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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my gratitude to Hazel Wilkinson for her detailed and comprehensive proof-reading of the introduction and my transcripts of both versions of the Memorandoms, which has saved me from a number of typographical errors. I am grateful to UCL Library’s Special Collections for permission to reproduce this transcript of manuscripts in their possession, and for their continuing support. Without the expertise of colleagues at UCL Creative Media Services, who are digitising the Bentham Papers for the Transcribe Bentham project, the excellent images of the manuscripts would not be available.

I would also like to thank my colleagues at the Bentham Project for their support and encouragement, and for humouring me in my fascination with this text. Dr Michael Quinn read both the transcripts and the introduction, providing a number of extremely useful suggestions. The TEI scheme for online presentation of the text was devised by Dr Kristopher Grint, and I am extremely grateful for his invaluable time and assistance in solving the various issues arising with my encoding.

In attempting to identify the Aboriginal peoples encountered by the escapees, I have used the Map of Aboriginal Australia, created by David Horton. I am grateful to Dr Kristyn Harman for her advice on this issue.

Any errors of fact and interpretation are my own. I would be very glad to receive any comments from readers, or further information which might be used to improve this resource.

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January 2014
NOTE ON THE
PRESENTATION OF THE TEXT

Identifiers for the manuscripts on which the text is based appear on the right-hand side of the text. The numerals [169-202], for instance, refer to Box clxix, folio 202, in the Bentham Papers, University College London Library. Clicking on these numerals will direct the reader to the relevant digital manuscript image.

I have retained the original documents' spelling and punctuation. Quotations given in the introduction are taken from the original version of the narrative, and the references to the corresponding page of the fair copy are provided in the footnotes. Square brackets indicate editorial insertions.

Where the Memorandoms mention the passage of time, I have attempted to provide approximate dates in both the transcripts and the introduction. After the escapees reach Cape York, however, it becomes impossible to continue to do so.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HO</td>
<td>Home Office Criminal Registers</td>
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<tr>
<td>HRA</td>
<td>Historical Records of Australia</td>
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<tr>
<td>ML</td>
<td>Mitchell Library, Sydney, New South Wales</td>
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<td>NA</td>
<td>National Archives, UK</td>
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<td>SLNSW</td>
<td>State Library of New South Wales</td>
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<td>SRNSW</td>
<td>State Records New South Wales</td>
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<tr>
<td>UC</td>
<td>Bentham Papers, University College London Library Special Collections. Roman numerals refer to boxes in which the papers are placed, Arabic to the leaves within each box</td>
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MAP

By accessing this map, readers can view places which Martin and the other escapees visited during their escape (blue markers), and places mentioned in the text (red markers).
INTRODUCTION: THE MEMORANDOMS OF JAMES MARTIN

Presented here, for the first time, is a detailed annotated edition of the Memorands of James Martin, the only extant first-hand account of perhaps the most famous escape by convicts transported to Australia. The bare facts of this episode are as follows: on the evening of 28 March 1791, Martin, in company with fellow prisoners William Bryant, his wife Mary Bryant (née Broad) and their two children Charlotte and Emanuel, William Allen, Samuel Bird alias John Simms, Samuel Broom alias John Butcher, James Cox alias Rolt, Nathaniel Lillie, and William Morton, stole the governor’s six-oared cutter. In it, the party sailed out of Port Jackson, up and along the eastern and northern coasts of the Australian continent, crossed the Gulf of Carpentaria, and landed at Kupang, in West Timor, on 5 June. There they successfully (for a while, at least) posed as the survivors of a shipwreck, and enjoyed the hospitality of their Dutch hosts. Theirs was an incredible feat of endurance and seamanship, in surviving a two-month journey of over 5,000 kilometres in an open boat.

The documents, and Jeremy Bentham and convict transportation

Martin’s Memorands are part of University College London’s Bentham Papers collection, in which there are two versions of the narrative. The first is the original (and an accompanying facsimile copy of it), located in Box 169, folios 179 to 201, enclosed in a folder on which is written ‘Journal (original) of J. Martin who in company with 12 others escaped from Botany Bay—on 20th March, 1791’.1 The second is an edited fair copy in the same box, at folios 202 to 205.

The original is twenty-three pages long, and is written on small pieces of paper in three different hands. When the document was

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1 The date on the folder is erroneous: the prisoners absconded on 28 March 1791.
foliated, two pages were numbered out of order: page two of the narrative is folio 181, while the third page is at folio 180. It is in an informal, colloquial style, and was likely written down from dictation. On the verso of folio 197 (page nineteen of the original version) is a note about payment for a ‘pair of Wheels’ dated March 1791, and on the verso of folio 198 (page twenty) is an address; the Memorandoms seem to have been written on whatever paper was to hand, as these two estrays do not appear to have anything to do with the narrative. The Memorandoms end with the surviving escapees having been returned to England as absconders, and their being examined before Justice Nicholas Bond on 30 June 1792. As such, though the narrative is undated, it was most likely written at some point between after the hearing before Bond, and 2 November 1793, when Allen, Broom alias Butcher, Lillie, and Martin were released by proclamation from Newgate gaol. The Catalogue of the Bentham Papers compiled by A. Taylor Milne suggests that the Memorandoms were written circa 1795, but there is no evidence for this dating.²

The narrative is written in three distinct but unknown hands. Charles Blount, who prepared a version of the Memorandoms for publication in 1937, erred in his suggestion that the document was written by four individuals.³ Blount is correct that the first eight pages are in the hand of one person, which is succeeded by that of a second on the ninth page. The first hand then briefly resumes writing at the top of page ten, before the second hand once again takes up the pen. Blount believed that a third hand begins writing on the fourth line of page seventeen, but the formation of letters in this alleged ‘third’ hand is identical to that in the preceding pages. For instance, compare the composition of ‘Turtle’ on the first and sixth lines of page seventeen, or the flourishes on the letters ‘d’ and ‘F’.⁴ Rather than there being a change of hand here, it looks more like the same writer began using a new quill. Finally, the document ends, from page twenty-one onwards, in a third and much less tidy hand.

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³ C. Blount, Memorandoms by James Martin (Cambridge, 1937), p. 4. Blount’s edition was limited to 150 copies, and he edited the text for coherence.
⁴ UC clxix 195.
Blount speculated that the *Memorandoms* were written by convicts Allen, Broom *alias* Butcher, Lillie, and Martin, while languishing in Newgate. Blount suggests that Martin ‘commenced to write an account of his journey’, but grew tired and ‘except for one brief attempt to resume the pen himself’, he dictated the remainder of the story to his fellow prisoners. Blount found it ‘pleasant to think’ that the *Memorandoms* were recorded in the hands of the prisoners.\(^5\) It is indeed an agreeable thought that the document was a collaborative effort between four men who endured so much together, but there is no evidence for Blount’s supposition, and that the document was written in three hands rather than the supposed four draws his theory immediately into question. It is just as possible, for example, that one or more of the sections were written by Newgate gaol staff.

The fair copy is written on the type of larger sheets customarily used by Bentham himself, is ten pages in length, and written in a neat, unknown hand. In this version, the original’s spelling has been heavily edited by the copyist. For instance, the original colloquial ‘they’ is replaced by ‘the’ (e.g. ‘they City of Exeter’ in the original, and ‘the City of Exeter’ in the fair copy).\(^6\) Presumably Bentham wished to have a more easily comprehensible copy to hand when writing his critique of convict transportation, but there is no evidence in Bentham’s correspondence or elsewhere that the fair copy had been ‘prepared for the press’ as Blount supposed.\(^7\)

It is unclear when or how Bentham acquired the *Memorandoms*. He was certainly gathering information about the convict colony around the time of writing *Panopticon versus New South Wales* in 1802,\(^8\) and had perhaps even begun this research as early as the

\(^6\) UC clxix 179 (original), and 202 (fair copy).
\(^7\) Blount, *Memorandoms*, p. 16.
1790s.  

*Panopticon versus New South Wales* was Bentham’s angry denunciation of the British government’s decision finally to abandon the panopticon prison scheme in favour of continuing to transport criminals to New South Wales. He had poured so much time, effort, and money into promoting his penitentiary only, as he saw it, to have it thwarted by the perfidy of the British government. Bentham lamented that ‘they have murdered my best days’, and his extreme antipathy towards transportation must therefore be seen through this lens.

*Panopticon versus New South Wales* is one of the earliest and most influential critiques of convict transportation, a practice which Bentham considered to be entirely useless. He believed that it violated all sense of British justice, and offended the principle that punishment should be effective and proportionate, as convicts sentenced to varying durations of transportation would, essentially, all be deported from Britain for life as no provision had been made for their return to Britain once their sentence had expired. Bentham argued that transportation was uncertain, as no-one could determine with any accuracy how much (or how little) pain would be inflicted upon an individual, and that the convict’s crime mattered little in his treatment: a vicious but skilled convict might be assigned to an indulgent master and be relatively well-treated, while an unskilled one-time thief could languish on the public farms or in a penal settlement. Moreover, transportation was not only a poor deterrent in Bentham’s mind, as the punishment occurred out of sight of the populace, but it did nothing to reform those transported (and indeed actively corrupted them). Finally, Bentham believed that the society created in New South Wales by the ‘excrementitious mass’ sent there was immoral, and would be a burden upon the mother country for years to come. Presented against this portrait of Antipodean perversity was, of course, Bentham’s rational, ordered, and reformative panopticon penitentiary. Though

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9 At UC cxix, 85–100, there are several manuscripts headed ‘New South Wales’ and ‘New Wales’ relating to the expense of the penal colony, which Milne’s catalogue suggests were written in 1792. These sheets are, however, undated. See Milne, *Catalogue*, p. 40.

10 UC cxx 466.

Bentham’s arguments had no discernible effect in his lifetime, they were rehearsed in great detail during the anti-transportation campaign of the mid to late 1830s, most notably forming the basis of reports of the heavily biased 1837–38 Select Committee on Transportation, chaired by the young Benthamite radical, Sir William Molesworth.

_Panopticon versus New South Wales_ is notable for Bentham’s tendentious use of evidence, and so his claims should be read with extreme caution. His key source of information was the _Account of the English Colony in New South Wales_ by David Collins, the colony’s first Judge-Advocate, which was published in two volumes in 1798 and 1802. Bentham mined Collins’s _Account_ for information on all the worst aspects of the convict colony, disregarding or reinterpreting anything positive which Collins might have to say.

Bentham highlighted the fact that though supporters of transportation claimed that the remoteness of New South Wales meant that convicts sent there would never be able to return or to escape from their captivity, prisoners had managed to do precisely that. Working through Collins’s _Account_, Bentham calculated that eighty-nine prisoners had been permitted to leave Sydney between 1790 and 1796, and that a further seventy-six had absconded. ‘Already’, Bentham noted, referring to the escape of Martin and the others, ‘has an open boat been known to furnish the means of escape; and that through the vast space between New South Wales

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13 D. Collins, _An Account of the English Colony in New South Wales_, vols 1 [1798] and 2 [1802], ed. B. Fletcher (Sydney, 1975).
and Timor’. With a certain degree of prescience, Bentham went on to suggest that ‘as stations multiply, and the [Australian] coasts become more and more difficult to guard, we may expect to see better boats, stolen or even built, for voyages of escape to Otaheite or some other of the many voyages, with the help of a seaman or two to each of them, to command it’. Future convict escapees and pirates proved him correct, on this point at least.

Bentham only touched briefly upon the escape in *Panopticon versus New South Wales*, and it is unclear whether he had the *Memorandoms* to hand at the time of writing, or relied upon Collins or the numerous newspaper reports of the case. Bentham corresponded with the Reverend Doctor Brownlow Ford, the Ordinary of Newgate, during 1802 and 1803; Ford could have passed the *Memorandoms* on to Bentham had it been in the gaol at that time, but there is no mention of the document in their letters. The when and how of Bentham’s acquisition of the *Memorandoms* will likely remain a subject of speculation.

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The escape

From the very establishment of the penal colony of New South Wales in 1788, the thoughts of convicts turned to devising ways in which they could escape. Escape could take many forms, from attempts to evade labour by doing work deliberately poorly or by breaking tools, to metaphorical escape through recreation (prisoners at the Norfolk Island penal settlement during the late 1840s, for example, sought escapism through books borrowed from the Island’s well-stocked library). Convict escapes were frequently characterised by contemporary officials as foolish, irrational, headlong plunges into the darkness of the forbidding bush, or the vast unknown of the Pacific. Of course, taking one’s leave from captivity was the greatest challenge a convict could make to the authority of the convict system and, in order to dissuade others from attempting the same, the colonial authorities had an interest in claiming that prisoners who had bolted had starved, drowned, or been killed by hostile Aborigines. For instance, almost fifty years after Martin’s escape from New South Wales, the *Sydney Gazette* was moved to reassure concerned readers that a group of men who absconded in 1830 from Norfolk Island were undoubtedly dead, having either drowned or met ‘death in a more terrific form […] either from being destroyed by the cannibals of New Zealand, or from starvation’.

Despite claims about the stupidity of convicts, and legends current among the prisoners that it was possible to walk overland to China, recent scholarship has shown that the phenomenon of convict escape is a much more nuanced and important subject than has generally been appreciated. Moreover, as Grace Karskens notes,

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17 For example, see W. Hirst, *Great Convict Escapes in Colonial Australia (revised edition)* (East Roseville, NSW, 2003); D. Roberts (ed.), *Escape: Essays on Convict Australia*, special issue of the *Journal of Australian Colonial History*, vii (2005); and D. Levell, *Tour to Hell: Convict Australia’s Great Escape Myths* (St. Lucia, Queensland, 2008). Escape from captivity is a constant theme of Hamish Maxwell-Stewart’s account
‘convicts were not as geographically ignorant as their superiors liked to believe’.\(^\text{18}\) They knew of Cook’s exploration of the Pacific through popular literature, and of the almost superhuman survival of Captain William Bligh and the crew members remaining loyal to him following the mutiny aboard *HMS Bounty* in April 1789.\(^\text{19}\) As the Marine captain Watkin Tench put it, after the ‘escape of Captain Bligh, which was well known to us, no length of passage, or hazard of navigation, seemed above human accomplishment’\(^\text{20}\).

Convicts transported to New South Wales brought vital skills to the colony. Among their number were sailors and fishermen, people who had worked the seas and currents for most of their adult lives. Collins lamented the ‘necessity for placing a confidence in these people [convicts] […] but unfortunately, to fill many of those offices to which free people alone should have been appointed in the colony, there were none but convicts’.\(^\text{21}\) Though some ‘had given evident proofs, or strong indications of returning dispositions to honest industry’, Collins continued, there were others ‘who had no claim to this praise’. Among the prisoners to disappoint Collins was William Bryant. Governor Arthur Phillip had put Bryant’s seafaring skills, learnt in his native Cornwall, to good use in managing the fledgling colony’s fishing boats. This was a particularly important job during the early years of settlement when food was so scarce: the ration was repeatedly reduced during this time, including all hands being placed upon subsistence rations in April 1790. Collins reported of this period that the dire state of the colony’s stores meant ‘it was determined to reduce still lower what was already too low’\(^\text{22}\).

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\(^\text{19}\) Bligh and his crew travelled over 6,500 kilometres in an open boat following the mutiny, and landed at Kupang on 14 June.


\(^\text{21}\) Collins, *Account*, i. p. 44.

Bryant’s skills afforded him a privileged position: he was provided with a hut for his family, and allowed to keep some of the catch for himself as an incentive. Given the parlous state of the colony’s supplies the punishment was ferocious when, on 4 February 1789, Bryant was found to have been selling fish caught on government time for his own benefit. He received 100 lashes, was dismissed from his post, he and his family were evicted from their accommodation, and he was sent to labour with the other convicts. It appears, however, that within a few months Bryant was back in charge of the fishing boats, his skills making him, as Collins put it, ‘too useful a person to part with and send to a brick cart’.23

Though convicts often took to the bush, escape by sea offered a much better prospect for effecting a permanent departure, and the escape led by Bryant was not without precedent. Collins wrote that ‘a desertion of an extraordinary nature took place’ on 26 September 1790, when five men working on the government farm at Rose Hill rowed undetected down the Parramatta River in a small boat. Once in Sydney, they acquired a slightly larger and more seaworthy boat with a sail, apparently with the intention of ‘steering for Otaheite’. Led by the ‘daring, desperate’ John Tarwood,24 the group—convicts Joseph Sutton, George Lee, George Connoway, and John Watson—simply sailed out of the harbour and disappeared. Collins comforted himself by writing that ‘from the wretched state of the boat wherein they trusted themselves, [it] must have proved their grave’.25 He was wrong: on 26 August 1795, Tarwood, Lee, Connoway, and Watson were picked up by Captain Broughton of HMS Providence at Port Stephens, further north along Australia’s eastern coast, having for the last five years lived among the Aboriginal Australians of that region.26 Though the fate of Tarwood's group was unknown to Bryant and the others when they took their leave, the fact that the earlier group had been able to sail unchallenged out of Port Jackson could only have given them encouragement.

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23 Collins, Account, i. p. 45.
24 Also known as ‘Turwood’.
26 Collins, Account, i. pp. 356–57. Sutton had died during the intervening years.
In her model of successful convict escapes, Karskens found such endeavours were ‘overwhelmingly a collective rather than an individualist enterprise’, were ‘carefully organised’, and that most escape routes were by sea.\(^{27}\) Led by William Bryant, this escape fits the model perfectly. Bryant chose well in recruiting his crew: perhaps the most important member of the party was William Morton, described by Collins as knowing ‘something of navigation’ (quite an understatement given the safe navigation of the boat all the way to Timor), while Bryant and Bird ‘knew perfectly well how to manage a boat’, and William Allen was, according the Newgate committal books, a mariner.\(^{28}\) Meanwhile, James Cox had ‘endeavoured to acquire such information on the subject [navigation] as might serve him whenever a fit occasion should present itself’.\(^{29}\)

It is unclear when Bryant determined to make his escape, though it might be reasonably supposed that the flogging which he endured in 1789 focused his mind. Collins notes, when listing those who escaped, that Bryant’s ‘term of transportation, according to his own account, had recently expired’, and he may have felt that he was now entitled to take his leave, since the government was not going to provide a return voyage for him.\(^{30}\) The accounts of the escape given in the London newspapers in 1792—written before the trial and so presumably gathered during interviews with the escapees in Newgate—imply that they absconded during interviews with the escapees in Newgate—imply that they absconded owing to the entire colony being put on short rations for an extended period, and their fear of ‘being starved to death’.\(^{31}\) Whatever their reasons, under cover


\(^{29}\) Collins, Account, i. p. 130.

