

CAPTAIN ARTHUR DEVLIN

1810 - 1893

His Life and Times

By S.L. Devlin

Foreword

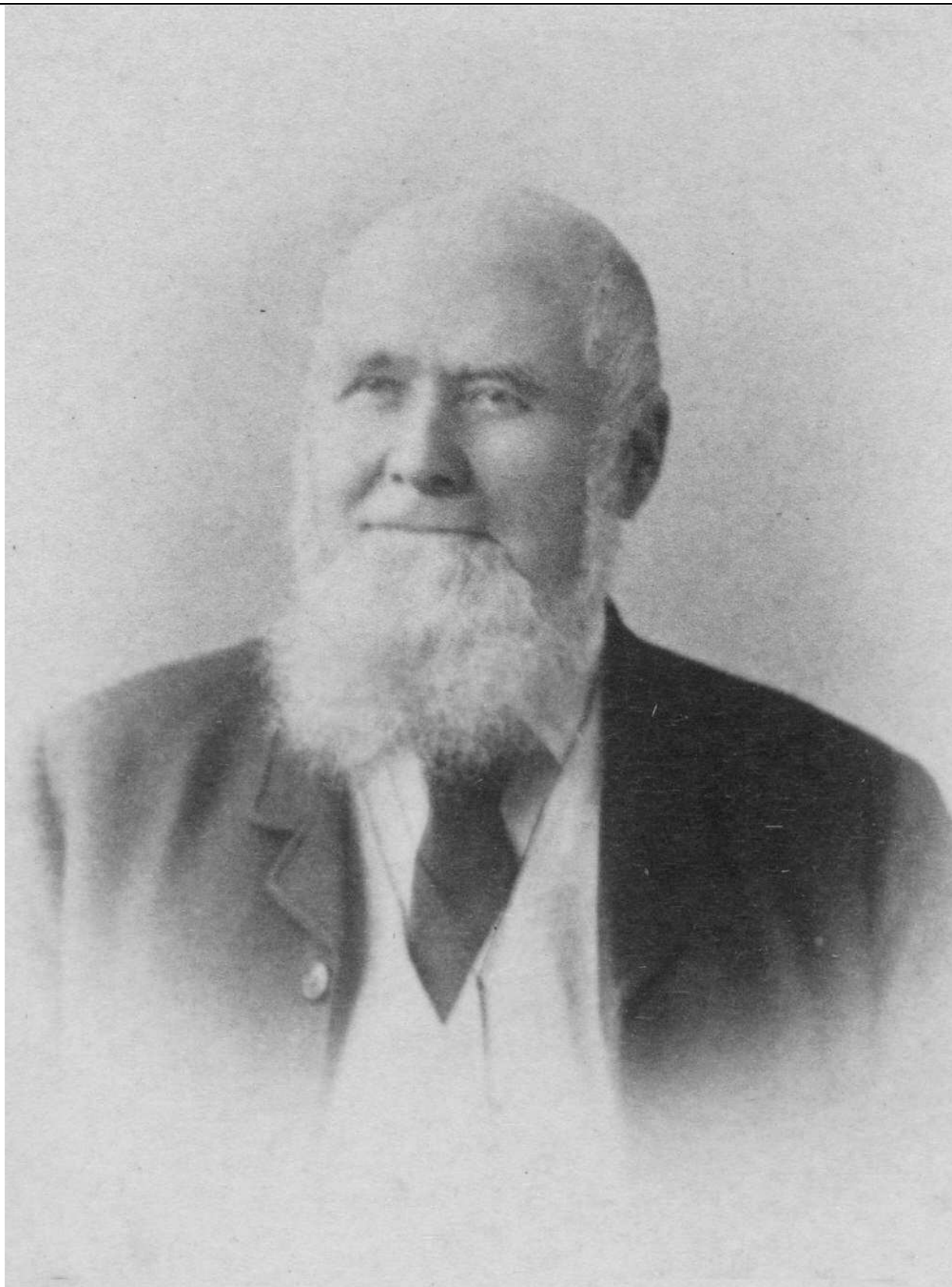
Much of this story is told by Captain Arthur Devlin himself, in what are called his "Reminiscences". Arthur obviously dictated them in his last days at Hastings, Victoria, where he died on 27 August 1893. They were addressed to "The Editor of the Argus", typed by a person unknown and, clearly were never edited at all. The documentation relating to the State Library of Victoria's acquisition of them in 1952 included a letter in which the donor mentions that Captain Devlin's diaries were destroyed! Efforts by the author in 1990 to trace the donor through the State Library of Victoria, unsurprisingly, failed.

For the publication of this article almost the whole of the "Reminiscences" has been reproduced. They have been lightly edited so as to leave the original as they were uttered and typed, but with some attention to punctuation and paragraphing.

Clearly the Reminiscences were dictated from memory without reference to any supporting information and, as a consequence a number of inaccuracies and omissions have come to attention. To correct these matters, appropriate comments have been inserted as "Observations" in the text.

Perhaps the diaries were destroyed before his death in 1893 but that would seem to be out of character.

I am indebted to Don Armitage of Great Barrier Island, New Zealand for his research on the "*Stirlingshire*", results of which are included in the Observations. Sources of information in the Observations are listed separately to the main story references.



Captain Arthur Devlin 1838

Johnstone, O'Shannessy & Co, Photographic print, 1892. Image No. nc001599.
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There is little doubt that young Arthur Devlin's convict and rebel heritage and hard early life prepared him to overcome the desperate situations he had to confront later on. Arthur was the second son of Arthur Devlin and Priscilla Squire who married in the penal colony of New South Wales on 2 April 1806.

The father, Arthur, had been exiled from Ireland in 1805, together with Michael Dwyer, leader of the Wicklow Outlaws and the other members, Martin Burke, John Mernagh and Hugh Vesty Byrne. To be sure, they had been given an option: "accept exile to Botany Bay or be brought to trial". Given their armed opposition to British rule they knew that the outcome of a trial would be death by hanging. They arrived at Port Jackson on 15 February 1806 and shortly thereafter presented themselves to the Governor, Philip Gidley King, bearing a letter from the Chief Secretary, A Marsden, Dublin Castle, dated 17 August 1805. It read,

*"The Lord Lieutenant of Ireland has this day signed a Warrant for transmitting one hundred and thirty men and thirty six women now embarked on board the Tellicherry in Cork Harbour for New South Wales. Among the number are five men – Michael Dwyer, John Mernagh, Hugh Byrne, Martin Burke and Arthur Devlin who were engaged in treasonable practices here and who have requested to be allowed to banish themselves for life to New South Wales to avoid being brought to trial; and as it has been deemed expedient to make such a compromise with them, they are sent there. Not having been convicted they claim the advantage of this distinction, the effect of which is not, however, to prevent their being subjected to all the laws of the Settlement. And that any further indulgence is to be earned by their behaviour, of which there has been no reason to complain during the time of their confinement here."*¹

King was furious. He hated, distrusted and feared the Irish. Many of the survivors of the Rebellion of 1798 had been sent to New South Wales and on 4 March 1804 about 300 Irish and a few English convicts rose in rebellion against their gaolers. Their intention was to escape the colony – they were rebelling against their ill-treatment. The rebellion was put down efficiently and ruthlessly by the New South Wales Corps but King was well aware that had the rebels been more efficiently led the outcome might have been different. He reported his consternation to Lord Camden, the Colonial Secretary:

*"I cannot conceal from your Lordship that the arrival of the five United Irishmen, who appear to have been considerable leaders in the late Rebellion in Ireland, without any conviction, added to the number of the disaffected of that class here already, will call forth the utmost attention of the Officers of this colony."*²

Despite his misgivings King was obliged to deal with the "Tellicherry Five" as he had been requested by Secretary Marsden to whom he reported.

"I have very clearly explained to them the footing they are on, and on their promises of being circumspect in their conduct and not giving cause for any complaint, I have allowed them to become Settlers with the encouragement

generally given to Free Settlers sent from England. How far these Indulgences will operate on their turbulent dispositions time will show.”³

He made a grant of one hundred acres to each of the five Wicklow men. The five allotments adjoined one another along the banks of Cabramatta Creek near Liverpool about twenty miles from the struggling town of Sydney. The blocks were surveyed and measured by James Meehan, an emancipated convict and a 1798 man.

The Irish community was overjoyed to greet and welcome the famous (or perhaps notorious) five. They were the centre of attention and they probably revelled in the warmth of their popularity. Even so, they realised that they would be regarded with fear and suspicion by the Establishment and would be under close surveillance. Governor King firmly believed that their presence in the colony would invite trouble from the volatile Irish. As the “Tellicherry Five” made their way out to take possession of their land they were probably well content. Any fears they may have had that the conditions of their surrender would not be met in full, had been dispelled. They understood the hostile reaction of the Governor and could cope with that, and they were encouraged by the welcome of the Irish community. They could look forward to a new life.

For Arthur Devlin that prospect was strengthened when, within two months of arriving in Sydney Cove, he met and married Priscilla Squire. This union added to their handicap of being viewed with suspicion by the Establishment; it added the convict stain of inferiority (both James Squire and Elizabeth Mason, Priscilla’s parents, had been convicts) and also religious complications. Arthur Devlin was a Roman Catholic, the Squires Protestant. Not only were there problems within the family, a rift developed between Arthur Devlin and Michael Dwyer, most likely because of Arthur’s apparent spurning of the faith. This would not have pleased the devout Dwyer nor would Arthur’s choice of a witness at his wedding, General Joseph Holt. Holt was now a neighbour along the banks of Cabramatta Creek, but a person Dwyer had believed to be a traitor to the Irish cause in Ireland, before Holt brokered a deal to be transported to New South Wales on the *Minerva* in 1799. Holt, moreover, was a Protestant.

Lest the handicap of the convict stain should be underestimated the observations of one writer were:

“there is one grand feature of the social status of Sydney which is almost exclusively peculiar to itself – I mean the convict infusion. A person newly arrived here feels no little animosity, perhaps some little uneasiness, on the subject of the degree of influence exerted on the social system by the numerous body of affluent emancipists, which in the lapse of time and their own reformed characters have formed in the community. It seems almost incredible that, living in the very midst of the community – in many cases in equal and even superior style to what may be called the aristocracy – possessing some of the handsomest residences in the city and suburbs – warehouses, counting houses, banking establishments, shipping, immense tracts of land, they are, nevertheless, a class apart from the untainted.”⁴

Governor King’s successor was Captain William Bligh of the Royal Navy, a man who had been involved in two mutinies (the *Bounty* and the *Nore*), had survived two

courts-martial, and yet had been commended in glowing terms by Lord Horatio Nelson for his noble support in naval action. Bligh's record contained such phrases as "tyranny and unofficerlike conduct", "a stickler for discipline and a martyr to naval efficiency: fiery and passionate, subject to outbursts of wrath accompanied by violent gesture".⁵ King remained in the colony for six months after Bligh's arrival. The very thorough briefing and advice which King was able to give to his successor combined with the hatred and apprehension he had about the Irish spelt trouble for Michael Dwyer, Arthur Devlin and their friends. It was not long in coming.

