was running high.

A great sea broke over the beam of the cutter and she was instantly filled with water and turned keel upward.

The body of Ensign Coane was not recovered.

The great sorrow for the loss of Ensign Coane of the 73rd Regiment, who was a remarkably fine young man, was increased by the sufferings of Captain Coane of the same regiment, whose agony of grief at the water side was a terrible sight. He had already lost three gallant brothers in the service of their Country – one at Buenos Aires, another on the frontiers of Portugal and a third who died of fatigue in India. He had a fourth brother who is a Captain in the 73rd who was severely wounded in the Battle of Waterloo.

John CARTER (1782-1850)

Assistant Surgeon 2nd Battalion Light Infantry of the Line KGL 1805
Surgeon 73rd Regiment 1809
Served in NSW
Retired 1817 – MD at Marischal College, University of Aberdeen

Phillip CONNOR

Ensign 73rd Regiment 1811
Served in NSW
Dismissed from the 73rd by Court Marshall on 11 August 1814

Lambert COWELL (1800-1867)

Gentleman Cadet RMC

Ensign 73rd Regiment 1815
Served in NSW
Lieutenant 1818
Captain 15th Foot 1846
Retired by sale 1848
Appointed a Military Knight of Windsor in June 1867

Thomas DEACON (1788-1853)

Ensign 73rd Regiment 1813
Lieutenant 1815
Served in NSW
Fort Adjutant at Trincomalee 1818-1823
Lieutenant 16th Foot 1822
Exchanged into Ceylon Rifles 1824
Captain 1836 28th Foot and 25th Foot 1847
Fought at the Battle of Waterloo

Richard DREW (1780-1834)

Ensign 35th Foot 1805
Lieutenant 61st Foot 1809
Captain 73rd Regiment 1812
Major 91st Foot 1826
Lieutenant Colonel 73rd Regiment 1831
Served in NSW

Andrew GEILS (1773-1843)

Cadet 1790
Ensign Madras Artillery 1791
Cornet 19th Regiment of Dragoons Recruiting Corps 1802-1803
Captain 73rd Regiment 1804
Major 73rd Regiment 1808
Lieutenant Colonel 73rd Regiment 1813
Served in NSW

George Alexander GORDON

Ensign 18th Regiment 1791
Lieutenant 73rd Regiment 1795
Captain-Lieutenant 73rd Regiment 1802
Lieutenant Colonel 73rd Regiment 1814
Served in NSW

George HUMPHRY

Cornet 21st Light Dragoons 1800
Lieutenant 14th Light Dragoons 1800
Captain 27th Foot 1807
Brevet-Major 12th Foot 1814
Major 73rd Regiment 1816
Served in NSW
Lieutenant Colonel 73rd Regiment 1822
Retired by sale 1825
Served in Battle of Waterloo as Supernumerary or Officer *en second*

James KISHORN

Ensign 73rd Regiment

Served in NSW
Died 14 January 1819 at Trincomalee (aged 19 years)

John Yeeton LLOYD

Ensign 73rd Regiment 1813 (without purchase)
Lieutenant 73rd Regiment 1814 (by purchase)
Fought at the Battle of Waterloo 1815
Captain 73rd Regiment 1820
Major 73rd Regiment 1828 (without purchase)
Retired by sale 1839
Served in NSW

William McBEAN

Ensign 73rd Regiment 1813
Lieutenant 73rd Regiment 1815
Fought at the Battle of Waterloo 1815
Served in NSW

John MACLAINE

Ensign 73rd Regiment 1809
Lieutenant 73rd Regiment 1810
Served in NSW
Died 13 January 1818 – killed in action near Bootie (Sri Lanka)

Archibald McNAUGHTON

Ensign 73rd Regiment 1807
Lieutenant 73rd Regiment 1808
Served in NSW
Court marshalled 10-13 August 1814 in Colombo for drunkenness while on duty – dismissed from the Regiment

John PALMER

Lieutenant 73rd Regiment 1814 (without purchase)
Transferred to 2nd Ceylon Rifles
NB travelled to Ceylon as a volunteer from NSW and joined the regiment when he was old enough to be eligible for a commission (ie 16 years of age). Later returned to NSW

Thomas Matthew REYNOLDS

Ensign 73rd Regiment 1812 (without purchase)
Lieutenant 73rd Regiment 1814 (without purchase)
Served in NSW
Fought at the Battle of Waterloo 1815 – wounded and received one year's pay and a pension

D'Arcy WENTWORTH

Ensign 73rd Regiment 1811
Lieutenant 1812
Captain 1825

Major 63rd Regiment 1837
Retired by sale 1842
Served in NSW
Died 21 July 1861 in Launceston, Tasmania