\(^{30}\) Collins, Account, i. p. 129.

\(^{31}\) Evening Mail, 29 June–2 July 1792; London Chronicle, 30 June–3 July 1792; Diary or Woodfall’s Register (London), 2 July 1792.
of darkness on the night of 28 March 1791, the prisoners took the governor’s cutter, rowed their way out of Sydney Heads and into the Pacific Ocean, having been canny enough to wait until there were no ships in the harbour capable of outrunning them.32 By the time the alarm was raised, they were long gone.

The investigation into the escape proved beyond all doubt that Bryant and his fellows were no fools, and that their departure had been long in the planning. Bryant had dug out holes underneath the floorboards of his hut in which to store equipment he had acquired from Detmer Smith, master of the Dutch snow Waaksamheyd,33 including a compass, quadrant, map, and ‘such information as would assist him in his passage to the northward’, vital tools for the navigator Morton.34 In preparation, they had stockpiled provisions, ‘a large quantuty [sic] of Carpinters [sic] tools of all Sorts for Enlargeing [sic] the Boat with beds’, bedding, sails, arms and ammunition, material with which to repair the boat, and a fishing net.35 Martin stated that they took with them a hundred weight of flour and rice, fourteen pounds of pork, and eight gallons of water.36

Collins conjectured that there ‘was little reason to doubt their reaching Timor, if no dissension prevailed among them, and they had but prudence enough to guard against the natives wherever they might land’, evidently having more respect for the seamanship of Morton and Bryant than he had for the Tarwood-led group.37 The escapees left little behind, save consternated officials, convicts who had perhaps been given hope by their example, and James Cox’s letter to his partner, Sarah Young, impressing upon her to relinquish the pursuit of those vices which, he told her, prevailed in the settlement, leaving her what little property

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32 Collins, Account, i. p. 128.
33 A ‘snow’ was a two-masted brig.
34 Collins, Account, i. p. 129.
36 James Martin, Memorandoms, UC clxix 181–82 (original), and 202 (fair copy).
37 Collins, Account, i. p. 130.
he did not take with him, and assigning as a reason for his flight the severity of his situation, being transported for life, without the prospect of any mitigation, or hope of ever quitting the country, but by the means that he was about to adopt.\(^{38}\)

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The *Memorandoms* are spare and prosaic, and given the absence of regular measurements of longitude of latitude, and the (understandable) lack of much sense of the passage of time, it is difficult to identify with precision many of the places mentioned in the text.

Martin notes that two days after setting sail, around 30 March 1791, they reached a ‘little creek (we call it fortunate Creek)’ about two degrees to the north of Sydney. There, they ‘found a Quantity of fine Burned Coal’, a ‘varse Quantity of Cabage tree’, and a ‘varse Quantity of fish’.\(^{39}\) Here, Martin and his fellows also had their first encounter with Aboriginal Australians, to whom they gave ‘some Cloaths & other articles and they went away very much satisfied’.\(^{40}\) Future meetings would not prove quite so peaceable. Warwick Hirst suggests that this place was Glenrock Lagoon, south of modern-day Newcastle, and that to the convicts ‘can be attributed the discovery of coal in Australia’.\(^{41}\) William Bligh was similarly impressed with this find. He returned to Timor in 1792 aboard *HMS Providence*, while transporting breadfruit from Tahiti to the West Indies as a foodstuff for slaves, and was presented with Bryant’s own account of the escape, which regrettably has not survived. Bryant wrote that they had found large pieces of coal on shore, ‘and searching about a little, we found a place where we picked up with an Ax as good Coals as any in England […] they burned exceedingly well’.\(^{42}\)

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\(^{38}\) Collins, *Account*, i. p. 129.

\(^{39}\) Martin, *Memorandoms*, UC clxix 182 (original), 202 (fair copy).

\(^{40}\) Martin, *Memorandoms*, UC clxix 182 (original), 202 (fair copy).


\(^{42}\) W. Bligh, *A Log of the proceedings of His Majesty’s Ship Providence on a Second Voyage to the South Sea Under the command of Captain William Bligh, to carry the Breadfruit Plant from the Society Island to the West Indies, written by himself*, vol. 2,
was aware that this discovery ‘may make the account valuable’, but was sorry that he could not ‘ascertain its [the place’s] exact situation’. He was complimentary about Bryant, finding that the journal was ‘clear and distinct, and shows that the writer must have been a determined and enterprising man’.

After a stay of two nights and day, on approximately 1 April Bryant’s group proceeded northward for another two days, where they ‘Made a very fine harbour Seeming to Run up they Country for Many miles and Quite Comodious for they Anchorage of Shipping’, on approximately 3 April. Hirst suggests that this place was Port Stephens, a harbour of some 134 square kilometres where the Myall and Karuah Rivers meet. Here they found fresh water and made repairs to their leaky boat, but on that night they were ‘Drove of by they Natives which meant to Destr oy us’. They continued along the coast in an attempt to find a safe haven in which to repair their boat, and were about to put ashore elsewhere when ‘there Came they natives in Varse numbers with Spears and Sheilds &c’, who had perhaps been informed by the earlier group of the arrival of the Europeans in the area.

A group of the escapees attempted to approach and tried ‘By signes to pasifie them But they not taking they least notice accordingly we fired a Musket thinking to afright them But they took not they least notice Thereof’. As the Aborigines began to rush the prisoners, Martin noted that ‘we were forsed to take to our Boat and to get out of their reach as fast as we Could’. They then rowed their boat a further sixteen kilometres up the harbour, ‘till we made


43 Bligh, Log, p. 151.
44 Bligh, Log, p. 151. Bligh was ‘too ill and the time [was] too short for me to copy the Journal, I however employed a person about it, but he did not get a fourth part through it’.
45 Martin, Memorandoms, UC clxix 183 (original), 202 (fair copy).
46 Hirst, Convict Escapes, p. 13.
47 Martin, Memorandoms, UC clxix 183 (original), 202 (fair copy).
48 Martin, Memorandoms, UC clxix 184 (original), 202 (fair copy).
49 Martin, Memorandoms, UC clxix 184 (original), 202–03 (fair copy).
50 Martin, Memorandoms, UC clxix 184–85 (original), 203 (fair copy).
a little white Sandy Isl\textsuperscript{d}, where they were able to land and repair the bottom of the boat without any ‘Interrup\textsuperscript{m} from they Natives’.\textsuperscript{51} They remained on this islet for two days, taking in fresh water, before continuing to the north on approximately 6 April.

The wind now forced the escapees ‘Quite out of sight of Land’ overnight, and though they ‘made Close into they land’ the following day (approximately 7 April), the rough seas prevented them from putting in anywhere for ‘nere [sic] three weeks’. This left them ‘much Distress\textsuperscript{d} for water and Wood’, and so having seen the water calm for a while, on approximately 28 April ‘Two of our men Swam on shor thinking to get some water’. However, it appears a group of Aborigines had gathered on shore ‘in numbers’, and the two fearful men returned with nothing but ‘a little wood which threw into they the water which we took up’.\textsuperscript{52}

With their boat ‘being very leaky’ and their finding it hard to ‘keep her above Water’, Bryant’s party managed finally to struggle ashore in a small river. They repaired the seams of the boat with soap, but could find ‘no Shell Fish or Fish of any kind in this Bay’. After a stay of two days and nights, on approximately 30 April they made off once more, travelling a further twenty miles (thirty-two kilometres) in the hope of finding ‘a Harbor to get some Refreshment’, but could find nowhere to put in.\textsuperscript{53} While looking for a harbour, a storm threatened their survival. With the ‘Sea Breaking over us Quite Rapid’ and the boat being heavy laden, ‘we were Oblidged to trow all our Cloathing over Board they Better to lighten our Boat’. They came to an ‘Open Bay’ during the night, but could see nowhere to land owing to the violent surf and the darkness, and feared ‘Staving our Boat to Pieces’ in any attempt to land. Instead, they laid their anchor to wait out their storm. At two in the morning of approximately 1 May, the anchor cable snapped and ‘we were drove in the Middle of the Surf Expecting every Moment that our Boat wou’d be Staved to

\textsuperscript{51} Martin, Memorandoms, UC clxix 185 (original), 203 (fair copy). Here Martin remarks that ‘they natives here is quiet [sic] naked of a Copper Colour’, and that their ‘Cannoos [are] made of bark’.

\textsuperscript{52} Martin, Memorandoms, UC clxix 186 (original), 203 (fair copy).

\textsuperscript{53} Martin, Memorandoms, UC clxix 187 (original), 203 (fair copy).
Pieces & every Soul Perish but as God wou’d have we Got our Boat save on Shore without any Loss or Damage’, save the loss of an oar.\footnote{Martin, \textit{Memorandoms}, UC clxix 188 (original), 203 (fair copy).}

Fortunate to have survived the terrifying storm, they got a fire going (‘with great difficulty every thing that we had being very Wet’), and caught shellfish and topped up their water supplies. Again ‘the Natives Came down in great Numbers’, but ‘we Discharged a Musquet over their Heads & they dispersed immediately & we saw no more of them’.\footnote{Martin, \textit{Memorandoms}, UC clxix 189 (original), 203 (fair copy).} After a stay of two days and nights, on around 3 May they returned to the ocean, but encountered further ‘very Bad Weather our Boat Shipping many heavy Seas, so that One Man was always Employed in Bailing out the Water to keep her up’.\footnote{Martin, \textit{Memorandoms}, UC clxix 189 (original), 203 (fair copy).}

After two or three days of enduring this weather, they must have been grateful to, on approximately 6 May, make landfall once more at a place they called ‘White Bay’, ‘being in Latt\degree d 27\degree d:00’, which Hirst suggests was Moreton Bay.\footnote{Martin, \textit{Memorandoms}, UC clxix 189–90 (original), 203 (fair copy); Hirst, \textit{Convict Escapes}, p. 15.} They sailed down the Bay around six to nine miles (ten to fourteen kilometres) before finding a suitable landing place, spotting ‘two Women & 2 Children with a Fire Brand’ on shore. Having landed, ‘the two Women being Frightened Ran away but we made Signs that we wanted a Light which they Gave us Crying at the same Time in their Way’.\footnote{Martin, \textit{Memorandoms}, UC clxix 189 (original), 203 (fair copy).} Bryant’s party spent the night in ‘two Huts which was there’, but at around eleven the next morning ‘a great Number of the Natives Came towards us’—presumably the women had alerted their kinsfolk to the presence of the escapees—but they once again fired their musket into the air, causing the Aborigines to melt into the woods.\footnote{Martin, \textit{Memorandoms}, UC clxix 190 (original), 203 (fair copy).}

They spent two days and two nights at this place, before setting off once more on approximately 9 May. At night, they were driven out to sea by a strong gale and current and terrified, they ‘expected every Moment to go to the Bottom’. When daylight came, they could
see no land but the sea was ‘running Mountains high’, and though they employed a drogue through the day and night to keep the boat upright in the storm, Martin found himself ‘thinking every Moment to be the Last the Sea Coming in so heavy upon us every now & then that two Hands was Obliged to keep Bailing out’. ⁶⁰ There was still no sight of land in the morning, and despite hauling landward, they ‘cou’d make no Land all that Day I will leave you to Consider what distress we must be in the Woman & the two little Babies was in a bad Condition’. The boat was too wet to light a fire, and they ‘had nothing to Eat except a little Raw Rice’. ⁶¹ After another night under the drogue, on about 12 May they finally landed on a ‘little Island’ about ninety miles (144 kilometres) from the mainland on approximately, having concluded ‘that if we kept out to Sea that we shou’d every Soul Perish’. ⁶²

According to Hirst, this was Lady Elliot Island, and Martin’s description seems to confirm this: the island—‘about one Mile in Circumference’—was surrounded by reefs and a beach, populated by ‘very fine Large Turtles’, and was in the latitude of ‘26° 27″’. ⁶³ With difficulty, they got a fire going and ‘being almost Starving we put on a little Rice for to Cook’. In the search for food, they got hold of five of the turtles which were on reef, turned them over and dragged them onto the beach, before killing one and having ‘a Noble Meal’. Though there ‘was not a drop of fresh Water to be had on this Island’, fortuitously it rained during the night and this water —gathered in their spread main-sail—was enough to fill their two water casks. ⁶⁴ Martin and his fellows spent six days on this island, having killed twelve turtles, drying some of the meat for the next stage of the voyage, which began approximately on 18 May. They also gathered ‘a kind of Fruit [which] grows like unto a Bellpepper which seemed to Taste very well’, but Martin did not state whether

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⁶⁰ Martin, *Memorandoms*, UC clxix 191 (original), 203 (fair copy).
⁶² Martin, *Memorandoms*, UC clxix 192 (original), 203 (fair copy).
⁶³ Martin, *Memorandoms*, UC clxix 192–94 (original), 203 (fair copy); Hirst, *Convict Escapes*, p. 16.
⁶⁴ Martin, *Memorandoms*, UC clxix 193 (original), 203 (fair copy).
they caught any of the ‘great Quantity of Fowls which Stayed at Night in Holes in the ground’.\textsuperscript{65}

They made the mainland that evening, passing ‘a great Number of Small Islands’ but despite visiting many of them ‘expecting to find some Turtle[s]’, they found none. Though there was a ‘great Quantity of shellfish’ they did not look ‘very fit to Eat but being very Hungred [sic] we were Glad to Eat them & Thank God for it’. Had it not been for these shellfish and the remaining dried turtle meat, Martin recalled, ‘we must have Starved’, though they were at least well served for fresh water.\textsuperscript{66}

Soon after, the escapees rounded Cape York, and began to cross the Gulf of Carpentaria. Running along the coast, they saw a number of small islands ‘on which we saw several of the Natives in two Canoes’. Martin and his fellows steered towards this group of men who appeared ‘very Stout & fat & blacker [than] they were in other Parts we seen before there was One which we tool to be the Chief with some Shells Around his Shoulders’, but they ‘seemed to Stand in a posture of Defence against us’. One of Martin’s group fired their musket, but there was no intimidatory effect this time: ‘immediately they began Firing their Bows & Arrows at us we immediately hoisted up our Sails & Rowed away from them but as God wou’d have it none of their Arrows Came into the Boat but dropped along side’.\textsuperscript{67}

These people were most likely Torres Strait Islanders, and the party’s next meeting with them was even more dangerous.

After travelling further along the coast, they saw ‘a small Town of Huts about 20’ with a fresh water supply nearby. Each hut, made of bark and grass, could accommodate six or seven standing people, Martin estimated, and as the huts were empty, the escapees landed in order to fill their water casks. They did not tarry for long, being ‘Afraid of Staying on Shore for fear of the Natives’, and anchored a few miles offshore overnight.\textsuperscript{68} In the morning, they intended to

\textsuperscript{65} Martin, \textit{Memorandoms}, UC clxix 194 (original), 203 (fair copy). These were probably mutton-birds.

\textsuperscript{66} Martin, \textit{Memorandoms}, UC clxix 195 (original), 204 (fair copy).

\textsuperscript{67} Martin, \textit{Memorandoms}, UC clxix 195–96 (original), 204 (fair copy). Martin estimated that these arrows were ‘about Eighteen Inches’, or forty-five centimetres, in length.

\textsuperscript{68} Martin, \textit{Memorandoms}, UC clxix 196–97 (original), 204 (fair copy).
return to the village to collect more water, but saw two large canoes heading towards them. Martin and his fellows ‘did not know what to do for we were Afraid to meet them there seemed to us to be 30 or 40 Men in each Canoe they had Sails in their Canoes [which] seemed to [be] made of Matting’.  

One of the canoes hoisted its sails and made chase, which caused the escapees to take what water they had with them and confirmed their determination ‘to Cross the Gulf [of Carpentaria] which was about five Hundred Miles [804 kilometres] Across’, and try and outrun their pursuers.

Fortunately, they lost the Torres Strait Islanders, and successfully crossed the Gulf in four-and-a-half days, both of which were no mean feats. After finding fresh water in one of the rivers of Arnhem Land, the escapees ‘Concluded as the best Way to Shape our Course for the Island of Timor’, and subsequently crossed the Arafura and Timor Seas inside three days. They reached West Timor on 5 June 1791, at the end of a sixty-nine day, 3,100-mile (5,000 kilometre) voyage. It is difficult to imagine the danger and hardship the escapees had endured, yet all survived the journey from Port Jackson.

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The escapees put in at Kupang, the main Dutch settlement in the west of Timor. They were greeted by Governor Timotheus Wanjon, and, according to Bligh, Bryant ‘represented himself as a Mate of a Whale Fisher that was lost, and all but themselves perished, and had written a very ingenuous [sic] account of their misfortunes that gained them protection’. Wanjon believed this tale and, as Martin reported, they were taken to Government House where Wanjon ‘behaved extremely well to us filld our Bellies & Cloathed Double with every that was wore on the Island’.

Martin also suggests that they got some work to support themselves, but after two months the game was up, apparently at their own hands. According to Martin, William Bryant ‘had

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69 Martin, Memorandoms, UC clxix 197 (original), 204 (fair copy).
70 Martin, Memorandoms, UC clxix 197–98 (original), 204 (fair copy).
71 Bligh, Log, p. 149.
72 Martin, Memorandoms, UC clxix 199 (original), 204 (fair copy).
words with his wife went and informed against himself wife & children and all of us which we was immediately taken Prisoners’ and confined in ‘the Castle’. It does seem unlikely that, after travelling such a distance, Bryant would willingly give up himself, his family, and his shipmates so easily. Author Carolly Erickson speculates that William and Mary Bryant had become estranged, based on Collins’s observation that William Bryant, like ‘the people of his description’ (i.e. convicts) did not ‘consider his marriage in this country as binding’, and that he may have been seeking his independence through this drastic manoeuvre.

Bligh was told by Governor Wanjon that an unnamed member of the group ‘informed, through peek [sic] at not being taken so much notice of as the next’, which also seems doubtful given the penalty for absconding from transportation. Collins suggested that the inherent criminality of the escapees gave them away, that ‘by their language to each other, and by practising the tricks of their former profession, gave room for suspicion; and being taken up, their true characters and the circumstances of their escape were divulged’. Alcohol may have had a part to play in their discovery, according to Watkin Tench, an officer of the Marines who had served in New South Wales and knew the escapees there, and who encountered them again in 1792 aboard HMS Gorgon. He suggested, from information likely derived from interviews with Bryant’s group, that the Dutch received the escapees ‘with kindness, and treated them with hospitality but their behaviour giving rise to suspicion, they were watched; and one of them at last, in a moment of intoxication, betrayed the secret’.

On 17 September 1791, a group of genuine shipwreck survivors straggled into Kupang, led by Captain Edward Edwards of HMS Pandora. Edwards had been commissioned, on 11 August 1790, to

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73 Martin, Memorandoms, UC clxix 199 (original), 204 (fair copy).
75 Bligh, Log, p. 149.
76 Collins, Account, i. p. 182.
77 Tench, Complete Account, p. 109n.
travel to the South Pacific to locate and arrest the surviving *Bounty* mutineers. He succeeded in capturing fourteen of them, but on the return journey the *Pandora* was wrecked on the Great Barrier Reef on 28 August 1791. Only eighty-nine of the ship’s crew survived the ship’s sinking, along with ten of the captured mutineers, after scrambling into the ship’s two open boats. George Hamilton, the *Pandora*’s surgeon, gave another version of the discovery of the subterfuge of Martin and his fellows. According to Hamilton, when the survivors of the *Pandora* appeared, a ‘Captain of [a] Dutch East Indiaman’ went to the escapees to proclaim ‘the glad tidings of their captain having arrived’. But one of them, ‘starting up in surprise, said, “What Captain! Dam’me, we have no Captain;”’ for they had reported, that the Captain and the remainder of the crew had separated from them at sea in another boat’. This, of course, led to ‘a suspicion of their being impostors’, and Mary Bryant, and one of the men, ‘fled into the woods; but were soon taken. They confessed they were English convicts, and that they had made their escape from Botany Bay’. Hamilton’s claims are not that believable, however, as the *Memorandoms* and other sources make clear that the group had been identified as escaped convicts about a month before the survivors of the *Pandora* arrived in Timor.

Whatever the truth of how their identities were uncovered, the escapees were informed by Edwards that they ‘was [now] his prisoners’. Edwards, did not, however, take formal charge of them until 5 October 1791. The next day, the escapees, the *Bounty* mutineers, and the survivors of the *Pandora* were embarked upon the *Rembang*, a Dutch East India Company ship which Edwards had

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78 Bligh, *Log*, p. 149.
79 George Hamilton, *A Voyage Round the World, in His Majesty’s Frigate Pandora, Performed under the Direction of Captain Edwards, in the Years, 1790, 1791, and 1792* (Berwick, 1793), p. 143.
80 Judith Cook makes the same chronological error in claiming that it was the arrival of Captain Edwards which led to the escapees being identified. See J. Cook, *To Brave Every Danger: The Epic Life of Mary Bryant of Fowey* [1993] (Truro, 2005), p. 176.
81 Martin, *Memorandoms*, UC clxix 200 (original), 204 (fair copy).
contracted to carry them to Batavia (modern-day Jakarta). Martin complained that Edwards ordered them to be put ‘Both Legs in Irons called the bilboes’ during the voyage, which was calm enough until 12 October.  

That day, according to Surgeon Hamilton, ‘a tremendous storm arose. In a few minutes every sail of the ship was shivered to pieces; the pumps all choaked, and useless […] and she was driving down’ towards the shore. The storm was ‘attended with the most dreadful thunder and lightning we had ever experienced’ and, engaging in a little jingoism, Hamilton found that the Dutch sailors were ‘struck with horror, and went below; and the ship was preserved from destruction by the manly exertion of our English tars, whose souls seemed to catch redoubled ardour from the tempest’s rage’.  

The Rembang arrived in Batavia on 7 November 1791, a place which Captain James Cook had, in December 1770, suggested that Europeans should make their stay at ‘as short as possible, otherwise they will soon feel the effects of the unwholesome air of Batavia, which, I firmly believe, is the Death of more Europeans than any other place upon the Globe of the same extent’. Cook stated that his ship arrived with as healthy a crew ‘as need go to sea’, but after a three-month stay, left Batavia ‘as a Hospital Ship, besides the loss of 7 men’. Surgeon Hamilton wrote that his ‘first care’ on arriving in Batavia ‘was employed in sending to the hospital the sickly remains of our unfortunate crew’, and described the place as a ‘painted sepulchre, this golgotha of Europe’.  

Martin and the other escapees were imprisoned and ironed in a hulk, and on 1 December—barely three weeks after arriving—little Emanuel Bryant died, four months short of his second birthday. Martin described how 'we Lost the Child' first, and then that six

83 Martin, Memorandoms, UC clxix 200 (original), 204 (fair copy).
84 Hamilton, Voyage, p. 149. Hamilton went on to say that he did not wish to ‘throw any stigma on the Dutch, who I believe would fight the devil, should he appear in any other shape to them but that of thunder and lightning’ (p. 150).
86 Hamilton, Voyage, p. 156.
days later Emanuel's father was 'taken Bad', and died himself on 22 December.\textsuperscript{88} Both were buried at Batavia. Martin’s description of the deaths is prosaic, but the use of ‘we Lost’ perhaps suggests that the loss of the two male Bryants was keenly felt among a group who had suffered together during the last nine months.

Edwards had, in the meantime, secured passage home via the Cape for those under his charge, with Martin stating that ‘we was put on 3 Different Ships’, namely the \textit{Vreedenberg}, \textit{Horssen}, and \textit{Hoornwey}.\textsuperscript{89} Surgeon Hamilton described this voyage as ‘tedious’, though they ‘experienced great death and sickness in going through the Straits of Sunda’.\textsuperscript{90} The number of surviving escapees was thinned further during this trip. James Cox \textit{alias} Rolt was lost in the Straits, having either drowned after falling overboard according to Captain Edwards, or ‘jumped over board in the night, and swam to the Dutch arsenal at Honroost’ according to Surgeon Hamilton.\textsuperscript{91} Either way, Cox was never heard of again, and the \textit{Memorandoms} makes no mention of Cox’s fate, other than that he had ‘Died’.\textsuperscript{92} Samuel Bird \textit{alias} John Simms, and the navigator William Morton, who had done so much to guide the group safely through the Pacific, both died aboard the Dutch East India Company ship \textit{Hornwey} en-route to the Cape.\textsuperscript{93}

Edwards and his rag-tag group arrived at the Cape on 18 March 1792, where they found \textit{HMS Gorgon}, commanded by Captain John Parker, also under anchor, having recently arrived from Sydney en route to England. The surviving escapees and \textit{Bounty} mutineers were placed aboard the \textit{Gorgon} for the passage home and coincidentally, also aboard the \textit{Gorgon} was a detachment of marines previously based at Sydney. The prisoners and the military would have mixed on a day-to-day basis in Sydney and, as Martin noted, ‘we was

\textsuperscript{88} Martin, \textit{Memorandoms}, UC clxix 200 (original), 204 (fair copy).
\textsuperscript{89} Martin, \textit{Memorandoms}, UC clxix 200 (original), 204 (fair copy).
\textsuperscript{90} Hamilton, \textit{Voyage}, p. 158.
\textsuperscript{92} Martin, \textit{Memorandoms}, UC clxix 201 (original), 204 (fair copy).
known well by all the marine officers which was all Glad that we had not perished at sea’. Tench gave a sympathetic appraisal of the escapees, seemingly grateful that they had survived. He wrote that I confess that I never looked at these people, without pity and astonishment. They had miscarried in a heroic struggle for liberty; after having combated every hardship, and conquered every difficulty. The woman, and one of the men [presumably Mary and William Bryant], had gone out to Port Jackson in the ship which had transported me thither. They had both of them been always distinguished for good behaviour. And I could not but reflect with admiration, at the strange combination of circumstances which had again brought us together, to baffle human foresight, and confound human speculation.  

The *Gorgon* left the Cape in early April 1792, but there was one more death among the escapees on this final leg of the voyage. Lieutenant Ralph Clark of the marines told his journal in early May that a number of the soldiers’ children were dying, and ‘going very fast the hot weather is the reason of it’. On 6 May, ‘the child belonging [sic] to Mary Broad the convict woman who went away in the fishing Boat from Port Jackson last year died about four oClock’. The body of three year-old Charlotte Bryant, who had spent much of her short life at sea, was ‘committed […] to the deep’ the same day.  

On 18 June 1792, the *Gorgon* arrived in Portsmouth. Martin writes that he and the surviving escapees, Mary Bryant, William Allen, Samuel Broom *alias* John Butcher, and Nathaniel Lillie, were taken to Purfleet and ‘from there Conveyed by the Constables to Bow st office London and was taken before Justice Bond and was fully

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94 Martin, *Memorandoms*, UC clxix 200–01 (original), 204 (fair copy).
95 Tench, *Complete Account*, pp. 108–09n
committed to Newgate’. Their future was uncertain: the penalty for absconding from transportation was, generally, death.

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Martin’s narrative ends here, but fortunately the fates of the survivors can (up to a point) be pieced together from other sources. On 25 June 1792, the prisoners were first taken to Newgate, before being brought before Magistrate Nicholas Bond five days later. Bond remarked that he had ‘never experienced so disagreeable a task as being obliged to commit them to prison, and assured them as far as lay in his power he would assist them’. For their part, the prisoners declared they would sooner suffer death than return to Botany Bay, and public sympathy appeared to be on their side, with the London Chronicle’s reporter finding that ‘His Majesty, who is ever willing to extend his mercy, surely never had objects more worth of it’. Being ‘destitute’, they were given money by ‘several gentlemen’ and returned to Newgate, where they spent almost a week before being brought to the bar at the Old Bailey on 7 July. They may have been relieved, given the sentencing options available to the judge, to be ordered to ‘remain on their former sentence, until they should be discharged by course of law’.

While the prisoners began serving out their respective unexpired sentences in Newgate, the lawyer and biographer James Boswell had begun to make intercessions on their behalf. Ever one to take on a seemingly hopeless case, on 16 August Boswell wrote to Henry Dundas, then Home Secretary, to implore that ‘nothing harsh shall be done to the unfortunate adventurers from New South Wales, for whom I interest myself, and whose very extraordinary case surely

98 Martin, Memorandoms, UC clxix 201 (original), 204 (fair copy).
99 HO26/6 pp. 7–8, NA.
100 Evening Mail, 29 June–2 July 1792.
101 London Chronicle, 30 June–3 July 1792.
102 The Criminal Registers say that the prisoners were brought to the bar of the Old Bailey on 5 July 1792, whereas the newspapers say the trial took place on 7 July. Compare HO26/1 p. 106, NA, and London Chronicle, 7–10 July 1792.
103 London Chronicle, 7–10 July 1792.
will not found a precedent’. Boswell noted that he had visited Evan Nepean, Under-Secretary for State in the Home Department, ‘concerning the poor people who escaped from Botany Bay’. Nepean told Boswell that ‘Government would not treat them with harshness, but at the same time would not do a kind thing to them, as that might give encouragement to others to escape’. David Collins certainly believed that their escape had indeed set a worrying precedent, when reporting on more abscondings from Sydney by sea in 1797. He thought that had Bryan[t] and his party […] instead of meeting with the compassion and lenity which were expressed in England for their sufferings, been sent back and tried in New South Wales, for taking away the boat, and other thefts which they had committed, it was probable that others might have been deterred from following their example.

The official caution indicated by Nepean meant that Mary Bryant had to wait until 2 May 1793 to receive an unconditional pardon, her sentence having expired. Boswell appears to have provided her with accommodation in Great Titchfield Street. He was then approached, on 18 August, by a ‘Mr Kestle’, a ‘native of Fowey’ who ‘knew all the relations of Mary Broad very well, and had received a letter from one of them directing him to me’. Kestle claimed that ‘a large sum of money had been left to Mary Broad’s father and three or four more—no less than three hundred thousand pounds’. Boswell was suspicious of this rather fanciful story and warned her not to put too much store in it. Kestle did at least know Mary Bryant’s family, and brought her sister Dolly to her for an emotional reunion. Dolly, overcome with gratitude to Boswell,

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104 Boswell to Dundas, 16 August 1792, GEN MSS 89, Boswell Collection, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University. Digital copy at http://brbl-zoom.library.yale.edu/viewer/1136292.


106 Collins, Account, ii. p. 38.

107 Pardon for Mary Bryant, alias Broad, HO26/56 p. 57, NA.

promised that if ‘she got money as was said, she would give me a thousand pounds’. There is no evidence that this fortune actually existed.

Boswell arranged for Bryant to travel to return home to Fowey and her family, paying for her passage aboard the *Ann and Elizabeth* on 13 October. Despite this, ‘her spirits were low; she was sorry to leave me; she was sure her relations would not treat her well’, though Boswell promised her ‘of ten pounds yearly as long as she behaved well, being resolved to make it up to her myself in so far as subscriptions should fail’. As Danziger and Brady note, ‘Boswell tried to raise this subscription but eventually paid for most of this annuity himself’, sending it to Mary regularly through the Reverend John Baron of Lostwithiel, until Boswell’s death in 1795. Boswell had previously made enquiries through his friend, William Johnson Temple, about the raising of a subscription in Cornwall, but Temple did not hold out much hope of collecting much money, having found that the family of Boswell’s ‘heroine’ were considered ‘eminent for Sheep-stealing’ in the area.

Though Mary Bryant was released in May 1793, Allen, Broom *alias* Butcher, Lillie, and Martin remained in Newgate, but were not forgotten by Boswell. On 14 May, he drafted a petition on their behalf to Nepean, pointing out that

Their offences, though justly punishable, have been of a slighter degree of malignity. For this they have atoned: by an imprisonment before trial—by confinement on board the hulks at Portsmouth—by a severe passage to New South Wales—by servitude and almost starvation there—by a series of most distressful sufferings in the course of making their escape—by imprisonment since, in the gaol of Newgate. They did certainly in the impatience of misery subscribe a petition praying to have their wretched

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112 *Great Biographer*, p. 241n.
113 Temple to Boswell, 18 July 1793, C2938, Boswell Collection, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University. Digital copy at http://brbl-dl.library.yale.edu/vufind/Record/3442981.
captivity exchanged for a situation on board His Majesty’s fleet. But it is humbly submitted to Government whether, all things considered, they should not have a second chance to be good members of society and be permitted to do the best they can for themselves and their families. It should seem to be of the genius of our Constitution to act with mildness and compassion when there is no obvious call for severity. […] It is therefore earnestly requested that in this extraordinary case the clemency of the Crown might be benignantly exercised.\footnote{Boswell, ‘Draft of a Petition for the Botany Bay Prisoners—14 May 1793’, \textit{Great Biographer}, p. 218.}

Boswell visited them during mid-August, to ‘assure them personally that I was doing all in my power for them’,\footnote{Boswell, entry for 19 August 1793, \textit{Great Biographer}, p. 226.} and again on 2 November. On the latter occasion, Boswell also went to Mr Pollock, first clerk in Dundas’s office, to apply ‘for the men who had escaped from Botany Bay’, but upon returning home, Boswell found that ‘all four men had been set at liberty and had been at my door’.\footnote{Boswell, entry for 2 November 1793, \textit{Great Biographer}, p. 247.} The next day, Boswell found that they had been discharged by proclamation, and later met with Lillie and Broom.\footnote{Boswell, entry for 3 November 1793, \textit{Great Biographer}, p. 248.} Five years after being transported to New South Wales, the survivors were now, finally, all free.

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What ultimately happened to the surviving escapees has been the subject of much speculation, most of it focused on Mary Bryant. In the quest for a happy ending, it has been suggested that she settled and remarried in Cornwall. Frederick Pottle was the first to note that a Mary Bryant was married to a Richard Thomas in 1807 in the parish of St. Breage in Cornwall, but remained doubtful that she was the absconder Mary Bryant.\footnote{F. A. Pottle, \textit{Boswell and the Girl from Botany Bay} (London, 1938), p. 28.} Carolly Erickson was also sceptical on the grounds that this woman gave birth to a child in both 1811 and 1812, meaning that the transported Mary Bryant would have been forty-seven years old when she gave birth, and ‘most women in eighteenth-
and early nineteenth-century England did not live that long, let alone bear children at such an advanced age’. 119 Judith Cook was more convinced that this could have been the Mary Bryant, though more out hope as she admitted that there was no proof that this was the case. 120 Jonathan King describes an emotional reunion between Mary and her father, and her true sweetheart, Richard Thomas, which is entirely fictional. 121

After being returned to England, Mary was named as ‘Mary Briant alias Broad’, while Boswell always referred to her as ‘Mary Broad’. A search of the criminal registers finds that a Mary Broad was committed to Newgate, and acquitted at the Old Bailey in September 1806 of stealing four sheets valued at twenty-one shillings, two table cloths valued at nine shillings, an apron valued at a shilling, and a handkerchief also valued at a shilling, all the property of one Thomas Middlebrook. 122 This woman was forty years of age when tried, putting her almost precisely at the age of the transported Mary Broad/Bryant. Though fourteen years had passed, surely at least one journalist might have recognised the famous ‘Girl from Botany Bay’ had she returned to court? Regrettably, there is no physical description of the woman in the 1806 Newgate Register to compare with that of Mary Bryant alias Broad’s entry for 1792, so this can only be additional speculation as to the subsequent details of Mary Bryant’s life.

The fate of the four male convicts is even less clear. Allen, Broom alias Butcher, Lillie, and Martin seem to largely disappear from the record, though Boswell’s petition of 14 May 1793 on their behalf at least gives some information about them. Allen apparently had a wife at Beccles in Suffolk, ‘from whom he has heard since he came home’.

Broom alias Butcher was from Kidderminster, and though unmarried had ‘heard from Mr. Woodward, who keeps the Lion in

119 Erickson, The Girl from Botany Bay, p. 196.
120 Cook, To Brave Every Danger, pp. 235–36.
121 J. King, Mary Bryant: Her Life and Escape from Botany Bay (Pymble, NSW, 2004), pp. 277–81.
122 HO 26/12, p. 11, NA; Old Bailey Proceedings Online (www.oldbaileyonline.org, version 7.0, 22 November 2013), September 1806, trial of Mary Broad (t18060917-112).
Kidderminster’, and would ‘be kindly received and get his bread in his own country’. C. H. Currey, Geoffrey Rawson, and Judith Cook all suggest that Broom alias Butcher enlisted in the New South Wales Corps, and was later granted twenty-five acres ‘in the district of Petersham Hill’ on 5 September 1795. This claim is not borne out by evidence, and appears to be an invention of Louis Becke and Walter Jeffery’s historical novel, *A First Fleet Family*, in which it is claimed that Broom alias Butcher petitioned Dundas on 23 January 1793 to be allowed to return to New South Wales ‘on proper terms’, and to use his expertise in Antipodean agriculture for the colony’s benefit. Becke and Jeffrey state that the ‘petition’ was granted, and that Broom alias Butcher was allowed to enlist in the New South Wales Corps. In reality, this ‘petition’ was not granted, as it does not appear to exist. There was a Private John Butcher stationed at Parramatta (about twenty-five miles from Petersham) in 1804, but nothing to suggest that this was the former escaped convict.

Lillie was born in Sudbury in Suffolk, and was a weaver and fish-net maker by trade. He had a wife and four children, and had been contacted by his uncle, Richard Wardel, a cabinet-maker and joiner in Gatney Street, Pimlico, and his brother, Robert Angus, a waiter in Old Russell Street. Boswell told Nepean that Lillie would be supported by these relations ‘and put in a way of getting a livelihood by his own trade’, having worked ‘night and day in gaol as a net-maker to support his family’. It is possible that Lillie returned home after his release, and a ‘Nathaniel Lilley’—a distinctive enough name—was convicted at the 1813 Suffolk summer assizes of housebreaking, and sentenced to death. No man by that name was subsequently entered into the transportation

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123 *Great Biographer*, p. 218.
125 ‘Returns of the Parramatta Associate Company embodied under the Command of John Savage Esqr. 5th March 1804’, enclosure no. 12 in Governor Philip Gidley King to Secretary of War, HRA, 1.iv, p. 578.
126 *Great Biographer*, p. 218.
127 HO 27/9, pp. 581–82, NA.
registers, so the sentence may well have been put into effect. But, like with the 1806 Mary Broad, there is no physical description by which to link the two Lillies other than a place of conviction.

Finally, James Martin, the supposed author of the *Memorandoms*, was said to be born in Ballymena, County Antrim, but had worked as a bricklayer and mason in England for seven years before being convicted. Martin had a wife and a son in Exeter, and Boswell expected he could ‘get a guinea a week, being a very good workman as he proved when at Botany Bay, where he worked a great deal for the settlement’. Martin was apparently willing either to return to Ireland, where the rest of his family lived, or he would seek work in London.\(^{128}\) Whether he took either of these options is unknown.

Transported convicts continued to attempt to seize boats and ships throughout the convict period, with the most famous incidents being the seizure of the *Wellington* in December 1826 while she was taking prisoners to Norfolk Island, and the capture of the *Cyprus* from Recherche Bay, Van Diemen’s Land, in August 1829.\(^{129}\) Though the later details of the lives of Martin and his fellow absconders may never be fully known, their example in steering a course towards their freedom must have been an inspiration to future would-be convict escapees and pirates.

\(^{128}\) *Great Biographer*, p. 218.

Further reading

The escape led by William Bryant is a story which has been told many times before, though on each occasion the account has focused upon the figure of Mary Bryant above all, often reducing the other members of the party to little more than ciphers. Owing to the relative paucity of the records relating to the lives of the escapees before, during, and after they absconded from New South Wales, modern writers have frequently departed from the historical record, substituting it with unsupported speculation and, in some cases, outright invention.

The best modern accounts of the escape are F. A. Pottle’s *Boswell and the Girl from Botany Bay* (1938), C. H. Currey’s *The Transportation, Escape, and Pardoning of Mary Bryant* (1963), Warwick Hirst’s chapter in his *Great Convict Escapes in Colonial Australia* (1999), and Carolly Erickson’s *The Girl from Botany Bay* (2005). Pottle was the first to fully explore the role of Boswell in the release of the escapees, while Currey widened the story further. Both are short works and are a now a little dated—Pottle was unaware of the *Memorandoms* when writing—but both are essential primers, and largely refrain from romanticism and supposition. Hirst’s excellent examination of the escape is largely based upon the *Memorandoms*, and is all the better for it, while Erickson’s book is probably the best of the modern full-length accounts. Erickson generally sticks to the documentary record, and offers some perceptive general observations about the period.

Other full-length works are usually on relatively sure ground when discussing documented events, but are much less satisfactory when attempting to widen the story. The most well-known and widely referred to of these accounts is Judith Cook’s *To Brave Every Danger: The Epic Life of Mary Bryant of Fowey* (1993), despite the book offering much unevedioned speculation and, as it contains no references, it is difficult to see where many of the claims originate from. For instance, Cook claims that Mary Bryant, not William Morton, was the ‘navigator’ of the boat in which the party escaped. This is based on the supposition that in her early
years Mary ‘learned to handle and steer a small sailing boat with considerable skill’, though nothing is presented to support either assertion, and the Memorandoms are explicit that Morton was the navigator.\(^{130}\) Cook’s Mary Bryant was a reluctant robber who only stole ‘to provide herself with funds with which to buy food to keep her family from starving’, and who subsequently, on the First Fleet’s voyage to Australia, ‘from time to time, negotiated on behalf of the other women for improvements in their ration of food and water’. Cook also claims that it was Mary who formulated the escape plan, cajoled William Bryant into absconding, and ‘who came up with the idea that the best boat in which to make a substantial journey […] would be the Governor’s own boat’.\(^{131}\) None of these statements are supported by any evidence, and To Brave Every Danger reads as though Cook wished to create a particular romantic portrait of Mary Bryant, despite there being little or no foundation for it.

Perhaps the most glaring example of this invention is when the escapees were hit by a storm after leaving ‘White Bay’:

It was then that the men seemed to give up all hope of a successful outcome to the voyage, resigning themselves to their deaths. Mary simply refused to give in. Snatching up a hat belonging to one of the men, she began to bail, calling on the rest to follow suit. […] Once she had organized the bailing, she took the tiller, straining against the huge seas. She told them, as they laboured, that she had no intention of drowning and nor should they. […] She was their shining light and, as [James] Martin writes, in spite of the very real distress she must have been suffering as the condition of ‘her two babies’ deteriorated rapidly through the continual cold and wet, she never once gave way to her own fears.\(^{132}\)

Needless to say, this is total fiction. Martin’s Memorandoms say no such thing about Mary’s supposed role in rescuing the party from the storm.\(^{133}\) Rather, Martin suggests all hands had given themselves

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\(^{130}\) Cook, To Brave Every Danger, p. 27.

\(^{131}\) Cook, To Brave Every Danger, pp. 41, 85, and 143.

\(^{132}\) Cook, To Brave Every Danger, p. 165.

up for lost, ‘thinking every moment to be the last’, and that the violence of the storm should lead the reader to ‘Consider what distress we must be in the Woman & the two little Babies was in a bad Condition’.  

Jonathan King’s *Mary Bryant: Her Life and Escape from Botany Bay* (2004) is even more problematic, with the author noting that although the story was ‘based on truth, I have embellished many parts of the story to help bring Mary to life in terms of our modern world’.  

‘Embellished’, however, generally means ‘invented’ in this work, which incorporates a fictional love story between Mary Bryant and one Richard Thomas which endures despite her transportation, and features Cornish mythology, romanticised encounters with Aborigines, and some atrocious invented dialogue (‘As she said to Catherine, “My poor liddle babe, Charlotte, is been alive four months but ne’r been outside a gaol!”’).  

King’s work is an unhappy hybrid of history and fiction, being neither one thing nor the other, and all the more misleading for it.

The story of the escapees has also been told a number of times as historical fiction proper, the first of which was Louis Becke and Walter Jeffery’s *A First Fleet Family* (1896).  

The work is subtitled as a ‘hitherto unpublished narrative of certain remarkable adventures compiled from the papers of Sergeant William Dew of the Marines’, and Becke and Jeffery present themselves as the ‘Editors of this narrative’ who had received Sergeant Dew’s journals from his grandson some months previously.  

Dew’s ‘narrative’ purports to tell the real story of the escape, but ends with one Lieutenant Fairfax—apparently modelled upon Watkin Tench—procur ing a pardon for Mary Bryant, taking her from Newgate, marrying her, and then settling together in London to start a family.  

As we have seen

134 Martin, *Memorandoms*, UC Bentham clxix f. 191–92 (original) and f. 203 (fair copy).


138 Becke and Jeffery, *First Fleet*, p. v.

139 Becke and Jeffery, *First Fleet*, p. 258. Boswell’s role in the release of the surviving escapees is not mentioned.
above, Becke and Jeffrey's fiction has been accepted as fact by some authors.

More modern, romanticised fictional accounts include Anthony Scott Veitch’s *Spindrift: the Mary Bryant Story* (1980), Lesley Pearse’s *Remember Me* (2003), Gerald and Loretta Housman’s *Escape from Botany Bay* (2003), and John Durand’s *The Odyssey of Mary B* (2005).\(^{140}\) All, apart from Veitch, appear to rely upon Cook’s *To Brave Every Danger* as their main source of information, with all the problems that entails. A television mini-series entitled *The Incredible Journey of Mary Bryant* was first broadcast in 2005, but the less said about the liberties it takes with the story, the better: as in most cases, the truth is much more interesting.\(^{141}\)


\(^{141}\) *The Incredible Journey of Mary Bryant* (2005), dir. Peter Andrikidis.
MEMORANDOMS BY JAMES MARTIN (ORIGINAL VERSION)

I James Martin142 Being Convicted at they City of Exeter in they County of Devonshire

Being found guilty of Stealing of stealing
16/2 of old Lead and 4/2 of old Iron _ I was

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142 James Martin/Martyn (c.1760 –?). Martin, the apparent author of this narrative (or at least a part of it), was born in Ballymena, County Antrim. He was convicted of stealing eleven screw bolts and other goods at Exeter Assizes on 20 March 1786, and sentenced to transportation for seven years. He was held on the Dunkirk hulk, where his behaviour was recorded as ‘tolerably decent and orderly’. On 11 March 1787, he was embarked upon the Charlotte, part of the First Fleet, bound for New South Wales. Mollie Gillen notes that Martin may have been the convict going by that surname who received 150 lashes on 7 March 1789, for ‘disobedience and straggling from the settlement’, but the evidence is unclear. For his convict indents, see NRS 12188 4/4003, pp. 315 – 16, and NRS 1150 SZ115, p. 4, SRNSW. For a biography, see M. Gillen, The Founders of Australia: a Biographical Dictionary of the First Fleet (Sydney, 1989), p. 238.

According to David Collins, at the time of his escape from Sydney, Martin had a further twelve months to serve before his sentence expired. See Collins, Account of the English Colony in New South Wales, vol. i [1798], ed. B. Fletcher (Sydney, 1975), p. 129.

After being recaptured, Martin arrived back in England on 18 June 1792 aboard HMS Gorgon with the other surviving escapees. He was detained for returning from transportation and held at Newgate gaol. At the Old Bailey on 7 July 1792 the escapees were ordered to ‘remain on their former sentence, until they should be discharged by course of law’ (London Chronicle, 7–10 July 1792). The Newgate criminal register for 25 June 1792 describes Martin as being aged thirty-nine, 5’ 8” in height (1.73m), and with grey eyes, black hair, and a ‘sallow complexion’. See HO26/56 p. 7, NA.

In his petition on behalf of the escapees of 14 May 1793, James Boswell reported that Martin was born in Ballymena, County Antrim, and was a bricklayer and mason who had worked in England for seven years prior to his conviction. Martin had a wife and son in Exeter, ‘from whom he has heard several times’. Boswell believed that Martin could ‘get a guinea a week, being a very good workman, as he proved when at Botany Bay, where he worked a great deal for the settlement’. Martin was willing ‘to return to his own country’, where the rest of his family were, ‘or he will get work in London’. See Boswell the Great Biographer, 1789–1795 (Yale Editions of the Private Papers of James Boswell, vol. 13), ed. M. K. Danziger and F. Brady (London, 1989), p. 218.

Martin served out the remainder of his sentence in Newgate, and was released by proclamation on 2 November 1793.
they property of Lord Courney\textsuperscript{143} poadrum

Casle\textsuperscript{144} nere Exeter \_ Recev.\textsuperscript{d} Sentance for to be

Transported to Botany Bay\textsuperscript{145} for 7 years 

Returned from they Bar to Exeter goal &

there remaind 2 months \_ from thence sent

on Board they Dunkirk\textsuperscript{146} there remaind 10 mon\textsuperscript{th}

from thence put on Board they Charlotte Trans\textsuperscript{port}.\textsuperscript{148}

Then Bound to Botany Bay \_ March 12 1787

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\textsuperscript{143} William Courtenay, 2\textsuperscript{nd} Viscount Courtenay and 8\textsuperscript{th} Earl of Devon (1742–1788), who succeeded to the title on 16 May 1762. Courtenay married Frances Clack on 7 May 1762, with whom he had eleven children.

\textsuperscript{144} Powderham Castle, ancestral home of the Earls of Devon.

\textsuperscript{145} Botany Bay, home to the Kamaygal and Gweagal people, was the site of the first landing of Captain James Cook on the Australian continent on 29 April 1770. It was owing to Cook’s favourable reports that the British government decided on Botany Bay as the site of its new penal colony. Arthur Phillip, first Governor of New South Wales, established a camp at Botany Bay on 18 January 1788, but the area was soon found to be unsuitable for settlement, and the First Fleet relocated to Port Jackson on 26 January. Despite this, ‘Botany Bay’ subsequently became a synonym for New South Wales.

\textsuperscript{146} HMS Dunkirk was built at Woolwich in 1754. She was converted to a prison hulk in 1782, and moored at Plymouth. The ship was used as a holding station for convicts to be embarked upon the First Fleet.

\textsuperscript{148} The Charlotte was a convict transport and part of the First Fleet (see n.6), and was built on the Thames in 1784. The Charlotte’s master was Thomas Gilbert, and her surgeon was John White. Eighty-six male male and twenty female convicts were embarked for the journey to New South Wales. See A. Frost, \textit{The First Fleet: The Real Story} (Collingwood, Victoria, 2011), p. 125.

42
Saild round to Spithead thence Remaind to they
13 of May _ then Sail in Copany with 10 sail\textsuperscript{149}
for Botany Bay under Comandand of govoner Philips.. \textsuperscript{150} Made they Peek of Tenureef\textsuperscript{151} _ 5 Day
of June, there Remaind 7 Days, then sail\textsuperscript{d}
for they Island of Reiodegionera,, \textsuperscript{152} being 8 \text{ weeks}
on our passage _ there remaind one Month
then sail\textsuperscript{d} for they Cape of good hope _

Being Eight weeks and three Days on our

\textsuperscript{149} The First Fleet left Great Britain on 13 May 1787, commanded by Captain Arthur Phillip, who had also been commissioned as the first Governor of the colony of New South Wales. The fleet consisted of six convict transports, two Royal Navy warships as escorts, and three storeships carrying food, supplies, tools, livestock, and other material for the new colony. The convict ships were the \textit{Alexander}, the \textit{Charlotte}, the \textit{Friendship}, the \textit{Lady Penrhyn}, the \textit{Prince of Wales}, and the \textit{Scarborough}; the Navy escorts were HMS \textit{Sirius} and HMS \textit{Supply}, and the storeships were the \textit{Golden Grove}, \textit{Fishburn}, and the \textit{Borrowdale}. Aboard the First Fleet were around 212 marines (with their families), and approximately 760 convicts. See Frost, \textit{The First Fleet}, pp. 65–66, p. 125 for the numbers embarked on the ships, pp. 159–78 for an account of the voyage, and more generally for a revision of the accepted presumption that the Fleet was badly prepared, brutal, and the ships unseaworthy.

\textsuperscript{150} Arthur Phillip (1738–1814), naval officer and colonial administrator. Phillip was born in London, the second child of Jacob and Elizabeth Phillip. He entered the navy aged nine, and worked his way through the ranks, having been promoted to fourth lieutenant in February 1760. He married Margaret Denison (1722–92) in July 1763, but they separated in April 1769. Phillip was on half-pay from July 1771 to January 1775, when he enlisted in the Portuguese navy, before returning to England and rejoining the Royal Navy in late 1778. He was appointed captain in 1782. Phillip accepted the position of Governor of New South Wales in September 1786, and played a major role in preparing the First Fleet for its voyage. He played a major role in steering the convict colony through its early crises, and set out for England at the end of 1792. He married Isabella Whitehead (\textit{b}.1751–1823) in May 1794, and returned to service in March 1796. By the time of his death, Phillip had been promoted to admiral of the blue.

\textsuperscript{151} Tenerife.

\textsuperscript{152} Rio de Janeiro.
pasage _ then Sail’d for Botany Bay

Being 10 weeks on our pasage _

Came to an anchor in port Jackson

Send on Shore in two Days _ they Convicts

Being Sent on Shore So Began to work
on governments account _ on being landed
we were Encamped _ and fourmed in sqads
of six in a tent _ after we Bing Encamped
We Some were sent to Clear they ground
others Sent to Build huts _ I Remaind on the
Island from January 1788 _ unto March
1791 _ on the 28 Day of March made
my Escape in Comp² with 7 men more & one
with one woman & two Child²₁⁵³ _ in an open
six oar Boat _ having of provisions on Bᵈ one hundred w¹ of
flower & one hundᵈ w¹ of
Rice 1⁴ w of pork and aBout Eight galons
of water having a Copass Quadrant
and Chart₁⁵⁴

₁⁵³ For biographies of the other escapees, see notes 213—23.
₁⁵⁴ For details of the preparations which went into the escape, see Causer, ‘Introduction to Martin’s Memorandoms’. 
after two Days sail reach a little creek +\(^{155}\)
about 2 Degrees to they Northward of port
Jackson\(^{156}\) there found a Quantity of fine Burn\(^g\)
Coal they Remaind 2 nights & one Day
and found a varse Quantty of Cabage tree\(^{157}\)
which we Cut Down & procured they Cabage
Then they Natives\(^{158}\) Came Down to which
we gave some Cloaths & other articles
and they went away very much satisfied
They appearanance of they land appears
more better here than at Sidney Cove
here we got avarse Quantity of fish which
were of a great Refressment to us
+ we call it fortunate Creek

\(^{155}\) The date on which they reached this creek was thus about 30 March 1791.
\(^{156}\) Historian Warwick Hirst suggests that this place was Glenrock Lagoon, south of modern-day Newcastle on Australia’s eastern coast. See Hirst, *Great Convict Escapes in Colonial Australia (revised edition)* (East Roseville, NSW, 2003), p. 13.
\(^{157}\) Probably the cabbage-tree palm (*Livistona Australis*), a palm tree which can grow up to twenty-five metres in height, which grows widely along the New South Wales and Queensland coasts.
\(^{158}\) If this was Glenrock Lagoon, then these were likely to have been of the people generally referred to as Awabakal in the literature.
after our stay of 2 nights & one Day⁵⁹ we
proceeded our Voyage to they Northward
after 2 Days⁶⁰ sail we Made a very fine
harbour⁶¹ Seeming to Run up they Country
for Many miles and Quite Comodious for
they Anchorage of Shipping _ here we found
aplenty of fresh water _ hawld our Boat
ashore to Repair her Bottom being very leaky
they Better to stay her Bottom with some Bees
Wax & Resin which we had a small Quantiy
Thereof _ But on they same night was Drove
of By they Natives⁶² _ which meant to Destru⁶⁴
us _ we Launchd our Boat and Road of in they
Strame Quite out of Reach of them

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⁵⁹ Approx. 1 April 1791.
⁶⁰ Approx. 3 April 1791.
⁶¹ Hirst suggests, from Martin’s description, that this place was Port Stephens, where the Myall and Karuah Rivers meet. The harbour is some 134 square kilometres in size. See Hirst, Convict Escapes, p. 13.
⁶² If this was Port Stephens, then these were likely members of the Worimi people.
that being Sunday\textsuperscript{163} Monday\textsuperscript{164} we were of in a Stream we Rowed Lower Down thinging for to Land Some Miles Below \_ on Monday Morn\textsuperscript{g}

We Attempted to land when we found a place Conversant for to Repair our Boat we accord\textsuperscript{y} we put Some of our things \_ part being ashore there Came they natives in Varse numbers with Spears & Sheilds \&c we formed in parts one party of us Made towards them they Better By signes to pasifie them But they not taking they least notice according\textsuperscript{by} we fired a Musket thinking to afright them But they took not they least notice Thereof \_ on perceiving them Rush more forward we were forsed to take to our Boat

\textsuperscript{163} Approx. Sunday 3 April 1791.
\textsuperscript{164} Approx. Monday 4 April 1791.
and to get out of their reach as fast as we
Could _ and what to Do we Could not tell
But on Consulting with each other it was
Determined for to Row up they harbour which
accordingly we Rowed up they harbour 9 or 10
Miles till we made a little white Sandy Isl.\textsuperscript{d}
in they Middle of they harbour\textsuperscript{165} which land.\textsuperscript{d}
upon and hawl\emph{d} up our Boat and Repair her
Bottom with what Little matariels we had
whilst our Stay of 2 Days we had no Interru\textsuperscript{on}
from they Natives _ then we rowed of to they
main\textsuperscript{166} where we took in fresh water and a few
Cabage tree _ and then put out to sea _
they \textsuperscript{167} natives here is quiet naked of a Copper Colour
Shock hair _ they have Cannoos made of bark\textsuperscript{167}

\textsuperscript{165} From the description, this may have been Snapper Island, One Tree Island, or Dowadee Island, all of which could be said to be ‘in the middle’ of Port Stephens.
\textsuperscript{166} A stay here of two days puts the date at around 6 April 1791.
\textsuperscript{167} If the escapees were still in the Port Stephens area, then these were likely members of the Worimi people.
then we proceed.\textsuperscript{d} they Northard, having a lead\textsuperscript{g} Brees from they S:W \_ But that night they\textsuperscript{168}
winds they Changed and Drove us Quite out of sight of Land \_ which we hawld our wind having a set of Sails in they Boat accordingly they next Day\textsuperscript{169} we made Close into they land But they Surf run\textsuperscript{g} so very hard we C\textsuperscript{d} not attempt to land but kept along shore but Making no harbour or Creek for nere three weeks we were much Distress\textsuperscript{d} for water and wood \_ accordly perceving they Surf to abate Two of our men Swim on shor thinking to get some Water\textsuperscript{170} But being afraid of they natives which they see in numbers they return\textsuperscript{d} \_ without any, But a little wood which threw into they water which we took up

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{168} Approx. the night of 6 April 1791. \\
\textsuperscript{169} Approx. 7 April 1791.  \\
\textsuperscript{170} Approx. 28 April 1791. 
\end{flushright}
We put over on the other Side of the Bay excepting to meet with a Convenient Harbour we found a little River which with great difficulty we got up our Boat being very leaky at that Time that it was with great difficulty we Could keep her above Water _ were we Landed & hauled her up putting some Soap in the Seams which Answered very well _ at this Place we Cou’d get no Shell Fish or Fish of any kind in this Bay here we stopped two Days & two Nights _ then we left this Bay Place & went down the Bay about 20 Miles expecting to meet with a Harbor to get some Refreshment but cou’d see none nor the End of the Bay the Wind being favourable we Tack’d about & put to Sea the Land here seem’d to be much the same as at Botany Bay

171 Approx. 30 April 1791.
accordingly we up grappling we up grappling so stood to they
Northward but our Boat being very Deep we
were Obliged to trow all our Cloathing over
Board they Better to lighten our Boat as they
Sea Breaking over us Quite Rapid
that Night\textsuperscript{172} we Ran into an Open Bay\textsuperscript{173} & Could see no Place to Land at the Surf running that
we were Afraid of Staving our Boat to Pieces _ We Came to a Grapling in that Bay
the same Night about 2 oClock in the Morn.\textsuperscript{174} our Grapling Broke & we were drove in the Middle of the Surf Expecting every Moment that our Boat wou’d be Staved to Pieces & every Soul Perish but as God wou’d have we Got our Boat save on Shore without any Loss or Damage excepting one Oar we Hauld our Boat up & there Remaind two days & 2 Nights\textsuperscript{175}

\textsuperscript{172} Approx. 30 April 1791.
\textsuperscript{173} I have been unable to identify this place.
\textsuperscript{174} Approx. 1 May 1791.
\textsuperscript{175} Leaving on approx. 3 May 1791.
there we Kindled a Fire with great difficulty
every thing that we had being very Wet _ we
Got Plenty of Shell Fish there & Fresh Water
the Natives Came down in great Numbers we
Discharged a Musquet over their Heads & they
dispersed immediately & we saw no more of them
we put our things in the Boat & with great
difficulty we Got out to Sea for 2 or 3 days
we had very Bad Weather our Boat Shipping
many heavy Seas, so that One Man was always
Employed in Bailing out the Water to keep her
up _ the next Place we made176 was White Bay177
being in Latt.° 27°00 we ran down that Bay
2 or 3 Leagues before we Cou’d see a convenient
Place to Land the Surf running very High
we saw two Women & 2 Children with a Fire

176 On approx. 6 May 1791.
177 Hirst suggests that this place was Moreton Bay. See Great Convict Escapes, p. 15.
Brand in their Hands at this Place we Landed
the two Women being Frightened Ran
away but we made Signs that we wanted
a Light which they Gave us Crying at the
same Time in their Way we took our things
out of the Boat & put them in two Huts
which was there _ the next Morn.

about 11 oClock a great Number of the Natives Came towards
us _ as soon as we Saw we went to meet them
& Fired a Musquet over their Heads as soon as
they Heard the Report they Ran into the Woods
& we Saw no more of them the Natives there
is Quite Naked _ there we Stopped two days
& two Nights the Surf Running so very High
that we were in great Danger of Staving y^e Boat

178 Approx. 7 May 1791.
179 If this was Moreton Bay, then these individuals likely belonged to the Yuggera, Waka Waka, or Gubbi Gubbi people.
180 Approx. 9 May 1791.
that Night\textsuperscript{181} we \textit{were} drove out to Sea by a heavy Gale of Wind & Current, expecting every Moment to go to the Bottom next Morn.\textsuperscript{182} saw no Land the Sea running Mountains high we were Under a Close Reef Mainsail & kept so untill Night\textsuperscript{183} & then came too under a droge\textsuperscript{184} all the Night with her Head to the Sea thinking every Moment to be the Last the Sea Coming in so heavy upon us every now & then that two Hands was Obliged to keep Bailing out & it Rained very hard all that Night the next Morn.\textsuperscript{185} we took our droge in but Could see no Land but Hawling towards the Land to make it as soon as possible the Gale of Wind still Continuing we kept on under a Close Reef Main-sail but cou’d make no Land all that Day _ I will Leave you to Consider what distress we must be in

\textsuperscript{181} Approx. 9 May 1791.
\textsuperscript{182} Approx. 10 May 1791.
\textsuperscript{183} Approx. 10 May 1791.
\textsuperscript{184} A storm drogue, a device which is attached to the stern of a boat to slow down and keep upright a boat during a storm.
\textsuperscript{185} Approx. 11 May 1791.
the Woman & the two little Babies was in a bad
Condition every thing being so Wet that we Cou’d by no Means light a Fire we had nothing to Eat except a little Raw Rice at Night\textsuperscript{186} we Came too under a droge as we did the Night before the next Morn.\textsuperscript{187} we took in our droge & kept to the North\textsuperscript{wd} on purpose to make the Land about 8 oClock we made Land which proved to be a little Island\textsuperscript{188} about 30 Leagues from the Main the Surf Running so very High we were rather fearful of going in for fear of Staving our Boat but we Concluded amongst Ourselves that we might as well Venture in there as to keep out to Sea seeing no Probability that if we kept out to Sea that we shou’d every Soul Perish _ All Round this Island there was nothing but Reefs but a little sandy Beach which we got in safe without much damage & haul’d our Boat up out

\textsuperscript{186} Approx. 11 May 1791.
\textsuperscript{187} Approx. 12 May 1791.
\textsuperscript{188} Hirst suggests that this place was Lady Elliot Island, which from the description and presence of turtles seems likely to be correct. See Convict Escapes, p. 16.
of the ways of the Surf we got all our things out of the Boat then we Went to get a Fire which with great difficulty we got a Fire which being almost Starving we put on a little Rice for to Cook when we went to this Island we had but one Gallon of fresh Water for there was not a drop of fresh Water to be had on this Island the Island was about one Mile in Circumference after the Tide fell we went to Look for some Shell Fish but found a great Quantity of very fine Large Turtles\footnote{These were most likely Green Sea Turtles, which can grow up to 1.5 metres in length, and have nesting grounds on the north-eastern and northern coasts of Australia.} which was left upon the Reef which we turned five of them & hauled them upon the Beach this Reef Runs about a Mile & half out in the Sea & Intirely Dry when low Water we took & killed One of the Turtles & had a Noble meal this Night\footnote{Approx. 12 May 1791.} it rain’d very Hard when we Spread our Mainsail & filled our two Breakers full of Water
We staid on this Island six days during that Time we Killed twelve Turtles & some of it we Took & Dry’d over the Fire to take to Sea with us.

It seemed to us that there had never been any Natives on this Island there is a kind of Fruit grows like unto a Bellpepper which seemed to Taste very well there was a great Quantity of Fowls which Stayed at Night in Holes in the ground we Could not think of taking any live Turtles with us because our Boat wouldn’t admit of it we Paid the Seams of our Boat all over with Soap before we put to Sea at the End of the Six Days we Launched our Boat & put to Sea at 8 oClock in the Morn\textsuperscript{191} & Steered to the Northward: this Island was in Lat: 26° 27’ we made the main Land in the Evening we passed a great Number of Small Islands which we put into a great many of them

\textsuperscript{191} Approx. 18 May 1791. After this date, it becomes impossible to gauge the passage of time.
expecting to find some Turtle but never found any in any of the Islands we put into Afterwards we found a great Quantity of Shell Fish but none of them very fit to Eat but being very Hungred we were Glad to Eat them & Thank God for it if it had not been for the Shell Fish & the little Turtle that we had we must have Starved very seldom put into any Place but found plenty of Fresh Water but nothing We could find fit to Eat when we Came to the Gulf of Carpentaria which is in Latt: 10°: 11′ we ran down the Gulf Nine or Ten Miles we saw Several small Islands on which we saw several of the Natives in two canoes landing on One of the small Islands we Steered down towards them as soon as they saw us they sent their two Canoes Round to the Back of the Island with one Man in each of them

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192 The Gulf of Carpentaria, a 590 kilometre wide sea on the northern coast of the Australian continent, bounded by Cape York on its east, Cape Arnhem on its west, and the Arafura sea to its north.

193 These people were likely to have been Torres Strait Islanders, the indigenous people of the Torres Strait Island. They are well known for their seamanship, and the escapees did well to have twice escaped their boats.
when we Came down to them they seemed to Stand
in a posture of Defence against us we fired a Musquet over them and immediately they began Firing their Bows & Arrows at us we immediately hoisted up our Sails & Rowed away from them but as God wou’d have it none of their Arrows came into reached the Boat but dropped along side we Could not get Hold of any of them but they seemed to be about Eighteen Inches long the Natives seemed to be very Stout & fat & Blacker they were in other Parts we seen before there was One which we took to be the Chief with some Shells Around his Shoulders we Rowed down a little farther down the Gulf & landed upon the Main for to get some Water we found plenty of fresh Water we saw a small Town of Huts about 20 of them just by were the fresh Water was there was none of the Inhabitants in their Huts or about them that we Could see their Huts was large enough for Six or
seven of them to Stand upright in they were made of Bark & Covered Over with Grass we filled our 2 Breakers with fresh Water & Came on Board of our Boat again for we were Afraid of Staying on Shore for fear of the Natives we went three or four Miles from the Shore & dropt our Killock & there Stopped all Night the next Morn. we was determined to go to the same Place to Recruit our Water but as we were making to the Shore we saw two very large Canoes coming towards us we did not know what to do for we were Afraid to meet them there seemed to us to be 30 or 40 Men in each Canoe they had Sails in their Canoes seemed to made of Matting one of their Canoes was a Head of the others a little Way Stopt until the other Came up & then she Hoisted her Sails & made after us as Soon as we saw that we Tack’d about with what Water we had determined

194 A small anchor.
Tho' Chapman No 11 George
Street Foster Lane
Cheapside.

N.B. Let me now by
the bearer if you had
a pair of Wheels of
Richhold of Melford
I paid him half what
that came to the 31st
of March 1791 which was £10 11s
to Cross the Gulf which was about five Hundred Miles
Across which as God wou’d have it we Out Run them
they followed us until we Lost sight of them
we having but little fresh Water & no Wood to make
a Fire with but in four days & a half we made
the other side of the Gulf we put on Shore\textsuperscript{195} to look
for some fresh Water but Cou’d find none at that
Place but we kept along Shore until the Even\textsuperscript{g}
we saw a little small river which we made to
& Got plenty of Fresh Water we put of to Sea
the same Night we saw no more Land untill
we Came into \textsuperscript{N} the Latitude of North End
of the Island we hawled up to make the Land to
get some fresh Water but saw no Land but a
heavy Swell Running which had liked to have
swallowed us up then we Concluded as the best Way
to Shape our Course for the Island of Timor with what
little Water we had which we made it in 36 Hours after we

\textsuperscript{195} Given that the escapees had just crossed the Gulf of Carpentaria, this was likely to have been somewhere on the northern shore of Arnhem Land, now one of the five regions of the Northern Territory of Australia.
Mr Jackson No. 10 Bishophead head

Court
Which we run along the Island of Timor Till we came to the Dutch Settlement\textsuperscript{196} where we went on Shore to the Governor\textsuperscript{197} House where he behaved extremely well to us filld our Bellies & Cloathed Double with every that was wore on the Island which rem\textsuperscript{d} very happy at our work for two Months till W\textsuperscript{m} Bryant had words with his wife went and informed against himself wife & children\textsuperscript{198} and all of us which we was immediately taken Prisoners and was put into the Castle\textsuperscript{199} we were Strictly Examined after been Examined we was allowed to Go out of the Castle 2 at a time for one Day and the next Day 2 more & So we Continued till

\textsuperscript{196} Kupang, was an important Dutch East India Company (VOC) trading post on the western coast of the island of Timor. Though the VOC had a presence around Timor from 1613, a Dutch fort at Kupang was only constructed in 1653 following the negotiation of a treaty with the rajah of Kupang.

Kupang was largely destroyed by the British in 1797, but only surrendered to the British in early 1812, being one of the Dutch colonial possessions occupied by the British during the Napoleonic wars. Kupang was returned to the new United Kingdom of the Netherlands in 1816.

\textsuperscript{197} Timotheus Wanjon (?–?), Governor of Kupang, 1789–97. Wanjon assumed the role after the incumbent (and Wanjon’s father-in-law), William Adriaan van Este (?–1789), died in post.

\textsuperscript{198} See Causer, ‘Introduction to Martin’s Memorandoms’, for the various explanations of how the true identity of the escapees were uncovered.

\textsuperscript{199} Presumably this refers to the Dutch fort at Kupang.
Captain Edwards who had been on search of the Bounty Pirates which had taken some of the Pirates at Otaheite which he lost the Pandora frigate betwixt New Guinea & New Holland which he made Island of Timor in the Pinnace Two Yawls and his long boat & 120 hands which was saved

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Edward Edwards (1742–1815), British naval officer. Edwards entered the Royal Navy as a lieutenant in 1759, and served on several ships (including as commanding officer of HMS Carcass and HMS Hornet), before being put on half-pay in March 1784. In August 1790, Edwards was given command of the frigate Pandora and commissioned to pursue the mutineers who had seized HMS Bounty in 1789. Fourteen of the mutineers were seized, but the Pandora was wrecked on the Great Barrier Reef during the return voyage to Britain, in which thirty-one crew members and four of the mutineers were killed. The survivors made their way to Timor in an open boat, and eventually returned home along with Martin and the other surviving escaped convicts. Edwards was court-martialled on 17 September 1792 over the loss of Pandora, but he and his officers were exonerated. He was promoted to vice-admiral in 1809.

Tahiti.

HMS Pandora.

The Australian continent was known as ‘New Holland’ from 1644, when it was given the name by the Dutch explorer Abel Janzoon Tasman, until the early nineteenth century. After the British colony of New South Wales was established, ‘New Holland’ was generally taken to refer to the western part of the continent.
which Captain Edwards came to us to know what we were which we told him we was Convicts and had made our Escape from Botany Bay which he told us we was his prisoners and put us on board the Yambang\textsuperscript{204} Dutch Company’s Ship & put us Both Legs in Irons Called the \textit{bilões bilboes}\textsuperscript{205} which we was Conveyed to Batavia which we was taken out of the Yambang & put on board a Dutch Guardship in Irons again there we Lost the Child\textsuperscript{206} 6 Days after the father of the Child was taken Bad & Died\textsuperscript{207} which was both buried at Bretavia\textsuperscript{208} 6 weeks after we was put on 3 Different Ships\textsuperscript{209} bound to the Cape of Good hope which we was 3 months before we

\textsuperscript{204} The \textit{Rembang}, one of the Dutch East India Company ships chartered by Captain Edwards, to take the survivors of the wrecking of the \textit{Pandora}, the captured \textit{Bounty} mutineers, and the escaped convicts to Batavia.

\textsuperscript{205} Bilboes were a form of leg-irons. Shackles were attached to both of the prisoners legs, with a locked rod running through the shackles to prevent much in the way of movement.

\textsuperscript{206} Emanuel Bryant. See note 217 for a biography.

\textsuperscript{207} William Bryant. See note 216 for a biography.

\textsuperscript{208} Batavia

\textsuperscript{209} These were three Dutch East India Company ships: the \textit{Vreedenberg}, the \textit{Horssen}, and the \textit{Hoornwey}. 
reachd the Cape when we Came there the Gorgon man of war which had brought the marines from Botany Bay which we was put on board of Gorgon which we was known well by all the Marine officers

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210 HMS Gorgon. Commanded by John Parker, she arrived in Sydney in September 1791 as part of the Third Fleet. The Gorgon left Sydney on 18 December 1791, with part of the marine detachment which had travelled to New South Wales aboard the First Fleet, and many specimens of Australian flora and fauna. The ship reached Cape Town on 11 March 1792, where it took on board Edwards’s party before leaving in April, and arriving at Portsmouth on 18 June 1792.

Which was all Glad that we had not perished
at sea which was brought home to England
in the Gorgon we was Brought to shore
at Purfleet and from there Conveyed by the
Constables to Bow St Office London and was
taken before Justice Bond212 and was fully committed
to Newgate. Wm Moatton213 Navigator
of the Boat Died James Cox214 Died Sam

212 Nicholas Bond (1743-1807), from 1785 a magistrate at the Bow Street public office.
213 William Morton (?–1792). Morton was convicted at Newcastle-upon-Tyne on 22 April 1789, and sentenced to transportation for seven years. He arrived in New South Wales on 27 June 1790 by the Neptune, part of the Second Fleet. See NRS 12188 4/4003, pp. 331–32, and NRS 1150 SZ115, p. 145 for Morton’s convict indents.
   According to David Collins, at the time of his escape from Sydney, Morton had another five years and a month to serve before his sentence expired (Collins, Account, i. p. 129). Morton died aboard the Dutch East India Company ship Hoornwey in 1792, during its voyage from Batavia to Cape Town.
214 James Cox, alias Rolt/Rott (c.1759–?). Cox was convicted on 11 September 1782 of breaking and entering a haberdashery owned by Henry and Francis Thompson, and of stealing 12 yards of thread lace and two pairs of cotton stockings (valued at four shillings each) belonging to the Thompsons, through a broken window. Though nothing was found on his person, when apprehended Cox was nursing a bleeding hand. He was sentenced to death, but was respited—a year later—on condition of being transported to America for life, and was sent to a hulk on the Thames on 10 September 1783. For details of his trial and sentence, see Old Bailey Proceedings Online (www.oldbaileyonline.org, version 7.0, 7 November 2013), September 1782, trial of JAMES COX (t17820911-14), and September 1783 (s17830910-1).
   On 26 March 1784, Cox was embarked upon the Mercury transport ship, bound for America, but a revolt by the convicts on board caused the ship to pull in at Torbay. From there, Cox escaped and went into hiding in Devon for just under a month. Cox was recaptured on 16 April 1784, and committed to gaol. On 24 May, he was tried before a Special Commission, and received another death sentence. This was again commuted to transportation for life, and he was sent to the Dunkirk hulk where it was reported that he behaved ‘remarkably well’. He was embarked upon the Charlotte bound for New South Wales on 11 March 1787. Cox worked as a cabinet maker in Sydney, and apparently had a
relationship with the female prisoner Sarah Young (transported by the Lady Juliana). For Cox's convict indent, see NRS12188 4/4003, p.102, and NRS 1150 SZ115, p. 19. For a biography, see Gillen, Founders of Australia, p. 84.

In the list of escapees prepared by Captain Edward Edwards, it is stated that on the journey from Timor to Britain via the Cape, Cox drowned after falling overboard at the Sunda Straits, located between Java and Sumatra. According to George Hamilton, the surgeon of the wrecked HMS Pandora, ‘before we left Java, one of the convicts [Cox] had jumped over board in the night, and swam to the Dutch arsenal at Honroost’. Had Cox been wearing the ‘bilbo’ irons described by Martin, he would likely have drowned. See the HRA, 1.I, enclosure in Secretary Philip Stephens to Governor Arthur Phillip, 21 July 1792, pp. 368–69, and George Hamilton, A Voyage Round the World, in His Majesty’s Frigate Pandora, Performed Under the Direction of Captain Edwards, in the Years, 1790, 1791, and 1792 (Berwick, 1793), p. 158.

215 Samuel Bird, alias John Simms (c.1762–1792). Bird was convicted of stealing 1,000lbs of saltpetre from a warehouse in Wandsworth, on 20 July 1785, at Croydon. He was sentenced to transportation for seven years, and convicted alongside one James Bird, who may have been an elder brother. On 24 October 1785, Bird was sent from Southwark gaol to the Justitia hulk, and was embarked upon the Alexander on 6 January 1787, bound for New South Wales. For Bird’s convict indent, see NRS 12188 4/4003, p. 39, and NRS 1150 SZ115, p. 1. See Gillen, Founders of Australia, p. 35.

According to David Collins, at the time of his escape from Sydney, Bird had another year and four months to serve before his sentence expired (Account, i. p. 129).

In the list of escapees prepared by Captain Edward Edwards, Bird is named as John Simms. See enclosure in Secretary Philip Stephens to Governor Arthur Phillip, 21 July 1792, HRA 1.I, pp. 368–69. Bird/Simms died on board the Dutch East India Company ship Hoornwey in 1792, during its voyage from Batavia to Cape Town.

216 William Bryant (c.1757?–1791). Bryant was convicted on 20 March 1784 at the Launceston Assizes of resisting the officers of the revenue. He was sentenced to death, which was commuted to transportation to America for seven years. Bryant was put onto the Dunkirk hulk on 6 April 1784, where it was reported in October 1786 that he was behaving ‘remarkably well’. Owing to Britain’s loss of the American colonies during the Revolutionary War, Bryant was embarked upon the Charlotte on 11 March 1787, part of the First Fleet bound for New South Wales. For his convict indents, see NRS 12188 4/4003, p. 43, and NRS 12188 4/4003, pp. 53–54. For a biography, see Gillen, Founders of Australia, p. 57.

Bryant was employed as the colony’s fisherman owing to his maritime experience, and had the charge of the government boats and was provided with a hut for his family. He married Mary Broad in Sydney on 10 February 1788, but a year later on 4 February 1789, Bryant was found selling fish caught on government time. He received 100 lashes as a punishment, was dismissed from his post, evicted from his accommodation, and sent to labour with the other convicts. A few months later, Bryant was again in charge of the colony’s fishing boats, his skills being too useful. The Bryants had a son, Emanuel, who was baptised on 4 April 1790. According to David Collins, at the time of his escape from Sydney, Bryant’s sentence of transportation had expired (Account, i. p. 129).

Bryant died on 22 December 1791 in the hospital at Batavia.

Sam'l Burd215 Died Wm Bryant216 Died
A boy of 12 months old Died

A little Girl 3 yrs and a Quarter old Died

the mother of the 2 Children Mary Brian

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217 Emanuel Bryant (1790–1791), son of William and Mary Bryant. Emanuel was born in Sydney and baptised on 4 April 1790. He died on 1 December 1791, in Batavia (now Jakarta, Indonesia). See enclosure in Secretary Philip Stephens to Governor Arthur Phillip, 21 July 1792, HRA I.1, pp. 368–69.

218 Charlotte Spence/Bryant (1787–1792), daughter of Mary Broad, later Bryant. Mary Broad gave birth to a daughter aboard the Charlotte transport ship on 8 September 1787, shortly after the ship had left Rio de Janeiro, and the child was baptised Charlotte Spence at the Cape on 28 September 1787. Broad became pregnant with Charlotte while aboard the Dunkirk hulk, but it is unclear whether William Bryant was the father. In the list of escapees prepared by Captain Edward Edwards, Charlotte’s surname is given as Bryant. Charlotte died on 6 May 1792 aboard HMS Gorgon, during its voyage from Cape Town to Britain. See enclosure in Secretary Philip Stephens to Governor Arthur Phillip, 21 July 1792, HRA I.1, pp. 368–69, and Gillen, Founders of Australia, pp. 47–8, and 57.

219 Mary Bryant (1767?–?), née Braund/Broad. Mary Broad was born in Cornwall, and was convicted, with Catherine Pager and Mary Hayden alias Shepherd, of assault and the theft of a silk bonnet and other goods at the Exeter Assizes on 20 March 1786. Broad was sentenced to death, but the sentence was commuted on 13 April 1786 to transportation for seven years. On 26 September 1786, Broad was placed onto the Dunkirk hulk, where she was reported to have behaved ‘tolerably and decently’. She was pregnant when, on 11 March 1787, she was embarked upon the Charlotte, part of the First Fleet bound for New South Wales. She gave birth to a daughter on 8 September 1787, not long after the ship had left Rio de Janeiro. The child was baptised Charlotte Spence at the Cape on 28 September 1787. Broad married her fellow Cornish convict, William Bryant, on 10 February 1788, with whom she had a son named Emanuel, baptised on 4 April 1790. For her convict indents, see NRS 12188 4/4003, pp. 43–44, and NRS 1150 SZ115, p. 8, SRNSW. For a biography, see Gillen, Founders of Australia, pp. 47–8.

According to David Collins, at the time of her escape from Sydney, Bryant had a further twenty-four months to serve before her sentence expired (Account, i. p. 129).

After being recaptured, Bryant arrived back in England on 18 June 1792 aboard HMS Gorgon. She and the other survivors were detained in Newgate gaol for returning from transportation, and on 7 July they were all ordered to ‘remain on their former sentence, until they should be discharged by course of law’ (London Chronicle, 7–10 July 1792). According to the Newgate criminal register of 25 June 1792, ‘Mary Briant alias Broad’ was aged twenty-five, was 5’ 4” (1.63m) in height, had grey eyes, brown hair, and a ‘sallow complexion’. See HO26/56 p. 8, NA.

On 2 May 1793, she was released with a free pardon, and appears to have returned to Cornwall in October 1793. Some researchers have noted that a ‘Mary Bryant’ married one Richard Thomas in the parish of St Breage on 3 October 1807, but there is no firm evidence that this was the transported Mary Broad/Bryant. A Mary Broad was acquitted at the Old Bailey of theft in September 1806, who was almost precisely the age of the transported
alive James Martin\textsuperscript{220} alive W\textsuperscript{m} Allen\textsuperscript{221} alive

John Broom\textsuperscript{222} alive Nath\textsuperscript{i} Lilly\textsuperscript{223} alive

Mary Broad/Bryant, but there is no evidence beyond the age to link the two women. See Causer, ‘Introduction to Martin’s Memorandoms’.
\textsuperscript{220} See n.3.

\textsuperscript{221} William Allen (1736–?). William Allen was born in Kingston-upon-Hull. In making a case for the release of the escapees, the lawyer and biographer James Boswell stated that Allen had ‘served both the last wars in His Majesty’s fleet under Captain [John] Moutray in the Ramillies’, and later served under ‘Captain Marotter and Admiral Groves’ (Great Biographer, p. 218).

Allen was convicted at Norwich on 30 July 1787, and sentenced to transportation for seven years for stealing twenty-six (according to Boswell) or twenty-nine (according to the London Chronicle of 30 June to 3 July 1792) handkerchiefs, belonging to Messrs. Lewis and Haywood. Allen was transported to New South Wales by the Scarborough, part of the Second Fleet, which arrived in New South Wales on 28 June 1790. For his convict indents, see NRS 12188 4/4003, pp. 28–29, and NRS 1150 SZ115, p. 20, SRNSW. According to David Collins, Allen had been transported for life (Account, i. p. 129).

After being recaptured, Allen arrived back in England on 18 June 1792 aboard HMS Gorgon with the other surviving escapees. He was detained for returning from transportation and held at Newgate gaol, and at the Old Bailey on 7 July 1792 the escapees were ordered to ‘remain on their former sentence, until they should be discharged by course of law’ (London Chronicle, 7–10 July 1792). The Newgate criminal register for 25 June 1792 describes Allen as being aged fifty-six, 5’ 11” (1.80m) in height, and with hazel eyes, dark brown hair, and a dark brown complexion. He is described as a ‘Mariner’ (HO26/56, p. 7, NA). On 5 July 1792, Edward Sharpe, Gaoler of Norwich Gaol, wrote to Sir Sampson Wright, Chief Magistrate of the Bow Street Office, having been ‘informed by the newspapers that W[illia]m Allen, a convict which was in our Gaol about five years since is in Newgate on suspicion of his elopement from his sentence’. Sharped offered to come and ‘identify the man’, providing that his expenses be paid. See HO42/21/17, pp.39-41.

In May 1793, Allen told Boswell that “Water I must follow” […] he] would rather go where he can get most by it, viz., in a merchantman: “I have the world to begin again.’” Allen apparently had a wife at Beccles in Suffolk, ‘from whom he had heard since he came home’ (Great Biographer, pp. 217–18). Allen was released from Newgate by proclamation on 2 November 1793.

\textsuperscript{222} See note 303 for a biography.

\textsuperscript{223} See note 304 for a biography.
I James Martin\textsuperscript{224} being Convicted at the City of Exeter in the County of Devonshire being found guilty of Stealing 16\textsuperscript{th} \(\frac{1}{2}\) of

\textsuperscript{224} James Martin/Martyn (c.1760 –?). Martin, the apparent author of this narrative (or at least a part of it), was born in Ballymena, County Antrim. He was convicted of stealing eleven screw bolts and other goods at Exeter Assizes on 20 March 1786, and sentenced to transportation for seven years. He was held on the Dunkirk hulk, where his behaviour was recorded as ‘tolerably decent and orderly’. On 11 March 1787, he was embarked upon the Charlotte, part of the First Fleet, bound for New South Wales. Mollie Gillen notes that Martin may have been the convict going by that surname who received 150 lashes on 7 March 1789, for ‘disobedience and straggling from the settlement’, but the evidence is unclear. For his convict indents, see NRS 12188 4/4003, pp. 315 – 16, and NRS 1150 SZ115, p. 4, SRNSW. For a biography, see M. Gillen, \textit{The Founders of Australia: a Biographical Dictionary of the First Fleet} (Sydney, 1989), p. 238.

According to David Collins, at the time of his escape from Sydney, Martin had a further twelve months to serve before his sentence expired. See Collins, \textit{Account of the English Colony in New South Wales}, vol. i [1798], ed. B. Fletcher (Sydney, 1975), p. 129.

After being recaptured, Martin arrived back in England on 18 June 1792 aboard HMS Gorgon with the other surviving escapees. He was detained for returning from transportation and held at Newgate gaol. At the Old Bailey on 7 July 1792 the escapees were ordered to ‘remain on their former sentence, until they should be discharged by course of law’ (\textit{London Chronicle}, 7–10 July 1792). The Newgate criminal register for 25 June 1792 describes Martin as being aged thirty-nine, 5’ 8” in height (1.73m), and with grey eyes, black hair, and a ‘sallow complexion’. See HO26/56 p. 7, NA.

In his petition on behalf of the escapees of 14 May 1793, James Boswell reported that Martin was born in Ballymena, County Antrim, and was a bricklayer and mason who had worked in England for seven years prior to his conviction. Martin had a wife and son in Exeter, ‘from whom he has heard several times’. Boswell believed that Martin could ‘get a guinea a week, being a very good workman, as he proved when at Botany Bay, where he worked a great deal for the settlement’. Martin was willing ‘to return to his own country’, where the rest of his family were, ‘or he will get work in London’. See Boswell the Great Biographer, 1789–1795 (Yale Editions of the Private Papers of James Boswell, vol. 13), ed. M. K. Danziger and F. Brady (London, 1989), p. 218.

Martin served out the remainder of his sentence in Newgate, and was released by proclamation on 2 November 1793.
old Lead & 4½ of old Iron the Property of Lord Courtney

Powderham Castle near Exeter Received Sentence to be Transported to Botany Bay for 7 years Returned from the Bar to Exeter Goal and there remained 2 Months from thence sent on Board the Dunkirk there remained 10 months from thence put on board the Charlotte Transport then bound to Botany Bay March 12th: 1787. Sailed round to Spithead there remained to the 13 of May then sailed in Company with 10 Sail for Botany Bay under the Command

225 William Courtenay, 2nd Viscount Courtenay and 8th Earl of Devon (1742–1788), who succeeded to the title on 16 May 1762. Courtenay married Frances Clack on 7 May 1762, with whom he had eleven children.

226 Powderham Castle, ancestral home of the Earls of Devon.

227 Botany Bay, home to the Kamaygal and Gweagal people, was the site of the first landing of Captain James Cook on the Australian continent on 29 April 1770. It was owing to Cook’s favourable reports that the British government decided on Botany Bay as the site of its new penal colony. Arthur Phillip, first Governor of New South Wales, established a camp at Botany Bay on 18 January 1788, but the area was soon found to be unsuitable for settlement, and the First Fleet relocated to Port Jackson on 26 January. Despite this, ‘Botany Bay’ subsequently became a synonym for New South Wales.

228 HMS Dunkirk was built at Woolwich in 1754. She was converted to a prison hulk in 1782, and moored at Plymouth. The ship was used as a holding station for convicts to be embarked upon the First Fleet.

229 The Charlotte was a convict transport and part of the First Fleet (see n.6), and was built on the Thames in 1784. The Charlotte’s master was Thomas Gilbert, and her surgeon was John White. Eighty-six male male and twenty female convicts were embarked for the journey to New South Wales. See A. Frost, The First Fleet: The Real Story (Collingwood, Victoria, 2011), p. 125.

230 The First Fleet left Great Britain on 13 May 1787, commanded by Captain Arthur Phillip, who had also been commissioned as the first Governor of the colony of New South Wales. The fleet consisted of six convict transports, two Royal Navy warships as escorts, and three storeships carrying food, supplies, tools, livestock, and other material for the new colony. The convict ships were the Alexander, the Charlotte, the Friendship, the Lady Penrhyn, the Prince of Wales, and the Scarborough; the Navy escorts were HMS Sirius and
of Governor Philips. Made the Peek of Tenereef 5th of June, there remained 7 days, then sailed for the Island of Rio de Janeiro, being 8 Weeks on our Passage remained there 1 Month, then sailed for the Cape of Good Hope being 8 Weeks and 3 days on our passage, then sailed for Botany Bay being 10 Weeks on our passage. Came to Anchor in Port Jackson sent on shore in two days the Convicts being sent on shore began to work on Government’s account on being landed we were Encamped and formed into squads of size in a tent after being Encamped some of us were sent to clear the Ground others to build Huts I remained on the

HMS Supply, and the storeships were the Golden Grove, Fishburn, and the Borrowdale. Aboard the First Fleet were around 212 marines (with their families), and approximately 760 convicts. See Frost, The First Fleet, pp. 65–66, p. 125 for the numbers embarked on the ships, pp. 159–78 for an account of the voyage, and more generally for a revision of the accepted presumption that the Fleet was badly prepared, brutal, and the ships unseaworthy.

Arthur Phillip (1738–1814), naval officer and colonial administrator. Phillip was born in London, the second child of Jacob and Elizabeth Phillip. He entered the navy aged nine, and worked his way through the ranks, having been promoted to fourth lieutenant in February 1760. He married Margaret Denison (1722–92) in July 1763, but they separated in April 1769. Phillip was on half-pay from July 1771 to January 1775, when he enlisted in the Portuguese navy, before returning to England and rejoining the Royal Navy in late 1778. He was appointed captain in 1782.

Phillip accepted the position of Governor of New South Wales in September 1786, and played a major role in preparing the First Fleet for its voyage. He played a major role in steering the convict colony through its early crises, and set out for England at the end of 1792. He married Isabella Whitehead (b.1751–1823) in May 1794, and returned to service in March 1796. By the time of his death, Phillip had been promoted to admiral of the blue.

Tenerife.

Rio de Janeiro.
Island from January 1788 till March 1791 _ on the 28th of March I made my Escape in Company with 7 men, one Woman and two Children234 in an open six oared Boat, having of provisons on board one hundred Weight of flower, one Cwt. of Rice, 14lb of Pork, and

234 For biographies of the other escapees, see notes 294—304.
about 8 gallons of water; having a Compass Quadrant & Chart.\textsuperscript{235}

After Sailing 2 days we reached a little Creek,\textsuperscript{236} about 2 Degrees to the Northward of Port Jackson,\textsuperscript{237} there we found a quantity of fine burning Coal, we remained there 2 Nights & 1 day and found a great many Cabbage trees\textsuperscript{238} some of which we cut down and procured the Cabbage. The Natives\textsuperscript{239} came down to whom we gave some Cloaths and other articles, and they went away very well satisfied. The land appeared much better than at Sidney Cove, here we got a great many fishes which were very refreshing to us \_ After our Stay of two Nights and one day\textsuperscript{240} we continued our Voyage to the Northward after two days\textsuperscript{241} sail we made a very fine harbour\textsuperscript{242} seeming to run

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{235} For details of the preparations which went into the escape, see Causer, ‘Introduction to Martin’s Memorandoms’.
\item \textsuperscript{236} The date on which they reached this creek was thus about 30 March 1791.
\item \textsuperscript{237} Historian Warwick Hirst suggests that this place was Glenrock Lagoon, south of modern-day Newcastle on Australia’s eastern coast. See Hirst, \textit{Great Convict Escapes in Colonial Australia (revised edition)} (East Roseville, NSW, 2003), p. 13.
\item \textsuperscript{238} Probably the cabbage-tree palm (\textit{Livistona Australis}), a palm tree which can grow up to twenty-five metres in height, which grows widely along the New South Wales and Queensland coasts.
\item \textsuperscript{239} If this was Glenrock Lagoon, then these were likely members of the Awabakal people.
\item \textsuperscript{240} Approx. 1 April 1791.
\item \textsuperscript{241} Approx. 3 April 1791.
\item \textsuperscript{242} Hirst suggests, from Martin’s description, that this place was Port Stephens, where the Myall and Karuah Rivers meet. The harbour is some 134 square kilometres in size. See Hirst, \textit{Convict Escapes}, p. 13.
\end{itemize}
up the Country for many Miles and very commodious for
the Anchorage of Shipping; here we found plenty of fresh
water, we hawled our boat a shore to repair her bottom with
some Bees-wax and Resin which we had a small quantity
of. But on the same Night we were drove off by the Natives, which meant to destroy us, we launched our boat and rode
off in the stream quite out of reach of them. That being
Sunday, Monday we were off in the Stream we rowed lower
down, thinking to land some miles below on Monday
morning we attempted to land, and we found a place convenient
for to repair our boat, we accordingly put some of
our things part being ashore when the Natives came in
great numbers armed with Spears and Shields &c. we form’d
ourselves in parts, one party of us made towards them to
pacify them by signes, but they took not the least notice accordingly
we fired a Musket thinking to affright them
but they paid no attention to it on perceiving them

243 If this was Port Stephens, then these were likely members of the Worimi people.
244 Approx. Sunday 3 April 1791.
245 Approx. Monday 4 April 1791.
rush forwards we were forced to take to our boat and get out of their reach as fast as we could, and what to do we could not tell, but consulting together we were determined to row up the harbour which accordingly we did 9 or 10 miles till we made a little white sandy Island in the middle of the harbour\textsuperscript{246} which we landed upon and hawled up our boat and repaired her bottom with what materials we had: during our stay of 2 days we had no interruption from the Natives; then we rowed off to the main\textsuperscript{247} where we took in fresh water and a few Cabbage trees and then put out to sea _ the natives here are quite naked, of a copper colour shock hair, they have Canoes made of bark\textsuperscript{248} _ then we proceeded to the northward, having a leading breze from the S.W _ but that night\textsuperscript{249} the wind changed and drove us out of sight of land _ when we hawled our wind having a set of Sails in the boat accordingly the

\textsuperscript{246} From the description, this may have been Snapper Island, One Tree Island, or Dowadee Island, all of which could be said to be ‘in the middle’ of Port Stephens.

\textsuperscript{247} A stay here of two days puts the date at around 6 April 1791.

\textsuperscript{248} If the escapees were still in the Port Stephens area, then these were likely members of the Worimi people.

\textsuperscript{249} Approx. the night of 6 April 1791.
next day we made close into land, but the Surf running very hard we could not attempt to land but kept along Shore but making no harbour or creek for near 3 Weeks we were very much distressed for water & wood: but perceiving the Surf to abate two of our men swam ashore to get some water, but being afraid of the Natives which they saw in numbers they returned without any but a little wood which they threw into the water and we took it up. We put over on the other side of the bay expecting to meet with a convenient harbour we found a littler river which with great difficulty we got up our boat being very leaky at that time that is was with great difficulty we could keep her above Water were we landed & hawled her up putting some Soap in the Seams which answered very well at this place we could get no fish of any kind here we stopped two days and two nights then we left this place and went farther down the bay about 20 miles expecting to meet with a harbour to get some Refreshment but could not

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250 Approx. 7 April 1791.
251 Approx. 28 April 1791.
252 Approx. 30 April 1791.
see any nor the end of the bay the wind being favourable we tacked about and put to Sea the land here seemed to be much the same as at Botany Bay. Accordingly we up Grapling and stood to the Northward but our boat being very deep we were obliged to throw all our Cloathing overboard the better to lighten our boat as the Sea broke over us quite rapid _ that night we ran into an open Bay but could see no place to land as the Surf ran so that we were afraid of staving our boat to pieces _ we came to a Grapling in the bay the same night, but about 2 oClock in the morning our Grapling broke and we were drove in the middle of the Surf expecting every moment that our boat would be staved to pieces and every Soul perish but as God would have it we got our boat safe on shore without any loss or damage excepting an oar we hawled our boat up and there remained 2 days & 2 nights _ there we kindled a fire with great difficulty every thing being very wet, we got plenty of Shell fish & fresh water the natives came down in great numbers we discharg’d

253 Approx. 30 April 1791.
254 I have been unable to identify this place.
255 Approx. 1 May 1791.
256 Leaving on approx. 3 May 1791.
a Musket over their heads, they dispersed immediately and we saw no more of them we put our things in the boat and with great difficulty we put out to Sea for 2 or 3 days we had very bad weather our boat shipping many heavy Seas, so that one man was always employed in bailing out the water to keep her up _ the next place we made was White Bay being in Latitude 27°0. 00 we ran down that bay 2 or 3 leagues before we could see a convenient place to land the Surf running very high we saw two Women & two Children with a fire brand in their hand at this place we landed the two women being frightened ran away but we made Signs that we wanted a light which they gave us crying at the same time in their way we took our things out of the boat and put them in two huts which was there _ the next morning about 11 oClock a great number of the Natives came towards us as soon as we saw them we went to meet them and fired a musket

257 On approx. 6 May 1791.
258 Hirst suggests that this place was Moreton Bay. See Great Convict Escapes, p. 15.
259 Approx. 7 May 1791.
over their heads as soon as they heard the report they ran into the woods

and we saw no more of them, the natives are quite naked there we stopped

2 days and 2 nights, the Surf running so very high that we were in great
danger of staving the boat; that night we were drove out to Sea by a heavy gale of wind & current expecting every moment to go to the bottom next morning saw no land the Sea running mountains high
we were under close reef Mainsail and kept so untill night then came to under a droge all the night with her head to the Sea thinking every moment to be the last the Sea coming in so heavy upon us every now and then that two hands were obliged to keep bailing out it rained very hard all that night the next morning we took our droge in but could not see any land but hawling towards the land to make it as soon as possoible the Gale of wind

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260 If this was Moreton Bay, then these individuals likely belonged to the Yuggera, Waka Waka, or Gubbi Gubbi people.
261 Approx. 9 May 1791.
262 Approx. 9 May 1791.
263 Approx. 10 May 1791.
264 Approx. 10 May 1791.
265 A storm drogue, a device which is attached to the stern of a boat to slow down and keep upright a boat during a storm.
266 Approx. 11 May 1791.
still continuing we keep on under a close reef Mainsail but could not make land all that day _ I will leave you to consider what distress we must be in the Woman and the two little babies were in a bad Condition every thing being so wet that we could by no means light a fire we had nothing to eat except a little raw Rice at night we came to under a droge as we did the night before the next morning we took in our droge and kept to the northward on purpose to make the land about 8 oClock we made the land which proved to be a small Island about 30 Leagues from the main the Surf running so very high we were rather fearful of going in for fear of staving our boat but we concluded amongst ourselves that we might as well venture in there as to keep out to Sea seeing no probability but that if we kept out to Sea we should every Soul perish _

All round this Island there was nothing but reefs and a

267 Approx. 11 May 1791.
268 Approx. 12 May 1791.
269 Hirst suggests that this place was Lady Elliot Island, which from the description and presence of turtles seems likely to be correct. See Convict Escapes, p. 16.
little sandy beach which we got in safe without much damage and hawled [sic] our boat up out of the way of the surf and got all our things out of the boat then we went to make a fire which with great difficulty we did & being almost starving we put on a little rice to cook when we landed on this Island we had but one Gallon of fresh water for there was not a drop to be had on this Island the Island was about 1 mile in Circumference after the tide fell we went to look for some shell fish but found a great quantity of very fine large Turtles<sup>270</sup> which were left upon the reef, we turned 5 of them and hawled them upon the beach this reef runs about a mile and a half out in the Sea & is entirely dry when low water we killed one of the Turtles and had a noble meal that night<sup>271</sup> it rained very hard when we spread our mainsail & filled our two Breakers full of water. We staid on the island 6 days during that time we killed 12 Turtles and some of them we took and dried over the Fire to take to Sea with us _ It seemed to us that there had never been any natives on this Island

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<sup>270</sup> These were most likely Green Sea Turtles, which can grow up to 1.5 metres in length, and have nesting grounds on the north-eastern and northern coasts of Australia.

<sup>271</sup> Approx. 12 May 1791.
there was a kind of fruit which grew like a bell pepper and tasted very well there was a great quantity of fowls which stayed at night in holes in the ground we could not think of taking any live Turtles with us because our boat would not admit of it we paid the Seams of our boat all over with Soap before we put to Sea at the end of the 6 days we launched our boat & put to Sea at 8 oClock in the morning\textsuperscript{272} and Steered to the northward; this Island was in Latitude 26\textdegree. 27\textarcdeg; we made the main land in the Evening we passed a great number of small Island and put into a great many of them expecting to find some Turtles but never found any in any of the Islands we put into afterwards we found a great quantity of shellfish but none of them very fit to eat but being

\textsuperscript{272} Approx. 18 May 1791. After this date, it becomes impossible to gauge the passage of time.
very hungry we were glad to eat them & thank God for it for if it had been for the Shell fish and the little Turtle which we had we must have Starved: we very seldom put into any place but found plenty of fresh water but we could not find any thing fit to eat when we came to the Gulph of Carpentara\textsuperscript{273} which is in latitude 10\textsuperscript{d}: 11\textsuperscript{m} we ran down the Gulph 9 or 10 Miles and saw several small Islands on which were several of the Natives in 2 Canoes\textsuperscript{274} landing upon one of the Islands we steered down towards them as soon as they saw us they sent their 2 Canoes round to the back of the Island with 1 man in each when we came down to them they seemed to stand in a posture of defence against us we fired a Musket over them & immediately they began firing their Bows and Arrows at us we immediately hoisted up our Sails and rowed away from them but as God would have it none of their arrows came into the Boat but dropped along side we could not get hold of any of them but they seemed to be about 18 inches long the Natives seemed to be

\textsuperscript{273} The Gulf of Carpentaria, a 590 kilometre wide sea on the northern coast of the Australian continent, bounded by Cape York on its east, Cape Arnhem on its west, and the Arafura sea to its north.