No sooner had King departed in the *Buffalo*, no doubt immensely pleased to be on his way homeward at last, than two convict informers came forward and declared that a revolt was imminent and that Dwyer was the chief conspirator.⁶ A Court of Criminal Jurisdiction was convened by Bligh on 11 May 1807 to hear the charges against the Tellicherry Five and two others, Thomas McCann and William Morris. These two were found guilty and sentenced to "*One thousand lashes each and be remanded to some distant and remote place where the baneful influence of their detestable principles cannot be disseminated among other ignorant or deluded convicts.*"⁷ Dwyer, Devlin, Burke, Mernagh and Byrne were acquitted.

Bligh was furious at the verdict. He had the acquitted men arraigned before a Bench of Magistrates who found them guilty, clearly on Bligh's known desire for this result. They were listed now as "State Prisoners" indicating a very different status to that which they had formerly enjoyed in accordance with the agreement made with them in Ireland. Bligh divided the gang (as he called them) and sent some of them to Norfolk Island, some to the Derwent, some to Port Dalrymple and kept two in Sydney.⁸ They were recalled when Major George Johnson deposed Bligh as Governor, placed him under arrest and assumed the title of Lieutenant Governor and the administration of the colony himself. Johnson was highly critical of Bligh's tyrannical action, of bringing them, after their acquittal by the Court, before the magistrates. He intended to cite this case at whatever hearing he was required to attend, in part explanation of Bligh's arrogance and injustice, an action which caused a sense of dread in the colony as to the arbitrary power which Governor Bligh was prepared to take upon himself.

So the on-again farmers once more returned to their properties to renew their interrupted efforts to become successful farmers. Alas, these efforts were unsuccessful and one by one the farms were sold (for one hundred and fifty pounds in Arthur Devlin's case). Things were not going well for Arthur. He was indebted to the Government for cattle he had received and which were to be paid for in cash or grain. He was not able to discharge that debt in full, the cost of one cow remained outstanding in the Government records. He was in trouble in spiritual matters as well. The first properly sanctioned Roman Catholic priests arrived in the colony on the *Janus*. They were Father J.J. Therry and Father Philip Conolly. Conolly did not remain long in Sydney; he went to Van Diemen's Land and died there in 1839. Arthur took advantage of his brief stopover in Sydney and had his youngest daughter Martha baptised by him, much apparently, to the dismay of his wife, Priscilla, who promptly had her baptised again in the Church of England. One imagines that some spirited dialogue resulted.

Arthur and Priscilla had parented five children in all. James (1808-1875), Arthur (1810-1893), Mary (1813-1835), Patrick (1815-1865), Ann (1817-1854). Arthur senior died in 1820, a fugitive from the law, for what seems to be a case of cattle duffing, a not unusual happening in those days.⁹

Priscilla may still have been living at Cabramatta Creek when Arthur died. The second son Arthur wrote, “*Shortly after, my mother moved to a farm and house on the banks of the Parramatta given by her father and in the vicinity of his brewery. I have a recollection that the Devlin family fared badly for a lengthened period.*”¹⁰ There was no doubt that the family did “fare badly” for a time. In making provision for the family in a separate domicile the wily old James Squire would have been very well aware of the complications which could have arisen if he had invited Priscilla and her young brood of children to share his own home where Lucy Harding had consolidated her position as Housekeeper and more. Deliverance in the form of a new breadwinner came by the marriage of Priscilla to Thomas Small, fifth child and third son of John Small and Mary Parker, both First Fleet convicts who had been married in the colony on 12 October 1788.

Young Arthur recorded, “*I attended regularly for two years to a school established by Mr Cooper and have a very vivid recollection of the quince cane he possessed, which he brought down heavily on the heads of the boys and girls; the only once he ventured the quince cutting on my napper, I am sure he received considerable fright, as I showed fight. For two years I attended regularly to a Sunday School established by the Reverend Mansfield and for the part of the last year was a teacher and choir leader.*”¹¹

Obviously, Arthur had absorbed the lessons of the times – don’t be put upon, irrespective of who attempts it – but also be receptive to those activities related to faith, harmony and goodwill.

No doubt the young Arthur spent time with his grandfather, James Squire, who had opened a tavern, “The Malting Shovel” which was a halfway house for travellers between Sydney and Parramatta. Squire’s Wharf was a well-known landmark on the Parramatta River and Arthur probably encountered many seafaring people there. He wrote, “*At the age of twelve, I went to sea in the Hope, Captain Morris, United Kingdom, South America and Sydney trade and subsequently in Queen Charlotte, Pacific trade. After three years of sea life, I relinquished it for a time, a boy’s life at sea [in the 1820s] was indeed a hard one.*”¹²

Returned from the sea, Arthur “*...worked hard as a Boatman Sawyer, Timber Merchant and other avocations; and in some two or three years had cash accumulations to start and build on the Parramatta the Priscilla of 30 tons which I sailed and employed in the cedar trade between Manning River, Reid’s Mistake and Sydney, made sufficient in a short time to build a clipper cutter of 60 tons, the Aquila, which I sailed and successfully employed for three years between Port Macquarie, Macleay River, Moreton Bay, with an occasional trip to Tasmania.*”¹³

Observation

The timings and tonnage are incorrect. *The Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser* of 11 June 1835 reported: “Mr. Devlin’s new cutter called the Aquila, 40 tons burthen, built by Mr. Jones of Darling Harbour has been launched and on Sunday [7th June] made her first cruise about the harbour. She will start this evening for Port Macquarie...”

Said to “have grown to be a splendid specimen of the native Australian”, Arthur was a member of the first whaleboat crew which claimed the championship of New South Wales. Whaling was a flourishing industry and great rivalry existed between the whaling crews.

At the age of 20, Arthur imported a racing gig called the *Paddy*. For many years the *Paddy* and its crew were unbeaten. The sight of the crew, Arthur Devlin, James Chapman, George Chapman, William Howard, Andrew Melville and George Mulhall, six young giants, “all standing well over six feet in height and splendidly built”, must have been positively awe-inspiring. On one occasion this crew rowed the *Paddy* in two races of 13 miles each with an interval of only two hours between the first and second races. In 1830 this crew was the champion whaleboat crew of Australia. Arthur is recorded as being in the winning boat in 19 out of 21 regattas.¹⁴ Arthur recorded,

“About this time I bought and sailed the Waterwitch, for some time, selling out of the Waterwitch, I sailed in the Ann Brigatine with a cargo of notions as our American cousins would say, for the new colony of South Australia just established, and arrived there a few months after arrival of the first settlers, sold the cargo wheat. After disposal of the Ann bought Lady Wellington Brig, formerly one of the Falmouth packets, took up in Parramatta, a cargo of cattle for South Australia. While at Adelaide this time established business relations with John Barton Hack & Co, merchants of Adelaide, and Captain John Hart, in after time one of the Premiers of South Australia, for the establishment of the first whale fishery in Encounter Bay; the purchase of a large herd of cattle from the Dutton to be delivered at Portland Bay from where we rafted many cargoes by sea, but found it a bad business. When Hart volunteered to navigate them overland as he called it, the cattle business turned out, pecuniarily, only a saving clause. Employed for some time in the Tasmanian trade in the purchase of wheat and flour for the Sydney market.”¹⁵

All sailors in those days had a genuine fear of the natives in the regions through which they were to pass. They were aware of the murder of Captain Cook by Hawaiian islanders and the subsequent mutiny of the *Bounty* and the hostile greeting Bligh received at Nomuka Island and other places. More sobering was the massacre in 1813 in the “Feejee Islands” of many of the crews of the *Elizabeth*, cutter, Peter Dillon master, a tender ship, and the *Hunter*, Captain Robson.

[Next Page: “Massacre at the Feejee Islands in Septr. 1813, dreadful situation of Capt. Dillon and the other two survivors”, C. Ingrey, lithograph, London, 1829. Rex Nan Kivell Collection NK2152. With the permission of the National Library of Australia.



MASSACRE AT THE FEJEE ISLANDS IN SEPT^R 1813.

Dreadful Situation of Cap^t Dillon, and the two other Survivors.

C. Ingrey del. J. G. Smeath sculp.

Peter Dillon reported that after about one third of a load of sandalwood had been procured, on an island called Vilear, the islanders declared their inability to supply more wood as the forests had been exhausted. Captain Robson was most displeased with this situation. The *Elizabeth* needed some repair and it was concluded that it would be necessary to haul the vessel on shore at high water. Captain Robson deemed it prudent to possess himself of the canoes of the island to prevent attacks on the people employed about the cutter. The Europeans belonging to the ship, plus others from the island of Bow, plus the Bow chiefs and 100 of their men under the direction of Mr Norman, First Officer of the *Hunter*, proceeded in boats and canoes and landed at Black Rock on Vilear Island. Mr Norman then ordered the Chief's house to be fired, which was done, but the natives had been lying in wait, and attacked the straggling parties into which the invading parties had arranged themselves. Mr Norman and several others were killed. Peter Dillon and five others then climbed a steep rock, a position they could defend with their muskets.

From their vantage point the defenders were able to observe fires being lit and ovens heated for the reception of the bodies of their ill-fated companions, which were cut up and dissected by the priests, while the natives sang and danced with joy over their prizes. Two of the defenders on the rock accepted invitations to surrender on the promise that they would be unharmed. They were betrayed, killed, dissected, cooked and eaten, along with the rest. The High Priest came to the rock and attempted to persuade the defenders to surrender: instead Peter Dillon held a musket to his head and told him he would shoot him dead if any native approached them while they marched with the High Priest to the boat and escape.

In all fourteen persons had been killed and cannibalised including three residents of New South Wales, Charles Fox, son of Paymaster Cox, John Graham son of a publican and Louis Evans, who was said to be the natural son of Governor Phillip, the first Governor of the colony.¹⁶

Arthur's Reminiscences continue:

"In 1838 purchased from Cooper & Holt of Sydney the Adelaide for £3000; and sailed on the 16 Dec. of the above year for Port Phillip - a dependency of N.S. Wales - with a full cargo and a number of passengers afterwards old colonists but now I fancy all joined the great majority. On the fourth day from Sydney sighted Point Nepean N.N.W, 8 miles, when a prodigious storm set in from NNW which continued for ten consecutive days blowing the Adelaide clean out of Bass Strait into 154° E Long, So that a voyage promising to be accomplished in four days occupied thirty days before finally anchoring in Hobson Bay. The discharge of the Adelaide's cargo at the village Melbourne some 600 tons, occupied fifty days as only a small ten ton lighter and the Adelaide's long boat could be obtained for taking it up the Yarra Sewer; having completed the discharge of my inward cargo took in a cargo of 2400 fat sheep for the Adelaide market bought in Melbourne @ 10/- per head sold in Adelaide @ 35/-. After discharge of the quadrupeds arranged with the South Australian Commissioners for the purchase and delivery in Port Adelaide of a cargo of New Zealand timbers and which built the first wharf in Port Adelaide called the Maclarens. After the successful

purchase and delivery of this cargo of New Zealand piles I was afterwards engaged carrying cargoes of sheep between Tasmania, Port Philip and Adelaide finally disposing of the Adelaide to a Mr. Clayton of Launceston for the original cost £3000 having netted in my ten months ownership and command of the Adelaide £7000.

It is worth mentioning that on my first arrival in Melbourne the latter part of the year 1838, the half acre allotments in Collins Street were selling from £22/10/ to £32/10., Grubbing up the stumps in Collins

Street was in progress. After disposal of the Adelaide bought from the South Australian Commissioners the Brig Rapid for £2400, this vessel fitted in England for the survey of Gulfs St. Vincent, and Spencer and South Australian coast, under Command of Colonel Light and Lieutenant Field, the coast of the colony being finished by these gentlemen. I purchased the Rapid and sailed her for a time between Tasmania, South Australia, Sydney and Port Phillip.”¹⁷

Arthur had by this time accumulated £48,000, an enormous sum in those days. He was just 27 years old. It seems that when he purchased the *Rapid* from the partners, South Australian Company and J.B. Hart, he re-registered the ship in his own name in Adelaide on 20 October 1840 and again at the Sydney Customs House, in association with Daniel Egan, on 7 December 1840.¹⁸

Arthur was now about to embark on a voyage which would test the calibre of the man, and how he had progressed under the handicaps of suspicion of all things Irish, especially known rebels and their families, the taint of convictism and the lowly place in the social order that that stigma evoked and additionally burdened with his family having “fared badly for a lengthened period” in his early years.

He continued, “*The price of tea being great in Australia, the first war in China in 1840, I decided to fit the Rapid with six guns and proceed to the East Coast of China for the purchase of a cargo taking dollars and other specie and other cargo amounting to 16,000 pounds. The Insurance Companies took fright, and the fitting out of the Rapid as a Man of War was a fatal blow to my getting Insurance at anything like a reasonable rate, and I took my departure from Sydney in the Rapid uninsured on the 16th Dec 1840.”¹⁹ This was to be a fateful journey. The Sydney Herald of 1 April 1841 reported:*

“WRECK OF THE BRIG RAPID”

The barque Avon, Captain Underwood, arrived in Sydney on Tuesday night, bringing up Captain Devlin and the crew of the brig Rapid, wrecked on a sand-bank near Rotumah. The following narrative by Captain Devlin explains the whole affair, and details the sufferings experienced by the crew:-

The brig Rapid cleared the Heads of Port Jackson on the 24th of December, bound to China, having on board a cargo of sundries, Mr Rawson, passenger, and a crew, including officers, of thirteen persons. Experienced for the most part contrary winds until the 3rd of January, when I made Norfolk

Island, hove to and communicated with the shore by signals for two or three hours, after which I bore up on my intended course. For eight days after leaving Norfolk Island, I experienced contrary winds and calms, on examination I found that if detained on the line by light winds and calms, I had not sufficient water to last to Guam. I determined on visiting the island of Rotumah, to get a necessary supply and shaped the vessels course accordingly.

On the 13th of January at noon, latitude 22-48 south, longitude by chronometers, 174-40 east the island of Rotumah bore north 14 east, distance 771 miles, a leaf [sic] laid down in my chart in latitude 21-56 south longitude, 175-26 east; at noon this reef bore N.E. by N. distance 158 miles, steered N. by W. to keep well to the eastward of this danger, and as the night closed to, I ordered a look-out to be kept. At the meridian altitude of several stars, I found I was to the northward of the reef, as laid down in the chart, and 50 miles to the westward of it by the reckoning; at 1.30 a.m. I quitted the deck, giving strict orders to the officer of the watch to keep a good look-out in case of any unknown dangers existing; wind E.S.E. all sail set, going at seven knots an hour. I had been in bed about twenty minutes when I heard the vessel strike; I immediately went on deck, and found that she was among the breakers; a few seconds after she was thrown over on her beam ends. At first sight in the dark, I thought it a narrow reef with deep water to leeward, and fearing the vessel would beat over and sink in deep water, (the water then being up to her lower deck) I ordered the boat to be got out, in doing which, one got shattered almost to pieces, and went adrift, I sent the chief officer and four men clear of the wreck, to leeward in the other boat lest she might be stove alongside the wreck, telling him to come alongside at daylight for myself, Mr. Rawson, and remainder-of crew; after the boat got clear of the wreck, myself and remainder of the crew commenced cutting away the masts, which we accomplished in about fifteen minutes, the sea beating violently over us. At daylight I found that we had struck on a circular coral reef about nine miles in circumference, with a sand bank in the centre.

When I observed the mate had hauled up the shattered boat, after which he came as near the wreck as possible, then we all quitted the vessel, taking a few nautical instruments, a small quantity of biscuit, and two or three kegs of water, and landed on the sand spit. This sand spit is just a marsh at neap tide, and no doubt at spring tide is much overflown. After getting all the little things we had procured from the wreck on the most elevated part of the sand bank, my first object was to get the boat repaired if possible, and quit before the spring tides set in, as in all probability we should then be floated off; we remained three days on this bank, repairing the two whale boats, and putting wash streaks on them, getting dead nails, &c., for that purpose from the wreck each day at low water. On the second day after landing, I observed the centre of this bank to be in latitude 21°42' South Long, by mean of three good chronometers 174° 40' East, distance 570 miles, where I determined in steering for in the boats.

Saturday night, January 16 - Having completed the boats and written the particulars of the loss of the vessel, and put it in a bottle on the bank, we lay down on the sand, worn out with fatigue.

On Sunday the 17th, at daylight, having made a fair division of the scanty allowance of biscuit, water, and a few tins preserved meats, launched the boats, the chief officer taking charge of one with seven of the crew; myself, with Mr. Rawson, and five of the crew in the other, taking my desk and two bags of dollars. At 8 a.m. got clear of the reef, and steered N. by E.; strong easterly breeze and heavy swell; found my boat leaking as much as one man could bail out-this dish tired the boat's company much. Latter part squally, and it was with much difficulty I could keep company with the other boat. Daylight more moderate, averaged four knots an hour since leaving the wreck.

Monday, January 18 - Moderate breeze Easterly and high irregular sea - boats shipping much water, steering N. N. E. - made sixty miles during these twenty-four hours.

Tuesday, January 29 - Strong breeze E.S.E. and high sea, boats making much leeway, steering N. by E., at four p.m., served out scanty allowance of three halfpints of water for the twenty-four hours, made 56 miles on a quiet course this day.

Wednesday 20 - Slight variable winds and very hot oppressive weather - crew suffering much for want of water, and food, as I could not allow more than two oz. preserved meat, and one biscuit, three half pints water for each of us for the twenty-four hours; gained very little this day.

Thursday 21 - Calm the whole of this day, and dreadfully oppressive, being a vertical sun, pulled for two or three hours, but unable to continue for want of water.

Friday 22 - Calm this day, suffering dreadfully from heat and thirst, people much depressed in spirits, read them a few prayers, and exhorted them to cheerfulness.

Saturday 23 - Light variable wind and severe hot weather, the latter part of this day a heavy shower of rain fell, during which we caught a small quantity, and were greatly refreshed.

Sunday 24 - Light variable wind and very hot weather; myself and Mr. Rawson read prayers, in which the crew seemed devoutly to join. In the evening of this day, saw some of the Western Feejee Islands, bearing east, distance about forty miles; continued steering to the northward, the wind being from the eastward.

Monday 25 - Moderate breezes at N.W. with appearance of bad weather; at noon, strong gale from the N.W., bore up for the Feejee Islands, then bearing from east to S.E. Sunset more moderate; distance eight miles from the land - hove to for daylight; remainder of the night heavy rain and high sea.

Tuesday, 26 - Daylight calm - distance 6 miles from the land, at 10 a.m. - come with the land and passed over a reef between the two Islands with just sufficient water for the boats, and come into a shallow strait about one mile wide, when I perceived some natives on the beach. In passing the place where they were first seen several came out of the bush, and beckoned us to come in with the boats; the whole of the crew seemed much depressed at visiting these islands. I certainly had some fears for our safety, as I have always heard these men spoken of as cannibals; it was at last agreed to land with the boats - on landing they seemed friendly, and on making signs that we were hungry, they brought us some cocoa nuts, yams, and plantains. I could get no information from these natives, either by signs or other means, with regard to a mission station or European residence; after we had partaken of a slight repast on yams, &c., I got under weigh for some of the South Eastern Islands, not feeling myself safe in the hands of those men: at sunset brought to under the lee of an island uninhabited - strong gale N.W. and heavy rain the whole night - served out the scanty allowance of damaged biscuit, the whole getting wet with sea water at starting; lay down in our wet clothes for the night.

Wednesday, 27 - Strong gale and rain at N.W., unable to move from under the lee of the island in consequence; crew on shore gathering periwinkles and boiling them on the island - served out one biscuit each person for the twenty-four hours.

Thursday 28th, daylight. - Strong breeze N.W. and heavy rain - got under weigh and stood over for some of the S.E. islands. At noon passed a high rugged island, went close in with it, and perceived some natives; landed with my boat for the purpose of getting something to eat. The natives appeared quite wild - shoved off again; I immediately served out the allowance of one biscuit, and stood to E.S.E. - obliged to alter my course frequently from the number of reefs in this place. Sunset, brought to under the lee of an island not inhabited, as it would be destruction to keep under weigh with the boats all night, as the whole of these seas are intersected with shallow coral reefs, and it was with much difficulty I could keep clear of them in the day time.

Friday 29, daylight. - Got under weigh - strong breeze N.N.W., and rain - served out one biscuit and steered for the islands. Ambow saw several canoes - steered after them, but unable to overtake them. At noon saw a native village, but the natives did not make their appearance on my first landing, and fearing they were lying in ambush, I came on board the boat again, when an immense number came immediately on the beach, with apparently, no friendly intentions. I shoved off with the boats and stood over to a small island, not inhabited, and brought to under the lee of it for the night. Some of the crew landed in search of shell-fish, but were unsuccessful.

Saturday, 30. - At daylight, the wind set in from S.E., which prohibited me from prosecuting my search to the eastward; served out last biscuit and stood to the northward. Noon, calm - crew unable to pull - lay to under a small Island for several hours, the whole of the biscuit being expended and being worn out with

hunger and fatigue, determined on returning to the Island first visited, and throw ourselves on the mercy of the natives. At 4 p.m., light breeze S.W., got underweigh, and stood to the northward - heavy rain - kept underweigh all night, although the risk was great, and I had great fears for the safety of the boats, from the number of reefs thereabouts - passed many during the night.

Sunday, 31. - Light breeze N.N.E., pulling in for an Island adjacent to the one I wished to land at. Noon, made the Island, and saw great quantities of the natives on the beach - landed with the boats, and on our making signs that we were starving, they brought some cocoa-nuts, plantains, and bread fruit, after taking a repast of these, gave the natives in return a few fish hooks, and got underweigh for the other island. At 4 p.m. arrived at the island first visited, the inhabitants of which seemed highly delighted at our return - this, as I afterwards found out, was only their treachery, they brought us cocoa nuts, plantains, &c.; as the night closed in I stood off with the boats, not having sufficient confidence in the natives to remain on the shore, remainder of night strong easterly wind and heavy rain.

Monday, February 1. - At daylight the natives waded off to the boats in great numbers bringing plantains, &c., myself and several of the crew landed and partook of the productions of the Island, but not feeling safe among them, and no chance of any vessel visiting these Islands from the immense number of reefs surrounding them many miles onward, I determined in getting, if possible, sufficient cocoa nuts and yams to carry me to the island of Rotumah, and start with the first fair wind. I accordingly commenced trading, each of us taking off part of our clothes, and giving it in return for cocoa nuts and yams, - after filling our water kegs and getting as many yams and cocoa nuts as we could, which was a very poor allowance for 15 persons for a passage of 6 days. I stood over to a detached island, for the purpose of cooking the yams, - after we had kindled a fire, we saw a large body of natives crossing over, armed with clubs and weapons of war. I ordered the party on shore that were cooking yams immediately into the boats, and we fortunately got clear of the reef before they were able to attack us; but we were, unfortunately, deprived of our yams, which in our state, then, was a serious loss. At sunset, cleared the island and reef - steered north - wind easterly - the island of Rotumah six degrees westerly, distance 304 miles, remainder of night strong breeze, and high irregular sea and shipping much water, lost sight of the other boat several times.

Tuesday, 2. - Strong breeze Easterly and high sea - steering North, made one hundred miles these twenty-four hours.

Wednesday, 3 - Moderate breeze, E.S.E., and much rain, steering North 3 knots; served out two cocoa nuts each person, for the twenty-four hours; made sixty miles this day on a direct course.

Thursday 4. - Squally from E S E, and heavy rain latter part - heavy squalls from N E to N W, and high irregular sea.

Friday, 5. - Moderate breeze SE, and heavy rain. At 1 p.m. this day, saw the island Rotumah, western end bearing N N W - 30 miles distant - all hands overjoyed at the sight. Pulled for the land. Midnight, made the south side of the island, ran under the lee of it, and hove to for daylight.

Saturday, 6 - Daylight - Strong southerly wind and heavy rain - pulling along the reef in search of a passage: after pulling two hours without success, two canoes came off, with several natives in each. On their being informed that we were shipwrecked, they seemed delighted saying "come ashore, come ashore"; one native came into each boat and piloted us through the reef; on the boats reaching the shore, we were surrounded by an immense number of natives, who plundered the boats of all their contents, chronometer and sextant excepted; among which was my desk, containing about £100 in cash, and many valuable papers, two bags containing about 1400 dollars; they also took the boats' oars, &c. Myself and Mr. Rawson were taken by one of the chiefs to his hut, the remainder of the crew were distributed among the tribe, two or three in a hut; they gave us something to eat, which we so much required, and we lay down in our wet clothes in these miserable dwellings, not having any shift of clothes. After I had been on the Island about a week, I received back about £100 of the stolen cash, and some of the papers that were in my desk - this was done through intimidation. I told the chiefs through the interpretation of a white man, that on my arrival in Port Jackson, the Governor would despatch a man-of-war to the Island, and take the thieves off, and hang them in Sydney - this frightened two of the chiefs, who delivered what they had in their possession of the stolen money. After remaining on the Island twenty days, during which time we were half-starved, for although the natives had so much money (and all we had after the two first days), they did not feel inclined to give us anything to eat - and had it not been for the kindness of two or three English sailors who resided on the island, we should have suffered much from hunger.

The whaling barque Avon, Captain Joseph Underwood, visited the island for refreshments, and we were received on board, and treated with the greatest hospitality and kindness. Thus were we delivered, after suffering twenty days in the boats from hunger, thirst, and fatigue - exposed to heavy rain, &c., at night, and a vertical sun in the day, during which time we pulled and sailed upwards of 1000 miles. We were twenty days upon the island, during which time we existed in a state little preferable to being in the boats.

By this unfortunate occurrence, I have lost upwards of £4000, the vessel only being insured for part of her cost, without any insurance being effected upon the cargo and specie on board - 5000 dollars, besides other money lost with the vessel, independent of the cash stolen from me by the natives of Rotumah. I have no doubt that if this aggression of these people be permitted by the Government to go unnoticed, they will commit greater depredations on some of the many whaling vessels visiting the island to refit.

A. DEVLIN.

N.B. - Several packets of letters for Her Majesty's ships in China were taken out of the boats, and destroyed by the natives of Rotumah."

Arthur later provided more details. Unbeknown to Arthur (when he wrote the report) the *Rapid* and her cargo had been insured by her half-owner, Daniel Egan, and so "the loss would not be great".²⁰ To add to Arthur's misfortunes, however, on arrival in Sydney in 1841, "the pilot conveyed to Underwood the news of the death of his wife".²¹

Arthur's Reminiscences provide further information on the wreck of the *Rapid* and its aftermath.

He named the second officer, "the lubberly non-vigilant Silles" as the cause of the loss of the *Rapid* and the subsequent sufferings of the crew. "*The Rapid had for cargo, large quantity of wine and bottled beer. Two prodigious Dutchmen of my crew under the 3rd officer were of the wreck party the first day, they returned in the afternoon more than half seas over and when I remarked on their outrageous behaviour, they remarked that the ship being wrecked my authority was at an end, and at once showed fight. I gave these two great Dutchmen a through good hammering, to show my authority, even on the sandbank; no more difficulty with Dutchmen or other portions of the crew after this.*"

"Briefly, I was on the sandbank for four days, during the time got Dollars and Doubloons from the wreck and buried them on the sandbank... Having written the names and addresses of the crew and Samuel Rawson, my passenger, put it into a bottle, sunk top gallant studding sail boom, and attached the bottle.

Started on the forlorn hope of reaching Rotumah NE 906 miles. The smart Chief Officer Wright I placed in the longer boat, with the 3rd officer and ten others. Wright not being satisfied with the 3rd Officer's navigation (himself not being one) desired that I should keep company with his boat.

Each boat steered with steer-oar. I was an expert at whaleboat steering, could not find one of my party able to steer in the lumpy weather, I tried them all. I steered the first forty eight hours after leaving and fell off my perch and slept eighteen hours right off and awoke bald-headed altho' possessed of abundance of hair previously. I was told by Rawson that the boat nearly swamped a dozen times during my long sleep, and tried many times to arouse me. I believe the brave Rawson proved the best steersman of the lot.

The first four days of rugged seas destroyed the greater part of my bag of biscuits and I was only able to give each man half a biscuit and about four ounces of preserved meat. After some six days out in the boat, light airs prevailed, and a terrible vertical sun which made sad havoc on the bodies of the crew previously well doused with salt water. On the eighth day out my allowance of water was such as to cause great suffering to the crew from thirst. On the sixth day out, two prodigious sharks made their appearance, one in close proximity to each boat, and gave great alarm to each boat's crew; the fellow accompanying my boat had the temerity to come up and give my steeroar considerable shaking.

On the ninth day the sufferings of the crew from thirst was something terrible and the brave Rawson and self feared greatly that madness would soon set in as they made some arrangement among themselves to cut each other's arm and drink the blood. While this great fear was on, down came one of the heaviest tropical showers I had experienced since my acquaintance with father Neptune's dominions – so great the difficulty was to keep the boat from swamping. My thirst was satisfied, our water keg replenished.

There came a time of great hunger, the small allowance of food for the twenty four hours was telling a sad tale of skeletonism on the crew, and poor Burfield was in much danger. This poor fellow had his spine broken or greatly injured getting from the wreck and I had him placed in my boat; his cries day and night were something terrible to listen to. I had listened to the plan the crew had of suggesting to me the final destruction of Burfield for the maintenance of the remainder. Next day they delicately communicated to me their plan with regard to Burfield. My reply was prompt, "Not while I live!"

When nearly down to the last half biscuit and four ounces preserved meat a NW gale set in which I considered would be the final disposal of the unfortunate Rapid's crew, however I determined to use all the skill I knew... Lashed the oars and mast together and ... fisherman fashion "hove her to", hauled my steeroar in as it was no longer of use, and remarked to Rawson, "this will probably be the last chapter in the narrative". The gale lasted thirty hours and the boat made a lee drift of 90 miles to the SE. Chief Officer's boat was always in company... The gale subsided about daylight of the second day, when I descried to the NNE the NW groups of the Fiji Islands making like a series of pyramids. Wright closed into ascertain the Islands in sight and inform me their small allowance had been eaten the previous day. I informed him of my intention to go in, as my boat no longer had [any either]. He replied that he preferred death at sea to being gobbled up by these terrible Fijians. That eight years previous he was wrecked on Ambon, one of the Eastern Islands and barring himself and another all were eaten. These two secreted in a cave, after some days starving there, they one day at low water saw some women picking mussels; they went down to them and craved mercy; the women saved them. I informed him I must chance being eaten, there was nothing but death at sea and shaped a course for the middle of the group... did not make them before three in the afternoon when I was about to enter a haven... the coconuts, bread fruit and bananas tantalising. Wright following at the distance of $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile.

Shortly before the beach where I intended to land, heard the conch shells sounding, and shortly after out rushed from ambush about 100 huge Fijians, and I with all the strength left in the shipwrecked boat's crew, backed out. These cannibals are next door to fish in the water, they rushed into the water after the boat, dozen of them, and a hard battle ensued as they promised for a time the best of the tug of war. Of course their object was to haul the boat on shore and destroy the shipwrecked crew. The wind being NW and fair down the haven – up lug and sailed away to the SE. Saw then cannibals rushing over the hills in the

direction of my course and feared they would catch me at the Eastern end of the haven. On reaching there found they were running for their war canoe three quarters of a mile NORTH on the Eastern end of the Island, this about four in the afternoon; had a start of about 2½ miles on them. Wright closed in to know my instructions when I informed him I intended running down before the wind and if not caught before darkness set in, haul to a right angle to my then course to the Southward, and sail so for an hour – and douse sail and remain as still as mice until daylight. As the darkness came they had considerably overhauled me and were about one mile distant when I hauled to the SSW in company with Wright's boat, and so sailed for an hour, doused as advised. Found myself in the midst of shallow coral reefs, but the sea being smooth, nothing serious happened. Daylight, no appearance of the chasers, saw to the Eastward a small islet with a solitary coconut tree on it – up lug and sailed down to it, when about to land appeared a huge Fijian. I observed to Rawson, they have caught us after all, supposing the previous night's chasers had remained under the lee of the Islet, looking for us at daylight. It turned out this was one man and his four boys who came over from the main Island, Ambon, the previous evening, Turtle fishing. He appeared greatly alarmed at our approach, no difficulty in getting the boys to shin up and get the coconuts from this great tree. A great feast soon took place, a coconut feast, and a fair division of the remaining coconuts made between the two boats for the completion of the voyage to Rotumah, as no time should be wasted, and getting out of the regions of Fiji was most important. A gale NW set in that afternoon and lasted some four days, which prevented my departure from the Islet. How were we to exist? The twenty coconuts allotted to each boat for the voyage to Rotumah must not be touched. We had devoured the Fijians small store of nuts, breadfruit and must feed his boys in some way. But for the NW gale he would have procured for us and himself and boys an abundant supply of Turtle. The small Islet had a large growth of Kangaroo grass, I commenced with the two crews on this grass, we ate it raw and stewed it; this food for four days. When gale over, launched boats and shaped course for Rotumah, we fairly cleared the Islet of it (the grass), but for it the story of the wreck of the Rapid, probably would have never been told; we must have starved at sea.

The feeding on the Kangaroo grass on the Island, and so saving the coconuts for the sea voyage, doubtless saved the shipwrecked crew. Well, as previously observed, the gale over, shaped a course N½ E 604 miles for Rotumah, the wind being light and variable little progress was made. I entertained great fear about the chasers of the previous five days observing us and again giving chase. To be brief this 604 miles to Rotumah occupied something over twelve days and great starvation and suffering experienced by the two boats' crews. Sailing on a parallel N½E gave me great anxiety, as if my chronometer showed to the Eastward, good bye to Rotumah, however good luck did attend me; observing on the twelfth day out from the Islet at noon of that day Rotumah was by my observations N½E 24 miles distant getting on the mast thwart and supported by it, after a time observed three peaks which I knew was

Rotumah. Communicated the fact to the two boats crews, and altho' 52 years have elapsed since that memorable day, the sighting of Rotumah the effect it had on the emaciated crews even now, when I think on it affects me much. Light and baffling winds prevented me getting up with the Island before next day; a coral belt surrounds the Island. Through an opening on the NW side came out a canoe guided by a man of Rotumah, who piloted us through the reef, at a glance he saw the state of affairs, and some time before reaching the beach where hundreds were assembled to receive us he communicated to them the facts of his pilotage charge, and the crews of both boats after reaching the beach, were carried ashore, and billeted variously Rawson Chief Officer Wright and self at one of the Kings palaces. I may mention the Island Rotumah about this time contained ten thousand inhabitants ruled by an Emperor and five hundred Kings, only just think A King to every twenty. I should have mentioned the boats, two bags of dollars, my desk with doubloons, two chronometers etc. were taken possession of by the Islanders, this I knew their custom to rob their own wrecked Canoes. My king and his Queen paid much attention to the wretched looking visitors, the royal household comprised one married Princess, two Princes and two unmarried Princesses. Their Majesties insisted on placing one of the Princesses as bolster for me. The coconut oil with which the Princess in conjunction with the other members of the royal family rubbed their bodies daily offended greatly my nasal organs and I begged their Majesties to relieve me of the bolster, the favor was granted after the second night. After six weeks Island life appeared two whaling vessels one on the S E side the other on the NW of the Island. I was the first of the crew able to walk any distance, the vessel on the S E side of the Island took my fancy. I walked over some mile and a half to a part where probably a boat would land from her. Emery, a white man of the Island, had gone off as pilot to the S E vessel which turned out to be the barque Avon, Captain Joseph Underwood countryman and a friend of mine. Emery the white pilot had informed him of Captain Devlin and the Rapid's shipwrecked crew being on the Island; the wind being light from N W and the ship some seven miles off it would take some time to work up to the Island. This good fellow Underwood manned one of his whale boats placed provisions and clothing in it started for the Island and landed at the spot I expected, where myself and one of my sailors were seated, coming up and addressing me said - "Where is Captain Devlin", in reply I said "I suppose, I am much altered Joe", his remark never escaped my memory notwithstanding the fifty two years that have elapsed - "Good God if your poor Mother only saw you now." He took all the Rapid's people on board his ship and treated them with much kindness. We whaled for some time unsuccessfully. I informed Joe of the position of the Rapid reef, with the promise of good percentages if the Treasure could be obtained. I must not omit to mention, Underwood traded with the Islanders for my Sextant and two chronometers and gave them to me. The Avon was a slow sailer and not a weatherly vessel. Altho' we tried for some time to get the Rapid reef, the light Easterly winds and Westerly current kept the Avon far to the Westward of it.

I cannot miss mentioning the conduct of the Captain on the N W side of the Island which turned out to be the Tigress, Captain Mac- something, two or three of the Rapid's crew, managed to get down to the part where this fellow landed and informed him they were a portion of wrecked Rapid's crew and asked for provisions and clothing. Reply "no he had no clothing or provisions for them but would ship them" - their reply, "no if they never got off the Island". Contrast this man's conduct with the good Joe Underwood. Well as I observed, after whaling for a time unsuccessfully we shaped course for Sydney where we arrived a night in May 1841.

The custom of 4 & 6 months bills had been in vogue some time in Sydney in matters of commerce and I may say all other matters. I arrived home to find a general smash²² had commenced the beginning of the year and continued for some three years. My bills taken for cargoes of wheat, flour sugar etc. had all matured during my absence, and been dishonoured. I had intended on arrival to take ship and return to Rapid Reef and get the Treasure; the smashing stopped all this – to appease some of my creditors I was obliged to sell by auction the Treasure buried on the sand bank and wreck of the Rapid and cargo, the whole lot only realised some £700 or £800. Joe Underwood took command of a vessel some people who bought the treasure and wreck and cargo chartered and sailed for it at once, a dispute arose between Underwood and the Charterers when he insisted on being landed at Rotumah, the charterers proceeded to the Reef obtained a quantity of the Rapid's cargo and altho' they had digged the sand bank for a week without finding the treasure, they returned to Rotumah to get Joe Underwood as they considered he was the only man that could find it.

When sinking the studding-sail boom on the sandbank attaching bottle with names and address of Rapid's crew and passenger, I buried treasure NNE of this some –feet. Of this Underwood knew from me, having obtained him and returned to the reef they had not dug more than two hours under his direction before the doubloons and dollars turned up."

Edward Lucett was the purchaser of "the wreck and all thereto appertaining."²³ Captain Devlin had asserted to him that he had buried between four and five thousand dollars in the sands. Lucett set out on 17 June 1841 in the Curlew which he part-owned and eventually found the wreck and the spar and bottle included in which were the directions – "at so many paces east of the spar". They dug and found nothing. On the third day of digging he requested the master (presumably Captain Underwood) to try again and "advised him to work in the direction opposite to that given by the instructions". They recovered \$2918, not "four or five thousand" dollars. He also wrote, "October 27th. On the evening of this day, in consequence of the unmanageable conduct of the crew, who would persist in getting drunk in spite of all remonstrance... I came to the resolution of abandoning it."²⁴ Obviously Lucett's crew had found the cargo, also found by "the two prodigious Dutchmen" on the first day of the wreck and who, it will be recalled, were so robustly and effectively dealt with by Captain Devlin.

Arthur's Reminiscences continue:

“Having made a voyage in the Abercromby to Melbourne under charter to Turnbull, Orr & Co of Melbourne, and returned to Sydney, my next voyage was in barque Jean for a cargo, Sugar, Coffee and Rice to be purchased at Batavia Island of Java. While there the greater part of the crew attacked with yellow Jack and I buried half the number on shore and was laughed at by the old traders for having expended so much money, burying my sailors on shore when I might take them out to the Islet Eden some eight or nine miles NNE of Batavia... and commit their bodies to the deep.

Having completed the cargo some 600 tons of Sugar, Rice and Coffee sailed, called at Melbourne intending to dispose of some of it there, but no purchasers could be found to make it worthwhile breaking bulk. I sold it in Sydney, better I had never gone on the voyage. The “smashing” business told seriously on the Jean's cargo.

After this loaded the Hope at Newcastle N.S.W. with wool for London, giving a Power of Attorney to Donaldson, Dawes & Co of Sydney to sell her, the Hope in London, having received from Donaldson Dawes an advance on freight and ship payable in London. When ready for sea, gave the command of the Hope to a Captain Hews, formerly a commander in the China and Sydney trade. This fellow turned out a thorough sea robber. When rounding Cape Horn the sea carried away some of the Hope's bulwarks; he went into Rio colleague with a scoundrel there, gave Bottomry Bond on the ship for £3,000 @ 33 1/3%. It would have been best if my Attorneys in London had relinquished the Hope, to the Bond holders but they faithfully paid it and when they paid the portage Bill (wages) and had sold the ship, recovered freight. The A/C sales came out showing a balance debit of £800 thus I had lost the ship and balance of freight and was £800 in debt. I may mention the further scoundrelism and audacity of the man, Hews, who claimed and obtained my two chronometers belonging to the Hope. He bought in London the Maid of Athens and had the audacity to say he did so out of the Hope's Bottomry. My information is to the effect that in a fit of delirium tremens he jumped overboard and was drowned. I remark on this Hope and the man Hews case as a remarkable robbery, and regret that such a fellow should be of a profession to which I once belonged!

I will give notice here the £48,000 for my eight years sailing and trading , in twenty months had all disappeared, leaving me in possession of two chronometers, two sextants, some charts and five children. Alas for human thought and pecuniary accumulations. After the Hope business sailed in the Abercromby for the Bay of Islands, New Zealand and was employed carrying Her Majesty's mails and Emigrants between the respective colonies of Auckland, Wellington and Nelson and was so occupied about one year. Returned to Sydney and in Decr 1842 sailed in Abercromby for China with a small quantity of Sandalwood. I may mention before further proceeding that I sold in Batavia in 1841, a cargo of Sandalwood obtained in the south seas in the Piscator, proceeds invested in Sugar and Rice and sold in Sydney. Well then. Arrived in due course

in China, sold the Sandalwood, invested proceeds in Tea (200 tons measurement) and called at Melbourne, expecting to sell my small cargo of 200 tons measurement there, but alas for human expectations. Only one third could be sold in Melbourne and that of the worst part of it.

I cannot pass an incident of the voyage. I had contracted while in China the Hong Kong fever. After making Cape Leuwin I could no more go on deck to take observations for Latitude and Longitude, my long service Chief Officer and good sailor John Wright was no navigator. He was in a great way when he found the fever had got the best of me, and that I could no longer navigate. I remember at this time a period 49 years ago saying to good John Wright, well you must do the best you can, I am no longer any good to you. Cape Otway bears by E by N½ N1080 miles if the wind continues favorable you will make it in a week. John, in great glee came to my cabin before the day closed, and informed me he had found a Navigator in the person of the Cook. It was so, for altho' I could not get on deck to observe, I could check the Cook's navigation work, and found it was correct. He navigated the Abercromby into Hobson's Bay. Turnbull Orr & Co. my agents, I was carried on shore, and taken to Abbotsford, the residence of John Orr.

When the Doctor of the time, Dr. Hobson, was sent for, and after examination pronounced me gone that is to say my case was hopeless, but for my satisfaction and his, he would on the morrow get three of his medical brothers to examine me. On the morrow Three came, I remember two, Dr. Howitt and Dr. Sandford, I believe Dr. Campbell was the third; some time was occupied with this examination. In the evening came the amiable Dr. Hobson and informed me that his three medical friends had confirmed the opinion he formed of my case. I said I did not believe it (I always said this) but said the good little man – "while there is life there is hope could you go to Moreton Bay". I replied that having my ship in Hobson Bay I could go anywhere, then add the dear little Hobson "Start at once, but pray make your arrangements for this world with regard to your children, for I am afraid you can't live long". I again reiterated the old story. I did not believe it, but would do as he desired and at once made my Will in favor of my five children and forwarded it to James Devlin of Ryde Parramatta River. Less than seven months from that time disclosed the fact that I had nothing to leave the little ones. Well I was taken on board the Abercromby in the Bay and at once sailed for Moreton Bay. Favourable weather soon brought me on to the East Coast of N.S. Wales when I began to get stronger, and a few days before making Moreton Bay, was able to navigate the ship, arrived there, wrote to Captain Petty then in Sydney (he had formerly been in my employ) to come at once to Moreton and take command of the Abercromby, at same time wrote for the Susan to take me into the Clarence River where I had brothers with Stations; a sojourn of less than six months at the station cured me. So much for medical opinion forty nine years ago. On arrival in Sydney, found that I was hopelessly gone as far as the goods of this world are concerned. To Donaldson Dawes & Co. I gave the only valuable I had left (barring Chronometers, Sextant charts & children) a grant from the Queen of 5000 acres of land commencing on the Eastern border of Auckland and

extending Eastward. Donaldson remarked he would put it away in the safe and probably some day it would turn up a trump. I hope they did retain it, for the land some thirty years after became of great value. A friend estimated the value of the whole 5000 acres at £50,000 this in 1874; some of the 5000 acres in the vicinity of Auckland sold for £40 an acre.

What was it to be Commerce or father Neptune's Dominions. Well it turned out to be a combination of both. A new vessel built on the Clarence River by my friends and named the Martha & Elizabeth I took command of and commenced and continued sailing and trading between N. South Wales and the Port Philip Dependency for some eighteen months. Time came in the eighteen months when I could buy in Sydney a portion of the Martha's cargo, consisting of Cedar, Maize and Coal, the latter sold to my good and faithful friend Captain George Ward Cole, the Cedar & Maize sold by auction on the wharf by William Easy & Co.

Having ended my sailing and trading in the Martha and Elizabeth in the Port Philip trade, took command of the Abercromby and loaded in Melbourne a cargo of colonial growth for Mauritius, Flour, Salted Beef, Bran and mutton Hams with 30 tons of Potatoes grown at the Merri Creek, these latter were the only things of the cargo that paid. After selling a few dozen of the mutton Hams at a price that promised well for the bulk, ordered by the Authorities to take the lot out to the Bell Buoy outside the Harbor sea-ward, and pitch them overboard, as they considered them hurtful to health. Of course I was obliged to do as ordered. I had as passenger in the Abercromby a notable gentleman in Australia especially so in Port Philip, he was desirous of visiting his people in the Cape Colony, Charles Hobson Ebdon by name.

Adverse strong WSW wind off Leuwin put into Albany King Georges Sound into which came an Imperial Surveying vessel. Charles Hobson considering life on board the Man of War or Surveying vessel preferable to that on the Abercromby induced the Captain of the Surveying vessel to take him as passenger to Mauritius; both vessels left the Sound same day. I arrived three days in advance of the Man of War or Surveying and meeting Charles Hobson did a little "chaffing". Having finished with cargo of Abercromby handed command of her to William Petley who sailed for Bourbon and was wrecked there a week after leaving Mauritius.

I cannot miss an incident while sailing the Martha and Elizabeth in the Sydney & Port Philip trade. On one of my voyages outward for Sydney, among my passengers was Anthony Hordern in after time famous in the commercial world of Australasia.

Approaching the Rip, Port Philip heads which disappointed me in its magnitude, wind ESE, the Martha's first dive was into the Windlass when in the act of hauling in weather fore brace to throw foreyard aback and so reduce speed through breakers, the next dive of the Martha away went the whole concern of Masts, Yards, Sails & Rigging to leeward alongside. Anthony placed at the top of the companion was something to be remembered, the fright depicted in his countenance took the attention of the busy sailors. Being well over on the Point Lonsdale side at the time

of the dismasting first of the ebb going out at the rate of 6 knots to the SE the Martha and everything alongside drifted out to the SE into comparatively smooth water when I saved sails, rigging and yards. The dismasting left a stump of some 20 ft of the foremast and the Bowsprit, by the returning flood and seabreeze some six hours after dismasting, had crossed foreyard on the foremast stump, and carried foretopmast staysail to stem and so returned to Hobsons Bay. Anthony on arrival deserted the Martha and Elizabeth and took passage in a barque bound for Sydney. Altho I had to obtain my fore and main mast from the forests of the Dandenong and refit the Martha, I arrived in Sydney the day after Anthony, and meeting him in George Street the following day gave him considerable chaffing on the subject of his deserting the Martha & Elizabeth, and forfeiture of passage money. He acknowledged his great fear on the morning of the dismasting and expected to be drowned and would not chance the Martha & Elizabeth again.

An incident of the first voyage in the Martha & Elizabeth after arrival in Melbourne, passing up Queen Street to the office of my Agents, Turnbull Orr & Co. behold in the distance coming down Queen Street the amiable little Hobson, going to see John Orr. Meeting at the office door and exchanging salutations, chaffing, I said what do you think of yourself and your three medical brethren; his only exclamations were "Marvellous, Wonderful". I continued in a chaffing way, snapping my two fingers, said I would not give that for you and your medical brethren, barring two things; he wished to know the two things. I explained to him, I need not mention it here.

An incident I cannot pass over. The Avon the barque that rescued self and Rapid's crew from the Island of Rotumah was owned and commanded by Captain George Ward Cole who whaled successfully in the Flores and Arafura seas took his Oil to Sydney, sold it, and ship to Robert Duke & Co. of Dukes wharf (in those days). Captain George Ward Cole soon after the sale of his oil and ship proceeded to the New Dependency of N.S. Wales Port Philip and there commenced business.

The Guiana brought a small cargo of Sugar to Melbourne, difficulty in getting clear of small cargoes. For about eighteen months conducted the business of Robert Jamieson & Co. receiving consignments from the United Kingdom, selling them and making remittances in wool and tallow; about the after part of 1847 proceeded with some Carpenters, rigging and sails to the Great Barrier Island, New Zealand. I chartered and commanded the William brig for the occasions, these proceedings to finish & fit out the Stirlingshire of 510 tons; having completed and rigged this vessel proceeded to Auckland thence to Hobartown loaded cargo of timber; proceeded and sold same in Adelaide; thence to Launceston where I sold the Stirlingshire to Major Wentworth & others who just then possessed the Mania of proceeding to the New Eldorado in California; however, they could not fulfill and I subsequently sold to Ducrow & Co. of Launceston. Having disposed of the Stirlingshire returned to headquarters Sydney.

Observation

It was 1848 not 1847 when Devlin arrived at Great Barrier Island and Captain Jeremiah Nagle was the commander, to organise the completion of the Stirlingshire.

Stirlingshire arrived up the Derwent River on 9 February, 1849.[1] It is almost inconceivable that the Stirlingshire would not have called in at Nagle's Cove on the voyage up the east coast from Auckland. While there is no absolute proof that this was so, the mediocre voyage time of 22 days from Auckland calculated from the departure date of 18 January published in the New Zealander[2] and the departure date from New Zealand of 23 January published in the Hobart Town Courier [3] could well mean that a five day stop was made at Nagle's Cove. Both papers also mention that the Stirlingshire was in ballast.

Devlin was accompanied on the voyage across the Tasman by his second wife Esther, [4] their two young children[5], with a female servant, a Colin Ward, and Peter Abercrombie, while fifteen crewmen worked the vessel[6], making a total of twenty-two persons aboard.

While the Stirlingshire made her way south-westwards, far away to the north, Captain Nagle, after departing Fiji on 22 January on the William brig, sailed for Port Jackson, arriving there on 4 February, 1849. Despite the prevalence of cyclones at that time of year, Devlin nevertheless must have had sufficient confidence in him to send him via the Fijian Islands. The carpenters and riggers who fitted out the Stirlingshire were, very likely, returned to their homes in Sydney by this means and their work acknowledged by a voyage to these islands.

Just twelve days after arriving at Hobart Town the Stirlingshire was auctioned off by the firm of Lowes & Machmichael. on 21 February 1849, bought by Arthur Devlin and registered on 9 March in Hobart No.12/1849.[7] Arthur had already advanced £2000 to the cash-strapped Abercrombies while the vessel was still on the stocks back in New Zealand to get it launched, fitted out and sold[8]. It could be that Devlin got a bargain, for at the time of the auction, several large vessels were then under construction in Hobart and approaching completion, which appears to have led to a discernible dip in the economy.[9] In the New Zealander newspaper a month after the auction, appears an item:

“The “Stirlingshire”, from this port, we hear, was offered for sale, and purchased by Captain Devlin for three thousand pounds.”

Whether the auction and purchase by Devlin was a device to establish the ship's real market value for a subsequent sale or to take advantage of the Abercrombies' weak position must be left for the

reader to speculate about.

During the two weeks after registering the vessel, Devlin, using a local agent, J. Waterhouse, had obtained and loaded a cargo of timber and an extra fourteen passengers[10] (in total 20) for Adelaide, passing down the Derwent River on 16 March, 1849, five obviously busy weeks after their first arrival[11]. Also on board was the mail for Adelaide, the close-off date having been published as 14 March. [12]

It was not to be an easy voyage for on 28 March, 1849, through “stress of weather”, the Stirlingshire called in to George Town at the entrance to the Tamar River, before continuing the voyage to Adelaide on 31 March, reaching that port on 8 April 1849.[13] Adelaide had previously been known as ‘Port Misery’ for the lack of a wharf, but earlier in his Reminiscences, Devlin had recorded delivery of a cargo of New Zealand timbers in the ship Adelaide from which McLaren’s Wharf had been built. This facility, no doubt to everyone’s relief, finished the practice of passengers being carried ashore on the backs of sailors.[14]

Devlin’s voyage from Hobart to Adelaide seems to have been as much an advertisement for the vessel he wanted to sell as turning a profit from it. His home at that time was in Sydney, and the weeks of winter weather in the Tasman Sea and Bass Strait could not have been easy on his family. Following the sale of the Stirlingshire at Launceston in June 1849, the new owners were Frederick Augustus Du Croz [15] (48 shares) and Captain Christopher Gwatkin[16] (16 shares). Captain Joseph Ayers was engaged to take the Stirlingshire with its crew of twenty[17] to Sydney on 5 July where it arrived 8 July with a large cargo and five passengers[18] from Launceston having taken only sixty-seven hours (heads to heads)[19], an average of about 7.5 knots.

In Sydney, the Stirlingshire was (presumably) hauled out, “her masts properly stayed, her trim thoroughly ascertained, and all the little minutiae observed” and coppered below the waterline, (as had been previously indicated in a report in ‘The New Zealander’[20]), these operations not having been done or completed in New Zealand[21]. On 27 July, Ayers continued on to Newcastle to load 350 tons of coal for Launceston. However, the vessel was noticed to be lying at that port on Monday 13 August, not having then discharged her ballast[22]. Ayers took the Stirlingshire back up the Tamar arriving at Launceston on 5 September 1849.

Meanwhile the Devlins and servant were still in Launceston, about to board as passengers, on 16 September, the 200 ton steamer ‘Shamrock’ to make their way via Melbourne on the 23rd, Twofold Bay on the 25th, and home to Sydney the next day.[23]

After this time, Captain Ayers drops from the scene and the minority part-owner, Captain Christopher Gwatkin, an experienced and respected Master Mariner, well-known on the South-East Australian coast over many years, becomes the vessel's commander as it is prepared and advertised for a service between Launceston and London. The following appeared in the 'Launceston Courier' newspaper's shipping column on 26 October 1849.

“STIRLINGSHIRE

This fine ship advertised for London has been docked and put in first class condition and placed on the berth as a regular trader between this Port and London. Mr. Du Croz has the intent of introducing to the London trade, the first vessel owned in this Port, and we would like to see her manned and officered by colonists as a matter of course. Colonial interests will receive to the vessel a good freight, etc.

The Stirlingshire was built of the best material, hardwood below the waterline, with topsides of kauri pine, at New Zealand by a party of experienced shipwrights and has a large scantling for her tonnage but her stern might have been better planned. She has a space of 7 feet between decks. No doubt on her arrival at London she will be creditably classed.”

Frederick Du Croz was just 27 years old at this time[24], a successful businessman and active in Launceston politics, being a strong supporter of the anti-transportation movement and later a co-founder in November 1853 of the Launceston Immigration Aid Society.

I should have mentioned in order that I owned in conjunction with Captain Alexander Fotheringham the brig Diana built at his slip, sailed her some time between Melbourne & Sydney and sold to Joseph Raleigh & Co. of Melbourne. About this time chartered the barque - Captain Hew Burn, loaded a cargo of Cedar and general merchandise for Adelaide and after discharge of cargo chartered her at 80/- per ton to load Copper Ore for the United Kingdom.

In 1846 took passage in the Emma commander Henry Thos. Fox, for the purpose of bringing from Adelaide the John Pirie a Brigantine of some 150 tons which I intended to and did sell in Sydney. Archibald Michie (now Sir Archibald Michie) an Eminent Barrister of Sydney had voyaged in the Emma and wrote articles to the press, the heading of which was "A sick man in search of copper". He often spoke of Captain Fox the captain of the Emma the vessel he went to Adelaide in, four words always took my fancy; "The amiable Fox aforesaid". Arrived in Adelaide by the Emma commander The Amiable Fox Aforesaid, commenced to refit the Pirie, having completed such, took on board a cargo of Flour and sailed for Sydney. Altho' the John Pirie was one of the slowest of sailers, I made the fastest passage on record for a sailing vessel viz. 5½ days. Starting from Port Adelaide with a good whole sail NE wind carrying same

down Gulf St. Vincent to Cape Jervis veering then to North steady at that until Cape Northumberland was sighted when the wind veered to NW steady breeze just sufficient to carry all sail to, sighted Cape Otway and passed same with the same steady NW wind and smooth sea until Wilson's Promontory was passed, when the wind veered to West. All sail could be carried this favorable wind and sea continued until I made Cape Howe my splendid N.Wester ceased and a dead calm followed for two hours, when up sprang a good and whole sail breeze from the S.W which carried me to the south reef of Sydney heads, veering to the Southward then hauled the John Pirie on a wind to pass South of the Sow and Pigs. I discovered for the first time what a slow sailer she was on a wind. I mention the details of winds and sea to account for this fast passage in a slow sailing vessel, it's about a thousand to one against it happening again.

Arrived in Sydney, sold my John Pirie to James Cooke, my cargo of flour by auction. I should have mentioned in due order my sale of the Lady Mary Pelham. The South Australian Commissioners, with the inauguration of the New Colony of South Australia had whaling vessels of which the Lady Mary Pelham was one. She had previously been one of the Falmouth Packets. John MacLaren the Manager commissioned me to sell her, and stores in one of the Australian colonies. I took command of her and searched firstly in Launceston Tasmania where I was successful and sold the Lady Mary Pelham to the well known and respected James Henty & Co. who employed her in whaling trade. Conveyed my traps and tools of trade to the noted William, of those days a trader between Sydney and Launceston, my passage being taken by that vessel for Sydney my headquarters.

After the sale of John Pirie and cargo, remained some months on shore doing some business there in conjunction with the Millionaire Merchant, Robert Campbell, tertius of Bligh street, Sydney, purchasing and reselling cargoes of Kauri timber turning over the nimble nine pence as Ben Boyd used to remark.

In speaking of dear Ben I cannot pass over an incident in connection with Benjamin Boyd, as I presume most Australians know of his at one time Twofold Bay possessions, a Township he built there and called Boyd Town, also a Lighthouse he built there, his whaling ships refitted there. He took great interest in the aboriginal tribe at and about Twofold bay. King of the tribe died, when Ben named the next King and had made an elaborate crown and appointed a day for the coronation, came down in his beautiful Yacht Wanderer of 4 guns, had two of his steamers, two whalers, and some sailing craft assembled at South Boyd. The writer put into the bay a few hours before the coronation; bound to Melbourne in the brig Diana, off Green Cape came up suddenly a strong SSW header, I up stick and ran for that good shelter Twofoldbay some 17 miles distant, my friend dear Ben gave me an invitation to the coronation of James the 2nd.

On a beautiful flat near the beach South Boyd, a ring formed, assembled the Twofoldbay tribe, all the ships crews, the inhabitants of Twofold bay, all told

come 800 persons. In the center of the ring was placed a chair where the coming Darkie King took seat; approaching him with a darkie crown bearer was the tall and handsome man Benjamin Boyd at this period. It was really painful to look on the Darkie about to be crowned, it appeared at times he would fall from his seat. His ordinary thoroughly black face seemed half white; this discomfiture of the black fellow did not prevent Ben from delivering his powerful speech - a speech of some 30 minutes duration, lamenting the loss by death of King ... his long and good reign, his confidence in James the 2nd the man he was about to crown. James Boyd the brother of the great Ben standing near me said "are you listening to Ben, is he not going it". I replied "I am paying strict attention, its grand". After placing the crown on the Darkie's head, he asked for three cheers and long live James the 2nd, at signals as arranged went forth a Royal Salute from the Yacht Wanderer. After the ceremony which greatly pleased dear Ben, a glass of rum for the sailors and blackfellows. Lunch and champagne for the Whites.

The wind from the SSW having partly subsided that night, tripped next morning and started for the NSWales Dependency Port Philip. Complimenting my friend Ben on the elaborateness of the coronation, the powerful speech he delivered on the occasion. The Diana here mentioned built at Fotheringhams patent slip was a new vessel this her first trip. I had much trouble with her in some of the gales in Bass Strait, two or three times she nearly turned the Turtle with me; as a matter of keeping above water I at last sent topgallant masts and yards down. After sailing her for a time, sold her to Joseph Raleigh & Co. of Melbourne who had her sailed some time in Sydney & Melbourne trade. I believe she is yet above water as a lighter somewhere in Hobsons Bay; the man that took command after I sold her had many frights between Sydney & Melbourne. I warned him she was overmasted, he had the lowermasts reduced, cut 8 ft. off each before he would again venture to sea in her."

Observation

Certificate of Captain Arthur Devlin

I, Arthur Devlin, have commanded merchant vessels from the port of Sydney, for the past thirteen years, and am thoroughly acquainted with Twofold Bay, and give it as my practical opinion, that the Government anchorage is most unsafe. I once anchored there, in the year 1840, in the brig Rapid, when it came to blow a gale from the S.W., and had a very narrow escape from being driven on shore, and was obliged to pay out ninety fathoms chain to a first, and sixty fathoms to a second anchor. In 1844 I came into Twofold Bay, at night, and being ignorant of the situation of Boyd Town, which had been only recently commenced, I anchored off the Government township, but before daylight it came on to blow a heavy gale from the W.S.W., and had to let go a second anchor with 90 fathoms chain; but, being anxious for the vessel, I took advantage of the first lull, got up my anchors, and worked over to Boyd Town,

where I lay in company with the Hawk for five days, during a very heavy gale from the S.W., but were perfectly sheltered, and I feel assured, that had I attempted to have remained at the Government anchorage I must have gone on shore. I may also mention, in confirmation of my opinion of the Government anchorage, that about nine years ago, I came into Twofold Bay during a S.W. gale, and found that the Friendship had gone on shore a day or two previous. The trade at present is from Boyd Town, and, in my opinion will continue at it, on account of the road from Menaroo securing that traffic, and it must necessarily become one of the principal sperm whale depots in the colony; already there are nine whalers belonging to Mr. Boyd, which ought to bring in at least £40,000 a year; and the Americans will also, like Van Diemen's Land ships, frequent it for provisions and refreshments, especially water, which is only to be obtained from Mr. Boyd's establishment, the Government township being entirely destitute.[25]

In 1850 Arthur and his younger brother, Patrick, went on a speculative trip to San Francisco, then at its height of attractiveness resulting from the discovery of gold in California. Arthur and Patrick sailed as passengers on the *Constant* which embarked from Sydney on 29 April 1850. The ship's manifest shows that R. [Robert] Campbell and A. Devlin had in the cargo, nearly everything to build a town, and to stock it when built, plus horses, carts and drays to convey the goods to the selected location.²⁵

Apparently the San Francisco journey was a successful one. Arthur did not stay there long. He bought the barque *Emma* and sailed to Sydney carrying seventy passengers whose passage money more-or-less covered the cost of the vessel. His financial and general well-being had obviously made a comeback in the latter years of the 1840s.

Reasons for Arthur's move to Melbourne are not difficult to find. In November 1850, Britain had granted the Port Phillip District separation from New South Wales and its own status as a colony. The residents of the new colony had fought long and hard for the decision. They had objected to be governed by New South Wales without having a say and to seeing the taxes they paid being spent elsewhere. The population in 1851 was 77,345; ten years later it was over 540,000. Gold had been discovered.

When Edward Hargreaves returned to Sydney from San Francisco in 1850 on the *Emma* with Captain Devlin in command there was another passenger on board who may have had an influence on the Captain's future. He was James William Esmond who had been a mailcoach driver. He had not been successful in California but the country reminded him of the country districts of Victoria. He was soon to be known worldwide for his discovery of gold there. By the end of 1851 gold was being carted into Melbourne at the rate of two tons a week. Digging for gold and providing for necessities for the miners became the prime business. It was in this environment of riches and rapid growth that Arthur formed a partnership with Captain George Ward

Cole to run the ferry steamer *Gem* between Port Melbourne and Willamstown. He had moved his family to live in the Melbourne suburb of Richmond and he obviously prospered. His daughters were prominent in Melbourne society.

Arthur had interests outside the steamer *Gem*. For a time he was a gold buyer, once more in partnership with Robert Campbell and later Devlin & Crawford, Merchants, had offices at 3 Queen Street, Melbourne between 1853 and 1856. In 1857-58, Arthur operated at the same address on his own account.

Observation

In retrospect, Arthur might have prospered equally as well had he remained in New South Wales which he might have done had he taken Edward Hargreaves (or Hargraves) more seriously. Hargreaves realised that the geology of the goldfields he was seeing in California looked remarkably similar to that of an area in New South Wales that he had seen some years before. Seized with a conviction to prove his theory, he rushed back to San Francisco to find passage back to Australia. On all sides, people he told of his idea derided him.

“...I still worked away at mining in California successfully, and very many still worked away at mining and very many times told my friend Davison that he would come over to my diggings in New South Wales. I then expected every day a ship would bring news of the discovery; however no such tidings reached us, and in the fall of 1850, just as the snow was about to commence, I made up my mind to return to Sydney, and wished Mr. Davison to come also, assuring him that I would point out a gold-field near Bathurst. His answer was, ‘I am in a gold-field: go you and find your gold-field in New South Wales, and then I will come to it’...”

“...to San Francisco and took my passage in the barque *Emma*, Captain Arthur Devlin, a native of the colony, who with Joseph Walford Esq., was the owner of the ship, and in the bay of San Francisco, on board the barque *Emma* I reiterated my previously expressed opinions, and boldly stated the object of my voyage, to the great amusement of the Captain in particular, who frequently got up a joke at my expense as the ‘*Hargreaves gold-hunting freak*’, as he was pleased jocosely to call it. I was lodging a few days at Mr. Underwood’s establishment, where I entertained some of my American friends at a dinner there, again before I boarded the ship. I asserted my belief in the auriferous wealth of New South Wales. Mr. Davison was present. I also in a conversation with William Abercombie Esq., on that day expressed the same opinions (Mr. Abercrombie is now in Melbourne, his address is Brasnell’s Hotel, Lonsdale Street). Well, Gentlemen, I arrived in Sydney on 7th January, 1851...”[26]

As luck would have it, there is even a brief record of the voyage by way of an article in the Sydney Shipping Gazette:

“barque Emma, 295 tons, Captain Devlin from San Francisco 23rd November 1850, arrived Sydney 7th January 1851

The Emma:- Captain Devlin has kindly favoured us with the following interesting account of this vessel's passage:— The above vessel sailed from the anchorage on the 23rd November, 1850, and has made the passage over in forty-five days, and from land to land in thirty-seven days, having been beating off a lee shore the first seven days after leaving the port, with gales veering between south-west and west-south-west, and a mountainous sea from the westward. She ran from the land to the Line[27] in sixteen days, which she crossed in 156'50 west, carrying strong winds the whole time between north-east and east, passed seventy miles to the eastward of the Navigator group[28], and within one mile of the island of Vavau[29] ; sighted Turtle Island,[30] and carried moderate winds between north-east and east-north-east to the extreme of the Southern Tropic, when I experienced a series of moderate gales between west-north-west and north-west, accompanied with much thunder, lightning and rain. Barometer receded to 29'40 and stood so for six days in continuance. Sighted Lord Howe's Island on the 1st January, and experienced light south-west winds and fine weather for several days. On the 4th had a strong southerly gale, which lasted eighteen hours, when the wind became light at south-east to east, with fine weather, until I made land yesterday of Newcastle. Made the run for the meridian of Sandwich Islands to Sydney Heads in twenty-seven days.”[31]

Hargraves made his way over the Blue Mountains until he came out on the bare plains near the town of Orange, 250 km west of Sydney, New South Wales. There, on the 12th February, 1851, in a place now called Ophir,[32] he found the yellow metal. The Australian gold-rush was on.

Other discoveries in Victoria, and the biggest of all in September, 1851 at Ballarat, New South Wales, not far from Melbourne, and then again later Van Diemen's Land, provided more stimuli to the economies of the New Zealand colonies and Maori businesses than the goldfields of North America. It coincided with, and affected positively, the climb out of the economic recession that had held sway since the early 1840s. It also 'caused the permanent cessation of transportation of convicts from Britain to Australia by taking away the fear of it, and altering the relative cost of maintaining convicts.'[33]

Arthur continued to take an active interest in shipping affairs. He supported the establishment of a marine board to control the affairs of Port Phillip. As early as 1853 the Melbourne City Council and the Chamber of Commerce had resolved to see such a body formed, but it was not until 1877 that the Marine Board was set up.²⁶ On 6 August 1856 Arthur appeared before a Parliamentary Select committee which had been appointed to inquire into the adequacy of lighthouses along the Australian coast. Arthur's answers revealed a vast experience of the dangers and the means by which those dangers could be reduced. For example in relation to King's Island he said,

“No prudent mariner would go there from choice, but ships are frequently, in running down from the westward, much further to the southward than they

*expect. They may not have had observations for a few days previously. In my own case, on three occasions, I found myself south of New Year Islands when I considered myself some twelve or fifteen miles off Cape Otway; on one occasion, I should have been wrecked but for a very smart man-of-war brig under me. I was enabled to carry a press of sail and get her off the coast. There was a sandy beach which showed I was off King's Island, close on a lee shore... I would certainly have a light on the New Year Island to show danger."*²⁷

Arthur Devlin became one of the first members of the newly formed Athenaeum Club in 1868. "Records show that Captain Devlin was a member of the first Committee elected by the members and that he served for at least ten years... Captain Devlin played a major part in the Club's foundation and... he was held in the highest regard."²⁸

In fact he was somewhat the envy of his fellow-members because of the adventurous life he had led; in later years he became known as "the father of the Athenaeum Club".²⁹

Arthur married three times, first in 1832 to Ann Hudson, daughter of Robert and Ann Hudson. They had five children, Mary Ann (b. 1832), Arthur (b.1833), Priscilla Martha (b. 1834), Charles Robert (b. 1836) and Elizabeth Agnes (b. 1841). His wife Ann died in 1841 and the toddler Elizabeth survived only to 1843.

In 1846 he married Esther McLelland, "a native of the County of Armagh, Ireland." Four children came along, Adolphus William (b. 1847), Frederick C. (b. 1848 : d. 1852?), Augusta Jessie (b. 1849) and Frank C. (b. 1852 : d. 1852).

Winifred Corry was almost fifty years younger than Arthur when she became his third wife. Two daughters, May Claudine (b. c.1877) and Jessie Arthurine (b. c.1882) were born to them but Winifred did not survive very long after Jessie's birth. Arthur was living at Michael Street, North Fitzroy, but made arrangements for the two girls to be cared for by Mrs Nannie Watson of "Bungunyah" Hastings, Victoria. This arrangement was still in force when Arthur, early in 1873, "...at that time, a hearty, hale old gentleman met with an accident at the Opera House through falling down a flight of stairs; he sustained a fracture of the knee, besides several internal injuries. From that time he became an invalid and was attended with assiduous care by his old friend and club companion, Dr. Fyffe."³⁰

Before his accident and after the abolition of the Steam Navigation Board it was said of Arthur, "...that he passed most of his time at the Athenaeum Club which became practically his home. He was always ready to join in a game of billiards or cards and loved sports which required nerve as well as skill. He took hot baths regularly and it was said of him at Kyte's that he and Mr. Harry Smith could stand the cold shower longer than any other frequenters of the place. The Captain used to come out of the ordeal skipping and dancing and sportively challenging the bathmen to box – lively tactics for the veteran of 82 he then was."³¹

Arthur died at Hastings on 27 August 1893. Only three of his eleven children survived him, Mary Ann (Malleeson) of the first marriage and May Claudine and Jessie Arthurine of the third. Notably, Augusta Jessie of the second marriage, married

Alfred Tennyson D'Orsay Dickens, the fourth son of Charles Dickens. Jessie was killed in 1878 in an accident while she was driving through Hamilton, Victoria, in her pony carriage, leaving two young daughters, Kathleen and Violet. These two girls never married and in later life moved to England where they died in 1950 and 1951.

Adolphus William, also of the second marriage, became a bank clerk and in 1868 was working in Daylesford where he met Mary Hepburn, a twin daughter of John Stuart Hepburn of Hepburn Springs, Victoria, thus forming a link with another pioneer family. Adolphus died aged 39 and subsequently Mary (and their daughter Lilian) sailed to England to live for the rest of her life.

Arthur had performed another service to his family and to his country. He had caused a meeting of his youngest sister, Martha and Captain Thomas Beckford Simpson, lately of the Honourable East India Company when he arrived in Sydney on the *Bronte* in 1840. Arthur gave him command of the barque *Hope*, having in mind a role in the island trade. Beckford and Martha married on 7 June 1842 and six children were added to the family, two of whom also entered seafaring life. Captain Beckford Simpson went on to make his own mark on Australian maritime history.

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- 26 J.C Noble, "Port Phillip Pilots and Defences", Melbourne 1973
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- 28 John Pacini, (historian and later co-author of "Windows on Collins Street, a History of the Athenaeum Club") in a letter dated 2 May 1989 to the author
- 29 "The Scottish Australasian", 2 September 1918
- 30 The Argus, Monday, 28 November 1893
- 31 "The Scottish Australasian", 2 September 1918.

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- [1] Hobart Town Courier mentioned in Shipping Arrivals and Departures, Tasmania', Vol. III, 1843-50, p.151. Graeme Broxam, 1998.
- [2] The New Zealander newspaper, 20th Jan. 1849 , p. 2, col. 4.
- [3] Hobart Town Courier, mentioned in 'Shipping Arrivals and Departures, Tasmania', Vol. III, 1843-50, p.151. Graeme Broxam 1998.
- [4] Nee McLelland, a native of County Armagh, Ireland- married 1846 'Multiple Stains', p. 180 Devlin. See Appendix X.
- [5] Most likely the children are Esther's; Adolphus William Devlin born 1847, and Frederick E. born 1848 died 1852, 'Multiple Stains', p. 182, Devlin.
- [6] Hobart Town Courier mentioned in Shipping Arrivals and Departures, Tasmania', Vol. III, 1843-50, p. 151. Graeme Broxam, 1998.
- [7] Hobart Town Courier mentioned in 'Shipping Arrivals and Departures, Tasmania', Vol. III, 1843-50, p.151. Graeme Broxam, 1998.
- [8] Letter dated 11 June 1849 Jeremiah Nagle to Donald McLean (Alexander Turnbull Library, MS-Papers-0032 folders 471. Nagle, J. (?) Auckland.
- [9] Introduction to Shipping Arrivals and Departures, Tasmania', Vol. III, 1843-50, p. ix, Graeme Broxam, 1998.
- [10] Abercrombie, cabin; Mr. Collins, cabin; B.Coole, T.Dixon, W.Fletcher, Miss Forrest, Mrs.Frayne and child, J.Fuison, Mrs.Devlin and two children and servant, cabin; Mr.Nowell, cabin; J.Herbert, E.Jones, J.Sands, J.L.Smith, J.Sowell, G.Wallace.
- [11] Hobart Town Courier mentioned in Shipping Arrivals and Departures, Tasmania', Vol. III, 1843-50, p. 151. Graeme Broxam, 1998.
- [12] Shipping Arrivals and Departures, Tasmania', Vol. III, 1843-50, p. 414. Graeme Broxam, 1998.
- [13] Shipping Arrivals and Departures, Tasmania', Vol. III, 1843-50, p. 151. Graeme Broxam. 1998.
- [14] 'Multiple Stains', Devlin. p. 166.
- [15] A ship-owner and merchant with London connections.
- [16] The Southern Cross, 3August 1849.
- [17] Philip Angel; Robert Archibald; Joseph Ayers, (Master); F.Cooper; Henry Gill; William Holloway; William Jones; H.T.Keffin,(Master); Robert McBride; Peter Mansen; Alex Miller; G.W. Parrott; James Phillips; John Roberts; Thomas Russell; Hunber Shanks,

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- (the only one of the crew not previously employed aboard the Stirlingshire); John Smith; James Speids; James Stewart; John West. Source: Archives Office of Tasmania.
- [18] Passengers were Philip Angel (a passenger employed as crew during voyage?); Peter Drew; Michael Green; Joseph Tropparth and P. Dunn. Source: Archives Office of Tasmania and State Records Authority, NSW, Shipping Masters Office, passengers arriving 1855 - 1922.
- [19] Hawkins
- [20] The New Zealander, 3 January 1849, p. 2, columns 2,3.
- [21] Sydney Morning Herald, 26 September 1849.
- [22] The Shipping Gazette and Sydney General Trade List, Vol. 283, Saturday, 18 August, p. 3, col. 3.
- [23] Sydney Morning Herald, 26 September 1849.
- [24] Born London 4 December 1821.
- [25] William Henry Wells, A Geographical Dictionary or Gazetteer of the Australian Colonies: Their Physical and Political Geography: Together with a Brief Notice of all the Capitals Principal Towns, and Villages. W.& F. Ford, 1848, pp. 78-9
- [26] 'The Discovery and Geognosy of Gold Deposits in Australia' by Simpson Davison, published 1860, pp. 83-4.
- [27] The Equator
- [28] Samoa
- [29] An island belonging to Tonga, approximately 160 n.m. North-North-East of the capital, Nuku'alofa.
- [30] Vatoa Island - belongs to Fiji, located between capitals of Fiji and Tonga.
- [31] Sydney Shipping Gazette, Volume 8, Number 356 , 11 Jan. 1851, pp. 350 355.
- [32] After the name of King Solomon's fabulous mines.
- [33] Fatal Shore p. 561.