Thomas WRIGHT

Ensign 73rd Regiment 1806
Lieutenant 1807
Captain 1813
Served in NSW
Court marshalled 12-21 November 1812 in Sydney for absence from duty
When Officer of the Guard and for conduct unbecoming the character of an Officer and a Gentleman – Sentence confirmed 1 February 1814 in London

References:

Society of Australian Genealogists
Historical Record of the 73rd Foot – Rex Nan Kivell Collection NK6300
Under a Tropical Sun: Officers of the 73rd Regiment in Ceylon

Contributed by Ron Ray



**Sir Maurice Charles O'Connell
by Ron Ray**

Camperdown Cemetery at Newtown in Sydney, is considered one of Australia's most historically significant cemeteries and it is the burial site of Sir Maurice Charles O'Connell KGH.

The land was already associated with famous Australians before it became a cemetery. A total of 12 acres of land were donated by the estate of Sir Maurice Charles O'Connell, a Lieutenant Governor of New South Wales, on 23 September 1848.

The land was originally part of the Camperdown Estate of 240 acres, granted to William Bligh, former Governor of the colony of New South Wales. Bligh's daughter, Mary, married O'Connell in May 1810 and she remained in the colony when Bligh returned to England.

The cemetery served as one of Sydney's principal burial grounds from its opening in 1848 until 1867.



It is significant that one of the first interments was that of Sir Maurice Charles O'Connell himself. He was initially buried in the Town Hall Cemetery after his death on 25 May 1848 and once the consecration of the Camperdown Cemetery had been finalised, his remains were exhumed and re-interred in the new cemetery (above).

A penniless younger son, Maurice was born in Co. Kerry, Ireland in 1768. He appears to have been dependent on the patronage of his kinsman, General Count Daniel O'Connell (1745-1833) of the Irish Brigade in the French Army.

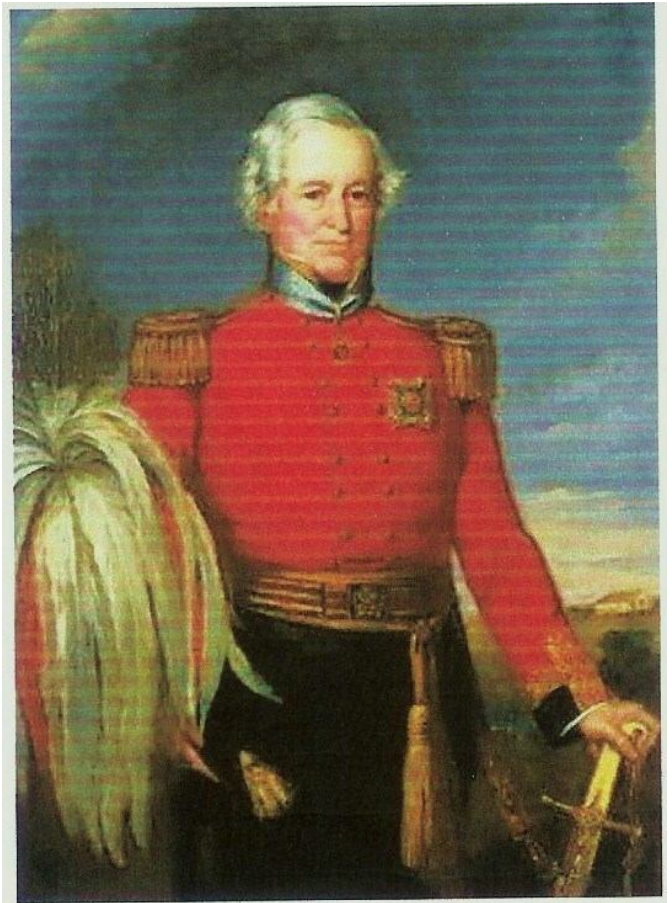
For some time, O'Connell studied in Paris for the Roman Catholic priesthood, but in 1785 (at the age of 17) his father arranged his entry into a military school.

In 1792, aged 24, he became a Captain in the French *émigré* forces serving on the French frontier under the Duke of Brunswick and in October 1794, after the Irish Brigade had been reconstituted in the British Army, he was appointed Captain in Count O'Connell's 4th Regiment.

He saw action in the West Indies and distinguished himself at Roseau in Dominca in February 1805 when it was unsuccessfully attacked by greatly superior French forces. For his services in Dominca he was thanked by the House of Assembly and was presented with a sword worth 100 guineas and the committee of the Patriotic Fund at Lloyds, London, gave him a sword worth 50 pounds and a plate worth 100 pounds.

On October 1806, he transferred to the **73rd Regiment of Foot** where he became Lieutenant Colonel in May 1809 at the age of 41.

In December 1809, the 1st Battalion of the 73rd Regiment, with O'Connell in command, arrived in Port Jackson with Governor Lachlan Macquarie and O'Connell was commissioned Lieutenant



Governor in January 1810.

On 8 May 1810, at Government House, he married Mary, daughter of the former Governor William Bligh (O'Connell was 42 and she 27). Mary was the widow of Lieutenant John Putland who died on 4 January 1808.

Bligh, who had planned to sail from Sydney with his family a few days later was distressed to leave Mary behind, but she was a headstrong young woman. Her dresses had shocked the more conservative members of the colony and her hostility to her father's enemies in the colony, soon embarrassed Governor Macquarie.

The day before the marriage, Governor Macquarie granted O'Connell 2500 acres in the Hawkesbury District, which he named Riverston, after his birthplace in Ireland. On 27 June Mrs O'Connell was granted 1055 acres in the District of Evan which adjoined 2000 acres earlier granted to her by Governor Philip Gidley King. She now had 3000 acres, 7000 head of stock and an income of 400 pound a year.

In May 1810, O'Connell was appointed a trustee of the Female Orphan Institution and from August he was steward of the race course in Hyde Park. He became President of the Philanthropic Society in January 1814.

It seems the 73rd Regiment was getting itself into some trouble over a range of issues and Mrs O'Connell (still the daughter of the deposed

Governor Bligh) was also raising strong feelings of resentment and hatred against those persons and their families who were involved in the overthrow of her father, in the Rum Rebellion. Lieutenant Colonel O'Connell allowed himself to be influenced by his wife's strong rooted prejudices.

Macquarie was urging the removal of O'Connell and the regiment from the colony. Arrangements were made to relieve the 73rd Regiment and transfer it to Ceylon. O'Connell and his troops sailed in the *General Hewitt* in April 1814.

While in Ceylon in 1815, O'Connell commanded the 73rd Regiment in the war against the King of Kandy. In August 1819 he was promoted Colonel and in July 1830 Lieutenant General.

He was Knighted in 1835 and in December 1838 he returned to Sydney in the *Fairlie* having been appointed to command the newly formed military forces in New South Wales. His military secretary was his son, Maurice Charles (1812-1879) a Captain in the 73rd Regiment.

In 1843-1844 O'Connell was nominated as a member of the partly elected Legislative Council. After the departure of Governor Gipps in July 1846, O'Connell administered the government until the arrival of Governor Sir Charles Fitzroy in August.

O'Connell was promoted to Major General in 1841 and in December 1842 was appointed Colonel of the 81st Regiment and in January 1844, Colonel of the 80th Regiment.

He was succeeded as commander of the forces of New South Wales by Major General Edward Wynward in 1847.

O'Connell and his family were about to sail for England when he died at Darlinghurst on 25 May 1848, aged 80 years. He was given a full military funeral, the service being held at St James Church.

His widow, Mary, lived in Paris for some years and then in London, where she died in 1864.

There were two sons and a daughter. One son, Maurice, after an eventful military career including a period as a Captain in the same 73rd Regiment which his father commanded, settled in Australia.

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Mary Bligh O'Connor by Ron Ray

Mary Bligh O'Connell's (1783 – 1864) life had all the drama of a modern TV soap opera. She has been described as the sauciest, daintiest and most determined little spitfire ever to reside at Government House. Mary was a strong willed and independent woman. Mary Bligh was born to Elizabeth and William Bligh in London in 1783.

It was Sir Joseph Banks who recommended Bligh for the position of Governor of New South Wales because he was a firm disciplinarian which was much needed in the colony. Bligh was reluctant at first as Mrs Bligh was a poor sailor and she refused to go on another sea trip. Bligh assured his wife that their separation would not last longer than 5 years and Mary, his daughter and her husband were to come with him.

Mary's husband was John Putland, who at this time was a half pay Lieutenant with early signs of TB. Bligh proudly asserted that he was the first rating to be elevated to the rank of Lieutenant by Lord Nelson himself, after the battle of the Nile. They had not been at sea long, when Lieutenant Putland was transferred to the *Porpoise* while Mary stayed with her father.

Soon after, the first signs of troubles to come occurred when Bligh, who considered himself to be totally in charge of the whole operation, ordered his ship to change course. This angered Captain Short of the *Porpoise* who had been entrusted with command of the ships at sea. He signalled Bligh to return to course and when he took no notice, Lieutenant Putland was ordered to fire on the ship containing his wife and his father-in-law, Bligh. He refused to do so and the confrontation was defused when Bligh brought his ship back into line.

The party arrived in Port Jackson on 8th August 1806. Governor King made Bligh a grant of 1000 acres on the Hawkesbury which he later turned into a model farm and 600 acres at St Mary's for John and Mary Putland.

Early in her stay in the colony, Mrs Bligh sent Mary a new gown. It was this gown that Mary wore to services one Sunday at St Philip's Church.

In his book *Petticoat Pioneers*, Denton Prout describes the scene –

“.....the gown suited her to perfection but it was so thin as to be almost transparent in the strong Australian light. It gave some of the soldiers sitting in the church such a lesson in the complexities of feminine wearing apparel that their minds were taken from the study of their prayer books. Mary was not wearing petticoats and the long pantaloons she wore underneath were visible to all. A series of chuckles erupted. Mary looked around to see what was causing the amusement and then realising she was responsible, she did the only thing a woman of her upbringing could do in the circumstances. She fainted. Bligh had his daughter carried prostrate from the church and then angrily demanded explanations and apologies from the soldiers, thus further arousing ill feelings towards him as he introduced harsh methods to restore order in the colony

On the 10th October 1807, Mary wrote to her mother

“.....Papa is quite well, but dreadfully harassed by business and the troublesome set of people he has to deal with. There are a few that we suspect wish to oppose him.....Mr Macarthur is one of the party, and the others are military officers.....”

Macarthur was stirring up trouble after Bligh prevented him trafficking in rum, which had been the main occupation of the NSW Corps and he was now recruiting military officers to his side against the Governor.

There is little mention of John Putland and Mary's first loyalty seems to have belonged to her father. On 24th August 1806, Bligh appointed Putland his Aide-de-camp and a magistrate. Putland's health was deteriorating and in November 1807, Bligh wrote to Joseph Banks about John's grave condition and the traumatic affect it was having on Mary.

Only 16 months after their arrival in Sydney, John Putland died of tuberculosis on 4th January 1808 and was buried in the grounds of Government House. Bligh had been very fond of his son-in-law and was deeply affected by his death.

Putland had only been dead for two weeks. Mary, a widow at 26 and her father were still in deep mourning. The officers of the NSW Corps, goaded by Macarthur, decided the time had come to depose the Governor for his opposition to the importation of stills, thus stopping their monopoly of trading in rum.

Matters came to a head after Bligh decided two court cases against Macarthur, one regarding the importation of stills. On the 26th January 1808,

Macarthur and nine of his close associates petitioned Lieutenant Governor Johnstone who commanded the NSW Corps, to remove Bligh from office and he agreed.

So, on the 20th anniversary of the founding of the colony, the NSW Corps was ordered to march on Government House. Soldiers with loaded muskets and fixed bayonets overran the grounds of the residence, pushing aside Mary who was trying to defend her father by laying into the soldiers with a parasol and tramping on the grave of her newly buried husband. Bligh and Mary were placed under house arrest in Government House.

After a year, the rebels demanded that Bligh and his daughter return to England on the *Admiral Gambier*. Bligh refused. Although he was no longer Governor, he still had his naval powers and had command of the *Porpoise*, although he was not allowed to go onboard.

Johnstone wanted to use the *Porpoise* and ordered Bligh to give up command of the ship. Bligh again refused.

Bligh and Mary were placed in more austere confinement in military barracks, with the aim of finally breaking their spirit.

Paterson was anxious to get the Blighs out of the colony and after seven days strict confinement, they came to an agreement. Bligh was to go with his daughter on board the *Porpoise* and sail for England without touching any part of the territory. Johnstone said Bligh could take with him anyone he needed as a witness in the enquiry which would be held. However, Johnstone refused to release one of these people, so soon after Bligh set sail, he went back on his promise, feeling that he was no longer bound to its terms and sailed to the Derwent River in Tasmania and remained there.

Bligh positioned the *Porpoise* down river to establish a blockade to stop all ships moving in and out of Hobart. David Collins the Governor of Tasmania, ordered all people to have nothing to do with the ship and said he would fire on any boat going ashore from her.

This made obtaining food very difficult for Bligh and Mary and he was forced to demand food from the ships he was trying to stop.

They stayed there for six months until he heard in December 1809, that Macquarie was due from England with the 73rd Regiment, so Bligh set sail for Sydney. Macquarie actually had his ship sail close to Hobart in the hope of meeting Bligh, but fog kept the ships from each other.

Bligh arrived in Sydney on 17th January 1810 and he and Mary were welcomed by Governor Macquarie and invited to stay at Government

House. It is not recorded whether Macquarie provided the Bligh's with a house to live in or whether Bligh himself rented the house in Bridge Street.

Either way, Bligh demanded a protective guard from Macquarie's 73rd Regiment. The *Hindustan* was being prepared for Bligh's return to England and Bligh insisted on being saluted each time he went on board – as many as six times a day.

Unknown to Bligh, his daughter Mary and Maurice O'Connell the commander of the 73rd Regiment and Lieutenant Governor to Governor Macquarie, were forming a serious attachment. Before the *Hindustan* sailed, he proposed to Mary and she accepted.

Macquarie who was aware of the disruptions the presence of the Bligh's caused in the colony, had been keen to see her go, but put a good face on the situation.

Macquarie ignored the rumours that Mary's motive in marrying O'Connell was to settle in an important social position from which she could snipe at her father's enemies.

She brought to the marriage a large dowry in the form of land grants and cattle and Macquarie gave the couple an extra grant of 2500 acres at Riverstone, as a wedding gift.

The wedding took place on 8 May 1810 with Governor and Mrs Macquarie giving them a dinner at Government House. The event finished with a display of fireworks.

The wedding ceremony was conducted by the Reverend Samuel Marsden and Bligh gave the bride away.

Bligh left for England on 12th May and gave Mary 140 pounds to settle her accounts before her marriage.

Mary and Maurice O'Connell lived in barracks in Wynyard Square until 1812 when O'Connell rented Vauclose Estate at Vauclose until 1814.

Although it would appear that Macquarie liked and approved of the O'Connell's, he realised that Mary was still the reason for a lot of discontent in the colony.

There is an interesting observation from the Judge Advocate, Ellis Bent about Mary, around this time.

"...very small, nice little figure, rather pretty but conceited and extremely proud. God knows of what! Extremely violent and passionate, so much as now and then to fling a plate or candlestick at her father's head...everything is studied about her, her walk, her talking, everything...and you have to observe her mode of sitting down...dressed with taste, very thinly and to

compensate for the want of petticoats wears breeches or rather trowsers. She is very clever and plays the pianoforte well. I regret this marriage for I dislike her and in the next place it crushed any hopes I had formed of seeing comparative harmony restored to the colony."

In 1813 Macquarie wrote to Lord Bathurst and asked for a withdrawal of the 73rd Regiment and its Commanding Officer, for the peace of the colony. The 73rd Regiment was ordered to Ceylon and the O'Connell's went with them in March 1814.

A first son was born to Maurice and Mary in January 1812 – Maurice Charles Junior who was to later serve as a Captain in the 73rd Regiment and then to settle in Australia.

The couple had 6 more children and one of these, Robert Browning who was born in December 1817, died in Ceylon when he was only 14 months old.

A daughter Mary Nino also died young, in Athlone Ireland on 19 February 1825, at the age of 2 years.

After leaving Ceylon, O'Connell retired on half pay in England where he was promoted to Lieutenant General in 1830. In 1834 the O'Connell's were posted to Malta and he was knighted in 1835.

In 1834 the O'Connell's were returned to Australia in the *Fairlie* after Maurice had been appointed to command the newly formed military forces of New South Wales. Their son Maurice then aged 22 and a Captain in the 73rd Regiment, came with them as his father's military secretary.

Mary and Maurice resided in a mansion called Tarmons at Woolloomooloo which is now part of St Vincent's Hospital. They put their Riverstone property up for sale in 1845.

Mary found time to serve on many committees including a Ladies Committee set up to support Caroline Chisholm's work with migrant women.

O'Connell became Acting Governor on 12 July 1846 after Governor Gipps left for England and until Governor Fitzroy arrived.

Sir Maurice Charles O'Connell died at the age of 80 in his home on the very day he was to return to England – 5 May 1848. He was accorded a full military funeral at St James Church. A huge crowd followed the funeral procession which took place in pouring rain. The military escort from the 80th regiment was unable to fire a volley over the grave as a result – their black powder could not be kept dry.

Mary returned to England where she died at the residence of her son-in-law, Colonel Somerset at

Beaufort Buildings, Gloucester on 10 December 1864 at the age of 81.

Her son Sir Maurice O'Connell junior had a distinguished career in the Queensland Government after he left the army and a grandson, Mr W. B. O'Connell was a Minister for Lands in Queensland.

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Persuasion: Fashion in the Age of Jane Austen

by Julie Sleigh

After supporting the French in their successful campaign at Taminick encampment this year, as part of La Legion Irlandaise, the Corps Sutler and I journeyed south to Melbourne town in search of even more historical delights.

Whilst out strolling alongside the banks of the muddy Yarra, we happened upon a show of fashion from Miss Austen's times that enthralled this humble living historian for so long that the Corps Sutler went all over the rest of the National Gallery of Victoria, plus the Gallery Shop before she was near done!

Miss Austen's lifetime saw enormous change and upheavals that were NOT the subject of her novels. But fashion is a reflection of change, an expression of character and social milieu - from the stiff rich fabrics of the late 1700s through to simple classically inspired lighter cottons of the early 1800s - and Miss Austen *was* interested in fashion. The tight corsetry of Austen's youth, emphasising the natural waistline, gave way to revealing short-sleeved high-waisted gowns worn with draped shawls, designed to mimic classical white marble statuary. Of course, without the invention of chlorine bleach by a Parisian chemist, flimsy white muslins may not have become so popular.

However, there were also cheap and plentiful printed cottons available, that were probably more appealing to practical women. These richer, darker coloured and heavier fabrics were made up in fuller designs, more likely to be worn by

soldiers' wives. My heart was filled with lust by one such dress on display. The rich red cotton was printed all over in a striking large leaf pattern, and constructed as a round gown with long open side seams for pockets. This 1802 garment demonstrates that reticules became necessary only when slim fitting light weight dresses were worn.

By 1809-10 the new slim fitting Empire line fine cotton muslins with delicate lace trims had become popular, especially for evening wear. A tiny dress worn by an apparently tiny Mrs King, wife of the Governor of the Colony of New South Wales around this time, illustrated the interest in subtle self-patterns such as spots, as it is beautifully embroidered with silver that is now less subtly tarnished.

The Waterloo fashions reflected further social change, with references to the military in cording, braiding, frogging and epaulets. Much more elaborate trims at the neck, sleeves and hems, of ruffles and frills of various colours and fabrics, were a reflection of the increased wealth of the British, especially the middle classes. We living historians may have to plan for the future to accurately reflect 1815 trends.

It was also fascinating to see how much Regency women were interested in fashion, much like our own fast-changing times. There were many references to times past, including the classical of course but also in particular some interest in Tudor styles and trims. Regency women studied French fashion magazines and fabric sample books, which formed, along with the many original garments, the primary sources for this exhibition. Taken altogether, it seems that Regency women were concerned with the wider trends of their freer times, but also with practical comfort, with an eye to the past - sounds like living historians!



English Dress c. 1816 (detail)
cotton muslin

See: <http://www.ngv.vic.gov.au/persuasion/>

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James Broadbent's Mulgoa Cottage

James Broadbent's home at Mulgoa is open to the public. It is well worth a look, even from the outside. It is 1810 vintage. It is actually full of the most amazing colonial furniture.



Eminent author, historian and conservation consultant Dr James Broadbent is the owner of Australia's oldest house in private

occupation.

The unique and rustic garden with its informal beds of drought-hardy plants, Cape bulbs, and species of old roses complements the cottage. The carriage loop is planted with agaves and white cedars, as recorded by Lady Franklin in 1839. The large re-created kitchen garden and orchard is hedged with common lemon.

The Cottage is located on St Thomas Rd, Mulgoa. To get there from Sydney take the M4 to the Mulgoa exit, turn left into Mulgoa Rd and travel 7km to the garden on the corner of St Thomas Rd. It is open 10am - 4.30pm. The cost is \$7 for adults, no charge for children under 18

Contributed by Anne Davey



Captain Robert Marsh Westmacott

Robert Marsh Westmacott (1801 - 1870) is one of many shadowy characters in the annals of Australian colonial history, an interesting historical figure and an amateur artist of some note, especially to the Illawarra region of NSW.

Westmacott produced a number of topographic and ethnographic views of places and sites around the early Colony – examples attached.

As part of his military duties, Westmacott travelled around the various settlements of the early Colony and was able to capture views and scenes never before seen by Europeans.

His work includes depictions of Illawarra landscapes, Sydney Harbour and views of early coal mining in the Colony prior to the 1830's.

He was a military officer with a talent for sketching. With professional artists scarce in the

Colony, it was left to those with military training and some free and convict amateur artists, to produce a pictorial record of the Colony during its foundation years.

Westmacott was trained in the arts as part of his officer training program in the British Army's **Royal Staff Corps**.

Military education for the corps included lessons in draughtsmanship, surveying and topographical drawing, designed to be applied to the preparation of battlefield plans, the capturing of coastal profiles and landscapes and in recording the geography, flora, fauna and peoples of far flung British outposts.

Robert Marsh Westmacott was born in 1801 at Sidmouth, County Devon on the south coast of England. He was the third child and second son of the famous British sculptor Sir Richard Westmacott (1775-1856). No birth certificate for Robert has yet been located, raising the possibility that he was an illegitimate son, a situation apparently common among the Westmacott line.

Robert chose a career, or had it chosen for him, in military administration within the **Royal Staff Corps and Quartermaster General's Department** of the British Army. Nothing is known of his life and education prior to joining the army in March 1823, at the age of 22.

His choice of a career in military administration is not strange, for it was a common career path open to sons of the wealthy. Whilst any military career during the 1820's would have been affected by the cessation of the Napoleonic Wars after 1815, there were many opportunities in other areas in which British military forces were involved – such as the various colonies.

The defeat of Napoleon gave England the encouragement it needed to further expand its Empire. The 1820's and 1830's saw expansion and consolidation of colonies in Africa, Australasia and the Americas. New garrisons and stations were opened, trade was expanded and the penal colony of NSW was one example of an area requiring administration by British authorities.

As far as is known, Robert was not engaged in any military actions during his period in the army – his main concerns being administrative and ceremonial.

Sir Richard Westmacott's wealth and position was able to support the purchase of a commission for his son. Robert was made an Ensign in the **Royal Staff Corps** and after two years as an Ensign, in September 1825 he attained the rank of Lieutenant, again with the **Royal Staff Corps** and again, by purchase.

This 'promotion' coincided with his departure from England for the colony of Mauritius.

Between 1823 and 1858, he travelled widely, both as a soldier and a civilian, visiting Mauritius, South Africa, New South Wales, New Zealand, Brazil, Spain, France and Abyssinia, before returning to

England. Throughout these travels, he penned many small pencil sketches and watercolours.

Mauritius 1825 - 1826

Lieutenant Westmacott was stationed at Mauritius, also known as Ile de France, as an aide to the English Governor Sir Galbraith Lawney Cole.

Cape Colony (South Africa) 1827 – 1829

He transferred to the nearby Cape Colony, where he became Aide-de-camp to Governor Richard Bourke. Westmacott remained attached to Bourke in this role until 1837, throughout the latter's governorship of New South Wales.

On 9 September 1828, whilst still in Africa, Robert purchased a commission as Captain in the **98th Regiment**, transferring from the Royal Staff Corps. Even though he was now a Captain in the 98th, his duties were substantially the same and he remained as Aide-de-camp to the Governor.

Robert and the Governor were stationed in South Africa for around 2 years and in early 1829, Bourke's governorship ended and both of them returned to England.

England 1829 – 1831

Upon his return to London in April 1829, Robert went on half pay. This was a form of semi-retirement from the army, enabling an officer to maintain his military rank and entitlements for a period while carrying out other duties.

As Robert was only 29 at the time, permanent retirement was not an option. He remained on half pay for just over two years and while his activities during this period are unknown, it seems he remained in Bourke's employ as Aide-de-camp or personal assistant.

In early 1831, Bourke was offered the position of Governor of New South Wales, replacing the unpopular Ralph Darling. When he decided to accept in July of 1831, he called on Captain Westmacott to accompany him as his Aide-de-camp. Robert accepted and was given the title of Deputy Quartermaster General of the Colony.

Just one week prior to leaving England, Robert married Louisa Marion Plummer on 18 June 1831 at St George's Cathedral, Hanover Square, London. The couple would go on to have 5 children and share a rather stormy relationship, before finally separating in 1851.

Voyage to New South Wales 1831

A week after their marriage, Robert and his new bride boarded the ship **Margaret** bound for Sydney. They were part of the official Bourke entourage. This included, Governor and Mrs Bourke, their children Anne and Richard, Captain and Mrs Westmacott, Captain Hunter (Bourke's military secretary), Mrs Hunter and her 5 children, the Reverend George Innes and Doctor Stephenson.

New South Wales 1831 – 1847

The **Margaret** arrived in Port Jackson on 2 December 1831 and Robert Westmacott immediately played a prominent part in arranging the official welcoming ceremonies as part of his formal role as the Governor's Aide-de-camp.

The Colony gave Bourke a hearty welcome after their unhappy period under the governorship of Darling. Bourke was to remain well liked throughout his term as was demonstrated by his being the first colonial governor to be memorialised in a statue, the funds for which were obtained by popular subscription shortly after his departure from the colony.

Coinciding with Robert's arrival in Sydney, early in 1832, he transferred from the 98th Regiment to the **4th (Kings's Own) Regiment** as Captain and remained in this unit until the end of 1837 when he sold his commission to settle in NSW.

As Bourke was probably the most travelled colonial governor since Lachlan Macquarie (1810-1822), visiting many of the settled areas of NSW and Port Phillip, Westmacott had the opportunity to see much of the Colony as it then was. Their travels took them to the Illawarra (1834 and 1836), Twofold Bay and Eden (1835), the Southern Tablelands, Newcastle, Port Stephens, over the Blue Mountains to Bathurst and as far south as Port Phillip in 1837.

Whilst at Twofold Bay in 1835, Westmacott was injured by an exploding powder keg and forced to return to Sydney by sea.

Throughout these journeys, Robert accompanied the Governor with sketchbook in hand, producing numerous pencil and water colour drawings of NSW and Sydney harbour.

Settler at Illawarra 1837 – 1847

In December 1837, Richard Bourke returned to England and Westmacott resigned his commission to become a settler in New South Wales. He immediately purchased properties at Illawarra and on the Paterson River. From 1838 to 1847 he was an active member of the Illawarra and Sydney business communities, operating from his

residences at Bulli in the northern Illawarra and in Sydney.

Robert was involved in farming and horse breeding at Bulli, land speculation (acquiring over 1000 acres in the Illawarra and 1280 acres on the Patterson River), brick making and sea trading – he started the first regular steamship service between Wollongong and Sydney in 1839 and operated his own vessel, the *Trial*.

He was a man whose star was on the rise and his future in the Colony looked bright.

Around this period, Robert unsuccessfully attempted to open a coal mine (the first in the Illawarra) on his property at Bulli, against the wishes of the Australian Agricultural Company who were the owners of the sole right to mine coal in the Colony. He was ultimately forced to cancel his plans due to lack of convict labour and personal financial problems.

Sometime in 1840, Robert travelled to New Zealand seeking business opportunities.

By early 1841, he had over committed himself with his various real estate and shipping ventures. When his steamship company became insolvent, he was responsible for a 4000 pound debt. He was forced to sell his Illawarra property and another house at Bulli, to cover these debts.

From 1844 to 1847 the Westmacott family resided at Woodlands, Bulli and they had other residences at Bent Street, Sydney and at Parramatta.

Robert and Louisa's 5 children were born in the Colony –

George Richard born 31 May 1832, Sydney

Robert Horatio born 1 September 1834, Parramatta

Francis Herbert born 29 December 1835, Parramatta

Louisa Margaret born 4 August 1837, Sydney

Helen Maria born 20 May 1845, Sydney

He gained employment as a Commissioner for Crown Lands in 1845 and at one point was also considered for the position of Postmaster at Port Phillip.

After struggling on in the Illawarra for two years, at the end of 1846, Robert decided to quit NSW and in February 1847 he returned to England with his family, seeking better fortune and help from his wealthy father and brother to start a new career.

Back in England 1847 – 1850

Robert's attempt to find employment in England paid off in August 1850. He was offered the prestigious position of General Superintendent to the Australian Agricultural Company's New

South Wales operations, based at Tahlee near Stroud. He accepted the offer and his father supplied the Company with a 5000 pound bond to indemnify his son's position.

The Westmacotts left Plymouth, England for New South Wales on 26 October 1850 aboard the *Tartar*, skippered by Captain Rudge. Their party included Robert, Louisa, 4 children and 3 female servants.

Superintendent of the Australian Agricultural Company 1850 – 1851

It seems ironic that the very company which had thwarted his attempts to mine coal at Bulli in 1840, should now offer Westmacott control of its Australian operations – an irony which was not appreciated by some employees in the Colony.

In May 1851, Robert's wife Louisa eloped with Captain Rudge of the *Tartar*, the vessel which brought the family out from England in 1850.

The scandal of his wife eloping with a sea captain, caused Westmacott to resign his Superintendency position on 2 June 1851 and he returned to England almost immediately.

The Westmacott's left Sydney aboard the *Mountstuart* on the 25th August 1851, bound for England via Cape Horn. Robert was to never set foot in Australia again. To add to his personal woes during this period, whilst on the return trip to England, Robert's 17 year old son died in Hastings, England where he had been sent for schooling.

Return to England 1852

Arriving in London in February 1852 to the news of his son's death and out of pocket with a young family to support, Robert once again sought the help of his immediate family. He moved in with his father at South Audley Street, London and by July he was listed as Managing Director of the New South Wales Gold Mines Company, operating from England.

The company was not successful and quickly faded from the scene, with Westmacott leaving them in mid 1853.

During 1852 he also became a Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society and the Geological Society, having been nominated to these by Sir Roderick Murchison.

South America 1858

Robert's activities for the 5 years between 1853 - 1857 are unknown.

In 1858 he was employed in Brazil as surveyor on the construction of the railway line between Recife and the San Francisco River, near Pernambuco. Here again, he drew a number of pencil and water colour sketches.

Late in 1858 Robert contracted an illness (probably malaria) as a result of the intense heat and many mangrove swamps through which the railway line passed. He returned to England in January 1859 due to ill health.

Final years in England 1859 – 1870

Westmacott's movements over the twelve years following his return to England in 1859 remain a mystery. On 10 May 1870 he died of inflammation of the stomach and exhaustion at Augusta Villa, Heath Road, Twickenham at the age of 69. He was survived by 4 children.

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