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# ST. GEORGE HISTORICAL SOCIETY BULLETIN

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24 Duff Street,  
ARNCLIFFE. 2205.

February 1983.

Dear Friend and Member,

The February Meeting will be held as follows:-

- Date: Friday Evening, February 18th, 1983, at 8.00 p.m.
- Place: Council Chamber, Town Hall, Princes Highway, Rockdale.
- Business: General.
- Syllabus Item: Lieutenant Commander Roger F. Moag, MBE., RAN., Retired,  
together with Mr. Noel Thorpe (both Members of the Society),  
will present "The Sans Souci Tramway", with Visual and Audio  
Aids. This should be an enjoyable evening.
- Supper Roster. Mrs. Robb, Captain, and helpers - Mrs. Larnach and Mrs. Meyers.  
Ladies please bring a plate.

Mr. R. Lee,  
President.  
Phone 570 1244

Mrs. B. Perkins,  
Publicity Officer.  
Phone 587 9164

Mrs. E. Eardley,  
Sec. & Bulletin Ed.  
Phone 59 8078

Mrs. E. Wright,  
Treasurer.  
Phone 599 4884

Miss D. Row,  
Social Secretary.  
Phone 50 9300

Mr. A. Ellis,  
Research Officer,  
Phone 587 1159

"Today well lived makes every yesterday a dream of happiness,  
and every tomorrow a vision of hope."

..... The Friendship Book  
1983.

Many of our Members have been and still are ill. We are sorry to hear this and hope they will be well again soon.

Our deepest sympathy to the President, Mr. R. Lee, and Mrs. Lee, in the sad loss of his mother. It is also sad to note the deaths of Mrs. Timbs and Mrs. Parker, well known and respected members. Our condolences to their families.

#### SPECIAL NOTICE.

The St. George Historical Society is pleased to announce that the following books, written and illustrated by the late Gifford H. Eardley for the Society, have been reprinted and are now available. No.8 Book was compiled by Mrs. Bronwyn Perkins.

- No. 1. "The Wollie Creek Valley"
- No. 2. "Kogarah to Sans Souci Tramway"
- No. 3. "Saywells Tramway - Rockdale to Lady Robinson's Beach"
- No. 4. "Arncliffe to Bexley Tramway"
- No. 5. "Our Heritage in Stone"
- No. 6. "All Stations to Como"
- No. 7. "Tempe and the Black Creek Valley"
- No. 8. "Early Churches of the St. George District"
- No. 9. "Early Settlers of the St. George District" - will be available at an early date.

For your copy of the above books, please contact one of the following:-

Mrs. E. Wright - Phone 599 4884, Miss B. Otton - Phone 59 4259 (after 8 p.m.)  
Mrs. E. Eardley - Sec., Phone 59 8078, Mr. A. Ellis - Phone 587 1159.

Book No. 9 - "Early Settlers of the St. George District" - is now ready for printing. We would like to thank those members who have contributed. Your efforts are greatly appreciated.

RENEWAL OF ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION FOR THE YEAR 1982-1983 was due in July 1982. If you have overlooked renewal of membership, and are desirous of receiving your Monthly Bulletin, we would be pleased to hear from you at an early date.

Eileen Eardley,  
Hon. Secretary.

#### HERITAGE WEEK - APRIL 10TH - 17TH, 1983.

APRIL 13TH. Afternoon Coach Tour - St. George Area - Historical Buildings, Churches, Sites, Etc. Guide - Mr. Arthur Ellis.

Full details as they come to hand. See Miss D. Row.

APRIL 15TH. Monthly Meeting of St. George Historical Society.

APRIL 16TH.) LYDHAM HALL will be open for inspection from 10.30 a.m. - 4.30 p.m.  
APRIL 17TH.) (Saturday & Sunday).

BOOK NO. 9. "EARLY SETTLERS OF THE ST. GEORGE DISTRICT" will be available for purchase to coincide with "Heritage Week".

VISITORS ARE ALWAYS WELCOME AT OUR MEETINGS.

THE BANKS PAPERS IN THE MITCHELL LIBRARY.

- Mrs Betty Goodger  
Field Librarian  
State Library of N.S.W.

Talk delivered to the members of the  
St. George Historical Society 17th September 1982.

I work among the manuscripts of the Mitchell Library, and among those treasures is a wonderful collection of the papers of Sir Joseph Banks, not by any means a complete collection, but one of great significance.

I thought it might interest you to-night to hear the story of how we come to have some of Banks' papers in Australia, so many thousands of miles from his home in Soho Square, London.

Sir Joseph Banks was born in 1743 and died in 1820, aged 77 years and 3 months. Of those 77 years, almost 3 years were spent with Captain Cook, on the Endeavour, in the South Seas. Of those 3 years, from August 1768 to July 1771 only about 3 months were spent on the east coast of New South Wales. The coast was sighted at Point Hicks on 19th April 1770 and last seen from Possession Island, off Cape York on 21st August. Only 8 days were spent in Botany Bay, from 28th April to 5th May 1770, but longer when the Endeavour was beached for repairs after being holed on the coral of the Barrier Reef, from 17th June to 3rd August, 51 days. Yet from this short stay, Banks gained an interest in New South Wales which never flagged for the rest of his long life.

The journal that Banks kept on that voyage is therefore a document of prime importance, for, with Cook's observations, it contains the first comments by Europeans on our eastern coast.

Fortunately, it is one of the treasures of the Mitchell Library, safely held as part of our heritage.

To-day, you can read it quite easily, without having to interpret Banks' handwriting or his lack of punctuation, for the Library published the Endeavour Journal in 1962 as part of New South Wales' memorial to Sir Joseph Banks. It was edited by Dr. J.C. Beaglehole, the great New Zealand scholar, and is the first time the complete journal has been available.

The Journal was published in 1896, but was so severely cut and "edited" by Sir Joseph Hooker, that it did not present an accurate account at all.

The interesting point about Hooker's version is that he could not work from Banks' original journal but used the transcripts held in the British Museum made by his own aunts, about 1834, when his grandfather, Dawson Turner, was considering writing a life of Banks. He remembered helping them check their work against the original, as a child. Just before the work was published, he was able to add a footnote that he had found that the original journal had been sold to a "gentleman in Sydney". That "gentleman" was Alfred Lee, a rival of David Scott Mitchell in collecting Australiana.

Lee (1858-1923) was a successful businessman, who, arriving in Sydney in 1874, followed a very progressive line in his financial company. He claimed his firm was the first in Sydney to use a typewriter, a telephone and a motor car. Francis Edwards, the famous bookseller of London, told Lee in 1894 that Henniker Heaton had the Banks journal.

The name of John Henniker Heaton will be well known to you as the compiler of Heaton's Australian Dictionary of Dates, in 1879. After a successful career as a journalist and an advocate of postal reform - he had returned to England for his "retirement" in 1884. He entered the British House of Commons, where his interest in Australia earned him the title of "The Member for Australia".

Heaton also collected Australiana, but just how he got hold of the Endeavour Journal is not known. Lord Brabourne (of whom we will hear more), died in 1893 so whether he bought it from him or an intermediary is not known. However, he did sell it to Alfred Lee, and so the Journal came to Australia. Naturally David Scott Mitchell wanted the Journal for his collection.

Lee had, besides the Journal, about 10,000 items, including some letters from Governor Phillip to Banks. This is what his biographer in the Australian Directory of Biography says:

"His wish to see them safely housed in the Mitchell Library, which was then about to be constructed, induced him in 1906 to dispose of them to David Scott Mitchell."

But I have read a different version. Mitchell tried to buy the Journal many times, without success. Finally, Lee said he would rather part with his entire collection than the Journal, whereupon, Mitchell offered 7000 pounds for his entire collection - a princely sum in those days.

Whichever is the correct version the purchase of Lee's collection was one of the last made by Mitchell before his death in 1907, and he did get Banks' Journal into his wonderful collection and thus it rests safely in the Mitchell Library.

Banks did not accompany Captain Cook on his second voyage, 1772-1775, but did do some more voyaging including an expedition to Iceland. But he stayed in England, leading a full and productive life - President of the Royal Society for 40 years, Director of the Royal Gardens at Kew for George III, with an active interest in sending out plant collectors to every quarter of the globe, managing his own estates, and throughout his life, without entering politics or holding any official position, acting as the unofficial expert on all matters pertaining to New South Wales.