\textsuperscript{274} These people were likely to have been Torres Strait Islanders, the indigenous people of the Torres Strait Island. They are well known for their seamanship, and the escapees did well to have twice escaped their boats.
very stout and fat and blacker than them those we saw in other parts; there was one which we took to be the chief with some shells round his Shoulders we rowed a little farther down the Gulph & landed upon the Main for to get some water we found plenty and saw a small Row of huts about 20 just by were the fresh water was there were not any of the inhabitants in their huts or about them as we could see their huts were large enough for 6 or 7 of them stand upright in they were made of bark & covered over with Grass we filled our
breakers with fresh water came aboard of our boat again
for we were afraid of staying ashore for fear of the Natives, we
went 3 or 4 miles from the shore and dropt our Killock\textsuperscript{275} and
stopped there all night the next morning we were determined
to go to the same place to recruit our water but as we were making
towards the shore we saw two very large Canoes coming towards
us we did not know what to do for we were afraid to meet them
there seemed to be about 30 or 40 men in each Canoe they had
sails seemed to be made of matting one of the canoes was a
head of the other a little way it stopt till the other came up
and then she hoisted her Sails and made after us as soon as
we saw that we tacked about with what water we had determined
to cross the Gulph which was about 500 Miles but as
God would have it we out run them they followed us till
we lost sight of them, having but little fresh water and no
wood to make a fire with but in four days and a half we
made the other side of the Gulph we put on shore\textsuperscript{276} to look for

\textsuperscript{275} A small anchor.
\textsuperscript{276} Given that the escapees had just crossed the Gulf of Carpentaria, this was likely to have been somewhere on the northern shore of Arnhem Land, now one of the five regions of the Northern Territory of Australia.
some fresh water but could not find any at that place we kept along shore till the evening we saw a small river which we made to and got plenty of fresh water; we put off to sea the same night & saw no more land till we came into Latitude of North End of the Island we hauled up to make the land to get some fresh water but saw nothing but a heavy swell which had liked to have swallowed us up then we concluded the best way to shape our course would be for the Island of Timor with what little water we had which we made in 36 Hours we ran along the Island of Timor till we came to the Dutch Settlement 277

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277 Kupang, was an important Dutch East India Company (VOC) trading post on the western coast of the island of Timor. Though the VOC had a presence around Timor from 1613, a Dutch fort at Kupang was only constructed in 1653 following the negotiation of a treaty with the rajah of Kupang.

Kupang was largely destroyed by the British in 1797, but only surrendered to the British in early 1812, being one of the Dutch colonial possessions occupied by the British during the Napoleonic wars. Kupang was returned to the new United Kingdom of the Netherlands in 1816.
Settlements where we went ashore to the Governors' house who behaved extremely well to us filled our bellies and Cloathed us double with every thing that was worn on the Island where we remained very happy for two months till Wm. Bryant had words with his Wife who went and informed against himself, wife, Children and all of us; we were immediately taken prisoners and put in the Castle and strictly examined afterwards we were allowed to go out of the Castle 2 at a time for 1 day and the next day 2 more & so we continued till Captain Edwards who had been in search of the Bounty Pirates who had taken some of the Pirates.

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278 Timotheus Wanjon (?–?), Governor of Kupang, 1789–97. Wanjon assumed the role after the incumbent (and Wanjon’s father-in-law), William Adriaan van Este (?–1789), died in post.

279 See Causer, ‘Introduction to Martin’s Memorandoms’, for the various explanations of how the true identity of the escapees were uncovered.

280 Presumably this refers to the Dutch fort at Kupang.

281 Edward Edwards (1742–1815), British naval officer. Edwards entered the Royal Navy as a lieutenant in 1759, and served on several ships (including as commanding officer of HMS Carcass and HMS Hornet), before being put on half-pay in March 1784. In August 1790, Edwards was given command of the frigate Pandora and commissioned to pursue the mutineers who had seized HMS Bounty in 1789. Fourteen of the mutineers were seized, but the Pandora was wrecked on the Great Barrier Reef during the return voyage to Britain, in which thirty-one crew members and four of the mutineers were killed. The survivors made their way to Timor in an open boat, and eventually returned home along with Martin and the other surviving escaped convicts. Edwards was court-martialed on 17 September 1792 over the loss of Pandora, but he and his officers were exonerated. He was promoted to vice-admiral in 1809.
at Otaheite\textsuperscript{282} when he lost the Pandora\textsuperscript{283} Frigate between New Guinea

and new Holland,\textsuperscript{284} he made the Island of Timor in the Pinnace two yawls and his Long Boats & 120 hands which were saved: which Captain Edwards came to us to know who we were we told him we were Convicts and had made our escape from Botany Bay he told us we were his Prisoners & he put us on board the Nambang\textsuperscript{285} Dutch Companys Ship and put both our legs in irons called the Bilboes\textsuperscript{286} in which we was conveyed to Bretava\textsuperscript{289} where we was taken out of the Nambang and put on board a Dutch Guard Ship in irons again there we lost the Child,\textsuperscript{287} 6 days after the Father of the child was taken bad & died\textsuperscript{288} they were both buried at Bretava\textsuperscript{289} 6 Weeks after we were put in 3 different

\textsuperscript{282} Tahiti.

\textsuperscript{283} HMS Pandora.

\textsuperscript{284} The Australian continent was known as ‘New Holland’ from 1644, when it was given the name by the Dutch explorer Abel Janzoon Tasman, until the early nineteenth century. After the British colony of New South Wales was established, ‘New Holland’ was generally taken to refer to the western part of the continent.

\textsuperscript{285} The Rembang, one of the Dutch East India Company ships chartered by Captain Edwards, to take the survivors of the wrecking of the Pandora, the captured Bounty mutineers, and the escaped convicts to Batavia.

\textsuperscript{286} Bilboes were a form of leg-irons. Shackles were attached to both of the prisoners legs, with a locked rod running through the shackles to prevent much in the way of movement.

\textsuperscript{287} Emanuel Bryant. See note 298 for a biography.

\textsuperscript{288} William Bryant. See note 297 for a biography.

\textsuperscript{289} Batavia
Ships bound to the cape of Good Hope we were 3 Months before we reached the Cape when we came there the Gorgon Man of War which had brought the Marines from Botany Bay which we were put on board of and was known well by all the Marine officers. We were all glad that we had not perished at Sea we were brought to England in the Gorgon and

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290 These were three Dutch East India Company ships: the Vreedenberg, the Horssen, and the Hoornwey.

291 HMS Gorgon. Commanded by John Parker, she arrived in Sydney in September 1791 as part of the Third Fleet. The Gorgon left Sydney on 18 December 1791, with part of the marine detachment which had travelled to New South Wales aboard the First Fleet, and many specimens of Australian flora and fauna. The ship reached Cape Town on 11 March 1792, where it took on board Edwards’s party before leaving in April, and arriving at Portsmouth on 18 June 1792.

set ashore at Purfleet from thence conveyed by the Constables to
Bow Street Office London, and taken before Justice Bond & was
fully committed to Newgate.

Wm Moatton Navigator of the Boat

James Cox

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293 Nicholas Bond (1743-1807), from 1785 a magistrate at the Bow Street public office.
294 William Morton (?–1792). Morton was convicted at Newcastle-upon-Tyne on 22 April 1789, and sentenced to transportation for seven years. He arrived in New South Wales on 27 June 1790 by the Neptune, part of the Second Fleet. See NRS 12188/4/4003, pp. 331–32, and NRS 1150 SZ115, p. 145 for Morton’s convict indents.

According to David Collins, at the time of his escape from Sydney, Morton had another five years and a month to serve before his sentence expired (Collins, Account, i. p. 129). Morton died aboard the Dutch East India Company ship Hoornwey in 1792, during its voyage from Batavia to Cape Town.

295 James Cox, alias Rolt/Rott (c.1759–?). Cox was convicted on 11 September 1782 of breaking and entering a haberdashery owned by Henry and Francis Thompson, and of stealing 12 yards of thread lace and two pairs of cotton stockings (valued at four shillings each) belonging to the Thompsons, through a broken window. Though nothing was found on his person, when apprehended Cox was nursing a bleeding hand. He was sentenced to death, but was respited—a year later—on condition of being transported to America for life, and was sent to a hulk on the Thames on 10 September 1783. For details of his trial and sentence, see Old Bailey Proceedings Online (www.oldbaileyonline.org, version 7.0, 7 November 2013), September 1782, trial of JAMES COX (t17820911-14), and September 1783 (s17830910-1).

On 26 March 1784, Cox was embarked upon the Mercury transport ship, bound for America, but a revolt by the convicts on board caused the ship to pull in at Torbay. From there, Cox escaped and went into hiding in Devon for just under a month. Cox was recaptured on 16 April 1784, and committed to gaol. On 24 May, he was tried before a Special Commission, and received another death sentence. This was again commuted to transportation for life, and he was sent to the Dunkirk hulk where it was reported that he behaved ‘remarkably well’. He was embarked upon the Charlotte bound for New South Wales on 11 March 1787. Cox worked as a cabinet maker in Sydney, and apparently had a relationship with the female prisoner Sarah Young (transported by the Lady Juliana). For Cox’s convict indent, see NRS12188/4/4003, p.102, and NRS 1150 SZ115, p. 19. For a biography, see Gillen, Founders of Australia, p. 84.

In the list of escapees prepared by Captain Edward Edwards, it is stated that on the journey from Timor to Britain via the Cape, Cox drowned after falling overboard at the Sunda Straits, located between Java and Sumatra. According to George Hamilton, the surgeon of
the wrecked HMS Pandora, ‘before we left Java, one of the convicts [Cox] had jumped over board in the night, and swam to the Dutch arsenal at Honroost’. Had Cox been wearing the ‘bilbo’ irons described by Martin, he would likely have drowned. See the HRA, I.1, enclosure in Secretary Philip Stephens to Governor Arthur Phillip, 21 July 1792, pp. 368–69, and George Hamilton, A Voyage Round the World, in His Majesty’s Frigate Pandora, Performed Under the Direction of Captain Edwards, in the Years, 1790, 1791, and 1792 (Berwick, 1793), p. 158.

296 Samuel Bird, alias John Simms (c.1762–1792). Bird was convicted of stealing 1,000lbs of saltpetre from a warehouse in Wandsworth, on 20 July 1785, at Croydon. He was sentenced to transportation for seven years, and convicted alongside one James Bird, who may have been an elder brother. On 24 October 1785, Bird was sent from Southwark gaol to the Justitia hulk, and was embarked upon the Alexander on 6 January 1787, bound for New South Wales. For Bird’s convict indent, see NRS 12188 4/4003, p. 39, and NRS 1150 SZ115, p. 1. See Gillen, Founders of Australia, p. 35.

According to David Collins, at the time of his escape from Sydney, Bird had another year and four months to serve before his sentence expired (Account, i. p. 129).

In the list of escapees prepared by Captain Edward Edwards, Bird is named as John Simms. See enclosure in Secretary Philip Stephens to Governor Arthur Phillip, 21 July 1792, HRA 1.I, pp. 368–69. Bird/Simms died on board the Dutch East India Company ship Hoornwey in 1792, during its voyage from Batavia to Cape Town.

297 William Bryant (c.1757?–1791). Bryant was convicted on 20 March 1784 at the Launceston Assizes of resisting the officers of the revenue. He was sentenced to death, which was commuted to transportation to America for seven years. Bryant was put onto the Dunkirk hulk on 6 April 1784, where it was reported in October 1786 that he was behaving ‘remarkably well’. Owing to Britain’s loss of the American colonies during the Revolutionary War, Bryant was embarked upon the Charlotte on 11 March 1787, part of the First Fleet bound for New South Wales. For his convict indents, see NRS 12188 4/4003, p. 43, and NRS 12188 4/4003, pp. 53–54. For a biography, see Gillen, Founders of Australia, p. 57.

Bryant was employed as the colony’s fisherman owing to his maritime experience, and had the charge of the government boats and was provided with a hut for his family. He married Mary Broad in Sydney on 10 February 1788, but a year later on 4 February 1789, Bryant was found selling fish caught on government time. He received 100 lashes as a punishment, was dismissed from his post, evicted from his accommodation, and sent to labour with the other convicts. A few months later, Bryant was again in charge of the colony’s fishing boats, his skills being too useful. The Bryants had a son, Emanuel, who was baptised on 4 April 1790. According to David Collins, at the time of his escape from Sydney, Bryant’s sentence of transportation had expired (Account, i. p. 129).

Bryant died on 22 December 1791 in the hospital at Batavia.
A Boy of 12 Months old\textsuperscript{298}

And a little Girl 3 years and a quarter old died\textsuperscript{299}

The mother of the 2 Children Mary Bryant\textsuperscript{300}

\textsuperscript{298} Emanuel Bryant (1790–1791), son of William and Mary Bryant. Emanuel was born in Sydney and baptised on 4 April 1790. He died on 1 December 1791, in Batavia (now Jakarta, Indonesia). See enclosure in Secretary Philip Stephens to Governor Arthur Phillip, 21 July 1792, \textit{HRA} I.1, pp. 368–69.

\textsuperscript{299} Charlotte Spence/Bryant (1787–1792), daughter of Mary Broad, later Bryant. Mary Broad gave birth to a daughter aboard the \textit{Charlotte} transport ship on 8 September 1787, shortly after the ship had left Rio de Janeiro, and the child was baptised Charlotte Spence at the Cape on 28 September 1787. Broad became pregnant with Charlotte while aboard the \textit{Dunkirk} hulk, but it is unclear whether William Bryant was the father. In the list of escapees prepared by Captain Edward Edwards, Charlotte’s surname is given as Bryant. Charlotte died on 6 May 1792 aboard HMS \textit{Gorgon}, during its voyage from Cape Town to Britain. See enclosure in Secretary Philip Stephens to Governor Arthur Phillip, 21 July 1792, \textit{HRA} I.1, pp. 368–69, and Gillen, \textit{Founders of Australia}, pp. 47–8, and 57.

\textsuperscript{300} Mary Bryant (1767–?), née Braund/Broad. Mary Broad was born in Cornwall, and was convicted, with Catherine Pager and Mary Hayden \textit{alias} Shepherd, of assault and the theft of a silk bonnet and other goods at the Exeter Assizes on 20 March 1786. Broad was sentenced to death, but the sentence was commuted on 13 April 1786 to transportation for seven years. On 26 September 1786, Broad was placed onto the \textit{Dunkirk} hulk, where she was reported to have behaved ‘tolerably and decently’. She was pregnant when, on 11 March 1787, she was embarked upon the \textit{Charlotte}, part of the First Fleet bound for New South Wales. She gave birth to a daughter on 8 September 1787, not long after the ship had left Rio de Janeiro. The child was baptised Charlotte Spence at the Cape on 28 September 1787. Broad married her fellow Cornish convict, William Bryant, on 10 February 1788, with whom she had a son named Emanuel, baptised on 4 April 1790. For her convict indents, see NRS 12188 4/4003, pp. 43–44, and NRS 1150 SZ115, p. 8, SRNSW. For a biography, see Gillen, \textit{Founders of Australia}, pp. 47–8.

According to David Collins, at the time of her escape from Sydney, Bryant had a further twenty-four months to serve before her sentence expired (\textit{Account}, i. p. 129).

After being recaptured, Bryant arrived back in England on 18 June 1792 aboard HMS \textit{Gorgon}. She and the other survivors were detained in Newgate gaol for returning from transportation, and on 7 July they were all ordered to ‘remain on their former sentence, until they should be discharged by course of law’ (\textit{London Chronicle}, 7–10 July 1792). According to the Newgate criminal register of 25 June 1792, ‘Mary Briant \textit{alias} Broad’ was aged twenty-five, was 5’ 4’’ (1.63m) in height, had grey eyes, brown hair, and a ‘sallow complexion’. See HO26/56 p. 8, NA.

On 2 May 1793, she was released with a free pardon, and appears to have returned to Cornwall in October 1793. Some researchers have noted that a ‘Mary Bryant’ married one Richard Thomas in the parish of St Breage on 3 October 1807, but there is no firm evidence that this was the transported Mary Broad/Bryant. A Mary Broad was acquitted at the Old Bailey of theft in September 1806, who was almost precisely the age of the transported
Mary Broad/Bryant, but there is no evidence beyond the age to link the two women. See Causer, ‘Introduction to Martin’s Memorandoms’.

301  See note 3.

302  William Allen (1736–?). William Allen was born in Kingston-upon-Hull. In making a case for the release of the escapees, the lawyer and biographer James Boswell stated that Allen had ‘served both the last wars in His Majesty’s fleet under Captain [John] Moutray in the Ramillies’, and later served under ‘Captain Marotter and Admiral Groves’ (Great Biographer, p. 218).

Allen was convicted at Norwich on 30 July 1787, and sentenced to transportation for seven years for stealing twenty-six (according to Boswell) or twenty-nine (according to the London Chronicle of 30 June to 3 July 1792) handkerchiefs, belonging to Messrs. Lewis and Haywood. Allen was transported to New South Wales by the Scarborough, part of the Second Fleet, which arrived in New South Wales on 28 June 1790. For his convict indents, see NRS 12188 4/4003, pp. 28–29, and NRS 1150 SZ115, p. 20, SRNSW. According to David Collins, Allen had been transported for life (Account, i. p. 129).

After being recaptured, Allen arrived back in England on 18 June 1792 aboard HMS Gorgon with the other surviving escapees. He was detained for returning from transportation and held at Newgate gaol, and at the Old Bailey on 7 July 1792 the escapees were ordered to ‘remain on their former sentence, until they should be discharged by course of law’ (London Chronicle, 7–10 July 1792). The Newgate criminal register for 25 June 1792 describes Allen as being aged fifty-six, 5’ 11” (1.80m) in height, and with hazel eyes, dark brown hair, and a dark brown complexion. He is described as a ‘Mariner’ (HO26/56, p. 7, NA). On 5 July 1792, Edward Sharpe, Gaoler of Norwich Gaol, wrote to Sir Sampson Wright, Chief Magistrate of the Bow Street Office, having been ‘informed by the newspapers that W[illia]m Allen, a convict which was in our Gaol about five years since is in Newgate on suspicion of his elopement from his sentence’. Sharped offered to come and 'identify the man', providing that his expenses be paid. See HO42/21/17, pp.39-41.

In May 1793, Allen told Boswell that “Water I must follow” [...] he would rather go where he can get most by it, viz., in a merchantman: ‘I have the world to begin again.’” Allen apparently had a wife at Beccles in Suffolk, ‘from whom he had heard since he came home’ (Great Biographer, pp. 217–18). Allen was released from Newgate by proclamation on 2 November 1793.

303  Samuel Broom alias John Butcher (1742–?). He is referred to as ‘Broom’ in his convict indents and by David Collins, but in the list of escapees prepared by Captain Edward Edwards, and in later newspaper reports, he is named as ‘John Butcher’. It is not clear which (if either) was the man’s real name. See enclosure in Secretary Philip Stephens to Governor Arthur Phillip, 21 July 1792, HRA I.1, pp. 368–69.

Broom alias Butcher was born in Kidderminster, