

COLONEL DAVID COLLINS

Of the Royal Marines (1756-1810)

LIEUTENANT JOHN BOWEN

Of the Royal Navy (1780-1827)

COLONEL WILLIAM PATERSON

Of the NSW Corp (1755-1810)

By

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Cover

Left: Painting of David Collins. Right: John Bowen RN from a miniature.

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DAVID COLLINS AND HIS CAREER



Painting of David Collins which hangs in the Athenaeum Club, Hobart.

All other images of Collins originate from this painting.

David Collins accompanied Governor Arthur Phillip as Judge-Advocate to Sydney Cove, serving in that capacity at Parramatta. Later under the orders of Governor Gidley King he was ordered to set up a colony at Port Phillip, Victoria.

Collins was then a mature officer. Aged 47 years, he had followed his father, General Arthur David's steps and had served with the Royal Marines. His mother was Henrietta Caroline nee Frazer. David was born in London, 3rd March 1756 and spent much of his childhood in Devon, as did John Bowen RN who settled at Risdon Cove, Tasmania, prior to Collins, in September 1803.

Collins was educated at the Rev. John Marshall's Grammar School and when 14 years old, he joined his father's division as an ensign. The following year he was promoted to 2nd Lieutenant, while only 15 years old.

In 1776 as a 20 year old he was stationed at Halifax, Nova Scotia. During the War of American Independence he distinguished himself at the battle of Bunker Hill. The British suffered heavy losses in the battle. At Halifax Nova Scotia, Collins met and fell in love with Maria Stuart Proctor. They were married on June 13th, 1777. Soon afterwards Collins returned to England with his bride. They enjoyed some years of blissful peace, but this was marred by the death of a daughter in infancy. There would be no other children. By the time of Hobart's recommendation, he was only on half pay. His father was long dead having

died in 1793 while Collins was in New South Wales, with the position as Deputy Judge-Advocate of the colony.

Collins had financial difficulties that would accompany him to his grave. He had, however, well-connected friends, one being Arthur Phillip and through Phillip, Collins met other influential people such as Viscount Sydney. There is little doubt Lord Sydney helped Collins's career.

The British government ordered him to settle Port Phillip with some urgency and he sailed in May 1787. Lord Hobart, then Secretary of Colonies and for War, became aware of this urgency from a despatch from Governor King because of the fear of the French.

Before Port Phillip of course, Collins had arrived with Phillip arriving at Botany Bay 20th January 1788. Six days later they moved on and settled at Port Jackson and Collins was given the full responsibility for the legal issues of the colony and formed the band of magistrates. Tension arose between the governor and the commanding officer of the marines, Major Robert Ross, in which Collins had to intervene and to judge, most times siding with the governor. Ross was to be sent to Norfolk Island which pleased Collins to no end.

Early in 1789 Phillip appointed him as secretary to the governor which gave him an extra five shillings a day. Eventually Phillip returned to England while the Second Fleet had arrived bringing with them the New South Wales Corp relieving the marines.

In October 1795 when Governor John Hunter had arrived, Collins asked for a pay rise as the responsibilities shouldered on him had increased dramatically. Hunter supported the claim.

According to family members in Devon, England, memories handed down to them indicated that Collins did not like the sea and was only too happy to have an administration job on land.ⁱ

Prior to this of course, Collins had gone to Parramatta (then Rose Hill) and constructed a military enclosure. Collins wrote in February 1789 that it was "*only of posts and shingles fastened with pegs on battens*" and that at Rose Hill, "*people are principally employed in cultivating and clearing the land*".

The first season in 1789 produced a bumper crop and by February the following year things were indeed improving.

Collins was responsible for law and order in Parramatta. The criminal court consisted of six military men or naval officers and the Civil Court of "*fit and proper persons*" presided over by the Judge Advocate.

Collins used the first Parramatta court house built on the south west corner of George Street also as a residence when visiting. In March of 1790 Collins held his first court at Rose Hill judging cases which were primarily to do with food and clothing. Whippings were

applied by Collins to deter crime, such as on George Bannister who was sentenced to 50 lashes for stealing three pounds of flour, while Peter Hopley received 25 lashes for stealing a quarter of a pound of bread.

Problems Collins found at Parramatta was the heat and bush fires, describing them as extreme". Dr Thomas Arndell, the surgeon, suffered greatly from fires that destroyed much of his farm.

Bush-fires were common: *"Many people at the time were much affected with inflammation of the eyes, attended with some pain and supposedly by the medical gentlemen to be occasioned by the dry and sultry weather which has prevailed for some time"*. (Legal History of Parramatta – Helen Watchris. C 1983)

In 1792 he took leave to return to England but it was not until September 1796 that he actually left the colony at a considerable financial loss and reached London in 1797. It was during this time that he saw the publication of his "Account of an English colony in New South Wales" followed by a second volume in 1802.

He was told he must return to duty on full pay, but found wife, Maria, well-nigh worn out by fretting over his absence. During his married years, Collins wrote some more, ("Royal William" in 1802) but unlike his earlier work, it was not overly well received. As a result he became frustrated over his slow career progress. However, that was soon changed with his appointment as Lieut. Governor of the new colony at a salary of 500 pounds a year.

Maria stayed behind in England. She missed him and was later to write: *"He had stayed too long in that infernal place"*.

King was convinced that the French, especially because of Baudin's recent southern voyage, would settle south of Sydney, at Port Phillip. King was acutely aware of the ideal location. In a private letter to Sir Joseph Banks, his patron, he wrote: (5th June 1802) *"The soil is excellent and the timber thin, added to which the security and expansiveness of the harbour seems to point it out as absolutely necessary that a settlement should be made there..."*

"I have in a very earnest manner recommended the making of a settlement at Port Phillip for the very advantageous account given of it both by Captain Flinders and Lieut. Murray."

It was not long before the HMS *Calcutta* was fitted and able to take 400 male convicts and a small number of settlers to Port Phillip. The government of the new settlement was to be placed under control of Port Jackson.

The *Calcutta* under the command of Collins was a naval ship originally built for the East India Company and had been purchased for service during the war with France.

Hobart in his proposal added, *"With a view to this Service and for the purpose of keeping open the communication between the two Settlements and with Port Jackson, it is thought*

necessary that a small vessel should be stationed in the Straights, to be employed in such manner as the Lt. Governor acting under the orders of Captn. King may point out.

“Experience having proved the great inconvenience arising from the Establishment of the New South Wales Regiment at Port Jackson, it is conceived that considerable benefit would result from selecting a Detachment of the Royal Marines for this Service.

“With a view of exciting the Convicts to good behaviour, it is proposed that such of them, as shall merit the recommendation of the Governments abroad, should be informed that their Wives and Families will be permitted to go to them at the public expense as indentured Servants; and to render this act of humane policy as conducive to the benefit of the Colony as the circumstances of the case will permit, it will be necessary that those Families should on no account be sent upon Ships on which Convicts should be embarked, and that they should be informed their reunion with the objects of their regard would depend upon their own good behaviour, as well as that of their Husbands.”

Transport of convicts at this time was the responsibility of the navy and Royal Marines were to be sent as part of the Navy’s fighting force. Lord Hobart states that he was only a “*little acquainted with Collins*”, but in a letter to His Majesty, Hobart humbly recommended Lt. Colonel Collins of the Marines as a “*person peculiarly well qualified for the position of Lt. Governor.*”

At 9am April 24th 1803 Collins set sail from Portsmouth with his small party of settlers. On the *HMS Calcutta* he arrived at 9 October 1803 at Port Phillip. They were joined by the store vessel *HMS Ocean* unloading supplies and personnel. Collins was not impressed with the amount of water available and the standard of the soil. In a letter from King (26th November 1803) to Lt John Bowen who had made a settlement at Risdon Cove, four miles north on the River Derwent from Sullivan’s Cove, King stated that if the place at Port Phillip was not fit for a settlement, Collins was to proceed either to Port Dalrymple at the north or to Sullivan’s Cove (south) and that, “*you will immediately resign the command of the settlement to him*”.

Collins did indeed sail on the *Ocean* for Risdon Cove knowing of course that the 21 year old Lt John Bowen RN had already settled there (12th September 1803) , but he carried with him the authority of Governor King. Arriving at Risdon Cove in February on 11 1804, Bowen was greatly put out by his arrival and the taking away of his command of the colony. Indeed, Bowen wrote to King saying that he was not giving up on his “Instructions” which Governor King had previously given to him. In the letter he is quite angry at Collins asserting his authority.



Lt. John Bowen RN. The original of this miniature is held by the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery.

He wrote to King, (1st March 1804) *"I am extremely sorry that my intensions were not fully explained or sufficiently understood in my letter of 24th April"*. Bowen had returned to Sydney to meet with King and returned again to the River Derwent settlement on the vessel *Pilgrim*. It appears that Collins charged Bowen with withholding stores and provisions, a charge to which Bowen strongly denied. However, the writing was on the wall. Bowen resigned and left the colony to fight in the French wars, leaving behind his lady friend, Martha Hayes Quinn and a daughter. Another daughter was to be born after his departure. Descendants still live in Tasmania.

Arriving with Collins was the first Anglican cleric, Robert (Bobby) Knopwood who kept a most important diary of the settlement, which for the early years was the main source of history of the settlement.

Collins gave orders after Bowen's departure that all buildings, huts and provisions be removed from Risdon Cove to Sullivan's Cove, now Hobart city, where the soil was better with plenty of fresh water. It is important to record that Hobart was firstly the name of the settlement at Risdon Cove as stated in letters between Governor King and John Bowen.

Collins erected his tent on a corner of what is now Macquarie Street, where the Town Hall stands. There was much for him to do organising the settlement of a new colony. In Hobart he shared accommodation with Margaret Eddington, who was fifteen years old at the time. She had arrived with her mother Elizabeth whose husband Thomas had died, from Norfolk Island and she already had a one year old son, John. It was believed that the boy's father was John Piper the commander of Norfolk Island. Collins's relationship with Margaret was quite open. When Captain Bligh arrived to the Derwent he expressed his horror at the arrangement in a letter to Lord Castlereagh referring to her as "a poor, low woman".

Collins had previously had an open relationship with Mrs Hannah Power, wife of a convict, Matthew Power. Hannah's relationship with Collins was with the consent of her husband, who received benefits from the Lt Governor, such as having his sentenced reduced. Later after he became a prosperous trader and was accused of fraud with Knopwood being one of

his accusers. It was recommended that Power be sent to Sydney for investigation, but on the recommendation of Collins with Collin's relationship with Hannah.

Bligh's arrival was a nightmare for Collins. He arrived on the vessel *Porpoise* and while Collins offered him hospitality, they soon fell out. Bligh decided to remain on the vessel moored in the River Derwent, first off Sullivan's Cove, later off Sandy Bay, then to the mouth of the river where Bligh was to stop vessels entering the Derwent on the way to Sullivan's Cove. Bligh's intension was to take off the in-coming vessel provisions which he could use for himself on the *Porpoise* while denying them to the colony. To be fair, Bligh paid for them. It was all about the question of Bligh's authority and Collins wrote to Acting Governor William Paterson in Sydney asking just who was now supreme commander of the colonies, which included Sydney and Van Diemen's Land. Paterson asserted that it was he and Bligh had no authority. Collins agreed with this. Relations between Collins and Bligh deteriorated further. Bligh, however, had his supporters at Hobart Town the leading one was James Belbin. On board the *Porpoise* was Midshipman George Reynolds Collins, fifteen years old son of David who had hoped to get a free voyage to Hobart Town to be with his father. Bligh punished George Reynolds Collins for drunkenness and gave him twenty four lashes. It is believed was prompted by Bligh's thirst for revenge.

Collins, however, could be just as nasty. Collins had Belbin arrested for going to the *Porpoise* and meeting with Bligh against his orders. He forbade anyone from having contact with him. After being held for four weeks without trial, he was sentenced by magistrates Bobby Knopwood and William Collins (no relation) to receive five hundred lashes. The beating was stopped by doctors, William l'Anson and Matthew Bowden, after fifty lashes. Belbin was taken away and imprisoned to await completion of the rest of his sentence. Fortunately for him, it was not carried out.

Collins had asked Maria his wife to join him, but she declined stating she was required by her ailing mother.

Further problems confronted Collins with the compulsory removal of the settlers on Norfolk Island. They were sent to Tasmania expecting as was promised to them by Sydney, supplies and convict help. Collins did not have the resources to give these. The continual arrival of Norfolk Islanders doubled the population, setting new strains on the viability of the colony.

Collins had complained to Dr Matthew Bowden of shortness of breath. Bowden thought it nothing more than the common cold. Calling on his patient at Government House, Bowden considered that his patient was much better and conversed over matters while sipping tea. Collins then suddenly fell back into his chair, observed by Bowden who thought he was having a fit. He summoned the servant, but it was too late. Collins was dead. Collins died March 24th 1810 7:30pm. The cause was said to be the stress of his office.



St David's Cathedral, Murray Street, Hobart. Reg Watson photo.

He was buried with full military honours dressed in his full military uniform in what is now St David's Park. Nearby St David's Cathedral is dedicated to him. While many lamented his passing, not all colonists did. John Pascoe Fawkner for example said, "Those who did not like the loose unchristian behaviour of the governor gave it out that his Satanic Majesty had taken both the church and governor" after the first church erected of wood was blown down by a storm not long after its construction.



David Collins Memorial St David's Park, Hobart.

In England, Maria continued to struggle financially. She was entitled only to a pension of a captain's salary. In 1813, fortunately, she was granted a yearly allowance of 120 pounds.

George Reynolds Collins's mother was Ann (Nancy) Yates a prior mistress of David Collins. The last resting place for George (born 1793) is not known, but he died in 1821. There is

another George (Haywood) Collins who came to Tasmania about this time, a convict. He is often confused with George Reynolds Collins with the former dying at George Town, Tasmania in 1870. George Reynolds's sister, therefore Collins's daughter, Marianne Letitia, married Samuel Rodman Yates, who died about 1826. Marianne then married on the 7th May 1829, John Davidson. She died on the 23d July 1860 aged 72 years and is buried in the Oatlands Cemetery, pictured below.



DAVID COLLIN'S BODY EXHUMED 1925

Soon after Collins's death there were rumours that he had been buried with many official papers and that he was even buried with colonist George Harris who died seven months later. Documents found after his death were sparse and it was considered there had to be more.

The exact location of his place of burial has been lost. There is a story that his body was buried under the altar of the wooden church erected, it is said in 1810, in the park then called St David's cemetery. However, Governor Macquarie told acting lieutenant-governor, Captain Murray, "to direct the church to be finished as soon as possible" (1st December 1811) The church blew down in a storm in 1812, obviously not long after its construction. There is no authentic record that Collins was buried under the altar.



The image of the church in St David's Cemetery (1811-1812). Photo taken from the book, "God and the City" by Peter Boyce. Page 12

In a letter from Lieutenant Lord to Governor Macquarie (31st March 1810) he writes: "The body was deposited in a brick vault and over the tomb I intend to erect a church, the spot where he was interred being that he had frequently pointed for the altar". Meaning, the spot where he was interned was where to place the altar. Clearly Collins had been planning for a church, but there is no mention that his body was under the "alter".

The first St David's Church on the site where the cathedral now stands had its first service 25th April 1819, although the building was not completed.

In 1921 an Act of the Tasmanian Parliament allowed the land known as St David's Park to pass into the hands of the Hobart City Council. The Church of England in Tasmania had previously owned it as it was a cemetery. The park, named after the founder of Hobart, Lt-Governor David Collins, was then a place of overgrown grass, scrub and neglected tombstones. Improvement work began, but stopped briefly when on the 1st April 1925 a coffin was discovered. It was found to be inscribed with the text "The entrance to Governor Collins's Vault". The Mercury newspaper on 18th April 1925 reported on the finding of the vault and an historical account of Collins. John Reynolds, historic researcher (1899-1986) was told that the coffin contained the body of none other than that of David Collins who died 24th March 1810. To exhume the body would be an opportunity to find out whether those stories had any merit.

In the mid 1970s Reynolds gave a lecture on the subject at Collins's Memorial in the Park at which time this author was present.

The Age newspaper of the 3rd April 1925 and The News (3rd April 1925), a Tasmanian newspaper, made mention of the vault being discovered "a few days ago". When it was, it was immediately inspected by Clive Lord and Dr Crowther. After its discovery there was a meeting of the Royal Society to discuss the exhumation of the body and its reburial. It must have been soon afterwards that the vault was inspected. By the term "a few days ago" and the date of the newspaper report, the 3rd April, it would seem that the actual date of the inspection was indeed the 1st April.

In front of many witnesses who included the Governor, Sir James O'Grady, Anglican Bishop Hay, the Mayor of Hobart, Alderman Valentine and others such as Reynolds, the workmen brought the coffin to the surface. Reynolds recalled that the outer part of the coffin was of oak, the inner wood being possibly Huon Pine, all completely encased in a lead covering.

Carefully two master plumbers opened the coffin and found that the body had been embalmed and was full of embalming plants.

Collin died when he was fifty four, but, amazingly, the body had not deteriorated at all. He was a large man, over six feet tall, handsome with very fine features. He was dressed in his uniform with his buttons still sparkling. A sword was beside him.

Reynolds recalled that a small beard had grown on him and that his fair hair had also grown**. He wore medals and decorations, but no revealing and interesting historical papers were discovered with him. Folklore said that significant revealing papers were to be found in the coffin. Reynolds was surprised how different he looked from the photographs and engravings, which he had seen.

Nothing was touched and before the coffin was completely uncovered workman began to clamp it down again, just after half an hour.

The stress of office for Collins had shown on his facial features and his slim face, Reynolds said, was "drawn".

Reynolds stated the opening of the coffin, 115 years after the Governor's death, was done with the greatest of decorum. He also said, he regretted not had a more opportunity to see it in more detail. Within that short space of time he took in as much as possible.

The body was reburied immediately after the brief opening. Whether it decomposed or not it is impossible to say. His death now is more than two hundred and twelve years ago. I do not believe any photographs were taken of the event.

The vault was over eight feet deep, nine feet long and four feet wide. It was constructed of long, wide, and very flat bricks and strongly arched, the original entrance being from the western end. Sir Johns Franklin's monument was erected at the western end of the vault and a massive block of freestone was laid over the vault to protect the remains. The block is

ten feet long, four and a half feet wide and over a foot thick. It is said to weight about three tons.

Tasmania remembers him well. Named after him were St David's Cathedral*, St David's Park, Collinsvale, Collins Cap and Collins Streets in Hobart, Melbourne and Sydney. A daughter and a granddaughter, as stated, are buried at the Oatlands cemetery. Interestingly The Mercury newspaper reported (4th May 1925) that there were moves to change the name of St David's Park to Wilmot Park, but it was not successful.

The cost of Collins's funeral, quite apart from the actual burial procedure, was 507 pounds and 18/6d, an enormous amount for the day. It included funds for purposely purchased outfits for all those who attended, which were supplied by merchants Thomas Ingle and Thomas Birch. On receiving the bill, Governor Macquarie was outraged, but nonetheless authorised payment.



Macquarie House 151 Macquarie Street, Hobart. Thomas Birch's home

According to the first paper to be published in the colony, *The Van Diemen's Land Intelligence* (April 8 1810) the cortege at Collins's funeral "was slow, long and impressive" with the rolling of military drums. The ceremony, as can be expected, was conducted by the Reverend Robert Knopwood.

*There are those who believe that the cathedral was named after the patron saint of Wales, St David. The Cathedral's own archives testify that it was named after David Collins as is stated by pioneer priest Robert (Bobby) Knopwood in his diary (24 September 1820).

** As I understand it, the beard and hair would not have grown. What actually happens is that the skin recedes.

So how can we sum up Collins's career in Van Diemen's Land?

Simply, he did his best against insurmountable odds. He moved the settlement from Port Phillip (Victoria) and bypassed Port Dalrymple for a reason still not fully understood. He then sailed for Risdon Cove, knowing that Bowen was already there. Within a short period of time he moved to Sullivan's Cove, Hobart Town. There he had the arduous job of carving out a

settlement from a raw environment. Naturally there were the personality clashes with the settlers and his own officers. One of the main problems was a lack of supplies being received either from Sydney or London. This promoted the situation of a lack of goods and food. Famine looked upon the colony more than once. Then came the arrival of the Norfolk Islanders after London and Sydney, having no idea or any appreciation of what Collins was going through, promised goods, chattels, provisions, land and convict labour to the new arrivals. He had no resources to fulfil such promises. Their arrival more than doubled the existing population of the small settlement which was already struggling. His problems took a huge hike with the arrival of Bligh, recently deposed as Governor from Sydney and his ailing widowed daughter, Mary Putland. Bligh, sailing to England, decided to go south to Hobart Town. At first Collins was relieved when Bligh gave assurances that he would not interfere with the administration of the colony and initially while the relationship was formal, it was cordial. Collins was also in a quandary over the recent mutiny in Sydney, he did not want to be seen, especially in London, to taking sides. Yet, William Paterson, his friend, was soon to go to Sydney and become Governor there.

Bligh, unwilling not to express his opinion on matters, did indeed clash with Collins. Arguments grew with – as we have seen – Bligh taking to the vessel *Porpoise* and blocking the River Derwent, extracting vital supplies destined for the colony, supplies which were sorely needed.

Bligh sent blistering complaints regarding Collins's behaviour and his administration to London and also to Sydney. In turn, so did Collins, putting his argument across. Finally the disgruntled Bligh left our shores, never to return, much to the pleasure of Collins, but by this time, his health had deteriorated never to repair, although at times he did feel better. The following section deals more fully with the Collins-Bligh situation.

Collins as a man could be very fair and impartial, but he also could be very harsh with his judgements and punishments. He was certainly not free from that. Like Bligh, he had no time for insubordination, which initially saw him support Bligh believing that it was deplorable that the King's appointment could be removed by junior men. That sympathy for Bligh turned sour, as we have learnt, not because of Collins's support for the mutiny, but because of Bligh's character, and his appalled attitude at Collins's open relationship with two women with whom he was not married, and the fact that one of the women was actually still married.

It was all very political and all must have taken its toll upon poor Collins along with a great deal of the stress and back-biting which goes with any such job. All in all, as said, he did the best he could as anyone could and he should be remembered for that. At his death he left in the colony debts of 290 pounds. Items which he personally owned were auctioned off to pay creditors. There was excess money left over which was sent to his wife, Maria. Over all, he did a fine job.

There is a “Pioneer Monument” on Hunter Street, Hobart. It was commemorated on the 20th February 1954, the 150th anniversary of the coming of Collins. It was unveiled by Her Majesty the Queen, Elizabeth II. It honours David Collins and carries the names of all those who came with him in February 1804 and those who came with John Bowen, September 1803. The picture shown below was taken during a *Hobart Town (1804) First Settlers Association* annual Floral Tribute ceremony. Guarded by re-enactors, I am laying a posy in memory of my ancestor, JOHN WADE, who came with Collins.



Presentation of portrait

John Reynolds did state that Collins looked very different from the engraving of him, which prompts me to believe it is an early portrait, perhaps when he was in Sydney with Governor Phillip.



Portrait of Collins which hangs in the Henry Hunter room, Hobart City Council. The public can view the portrait.

In 1956, John Reynolds made mention during his 1979 ABC interview that he presented “the only known portrait of Collins and I had it copied at the Mercury to the Mayor of Hobart”. The caption reads:

“Presented to the Rt. Hon. The Lord Mayor of Hobart (Alderman A.R. Park) by John Reynolds Esq, Chairman, Tasmanian Historical Research Association for 1956. Tuesday March 6th, 1956, to mark the BI-CENTENNIAL OF THE BIRTH OF LT. COL. DAVID COLLINS. RM. Founder of Hobart”.

- There are questions that can be asked regarding Collins’s portrait. Where is the original? Who actually painted or engraved it? And is it really Collins?

ⁱ Mr John Reynolds interview with the ABC 1979 with no further date given. I have in my possession a copy of the transcript.

DAVID COLLINS AND WILLIAM BЛИGH AT THE RIVER DERWENT

Two men who had a profound influence on early Australia were very different in character. David Collins’s life had its major difficulties. For instance he left his wife, Maria, back in England and once he left England for good after returning from NSW for a brief time and publishing a very successful book, they never saw each other again. Collins suffered continuous financial difficulties, forever in the debt of the bankers from whom he borrowed and they continuously demanded their due. This affected the lifestyle of Maria. He did of course have two mistresses during his time here in Australia. His clash with John Bowen RN of Risdon Cove, which was originally named Hobart, is most interesting. Collins died 10th March 1810, no doubt because of the demands of his office. His memorial in St David’s Park has his death date on it wrong. It being his burial date.

Captain William Bligh, on the other hand, while very talented in many areas, including of course in navigation, was a robust man who clashed vigorously with others throughout his career. Instances were the Bounty Mutiny, whilst governor of New South Wales and his clashing with Collins when he turned up at the River Derwent. Bligh had been in our waters some years previously. When 24 years of age he sailed with his mentor, Captain James Cook and Bligh went ashore on Bruny Island at Adventure Bay and there planted Tasmania’s first apple tree.



William Bligh

David Collins, as Judge-Advocate accompanied Governor Arthur Phillip to Sydney Cove, serving in that capacity at Parramatta. Later, under the orders of Governor Gidley King he was ordered to set up a colony at Port Phillip, Victoria.

The British government ordered him to do this with some urgency. Lord Hobart, the then Secretary of Colonies and for War became aware of this urgency from a despatch from Governor King, because of the fear of the French.



Governor John Hunter

King was convinced that the French, especially because of Baudin's recent southern voyage, would settle south of Sydney, at Port Phillip. King was acutely aware of the ideal location. In a private letter to Sir Joseph Banks, his Patron, he wrote: (5th June 1802) *"The soil is excellent and the timber thin, added to which the security and expansiveness of the harbour seems to point it out as absolutely necessary that a settlement should be made there..."*

Regardless of Bowen's own wishes not to resign his "instructions", his orders were clear. He made a half-hearted offer to Collins to give up the public stores, but his commission was another matter. King in his dispatch to Bowen (12th Jan 1804) states: "You will accompany the Lieut Governor thither (i.e. Collins - Ed) and deliver him up the Charge you are entrusted with and every Information you process respecting the Country, Soil, etc. Lieut Gov Collins is directed to dispatch the *Integrity* as soon as possible to this place with yourself and such other officers and Persons as may be necessary to Answer your representation of their improper Conduct with Regards to the Stores, which Appear to have been so Shamefully pillaged; And you will inform the Storekeeper that in Consequence of his Neglect, His Majesty's Service has not further Occasion for his Service.

"Should Lieu Go Collins have fixed at Port Dalrymple you will proceed to the Derwent and as you wish to resign the Charge of that Settlement you will deliver it up to Mr Mountgarret, until I can make further Arrangements. If it is Convenient to that gentleman."

King expected Bowen to return to Sydney on the *Ferret*, after carrying out his instructions. The *Ferret* left the River Derwent, so recorded the Rev Bobby Knopwood, 25th April 1804. After its arrival in Sydney, Bowen was not found aboard and his letter to King is no longer available. King nonetheless refers to the letter's contents in his reply to Bowen, written 31st May 1804.

He wrote, "I most certainly understood it was your wish to resign your command in the Derwent. For this reason it appeared to me a principal object of your return to this place in the *Ferret*, and the eagerness you showed to return in the *Integrity* to give over that charge to Lieutenant-Governor Collins, who possessed the King's commission to command any settlement he might go to with my concurrence. You will know, sir, that my letter of the 26th Nov 1803, contained a decided order for you to give the command up to Lieutenant-Governor Collins, in case he made his election of the Derwent; at least you should not now be in possession of that letter which I sent to Lieutenant-Governor Collins open, for him to deliver you, and which he informs me he should do if he went to the Derwent, I enclose a copy. For that event, and your consequent return by the *Integrity*, I had provided in my different letters to Lieutenant-Governor Collins, and particularly that you took with you, dated February 4, the contents of which I communicated to you, bears this pointed paragraph - I shall transcribe it: "As we have no other vessel than the *Integrity*, just launched and has been finished in great haste, I have ordered him (Mr Bowen) to return in her to the Derwent, calling on his way at Port Phillip, and have instructed him to you every information respecting the settlement he has formed and to go with you to deliver up his charge; after which you will direct the *Integrity* to return to this port as soon as possible that she may arrive with Lieutenant Bowen before the *Calcutta* sails, which Captain Woodriff has limited to the 1st next month; but perhaps he may detain the ship a few days longer.

“After these positive directions I must confess my surprise at your delaying to return by the Integrity and I cannot help considering it the more unfortunate for you at this period as there have been two opportunities since the Integrity’s return of a much quicker conveyance to England than by any future means.



Martha Hayes Quinn

It is worth noting that no book with the exception of the Garrison Order Book, no newspaper or document of the year 1809 can be found among the official records of the colony.

Collins’s career highlights deep aspects of despair and loneliness. His relationship with his wife Maria is a sad story and shows the difficulties carried by Collins.

In England, Maria continued to struggle financially. She previously wrote to Collins stating as we have noted, “he had stayed too long in that infernal place” and exhorted him in vein to go to some other country where she could join him being assured that they would be able to manage quite well on his half-pay. His father too, urged him to return, stating that promotion would come easier, but Collins had developed a great sense of loyalty to Arthur Phillip. His debt problems plagued him to the end of his days. His banker, Charles Cox at times, would not honour Collins’s bill of exchange, placing him in great embarrassment with creditors. When asked by Cox to reduce his overdraft, Collins replied, “For heaven’s sake, where do you think it is to come from”? Consequently, as soon as Cox collected Collins’s marine pay for him, it as quickly flowed out again. Maria was entitled only to a pension of a captain’s salary. In 1813 fortunately she was granted a yearly allowance of 120 pounds.

We know of course that Collins enjoyed the company of two mistresses, the first Ann Yeates from Sydney with whom he had a son, George and while in Hobart he shared accommodation with Margaret Eddington, who was only fifteen years old at the time and had two children by her. Confrontation with Bligh was more than just political. When visiting Sydney, Bligh was outraged by Collins’s lack of morality, he referring to Margaret Eddington as a “poor, how creature.” (Bligh’s letter to Lord Castlereagh 10th June 1809)

In the graveyard of St Peter's Church lies the grand-daughter of Marianne Letitia Davidson and great grand-daughter, Elizabeth Catherine Adams (nee Davidson).

Let's introduce William Bligh. Born Sept 9, 1754. Immediately we think of his association with the mutiny on the high seas or that of the mutiny at Sydney, but there was more to Bligh than mutiny, rum and convicts. After all, he was a Master Mariner. From ship's boy to vice-admiral, there was much more to Captain William Bligh than his infamous bad temper. At 34 years of age (1789), he was the captain of the famous *Bounty* when cast adrift by Fletcher Christian and when 36 years of age, he took HMS *Providence* in the company of a young Matthew Flinders on a voyage to Tahiti and back.

Bligh's survival after being placed in a launch on 28th April 1789 from the vessel *Bounty* was remarkable and despite all his other adventures, to the world in general, he would be Bligh of the *Bounty*. The episode has been made into at least three films that I know of where Bligh is depicted as cruel and violent. Even after returning to England, he had to live that depiction by some many. His epic six weeks voyage of 6,705 kilometres to Timor, which involve attacks by Islanders, continuous storms, crippling illnesses and near starvation. Along the way Bligh, haunted by his memory of James Cook in the Pacific ten years earlier, found out that not all his enemies had remained on the *Bounty*. After the boat had reached the Australian coast there was almost another mutiny. Bligh's success in bringing the survivors to Timor was a personal triumph and one of the great achievements in history of European seafaring

The clash with Collins and the subsequent antagonism dates from his term as Governor at Sydney, which we will briefly look at. By 1805 London was frustrated by the lack of progress of the Sydney colony which had been governed by Phillip who of course did a mighty job in establishing the colony and later King and Hunter. Someone with vigour was needed. Sir Joseph Banks was asked who he could recommend, replying, "I know of no man but Captain William Bligh who will suit. But whether it will meet with his views is another question".

Bligh was reluctant. After two long voyages where he was separated from his wife who was terrified of the sea and wanted to know from the authorities whether his naval rank would remain if he became governor. They agreed as well as increasing the governor's salary from 1,000 pounds annual to 2,000 pounds. After arrival he moved cautiously, but his main task was to bring the rum traffic in the colony under control and do away with the monopoly and extortion and to ensure that the New South Wales Corp ends its relationship with the trade. Writing to London, he said, "I am aware that prohibiting the barter of spirits will meet with the marked opposition of those few who have so materially enriched themselves by it." In February 1807 he acted and issued a general order prohibiting the exchange of rum or any other spirit to barter for grain, for food, labour, clothes or any other commodity. There were various, strong penalties for anyone who did not adhere to the order. The problem was, of course they only way he could enforce the new law was through the New South Wales Corp

and it was not long the famous clash with John Macarthur began. Before this time, relations between the two men were cordial with Mr and Mrs Macarthur being regular visitors to Government House.

The problem between the men began not with rum, but over land. Macarthur claimed that Lord Camden promised him with a further 5,000 acres of land because of the progress he had made with the wool industry. Macarthur claimed that Bligh went into a rage and rejected the demand. Lines were drawn up; Bligh being aware many would oppose him from the colony knew full well he had good support from London. Bligh's opposition to any further grants to Macarthur may be because he knew very well of his ambitions. Indeed Governor King, said of Macarthur, "If Captain Macarthur returns here in any official character (as he was in London) it should be that of governor, as one-half the colony already belongs to him and it will not be long before he gets the other half". Macarthur was furious by Bligh's rejection. Events moved swiftly. Bligh had Macarthur arrested preventing a possible rebellion, but he skipped bail. The following day, January 26th 1808, Bligh had Macarthur arrested a second time, but Major George Johnson of the NSW Corp whose duty was to do the chore, signed an order releasing him. He then deposed Bligh as governor first asking him to resign then arresting him. The story was that Bligh was hiding under his bed. Bligh said that he was merely hiding important papers in a safe place. Seventeen months after being sworn in, Bligh's governorship was over. He was placed on the ship *Porpoise* with the proviso he would sail to England, instead with Mary his daughter he set course for Hobart Town.

Sailing up the Derwent River and anchoring off the settlement, Bligh hoped he would be able to muster the support of Lt-Governor David Collins to overthrow those who had usurped his position. That was not to be.

Bligh came ashore and was officially welcomed by Collins and the Rev Knopwood. Bligh assured Collins that he was not there to interfere with his governing of the colony. Bligh in his own way expressed surprise that other officers were not on hand to be introduced, but he was assured this would happen in time, which it did, the following day. Two were not introduced, however, one being Judge-Advocate Samuel Bate, the other being George Harris, the surveyor-general, who, it appeared, had been arrested after an altercation with Edward Lord.

Bligh was not impressed with the settlement, writing to the Secretary of Colonies in London, Viscount Castlereagh of its poor state, including government house, which he said consisted of three rooms. Collins, however, put the house to Mary's disposal.

On April 4, Bligh had to deal with a mutiny aboard the *Porpoise*, when six men who had been confined broke out of their quarters and escaped in the ship's boat. They abandoned the boat several miles up the river and took to the bush. Two were captured and had to

endure two lots of 36 lashes, which was surprisingly light, when it would normally have been between three and four hundred. Indeed, this was the first flogging aboard the *Porpoise* since Bligh had taken over two months previously.

In the meantime, Collins sent a communique to Sydney stating that Bligh had not sailed to England and that instead he and his daughter were there. Collins had shown his hand. He had sided with the insurrectionists. Bligh had another enemy on his hand. Bligh who wanted to explore the country was accompanied by Lord rather than Collins. Lord, who was only twenty-seven years of age, did not get on well with Bligh, probably because Lord was sympathetic to the Sydney rebellion and while visiting the town had received a 500 acre grant. Lord also, Bligh noted, operated a shop, which was prohibited as he was an officer. He also believed he had an influence over Collins.

Collins was in a pickle. He was dependent on Sydney for food supplies to Hobart Town and if he had been seen to side with Bligh that important source could be stopped. Collins had enough on his hands feeding, clothing and supplying items to the colonists. Any antagonism with those in Sydney would only have added to his problems.

Relations between Collins and Bligh deteriorated with Bligh complaining that he was inattentive to his criticisms and that he had no decorum. Collins in turn complained to London, that he thought Bligh considered he was the real governor.

What really caused the final break was the arrival of the vessel *Aolus* with a message to Collins from William Paterson asking that a proclamation be read to the colonists regarding the situation in Sydney. From that moment there was a remarkable stand-off between the pair. Collins tried to force Bligh to leave Hobart by cutting all opportunities for the provisioning of the *Porpoise*. Bligh was now completely isolated, but he stood firm, hoping to receive word that support was coming from England. He wrote later, "I remained on board my vessel getting some trivial supplies from the captains of ships.

Bligh enjoyed the support of the Norfolk Islanders who had arrived in VDL and one in particular, ex-convict, James Belbin who took up a petition in support of Bligh with the words that he was the "only and true representative of our August Sovereign in our Colonies". Twice Belbin was arrested and sentenced by Knopwood.

Bligh wrote: "A few poor unfortunate settlers who endeavoured to get off a few fowls and some mutton to my daughter, some were seized and flogged and one poor man received, I believe 400 to 500 lashes and was imprisoned for the relief." There is no evidence about this next matter, but Collins's son, George, was unfortunately aboard the *Porpoise* and Bligh was said to have given him a flogging.

When the vessel *Aolus* sailed for England it contained two despatches, one from Bligh the other from Collins, containing their particular view of what was happening. Relations

became untenable, with Bligh moved his vessel further downstream near Bruny Island which became known as “Bligh’s retreat”. Every ship that entered the Derwent was approached by Bligh

Bligh remained resolutely stubborn and the stand-off continued for more than a year. Finally in January 1810 he received a letter advising him that Governor Lachlan Macquarie had taken office in Sydney and had declared that the 1808 rebellion illegal. Also, the British Colonial Office had condemned his overthrow as **mutiny**. “I shall be most happy to pay you every respect and attention in my power to bestow while you find it necessary to remain in the Settlement,” wrote Macquarie. It was the news Bligh had been waiting for. He sailed back to Sydney and arrived in Port Jackson little more than two weeks after the new governor had taken office.

Macarthur and Johnson had long since fled to London. Johnson was to face a court martial and Macarthur stayed in England for eight years. Eventually London dropped the charges. On 12 May 1810, just shy of five years after he had first arrived Bligh left Sydney and after nine months after returning home, he was promoted to Rear-Admiral and three years later to Vice-Admiral. He died in 1817 aged 63.

Further reading:

- “Parramatta-Tasmania Colonial Connections Volume I & II” by Reg A. Watson.
- “John Bowen, the Founder of Tasmania” by Reg A. Watson
- “David Collins” by John Currey. Melbourne University Press. 2000.
- The Story of St David’s Park. By W.H. Hudspeth. Pages 110-111. (HCC publication)

There are, of course, numerous works on him.

LIEUTENANT JOHN BOWEN ROYAL NAVY



Original miniature at the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery.

JOHN BOWEN THE MAN.

John Bean Bowen was a Devon lad. It has proved difficult to actually locate his birth date, almost probably 1780. However, we know he was born at Ilfracombe, the son of Rear-Admiral James Bowen of the Royal Navy and of Elizabeth.

His father, James Bowen (1750-1835) had a very distinguished and full career in the navy. He was born 9th Dec 1750 and baptised at Ilfracombe, Devon. At the very young age of 16 years he commanded a ship in the African and West Indian trade in the merchant service. Shortly afterwards, he entered the Royal Navy as a Master and served in that capacity on board *HMS Artois*. Thereafter, in many capacities, he served in the West Indies and the Mediterranean and on occasion successfully fought the Spanish. In 1803, the same year that his son settled Risdon Cove, he was appointed to command *HMS Dreadnought* of 98 guns. In 1825 he retired with the rank of Rear-Admiral. He died 27th April 1835.

John's Uncle Richard, while captain of the *Terpischore* was killed in the attack on Santa Cruz, 24th July 1797. Nelson described him thus: "a more enterprising, able and gallant officer does not grace His Majesty's naval service. (Nelson Despatches, ii, 423). He also had an association with Australia. In 1791 he was naval agent aboard the transport *Atlantic* on the occasion of the discovery and naming of Jervis Bay, on the New South Wales coast. On the instructions of Governor Arthur Phillip he took the *Atlantic* from Norfolk Island to India in the teeth of a monsoon to obtain stores and returned so heavily laden that the ship was "as deep in the water as a sand-barge". The journey took seven and a half months.

Brother George, who was also a naval man, died while captain of *HMS Phoenix*, a frigate on the East Indies station, in 1812. John's younger brother, James St Vincent Bowen, was a clergyman. James's daughter, Teresa Bowen, bequeathed a portrait of her father, James Bowen, to the Painted Hall at Greenwich.

James's son John was baptised 14th February 1780, as was his father, in Ilfracombe. There is a pedigree of the family in the biographical cutting files in the West country Studies Library, Devon, but without a birth date for John. Dates are given for a brother, James St Vincent Bowen (1801-44).



Bowen plaque in the care of the author

There was a major family influence for John to seek a career in the navy. He began his studies at the Royal Naval College at Dartmouth in 1794 and after graduating in 1798 he served in several ships as midshipman. One, on which he served as midshipman, was the *Argo*, a fifth rate ship of the 'Roebuck' class, of 44 guns, (built by Baker of Newcastle between 1779-1781, becoming a troopship in 1791 and sold in 1816) commanded by his father. They assisted at the capture of a Spanish frigate, mounting 42 guns; a royal packet of 12 guns; three privateers; three armed ships, with letters of marque and four other merchantmen. They also assisted in the recapture of a British sloop of war. Upwards of 30 vessels were taken and destroyed by the boats of the *Argo* during the period. On leaving the *Argo*, Bowen joined the *Lancaster*, a third rate ship originally an East Indiaman, 64 guns, (built by Randall of Rotherhithe, purchased in 1797, hulked in 1807) bearing the flag of Sir Roger Curtis, on the Cape station, returning to England on the *Adamant*, a fourth rate ship of the "Portland' class, 50 guns, (built by Baker of Liverpool between 1777-1780 and broken up in 1812), at the end of 1801. In 1802 he was promoted to Lieutenant and was posted to *HMS Glatton*, a fourth rate ship originally an East Indiaman. He became commander in 1804.

His rapid rise saw him become Captain the following year. Before then, of course, he had taken part in the historic settlement at Risdon Cove, Van Diemen's Land.

His career was certainly full of experience, especially for one so young. In those days, however, the world was still full of adventure. Bowen had already seen service in the Mediterranean (1788-1800) and on the Cape of Good Hope Station.

Bowen's next appointment brought him closer to his destiny. The *HMS Glatton* was a convict ship, bound for New South Wales, with Dr Jacob Mountgarrett, its surgeon. Bowen reached Port Jackson March 11, 1803 and offered himself for colonial services to Captain Philip Gidley King, Governor of New South Wales (1800-1806). King was an intelligent, hard-working administrator, but was criticised for lacking tact. Also a navy man, King was devoted to his job and had sailed with Governor Phillip, who had a high opinion of him. It was under King that Matthew Flinders was encouraged to undertake coastal navigation. By the time of Bowen's arrival, King and his wife had had enough of the Office. One of their major projects was the plight of many of the homeless and illegitimate children of the colony about whom King stated that "...more neglected children are not to be met with in any part of the world." He had written to England requesting that he be relieved, but had to wait three years before his successor Captain Bligh arrived. King did not enjoy good health and the strain showed.

King accepted Bowen's offer for service, as we have seen, and appointed him to relieve the Lieutenant-Governor of Norfolk Island, Joseph Foveaux, who wanted to return to England. Bowen, however, understood that an attempt was to be made to settle the south of Van Diemen's Land. He went to King and told him that he would much prefer to command the new settlement at Risdon Cove. King readily obliged, believing that the appointment was a much more important position than the Norfolk Island one, sending Captain John Piper in his stead.

On the 28th March 1803 Governor King documented Bowen's commission. Bowen had the commission to "establish His Majesty's right to Van Diemen's Land" and claim it in the name of the King. He was appointed Commandant and Superintendent of Risdon and sailed from Sydney 21st August 1803. This, however, was his second attempt. The first expedition left August 7th 1803, when the *Porpoise* and *Lady Nelson* had to return to port because of bad weather. They first put into Twofold Bay, now the site of the port of Eden. There they stayed for a week, but the weather did not improve. As stock was running low and the *Lady Nelson's* centreboard or sliding keel was causing concern, they returned to Sydney. Naturally King would have been disappointed to see them return. Both vessels were unloaded and the *Lady Nelson* had repairs carried out.

King's instructions to Bowen were, "Obey all such orders as you shall from time to time receive from me, His Majesty's Governor-In-Chief and Captain-General of the territory of

New South Wales and its dependencies, or from the Lieutenant-Governor in my absence, or other officer administering the Government for the time being.

“You are therefore, to proceed in His Majesty’s armed vessel Porpoise, or Lady Nelson, tender who commanders have my orders to receive you, with the men, women, stores, and provision necessary for forming the intended settlement; and, having fixed on a proper place about Risdon Cove, you are to take upon you the execution of the trust reposed to be publicly read.” Again, the command is quite extensive, but King ordered Bowen to further...“inform yourself of the nature of the soil, what proportion of land you find proper for the cultivation of wheat, barley and flax, as likewise what quantity of cattle can be taken care of, and the number of people you may hereafter judge necessary for the above purposes. You will also inform me whether the general timber in that country is fit for the purposes of being sent to England for the construction of King’s ships, particularising, as far as you are able the different species, length of trunk, and diameter; also whether it grows mostly crooked for strait (sic) and notice the facility of getting it on board ships. Attention is also necessary to the other productions of that country. You will likewise observe what are the prevailing winds in the different seasons, the best anchorage according to the season, the rise and fall of the tides, likewise when the dry and rainy season begin and end. You are not on any consideration to build or permit the building, of any decked boat or vessel exceeding twenty feet keep.”

Other matters dealt with convicts...“their labour is to be for the public”, and religious observances, “You are to cause the prayers of the Church of England to be read with all due solemnity every Sunday,” and security, “to not permitting any intercourse with any ships of any nation, even English ships,” and assignments to settlers, “And as they are free settlers, you will, as they are the first, allot two hundred acres to each family and victual them for eighteen months. They are to be allowed the labour of two convicts each during that time and to be supplied with such a portion of seed, grain, garden seeds, and stock, as can be spared; the proportion of tools they are to be issued respectively.”

This was a tall order for one so young. It was to be a hard existence for the pioneering settlers from the start. Orders to Bowen were that, “The whole must labour from daylight till sunset, allowing one hour to breakfast and two hours to dinner, except if task work is found more eligible.

“The slops are to be issued in December and June, i.e. a suit twice a year at those times.

“Regular returns of the state of the settlement - the same of stock and employment of people - must always be forwarded.

“The store keeper must give you weekly returns of the issue and remains of provision in store, specifying the number of weeks it will last at the established ration.”

And so the orders were given and the plans laid.

SETTLING RISDON COVE

With the site chosen, the urgency noted, the appointment made, and the requirements given, a momentous adventure began for Bowen and his settlers, who considered themselves in every sense of the word, “settlers” rather than, “invaders”.

The Sydney Gazette June 12th 1803 reported on the first attempt at Risdon Cove: “On board, were embarked John Bowen, Esq appointed to command and superintend a settlement intended to be formed at that place; also Mr Mountgarrett appointed surgeon, with 3 privates, ten male and six female prisoners. The Porpoise was also to sail on the same service with the remainder of soldiers, settlers, prisoners, provision and stores, but the decayed state of the Investigator required the commander of the Porpoise being on the survey of that ship which when completed the Porpoise set sail for the above destination.”

We have learnt that Bowen in a second attempt left August 21st with the ships *Porpoise* and *Lady Nelson*. The expedition consisted of a surgeon, storekeeper, three free settlers, 21 prisoners and a small guard of soldiers. However, soon after leaving Port Jackson, they struck heavy weather once again and with both ships taking water, they returned to Port Jackson. The *Porpoise*, under the command of Lt Scott, was replaced by another vessel, the *Albion*, a whaler of 326 tons.

On August 28th, 1803, at 9:00 a.m. another attempt was made to sail for Risdon Cove. Bowen was aboard the *Albion*, under the command of Captain Ebor (at times spelt Eber) Bunker. Two days out, the *Albion* struck severe gales and fell behind the *Lady Nelson*, which was under the command of Lieutenant Courtoy who continued as planned.

Lt Courtoy’s instructions from King (June 1803) were as follows: “You are hereby required and Directed to receive on Board His Majesty’s Armed Vessel, Lady Nelson, under your command, John Bowen Esq, Commandant of the Settlement intended to be formed on Van Diemen’s Land and Mr Jacob Mountgarret, surgeon, with the Other Person as per enclosure and proceed without loss of time to Storm Bay and give Mr Bowen every assistance in Your Power in assisting to Build Huts for the Reception of himself and People at such place, as he may fix on for a Settlement, And to which Assistance you will be particularly Careful of the Safety of the Vessel. And on the Arrival of His Majesty’s Ship Porpoise, you will return to this Port, as soon as possible, with such Accounts as the Commander may have to transmit by you, deliver me a Journal of the Proceedings.”

King also provided terms on which the first five settlers agreed. They were:

“To have Town Lots of 5 acres each, on a lease of 14 years, and when circumstances will allow to have a Grant of 100 acres each, Subject to the usual Quit Rents. To be Victualled

from the Stores for 12 Months, from the time of taking possession of their Town Lots. To be allowed the labour to Two Convicts Victualled from the Store for the same term; after which they and their Families to be of no further Expense to the Government.

“To have Two Ewes each, Six Bushells of seed wheat; a proportion of Tools, Nails, Cloathing, and such Garden Seeds, as can be spared from the general Stock of the Settlement.

“They will receive their first proportion of Slops on leaving Port Jackson, And the other proportion when they go off the Stores.

“And should any unforeseen circumstances occur to induce the Commandant to continue them longer on the Stores from loss of Crops, etc; he is at liberty to do it, but to assign sufficient Reasons to the Governor.

“The present Settlers and their Men, who go by the *Porpoise*, are to assist in Building temporary places to Shelter the whole of the People and Provisions.”

As we have learnt, Bowen finally sailed not on the *Lady Nelson*, but the *Albion*. The vessel *Porpoise* was withdrawn. The *Porpoise*, under the command of Lieut. W.Scott was ordered ...“You are hereby required and Directed to receive on Board His Majesty’s Armed Vessel *Porpoise*, under your Command, the People, Provision and Stores stated in the Enclosure, And proceed to the River Derwent in Storm Bay Passage on the east side of Van Diemen’s Land, where I hope you will find the *Lady Nelson* Arrived and place fixed on for the Settlement by the commandant.

“You will disembark the Passengers, Provision and Stores, as soon as a place of temporary securing can be got ready for them; when you will make the best of your way back to this Port, deliver the enclosed Order to Acting Lieu Courtoy, And Months from the time of your leaving the Derwent, And in the Event of you not hearing anything of the *Lady Nelson* after you have been in the River Derwent Three Weeks, you will lose no time in returning to this Port.” (13th June 1803).

Courtoy’s orders were changed two days later, stating that the *Porpoise* was to stay at the settlement for “two weeks”. Events, however, put paid to such plans.

Meanwhile, the *Albion* had successfully survived the storm and was now sailing in calm waters, calm enough for Captain Bunker to catch three Sperm Whales. Business must not take second place to a settlement! Its sister ship, *Lady Nelson*, had reached Van Diemen’s Land, September 7th at 6:30 p.m., Wednesday, sailing just above Stainforth’s Bay (New Town). The next day she sailed on to Risdon Cove. Three days later (Sept 11th) on the Sunday the *Albion* was “assisted” into the Cove.

A letter dated 20th September 1803 was Bowen’s first report to King. Bowen wrote: “Sir: After a passage of twelve days we arrive in the Derwent ourselves all well, but the cattle

very indifferent – the effects of a severe gale on the second day we left Port Jackson which notwithstanding – Capt Bunker did everything in his Powers”. Later...”Sunday the 12th, to my great satisfaction I found the Lady Nelson in Risdon Cove having been so fortunate to arrive five days before us – as I have not had time enough even to form a general plan.” Later...”The soldiers I have got are very discontented and appear to have had too cosy a life for their present employment. I have had only one sentry in the day and two at night which they call very hard duty and give me some trouble to put them to right.” Later...”I have not seen a single native yet but some of the people found them on the first arrival but they appear very shy and have since returned entirely from us not apprehending they would be of any use to us I have not made any search after them thinking myself better off if I never see them again.”

What was to become the most important historic site in Tasmania was not spectacular in its geographical features. It is one of the driest areas in southern Tasmania. Rainfall over the years can vary substantially and the area can experience drought conditions, with long summer days and higher temperatures than elsewhere in what we would now term the Greater Hobart Area.

Conditions are suitable for grazing, the growing of grain and perhaps some vegetables in the cooler months. Bowen was to learn the hard way, endeavouring to grow vegetables on the hilltop ridges, which are heavily dotted with mud-rocks. These rocks proved helpful for building purposes and there were excellent building timbers, such as Eucalyptus globules, more commonly known as the Tasmanian Blue Gum. Generally the earth was dry, but fresh water was available for the people along the river not far upstream from the landing place.

This was a good defensive site, as there was a clear outlook from the Hilltop, which provided a rich volcanic soil, a rarity for Tasmania. But the settlement was to experience a dry summer and with the lack of farming experience, the area’s potential could not be fully utilised and was destined to fail.

The small river at Risdon Cove was shallow and was subject to the tidal flow of the large River Derwent, but a short distance away into which it flowed. In summer the fresh water flow could cease altogether.

In summary, Risdon Cove was not the best choice of site, but with limited knowledge of Van Diemen’s Land and its environment and acting mainly on the observations of Bass, Bowen settled there.

Upon Bowen’s arrival, a return for the settlement showed that it consisted of:

Lieut. John Bowen, of the Royal Naval Command and appointed Magistrate.

Mr Jacob Mountgarret of the Royal Navy, Surgeon and appointed Magistrate.

Mr Wilson, storekeeper.

A Corporal and Eight Privates of the New South Wales Corps.

William Birt, a free settler from England.

Wm Clark, free settler, reduced soldier of the NSW Corps.

Twenty-one male convicts.

Ten female convicts.

Eight Months' provisions for the above number of people, with and ample assortment of stores, clothing (sic) and necessaries, divided between the Two Vessels.

Nine cows.

One Bull.

Twenty-five ewes and two rams.

There was also one horse. After some time it roamed off and was found in the bush by James Meehan who returned it to the settlement. Notice there was no Edward White.

For his part, the master of the *Albion* received 204lbs. Tobacco, 336 lbs. Junk, 1 pair rudder chain, 40 fathoms, 3" worn rope and 1 foresail.

On October 7th Gov King reported:

"I have this Instant heard that Lt. Bowen has landed safely at Risdon Cove in the River Derwent on Van Diemen's Land - He speaks in high terms of the beneficial Settlement."

Between September 1803 and 1804 when the settlement was abandoned, the first British settlement had consisted of: (1)

CIVIL ESTABLISHMENT

Lieutenant John Bowen R.N. Commandant.

Jacob Mountgarret, surgeon.

Thomas Wilson (Williams), Storekeeper.

Robert Brown, Botanist, (on temporary duty)

James Meehan, surveyor.

Thomas Smith, gardener.

NEW SOUTH WALES CORPS.

Lieutenant William Moore.

Sergeant..... Johnston.

Sergeant Thomas Prentice.

Corporal John Lamb.

Corporal John Wixtead.

PRIVATES

.... Brookes.

Thomas Browne.

John Carr

John Currie.

John Lawrence

John McGuire.

William Meadows.

George Morrison.

William Page.

James Prickett.

Jeremiah Smith.

James Staikes.

& four other unknown privates.

SETTLERS.

Bowen, Martha*

William Birt.

William (Richard) Clark* and Maria Clark (wife)*

MALE CONVICTS. (Incomplete list)

Anderson, Robert*, Barnes Edward*, Cavanagh James, Clark George, Cole Thomas*, Coolman John, Coward John (James)*, Davis Robert, Dawns Michael, Dennison William, Dring Francis*, Duce John, Flinn Charles, Garrat William*, Gilley George*, Goulan Fordyce*, Hardwicke Joseph, Harris John, Harris Richard*, Herne Williams*, Holloughan Richard, Jackson John*, Jones John*, Kale John*, Lee Matthew, McCarty Dennis*, Monday Edward, Orlando Stephen*, Parnell Joseph*, Richards Edward, Shields Russel, Shiffart Frederick*, Watts George*, Wilson William, Wright Richard*, Wright William*.

FEMALE CONVICTS (incomplete list)

Kale Mary*, Lawler Mary*, Ware Elizabeth*, Ware.... (Child)*

* With the exception of those marked * they all returned to Port Jackson or died at Risdon Cove in 1803/1804.

Notice there is no Edward White. Edward White who said he was at the 1803 settlement when giving testimony to the 1830 inquiry regarding the 1804 aboriginal confrontation must have lied. There is NO record of him being there with Bowen.

The next major decision, of course, was how to get everyone and everything ashore. This proved to be a difficult task. There was continual conflict among the people, especially between the two senior officers, Bowen and Moore. This did not help the situation. Bowen actually referred to Moore as a “mutinous rascal”, later - as we shall see – Bowen court martialled him, but he was acquitted. Negative reaction, however, was expressed by all and one can’t really blame them, after experiencing what they had with limited resources and possessions in the country to which they had come.

Another major problem was the calibre of the people. Collins described the convicts that Bowen had to contend with as “abandoned and hardened wretches”. Given Bowen’s young age, we could not expect him to be more successful than he was. In March 1804, Sir Evan Nepean stated that “Bowen’s conduct in the charge he undertook appears to have been very commendable and active”

Two large whalers were lashed together to ferry the animals and stores from the moored vessels and the hard work began the very next day after arrival; but it took a full week for everything that was necessary to be landed. The first woman ashore was Bowen’s mistress, pretty Martha Hayes Quinn. She was carried ashore by Bowen’s men. While it appears that Martha Hayes had that honour, it may actually belong to a French woman, named Girandin, who worked as a steward, disguised as a man on the French expedition of Bruny D’Entrecasteaux in 1792. It is certainly possible she set foot on Tasmanian soil, however

there is no conclusive record to confirm this. She was, indeed, the first white woman to visit our shores*.

The *Lady Nelson's* Logbook recorded, Sept 12th 1803, "sent some of the stores belonging to the colony on shore; the long boat assisting the Albion discharging." Whaleboats were lashed together, side to side, and a sort of crane was rigged to the mainmast. They then lifted the stock over the ship's side and on to the whaleboats that were then towed ashore. The stocks were landed into the care of a party of convicts, while the boats continued to unload stores and equipment.

The stores now landed, it was important to keep them from the elements of nature and from pilfering. A ship mainsail was placed over them. Bowen and Martha shared the mainsail as their shelter. The settlers, soldiers and convicts erected similar tents.

Three days later, the first punishment on land is recorded in the Logbook of the *Lady Nelson*. "Inflicted punishment". (15th Sept 1803). No further details are given, but even by then Bowen was having trouble with "discontented soldiers". On that same day Bowen explored further upstream looking for a better spot for his settlers.

On the 19th September the *Lady Nelson* unloaded bricks. It was the day, also, when Bowen wrote his first report to Governor King.

The following day (20th) the *Lady Nelson* "Supplied the Colony with half a barrel of powder and a bell."

Two days later, during the morning, the crew unloaded from the *Lady Nelson* the remainder of the bricks she had on board for the settlement. The ship was now empty and the crew spent the next week filling her water casks, cleaning the holds and generally preparing for the return journey to Sydney.

At this time, Bowen made a second boat trip on the River Derwent and was clearly impressed with the scenic beauty of the river valley and the possibilities it offered. Apparently he went as far as Mt Dromedary and also inspected the Prince of Wales Bay opposite Risdon Cove.

On the 23rd June, it is recorded: "The Lady Nelson crew being rather sickly obliges Lt. Curtoys to leave the Derwent much sooner than he first intended."

Four days later, Bowen reports to Governor King that his soldiers and prisoners are now living in "very comfortable huts" and that the settlers have been placed some distance further on. He mentioned that water during the voyage spoiled some of the flour and sugar and states that he is short of large-sized nails.

In turn King (7 October 1803) wrote to Secretary of State for the Colonies, Edward Nepean in London and said that Bowen “speaks in high terms of the beneficial settlement.

The Sydney Gazette (9th Oct 1803) reported. “Lt Bowen with the settlers and etc, were all landed and in good health. A week later it stated: “Arrival of the armed vessel the Lady Nelson from Van Diemen’s Land having left Lt Bowen and those under his command in perfect health and making every progress their numbers will allow.” (16th October 1803).

The settlement of Tasmania, the second settlement in Australia, had begun. On the 29th September, the *Lady Nelson* departed, leaving Bowen and his 48 settlers to their own resources. We can only surmise their feelings.

* This episode is mentioned in E. Duyker’s *“Citizen Labillardiere: a naturalist’s life in revolution and exploration “(1755-1834)* (Miegunyah Press, Melbourne 2003. P. 150).

THE YEAR 1803 PASSES INTO 1804.

King’s orders to Bowen were clear; the convicts were of course to work and King’s instructions were (repeat)...“convicts, being the servants of the Crown till the time for which their sentence expires, their labour is to be for the public and you are to take particular notice of their good behaviour, that proper notice may be taken of them thereafter.”

In his second report to King (27th Sept 1803) some progress had been made. He mentioned that his soldiers and prisoners were living in “very comfortable huts” and that the settlers have been placed further on. He was pleased that his stores had not been destroyed or tainted with water during the journey, but expressed concern about the lack of supply of large-sized nails. He also did a great deal of exploring, writing to King: “about six miles from Risdon Cove the banks on each side are very steep and high sometimes rocky but thickly wooded. Opposite Risdon Cove is a fine inlet and Deep Waters the largest I have seen in the Derwent and had but little noticed on the chart. The wood we have found consists of Blue Gum, Sheoak, Shringy Bark and Mahogany.”

He also mentioned that “The Storeman Clark has offered to put up a common stone store House in a month which offer I have accepted upon no other terms than a man to work for him the time he is employed about it.”

Interestingly, he has headed the letter, “Hobart, Van Diemen’s Land. 27th September”. It is the first time the name “Hobart” had been officially been referred to. He also included a sketch of the settlement drawn by him.

Two days later, the *Lady Nelson* departed, leaving Bowen and his 48 people alone. The Sydney Gazette (1) reported that King received Bowen’s dispatch. On the 7th October King reported: “I have this instant heard that Lt. Bowen has landed safe at Risdon Cove in the

River Derwent on Van Diemen's Land – He speaks in high terms of the beneficial Settlement.”

King, on October 13th 1803, in a letter containing orders of appointment, extended Bowen's commission over the whole island and not just over the Risdon settlement. This is interesting with the later arrival of Collins and then of Paterson, the island was administered separately between north known as Cornwall and south known as Buckingham. King also refers to the Risdon settlement, officially, as “Hobart”.

In the circumstances, there was considerable progress over the next two months (2). There were over 30 huts and farm buildings, a big stone store, several vegetable gardens, stockyards, blacksmith's forge and proposed streets. Coal was discovered in the Richmond area.

It may well be time to give a brief profile of James Meehan (1774-1826). This explorer, surveyor and settler, was born in Ireland and was transported for his part in the 1798 Irish rebellion. He arrived in Sydney on the *Friendship* 16th Feb 1800 and with his master (as he was assigned as a servant) Charles Grimes, he visited unoccupied King Island and Port Phillip. His surveying abilities were recognised and by the time he had joined Bowen, he had been conditionally pardoned. In 1806 he received an absolute pardon. His skills were required by Governor Macquarie in NSW, but he returned to Van Diemen's Land in 1812-13 for further surveying work. His career was from now on, distinguished. He laid out the NSW towns of Richmond, Castlereagh, Windsor, Pitt Town, Wilberforce, Liverpool and Bathurst, besides Hobart Town in Van Diemen's Land.

He resigned his position in 1821 because of ill health. A pension was granted to him. Governor Macquarie in a letter to Viscount Sidmouth wrote of Meehan, “His integrity has never to my knowledge, been impeached; and I certainly consider him to be, both on account of his professional skills, and the faithful and laborious discharge of his duty, a valuable man.”

Bowen was very busy. This adventurous, energetic young man made a number of expeditions up and down the Derwent River, even as far as exploring Adventure Bay, Bruny Island and the Huon Valley. However, all was not entirely well. The year 1803 proved to be a very dry Spring/Summer period and rain was scarce. The continual heat and survival problems began to take their toll. The relationship between Bowen and the next in command, Lieutenant William Moore, was not good. Indeed, as already stated Bowen referred to him as “a mutinous rascal” and sent for his pistols to shoot him. Obviously that did not happen. Moore, of course, was court martialled, but Moore was honourably acquitted. Indeed the Sydney Court stated that Bowen's accusations were “malicious, vexatious and groundless.”

There were serious additional problems for Bowen, namely with the convicts. Soon after their arrival, several prisoners escaped in Mountgarrett's boat which, because of landing difficulties, had been left nearby. They reached the unoccupied sealing islands in Bass Strait, finishing up near Cape Barren Island. One of the seven, James Lewis (alias Druce Duce) (4) was described in 1821 as a "wicked, lewd person of depraved and abandoned mind and disposition." He died in 1824 from wounds received from aborigines at Port Stephens.

In December a soldier helped convicts in robbing the stores. The settlement was entirely dependent on these stores, so it was a very serious offence. Bowen would have to take these matters to Sydney. Again, in January 1804, he wrote to King of a proposed robbery. "Having early detected some prisoners and one of the New South Wales Corps in a very ingenious plan they were carrying on by robbing the Public Store at Hobart which led to the discovery of several dangerous designs among the Prisoners. I have judged fit to leave the settlement under the Command of Lt Moore in order to have the benefits more efficiently inquired into as you shall think fit to bring the principal offenders to Justice. I have the honour to remain,

Your Most Obed.

Humble Servant

John Bowen.

In early 1804, a whaler, the *Ferret* was in the Derwent. It brought news of the war with France. The news increased Bowen's desire to fight the French, so he decided to go with the vessel on its return to Sydney. Indeed, he intended to resign his command to fight in the war.

There was another purpose for the trip to Sydney and that was to report the robbery and other "dangerous plans" among the prisoners.

The *Ferret* was not the first vessel to visit the fledging colony. The *Dart* arrived sometime in October 1803, certainly no later than November 1st, 1803. The *Endeavour* left Sydney 20th October 1803 to sail to Hobart, but had to return after two crewmen had been injured by lightning. It eventually arrived at Risdon Cove 10th November 1803.

In late November, Meehan made "astronomical observations".

So ended the year 1803. There was progress despite the major problems and personality clashes. In all, Bowen had achieved much.

1804

Bowen arrived in Sydney in late January 1804, still with the full intention of resigning. After hearing Bowen's report Governor King, the Governor was impressed by Bowen's patriotic

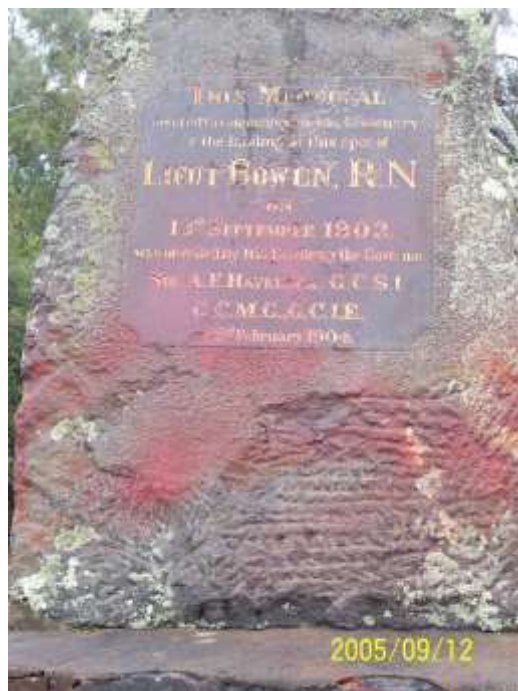
motivation, but advised that he return to Risdon Cove. King also told Bowen that Lt David Collins would be sailing to the island with the intention of setting up another settlement on the banks of the River Derwent.

One wonders what effect this news had on Bowen. It would later appear that he resented Collins's intrusion into his domain, but must have camouflaged his feelings well from King as he said he was "anxious" to tidy up his private affairs and begone - his "private affairs" - primarily with his lover, Martha Hayes.

Governor King said to Bowen that proper procedure would be to return to Risdon Cove and formally hand over the budding colony to Collins.



NSW Corp



Bowen Monument erected in 1904 at Risdon Cove after it had been vandalized by activists. Reg Watson photo.

I now delve into the life of Bowen's mistress, Martha Hayes, who played such an important part in the colony and in his life.



Full view of monument. Reg Watson photo

MARTHA HAYES QUINN

(1789-1871)

&

THE HAYES FAMILY

Martha Hayes, whose descendants still inhabit the Island State, was lady companion to Lt John Bowen RN. They settled we know at Risdon Cove. Martha had two children to Bowen. Whilst he was later to leave the colony, Martha stayed. Eventually she became a respected and a reasonably prosperous settler. Her daughter, Henrietta, was the first white child born in Tasmania.

By all accounts Martha was, indeed, a beauty. A visiting Irishman in late 1805, exiled rebel, Joseph Holt, described her as the "*prettiest violet that I saw growing at the Derwent*" and

that (after visiting Henry Hayes's farm which I believe was where Olgivie School now is) "*The daughter was a beautiful girl.*"

Little is known of Martha's life before her arrival at Risdon Cove in September 1803. She was born in 1789 (1), the only child of James Quinn and Mary Maria (nee De Knight), later to marry Henry Hayes. Martha was named after her auntie Martha De Knight (2). Mary and Henry Hayes were arrested in May 1801 for receiving stolen goods, such as a trunk containing jewels to the value of one thousand two hundred pounds. They were running a pub called *The Bell* at the time, and before that, owned some sort of second hand clothes-rag business. Martha's step-father, Henry, was acquitted while his wife Mary was found guilty and sentenced to 14 years transportation. Mary was believed to have been the dominant one of the two.

Mary was transported to Sydney on the H.M.S *Glatton* that had the responsibility of transporting female convicts to Sydney, which arrived in March 1803.

While it was undoubtedly a difficult voyage for her, because H.M.S. *Glatton* was a naval ship, conditions were better than on the ordinary convict transport ship in the matters of hygiene, general cleanliness, food and treatment. There was great concern by the authorities as to how to improve conditions for those aboard and "to prevent the infectious sickness which has on former occasions proved so fatal to them on their passage to that part of the world.

"I need not mention to your Lordship that the principal cause of those epidemical diseases which occasionally arise on board of ships is the frequent breathing of the same air and the stagnation of the breath and other effluvia of the living human body, which in time generate the poison of febrile infection, and that the preservation of health depends on the constant removal of such effluvia, and the perpetual renewal of fresh air.

"Various ingenious contrivances have been invented for effecting this end, such as ventilators upon different principles. Some of them are well adapted for the purpose; but it is a solid practical objection to them all that the operation of them depends on the constant attention of officers, many of whom, being either not impressed with a conviction of their utility, or their minds being occupied with those more urgent duties which belong to the management of a ship at sea, do not enforce the regular working of ventilators. Accordingly, none of the moveable mechanical contrivances for renewing and sweetening air have been found duly to fulfil their intention." (Dr Blanc to Lord Pelham 9th May 1803). The rest of the report deals further with ventilators and hospitals.

On board was the young Lt John Bowen RN.

It is not proven, but it is most likely that young Martha, whose age in September 1802 was but 13 years, accompanied her mother on the voyage. It was not an uncommon practice. Martha, of course, was free and could consort with others much more easily than her mother. It is most probable that Martha met Bowen aboard the vessel and struck up a very friendly relationship. After the ship's arrival in Sydney, Mary was assigned as a servant to Henry while Martha went to live with Bowen. Mary received a free pardon, in 1810, after having served nine years of her fourteen year sentence. Martha's step-father died in 1813.

Bowen was at least 22 years old at the time (1802) and it was not unusual for officers, indeed Governors, to have mistresses. They were quite open about their relationships, as testified by Lord Nelson in London with Lady Hamilton or even with Governor William Sorell with his relationship with Eliza Cox Kent, not to mention David Collins with Mrs Powers.

When Bowen sailed to Risdon Cove, Martha accompanied him, arriving September 1803. Bowen instructed that she be carried ashore, thus being the first white woman to set foot in Tasmania (3). She first lived with him in a tent, then a wooden hut. On one occasion when a party of aborigines approached the camp, she panicked and ran and sought the assistance and protection of Dr Mountgarrett. A convict, Joseph Parnell, who had been transported after the 1798, United Ireland rising, had been chosen as a servant to John and Martha and it is believed he became quite attached to the young lady.

John also began building a new house for them both, some half-a-mile up the valley. Called the "Governor's New House" it was in a commanding position overlooking their old hut and the Parade Ground. The foundation ruins are to be found today, but are located on private land (TALC owned) forgotten and neglected. This should have public access. The actual building had been burnt down many years ago.

Meanwhile, her step-father Henry (Bn 1766), being a free man, followed his wife Mary (Bn 1762) and journeyed to Port Phillip. There he met with Thomas Hayes and his wife Elizabeth nee Followes. Undoubtedly Thomas and Henry were brothers.

On the 29th March 1804 Martha gave birth to John's daughter Henrietta, probably named after her step-father, Henry. David Collins acted as her god-father, as he did with the second child Martha Charlotte.

Step-father Henry arrived at the same time as David Collins. Martha's lover, John Bowen, had returned to Sydney, but Governor King was angry with him for deserting the settlement and promptly ordered him to return. He did so, taking with him Thomas Hayes and his family which would have included naturally his wife, Elizabeth. Thomas as we have seen was Martha's uncle. The voyage was difficult, but they arrived in Hobart 10th March 1804. Thomas was given a grant of 100 acres at New Town creek, which he called "Project Farm".

Knopwood recorded in his diary 29th March, while visiting Bowen, "*Gov Bowen's young friend was confined to her bed.*"

This records the birth of Henrietta, so Martha must have been pregnant possibly as early as July 1803 before their arrival in VDL. Bowen arranged for her to be declared a settler, thus allowing Martha to receive a grant of land and government rations.

Martha now was a mother and before long had the company of both her parents, besides that of Thomas and Elizabeth Hayes and their two sons, who arrived on the vessel *Integrity* September 1804. Bowen, however, was to leave the colony for good and asked Knopwood to take a special interest in her welfare. Bowen sailed away on the *Ocean* leaving behind Martha and daughter Henrietta, who sadly was to die in June 1823 who died unmarried. The Hobart Town Gazette recorded: "DIED – On Saturday night of last, much beloved and respected, Miss Henrietta Bowen, daughter of John Bowen Esq., Captain in the Royal Navy. Her suffering she bore in piety and with resignation and departed this life sincerely lamented by all who had the pleasure of her acquaintance." (Sat. 21 June 1823). Knopwood was to write: "*Afterwards I see Henrietta Bowen; read prayers to her...thus died one of the finest girls on the earth.*" (Knopwood 14th June 1823). She is buried in St David's burial yard. The tombstone states, "Mrs Henrietta Bowen. Who departed this life on the 4th day of June 1823 aged 19 years. (Died 18th June buried 21 June) – also Mrs M. M. STOKER who departed this life Jany 12, 1843 aged(un-readable) Probably 82 years.

A second daughter (born 3rd April 1805) Martha Charlotte was born after her father had left. They never saw each other, even though both daughters took great pride in their descent from Bowen. Knopwood christened them in August 1805 on a wet winter's day.

In 1806 Martha senior was growing crops and the following year had two convict female servants to help her. She also had a number of stock. One time, Knopwood mentions, damage was done to Martha's corn when a neighbour's pig had got in it. (Knopwood 25th May).

Martha Charlotte married Dr Robert Garrett surgeon, in 1823. The Gazette recorded: "MARRIED. – By special licence, by the Rev. William Bedford, Colonial Chaplain, on Thursday morning last, at St David's Church, Robert Garrett, Esq., Assistant Surgeon on the Civil Establishment at this Settlement, to Miss M.C. Bowen, daughter of Captain John Bowen, of the Royal Navy." (Sat. 6th December 1823).

Garrett had arrived in VDL from India in 1822. Historians have asserted that Dr Garrett had a drinking problem and it is believed this was the cause of his early death. He had a couple of stints as surgeon at the penal establishment at Macquarie Harbour and he owned a farm at Pitt Water. He and his wife had five children, one dying in infancy.

Martha Charlotte's father, who sent some silver plate as a wedding gift and a fob watch (4), had not forgotten her. Her mother Martha received a 50 acre grant, which bordered the area in the Glenorchy Municipality, which is now known as Prince of Wales Bay at a place called *Swamp Lagoon*. Bowen saw to it that a hut was built for her here. It is strange, however, that while their father never forgot them, they are not mentioned in his Will.

Knopwood, true to his word, did keep an 'eye' on Martha and so did others. She soon received the attention of her neighbour, Andrew Whitehead and Knopwood married them 13th June 1811, Martha using the surname Hayes, but written in the register as Martha Hayes Quinn.

Andrew was a Scottish convict who had come out with David Collins when 18 years old. He had been convicted of embezzlement. He was appointed to take charge of the government farm at Cornelian Bay. He later purchased the 1000 acres. It is believed that their place of residence is where the Jewish cemetery now stands. It was not his first marriage; his first wife, Elizabeth died in 1809. The name is registered as "Martha Hayes Quinn". Andrew and Martha enjoyed a social life and their home became a central point of the small New Town community. Gov. Lachlan Macquarie from NSW visited their farm and stated of Whitehead that he was "a respectable farmer

Two years later, a daughter Mary, was born to them. Mary at the age of 38 years married farmer, Thomas Devine.

It is believed that the first racetrack in Tasmania was established at their farm in 1813. In that year they received more land at New Town and were accustomed to receive visits from Knopwood who enjoyed their company as well.

Whitehead, however, was involved in a scandal the following year, whilst smuggling liquor with Dennis McCarty. The liquor was smuggled from the vessel, *Argo* to Cornelian Bay, and toted to Whitehead's farm. Governor Davy, who followed David Collins, sentenced Whitehead to a few days "house arrest" as punishment - smuggling was not a serious crime in the new colony. Indeed Davey himself was involved.

Selling their New Town properties, they moved to "Herdman's Cove, at the mouth of the River Jordan, where besides farming they ran a hotel called the Herdsman's Cove House. The Bowen girls remained in Hobart Town with their grandmother, Mary Stoker, as Martha's mother had remarried to William Thomas.

As Knopwood became older, Martha took great pride in looking after his welfare. There was obviously a close connection between them. In 1813 Knopwood gave both Bowen girls a bible. Martha had two children to Andrew, Mary born 1813 and Andrew 1820. Her first two daughters retained the name Bowen. Sadly Andrew senior died in 1832, aged 64 years. He is buried in St David's graveyard.

There is an interesting newspaper report of 17th November 1816 (Hobart Town Gazette) where it states that Andrew Whitehead and family (so one resumes he was accompanied by Martha) while visiting “*Mr Thomas Hayes of Bagdad on the road to Port Dalrymple*” were attacked by “*one of those Banditti’s of ruffians, who have been too long a terror of the peaceable settler and traveler (sic)*”. The banditti turned out to be Michael Howe and his gang. No doubt Andrew and Martha stopped at Thomas’s house because he was her uncle. The bandits took “*Mr Whitehead’s watch (and later) returned Mr Whitehead his watch.*”

Thomas Hayes was probably the first settler at Bagdad after receiving a grant of grant of 640 acres from Lt Governor Colonel David Collins, to whom he was an adviser. I understand that the grant was where the Bagdad school now stands and the Anglican church of St Michael and All Angels. It is noted that on his return from Launceston Knopwood breakfasted there. Thomas once lived in New Town, next door to the Maypole Hotel. The property was known as *Prospect Farm* and in 1812 was owned by Alfred Luttrell.

The newspaper states also that Mr Whitehead was accompanied by “*Mr William Thomas Stoker and his wife*”. William Stoker married Mary (as her husband died in 1813) on the 27th June 1816 the ceremony performed by the Rev. Bobby Knopwood at the Derwent Hotel Hobart Town, owned by Mary. The hotel was next to the GPO which I have actually visited as a friend of the late Dr George Howatt who lived there. It would appear then “*his wife*” was Mary Hayes, Martha’s mother. The gathering at Bagdad at Thomas’s Hayes home was very much a family affair; with Thomas, Elizabeth (8), Andrew Whitehead, Martha and their baby and William Stocker and Mary nee Hayes. They were joined by John Wade, the district (Buckinghamshire) sheriff who was on his way to check his stock.

Late historian, G. Hawley Stancombe (6) states that “*Maria (Ed - meaning Mary) married W.T. Stoker after a tedious courtship of two years. He (Stoker) was a member of the night watch when Hobart Town was only a camp and later the official messenger to Launceston. Hyron’s coach on the Launceston run used to set out from here during the forties.*” (Ed – meaning the 1840s and the Derwent Hotel. Unfortunately Mr Stancombe, who incidentally wrote the foreword to my first book, (7) lists no sources. The book’s title, “*Churches of Van Diemen’s Land*” – a history.

No doubt Martha had retained some of her early beauty, because in January 1836 she married again when she was 47 years old. Her new husband was Bernard Williamson, a Police Clerk at Brighton, who was but twenty years of age. Toy- boys aren’t new! Even so, she outlived her husband when he died in early 1871. Martha then lived at the farm her son-in-law’s and daughter Mary, “*Lea Farm*”, at Browns River, in the Kingborough Municipality. Her daughter, Martha, had married Thomas Devine. Mother Martha did not, however, outlive Bernard for long. On May 15th 1871 she too died at the “*Lea Farm*” and is probably buried at St David’s Park, Hobart. The Mercury newspaper reported that she was the last of the first settlers.

Judging by an article which appeared in *The Advocate* (Burnie) 13th Feb 1954 (P.12) "Lea Farm" was situated at Bonnett Hill. The article quotes a Mrs Winifred Terry of Hobart, who spoke of her great grandmother, Martha. Mrs Terry is reported to have said, "*my mother was with her grandmother when she died at her daughter's home at Bonnett Hill, Browns River*" and adds that John Bowen's men had carried her to shore (article written by W.A.T. Hoyes). Lea Farm, however, is closer to the Hobart side. It was once a large establishment, but the original house burnt down many years ago. It encompasses what is now The Lea's campsite run by the Scout movement.

The question must be asked why did not John Bowen marry Martha Hayes? Most probably it was because of the social differences between them. John was from a very distinguished family. Martha was illegitimate and her mother was a convict. I suggest this was a serious consideration for John. Martha did arrive at Risdon Cove with child, even so, there appears to be no intention of marrying her. He may have also had a serious desire to leave the budding colony as soon as he could to further his naval career, which he eventually did. He probably considered that a family would have been a burden to this ambition.

Martha had several distinctions in her life. She was the documented first white woman to set foot in Tasmania (VDL) (5). Her daughter is believed to be the first white child to be born on land here, taking into consideration that Catherine Potaski, was born on board the "Ocean" 17th February 1804. Martha was the last of the first settlers to die. Her life also shows that women in early Van Diemens Land society could make well of themselves. Her daughter Martha Charlotte died in 1891 with *The Mercury* newspaper noting, "daughter of the late Captain Bowen R.N."

(1) Most reports state 1786, but she was born 20th August 1789 and Christened some years later 24th May 1802 days after her mother was sentenced to be transported at St James on the 24th May 1802. Also when she appeared in court in the trial of Henry, the judge asked how old she was and Martha answered 10 or 11, to which the judge remarked "*you (Henry) are training her up early*" (source: Old Bailey transcripts online).

(2) Martha De Knight married Tobias Quinn. Martha died in 1795 at the age of 35.

(3) Other works state that the French woman who was disguised as a man, Girandin, and came on the D'Entrecasteaux voyage in 1792 was the first. There is, however, no documentation to state that she stepped ashore.

(4) These items were sold off in auction some years ago.

(5) It is understood she was carried ashore, which is probably what happened.



Left: John Hayes's tombstone, Cornelian Bay. Born 23rd July 1805 and died 5th March 1884.(8)

Right: John Hayes.

(6) Stancombe's book, "Highway in Van Diemen's Land" (P66)

(7) My book, "Churches of Van Diemen's Land" – 1975.

(8). They had three sons: William (1803); John (5th August 1805-5 March 1884) and William. John was the first white boy to be born in VDL (Tasmania) to free settlers. On his tombstone it reads: "*He being the first Tasmanian child of European descent*". Also buried in the grave John's wife Emma Hayes and her first husband, Thomas Sharpe. Sharpe died, having become insolvent, 31st December 1865 at Thomas's Hayes's property at Bagdad. The property was being rented to Thomas Sharpe and Emma with John Hayes their landlord Emma then married John (her second husband) in 1866. It is interesting that the two husbands are buried in the same grave with her and that Thomas Sharpe, who died in 1865, is buried at Cornelian Bay, which never became a cemetery until 1872. John Hayes took over his property "Malbrook" Bagdad.

John's great grandson, John Blyth Hayes, was once Premier of Tasmania (12 August 1922-14 August 1923) and later Senator for twenty four years. He was born at Bridgewater and later lived in Scottsdale and entered politics in January 1913. Hayes led Tasmania's first coalition government. Tasmania was in dire financial straits and demands for his resignation began in mid-1923. Hayes resigned and moved to the Senate in September 1923 as a senator for the Nationalist Party and then as a United Australia senator. He went on to become President of the Senate and retired from politics in 1947 and died in Launceston 12th July 1956. He had married Laura Blyth. They had no children.

His brother, W.A. T. Hayes lived and taught in the Bagdad valley and his sister, Mrs Ernest Eddington lived in the area as well.



John Blyth Hayes

Appreciation goes to Susan Adams, whose husband is a descendant of Mary, for her valuable research and also to Scott Seymour, local historian.

A greater detail of the settlement can be read in Reg. A. Watson's book, "JOHN BOWEN AND THE FOUNDING OF TASMANIA" and his "TASMANIA! A SAGA OF A PIONEERING FAMILY" Vol 1.

POST SCRIPT: *The following is from the Tasmanian Mail. (February 29th 1912 P.23). It is worth repeating in full:*

RESTDOWN OR RISDON?

"A contributor to the press" some time since, in referring to the nomenclature of Tasmania, mentioned that Lieutenant John Hayes in 1797 gave it that name and also named various other places, along the banks, including Risdon. The writer went on to say that it was a mistake to suppose that the place was originally called Restdown. In this the writer is quite correct and being in a position to show how this impression arose, I will, with your permission, supply the particulars for public information:-

'When Governor Collins landed at Risdon in 1804 at the settlement which had just been commenced by Lieutenant Bowen, he requested a young girl, Miss Mary Hayes, to precede him ashore and upon landing remarked, "Let us call this place Restdown." Singular

but Miss was a descendant of Commodore Sir John Hayes and she was the first white female to tread upon Tasmanian land.'

I obtained this information first of all from the late John Hayes of Marlbrook, Bagdad, who was the first European male in this island, he being born in 1805, a few months after the landing of Collins and he got the particulars from his father, Mr Thos Hayes, who was aboard the vessel with Governor Collins and was one of the twelve pioneer settlers and the son of the navigator above mentioned.

In confirmation of the above statement, I would add that the above Miss Hayes married and had numerous descendants and towards the close of her life was a frequent visitor of Mr Hayes at Bagdad whose aunt she was. One evening while she was discussing some of the incidents of the early settlement, she narrated the circumstance of Governor calling the place Restdown as she stepped shore with him. This lady was then over 70 years of age and the writer a small boy, though now nearly in the seventies. The above is a truthful account as to how the impression was got that Risdon had ever been called Restdown. Probably Governor Collins, after his bitter experience at Port Phillip, was glad to find a place where he could rest down and made the remark feelingly though without any intention of changing the name of Risdon”.

END.

There are a couple of problems with the above report though well intended. Miss Hayes was not with Collins, but with Bowen and her name was Martha, not Mary. Mary was her mother. It is doubtful that they were related to explorer John Hayes and as we have seen, Martha was actually a ‘Quinn’ and not a Hayes, so there would be no blood connection. Regarding the story regarding Restdown and its naming there could be some truth, however, it is interesting how things can get mixed up and taken as truth so soon after the actual event. The “Mr

Hayes of Bagdad” would have been Thomas Hayes whose property was known as Marlbrook. – Reg Watson.

COLONEL WILLIAM PATERSON

(1755-1810)

By

Reg. A. Watson

©



SOLDIER, EXPLORER AND LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

William Paterson, born 17th August 1755, coincidentally died in the same year as his southern Tasmanian counterpart, David Collins, in 1810. Paterson was a military officer who had arrived in Sydney in 1771. He had a distinguished career. A Scotsman, born at Montrose, he was greatly interested in scientific study, especially botany. He was a friend to Sir Joseph Banks. In 1777 he visited South Africa and wrote a book about his expedition. In 1781 he enlisted in the 98th Regiment and served in India, returning to England in 1785 and transferring to the 73rd.

In 1787 he married Elizabeth Driver who outlived her husband, marrying again to Francis Grose and died in Liverpool, England in 1839.

Two years later he was gazetted as Captain perhaps because of the influence of Joseph Banks of the New South Wales Corps. Arriving in Sydney in 1791 he served some time at Norfolk Island where he corresponded with Joseph Banks regarding the island's fauna and flora as he had done while in India. Back in Sydney, now major, he was second-in-command of the New South Wales Corps and endeavoured to find a route through the Blue Mountains but failed. He administered the colony as Lieutenant Governor in 1794-5 after the departure of Lt-Governor Francis Grose, until the arrival of Governor Hunter in September. Paterson's administration satisfied Hunter and London, although it is quite apparent he allowed the military personnel to strengthen their hold on the colony. This would prove to be a problem later on.

In June-July 1801 Governor Philip Gidley King sent him to explore the Hunter River. It was Paterson who challenged John MacArthur to a duel during which MacArthur, much to the consternation of Governor King, nearly killed him. Paterson had accused MacArthur of disclosing material from a letter from Mrs Paterson to Mrs MacArthur. King sent MacArthur to London for a court martial, but nothing came of the affair with MacArthur returning to earn a 5,000 acre grant.

NORTHERN TASMANIA TO BE SETTLED.

The main reason for the haste to settle the northern part of Tasmania was the French fear. Paterson, accompanied by his wife Elizabeth, set sail in 1804 with 57 soldiers and convicts in the *Integrity* and the *Contest*. Bad winds, however, forced them back to Port Jackson. Paterson wrote to the Under-Secretary Sullivan about his immediate future. "I am preparing to make a second attempt for Port Dalrymple I hope it will be what Government has been led to believe it is; but if the entrance into it is so dangerous as is reported by the different surveys, I fear we will never be visited by ships of burthen. However, when I get there it will be my constant employment and study to ascertain every advantage and disadvantage it has for a settlement likely to prosper, which I shall communicate to you without reserve for the information of Government." (14th August 1804)

A.W. H Humphrey (Adolarius William Henry) who was with David Collins at Port Phillip was sent to Port Dalrymple to see if the northern part of the island was suitable for settlement. Humphrey found fresh water a problem although he found a source which he called Supply River. Whilst there he carved his initials into the dolerite rock. He then left the site, sailed back to Port Phillip returning to southern Tasmania with David Collins.



Initials A.H. carved into a rock at Supply River, West Tamar 1804. A.H. stands for A.W.H. Humphrey who rowed the river looking for fresh water. (Nigel Burch photo)

A second attempt was made, late October, this time with a total of 181 persons. Four vessels were used, *Buffalo*, *Lady Nelson*, *Francis*, and *Integrity*. The River Tamar was successfully reached, but on the 4th November 1804 the *Buffalo* went aground in Outer Cove, later to be named George Town on the eastern side of the Tamar. Paterson made the decision to unload the vessel and set up camp at Outer Cove, while he undertook a more detailed inspection of the River Tamar.



Paterson memorial, George Town, West Tamar, Reg Watson photo.

Paterson penetrated as far as the later site of Launceston, which was more fertile, but he made the decision to settle at the head of West Arm and founded York Town (George Town), while still maintaining the small settlement at Outer Cove and also at Low Head and Green Island. Why Paterson decided on such procedures has always baffled historians. Most probably they were based on strategic concerns. Even so, it soon became painfully obvious to him, that neither settlement, Outer Cove nor York Town were suitable. As a consequence in March 1806 he made his move to the present site of Launceston.

Paterson was unsure of his status, with Lt-Governor David Collins in the south. It was questioned who was in over-all charge of Van Diemen's Land, which in turn was under the command of Port Jackson. Governor King made a decision. Paterson was to be in charge of the northern settlement, while Collins was in charge of the southern settlement below latitude 42 degrees.

The northern colony struggled, although Paterson took great interest in the fauna and flora about him, including the digestive system of the Tasmanian Wolf. In early 1807 a decision was made in Sydney to officially name the new settlement at Launceston, calling it firstly Patersonia or Paterson's Village. Launceston won out.

In early February 1808 Major George Johnson reported to Paterson the arrest of Governor Bligh. Major Johnson was one of the leaders of the rebellion in Sydney. He was later 'cashiered' after a court-martial in England in 1811. Paterson was obviously in no hurry to return to Sydney and support Johnson, for he did not arrive in that city until January 1809, nearly one year after he was informed.

Paterson (to become known as Colonel Pat) did his best when at Launceston. He devoted himself personally to providing the little community with as much food as possible in attempt to stave off famine with grain, salt meat and the planting of crops. The main staple diet was wallaby and kangaroo. He asked Sydney and London to send free skilled settlers and administered the colony with little interference from Governor Macquarie in Parramatta.

Paterson had his complaints. He had few military under his command to ward off troublesome natives and to oversee the convicts. Neither did he have no means of holding a Criminal Court, there being no Judge-Advocate.

Once back in Sydney Paterson took over the administration from Joseph Foveaux who had been acting as Lieutenant Governor. Paterson acted with firmness and insisted that both Bligh and Johnson return to England, confining Bligh to barracks until he agreed to go. Unfortunately Paterson was not enjoying good health and spent much of his time confined in Government House at Parramatta. When Governor Macquarie arrived he retired. He embarked with his corps in the *Dromedary*, but he died on board when it was

off Cape Horn 21st June 1810. Paterson's widow had stayed at Sydney and after his death and was granted 810 hectares of land in Van Diemen's Land.



Government House, Parramatta

By the time of Paterson's venture to the River Tamar in 1804 there were to be three settlements in Tasmania with three commanders; Risdon Cove under Lt John Bowen RN , Sullivan's Cove under Lt- David Collins, and of course Outer Cove under Paterson. It was a strange situation and it was Governor Macquarie (see separate section) who placed the whole island under the command of one commander who administered from Hobart Town.

THE AUTHOR



Reg is a descendant of JOHN WADE who came with David Collins in 1804