His papers show that the Government consulted him on any matter connected with the Colony. His patronage was responsible for many appointments. The first four Governors, Phillip - Hunter - King and Bligh - reported to him regularly. In fact he and Bligh had a friendship that spanned forty years. Matthew Flinders owed his appointment to the Investigator to Banks. Allan Cunningham, George Caley, George Suttor came to the Colony as plant collectors for Banks.

A man involved in so many varied activities, must have accumulated a vast amount of records. From contemporary statements, Banks' records were kept in a most systematic way. His estate papers were kept so that a document could be produced quickly whether the subject was about a tenant, or a property or a subject such as draining the fens. Sounds as if he had a good librarian in charge! But where are his papers now? Scattered all over the world! How did the scattering of Banks' papers happen?

Perhaps one reason was the codicils that Banks added to his will in the last few months of his life in 1820. In seeking to provide for his librarian, Robert Brown, he left him the use of his library and manuscripts during his lifetime and then bequeathed them to the British Museum of which Banks was a trustee. This provision, bequeathing the papers "usually kept in the back buildings of my house in Soho Square" to the British Museum, seems to have been forgotten by all concerned, especially the British Museum.

The second codicil, 7 March 1820, sought to provide for his artist, Francis Bauer, and in addition appointed his nephew Sir Edward Knatchbull, as executor of his papers. He was directed to look over the papers, burn personal ones and distribute them to various places. He was not a good executor, and probably did nothing except pass over some bound volumes of foreign correspondence to the British Museum. But thank goodness he did not burn the papers.

Perhaps another reason for the final scattering was the desire of Banks' descendants for a life of Banks to be written. From 1820 to 1880 - a period of 60 years - the Banks papers were lent to 5 different people, none of whom completed the task of writing a biography:

- Robert Brown (Librarian) 1820-1830
- Dawson Turner (Botanist) 1775-1858
- Thomas Bell (President of the Linnean Society) c.1861
- In British Museum 1861 - 1876
- Daydon Jackson (British Museum nominee) 1867
- Edward Stanhope c. 1880.

The papers were placed in the British Museum c 1861 at Lady Knatchbull's request, but the British Museum does not seem to have considered itself the owner, for the Museum asked permission from Lord Brabourne to lend then to Edward Stanhope in 1880. He decided not to write the biography of Banks, but returned the papers to Lord Brabourne, not to the British Museum.

I will digress here, to explain how Lord Brabourne enters our story.

Sir Joseph Banks had married Dorothea Hugesson (1758 - 1828) in 1779, but they had no children. His sister, Sarah Sophia, a character in her ownright, predeceased him. So he had no direct heir. Dorothea's sister, Mary Hugesson married Sir Edward Knatchbull in 1790. Their son, also Sir Edward Knatchbull, d.1849, the one whom Banks named as his literary executor, married twice. The eldest son of his second marriage was also Edward, and on his father's death in 1849, he and his brothers and sisters took an extra surname, adding their grandmother's maiden name to theirs, and becoming Knatchbullhugesson. It was his mother, Lady Knatchbull, who placed the Banks Papers in the British Museum in 1861.

Edward Knatchbull-Hugesson, 1829 - 1893, was a politician, and was created Baron Brabourne of Brabourne, Kent, in 1880. His mother died in 1882, aged 90, and Lord Brabourne seems to have considered himself the owner of the Banks Papers.



In February 1884, Lord Brabourne offered to sell the papers to the British Museum, but negotiations broke down when they refused to pay 250.0.0 pounds for them!

Fortunately for New South Wales, the Agent General for N.S.W. in London, was Sir Saul Samuel (1820-1900). Somehow he and James Bonwick (you will know his transcripts from British Archives which formed the basis of the Historical Records of New South Wales) learnt of the collection, and examined it. Sir Saul wrote later of the exciting moment when he and Bonwick found the 20 page letter from Bligh to Banks, written from Timor, 14 June 1789, giving an account of the mutiny on the Bounty and his voyage in the open boat, with a map showing both his and Cook's route, ending with the words: "I have not given so full an account to the Admiralty - you will please therefore attend to it in that particular". He said this decided it. Those papers had to come to New South Wales!

And that is how, in 1884, for the sum of 375.0.0 pounds we got the collection of Banks Papers, often known as the Brabourne Papers.

What a wealth of riches they contained. In the 15 volumes are letters covering 30 years of Banks' connection with the Colony - letters from Cook, letters to Phillip, correspondence with Surgeon White, Governors King and Hunter, George Cayley, George Suttor, Matthew Flinders, Captains Kent and Waterhouse, the Rev. Samuel Marsden, William Balmain, Lt. Grant, Ensign Barrallier, Capt. Tucker and a great deal with Bligh.

This was the first time those documents had been available, and many were printed in the Historical Records of N.S.W. shedding new light on many different aspects of our early history.

When Sir Saul Samuel bought the Brabourne Papers, it was on the understanding that if any more were found about Australia, they were to come to New South Wales without further payment. So when Sir Saul found that more Banks Papers were to be offered at auction by Sotheby's in 1886, he protested to Lord Brabourne and to Sotheby's, but without result.

So that is how E.A. Petherick obtained some Banks Papers, which are now, happily for Australia, in the National Library at Canberra, and not in the Alexander Turnbull Library in Wellington, N.Z., where other lots from the auction, eventually found their way, or in San Francisco where those of another purchaser, Mr. Sutro, finally became the nucleus of the Sutro Library of California.

However, Lord Brabourne did not offer all the papers at the auctions held in 1886, for in 1928, further papers were offered by his descendant, Lord Brabourne (4th Baron). The Mitchell Library was able to obtain the significant Australian material at this sale.

Banks material still appears at auctions and the Mitchell Library watches for any of interest to us.

Indeed, in 1946, the Mitchell Library purchased some Banks papers consisting of about 105 letters and drafts of letters. Among them was a page obviously part of a draft of a letter. It could not be dated so, as is our custom, was placed at the end of all the dated letters. There it stayed until 1961, when an alert scholar, proved that the page is a continuation of a letter dated September 1803 of which the original is in the British Museum.

The letter was printed in the Historical Records of N.S.W. Vol.5pp.224-225. It is interesting in many ways.

As Banks wrote to William Augustus Fawkener, an official of the Office of Trade, in answer to his "wish to know my sentiments", regarding two memorials from woollen manufacturers and a statement from John Macarthur it is yet another evidence of Banks' unofficial position as advisor on colonial matters.

In his answer, Banks said that he thought "Macarthur was too sanguine in his expectations" and that he did "not recommend any special encouragement ... to perfect what as yet is a mere theoretical speculation."

This letter was interpreted to show that Banks was hostile to Macarthur. In fact F.M.Bladen, Editor of the Historical Records of N.S.W. added a footnote stating: "Notwithstanding this adverse opinion of Sir Joseph Banks, the Government finally decided to encourage Macarthur by giving him a grant of land", the 5000 acres in the Cowpastures, and Mackaness in his book Sir Joseph Banks: His Relations with Australia, speaks of Banks' "depreciatory tones of the wool industry in New South Wales".

However, the photostat that the Mitchell Library now has of that part of the letter in the British Museum shows that it, too, is a draft, much altered and crossed out, and that "speculation" is not, in fact, the last word of the letter. The extra page in the Mitchell Library, continues and goes on to recommend waiting until a supply of wool



has arrived so that **its** quality and cost of freight is known, and meanwhile seeking further information.

This entirely alters the tenor of the letter. It is no longer damning, but eminently practical. Historial judgement must be altered in the light of new evidence.

So my story illustrates the importance of a historian working from original documents - and not accepting secondary sources, if he wants accuracy.

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## THE GOVERNOR BOWS OUT.

- Joseph Glascott  
Herald Environment Writer  
The Sydney Morning Herald  
31st October 1981.

Purchasers of Crown land in future will not receive a title deed signed by the Governor. A tradition which began with Governor Phillip has ended with a huge move by the Lands Department to simplify land transfers.

An era of N.S.W. history ended last week with the issue of the last Crown grant land title. Crown grants have been a tradition in N.S.W. for 189 years, since the first free grant of land was made by Governor Phillip in 1792.

It is generally acknowledged that the first grant was given to James Ruse. This was 30 acres of land known as Experiment Farm at Parramatta. Since then State Governors have signed many thousands of Crown grant titles.

In the early years of the colony, Governors granted land to leading citizens in return for their services to the settlement. Nowadays Crown land is given free only to charitable institutions by Acts of Parliament. The bulk of Crown grants are purchases, as in Crown land building-lot subdivisions, or leases for grazing in areas such as the Western Lands Division.

The history of Crown Land grants illustrates the pattern of settlement in N.S.W. But in the interests of simplifying conveyancing and bringing all land in the State under one title system, the issue of Crown grant titles has ended. In future all purchasers, lessees or recipients of Crown land will be issued with title under the Torrens system.

The Real Property (Crown Land Titles) Amendment Act, 1980, proclaimed on October 1 last year, permits the Registrar-General to bring Crown land under the provisions of the Real Property Act without the issue of a Crown grant. The legislation is a further step in converting all land in N.S.W. to the Torrens system. A spokesman for the Lands Department said the change would make possible real economies in searching Crown holdings and preparing land deals. It would also give people with registered interests the added security of the Torrens system.

The legislation would facilitate the mass production of certificates of title for lots in Crown subdivisions, much as is done with freehold subdivisions after registration of the subdivision plan.

Transfer of Crown subdivision lots under the Real Property Act

would be much faster and more economical than was possible with the old method of preparing individual Crown grants.

It was an historic occasion, therefore, when the N.S.W. Registrar-General, Mr Bruce Davies, handed over the last Crown grant title to trustees of St. Vincent's Hospital last week.

The land in Barcom Avenue, Darlinghurst - in this case a free grant under the Charitable Institution legislation - is already occupied by hospital buildings. Trustees of the hospital, Sister Marion Corless, Superior-General of St. Vincent's Convent, Potts Point, Sister Marie Haren, administrator of St. Vincent's Hospital, Dr M P Cleary, general superintendent and Sir Tristan Antico, chairman of the Board of Directors, received the Crown grant title in a ceremony attended by the Minister for Lands, Mr Gordon.

An exhibition of early Crown grant title documents was arranged in the Registrar-General's office for the ceremony. A copy of the title granting the Experiment Farm land to James Ruse was borrowed from the archives of the Mitchell Library.

Another Crown grant title exhibited was that for the 100 acres granted John Palmer at Woolloomooloo and Darlinghurst in 1793, by the Lt.Governor, Francis Grose.

Mr Davies said the abolition of Crown grant titles was the end of an era for N.S.W. "The days of parchment titles, sheepskin titles and large wax seals ended long ago," he said, "Now we are moving towards computer-recorded titles." In about 18 months all land titles in N.S.W. would be recorded on computers, he said. Registration of land transfers, which now took about 10 days, could be done overnight. The landowner would receive a computer printout of the title. All department records would be stored in the computer, the first fully automated land title system in the world.

Mr Gordon said the Land Department was diverting available resources to converting all freehold land in the State from Old System to Torrens title as soon as possible. Since 1967, 50,000 qualified certificates of Torrens title had been issued. The certificates were prepared by the Registrar-General, on his own initiative and without charge, on lodgment of a conveyance or mortgage of Old System land whose boundaries were satisfactorily defined on plans filed in the Registrar-General's office.

The issue of a qualified Torrens title to a land owner superseded the owner's Old System title deeds. The only difference between a qualified title and an ordinary Torrens title was that the owner held the land subject to any interests which might have been enforceable against him under the Old System title. The qualification on the title was removed after periods of six to twelve years. Mr Gordon said his department estimated that there were about 100,000 Old System land titles in N.S.W. yet to be converted.

The Torrens title is a simplified system which involves a single document called a certificate of title. The person named as the registered owner is guaranteed by the State.

Old System titles rely on a chain of documents. There is no question of the State guaranteeing title. The purchaser of land must satisfy himself by search of all the documents of ownership.

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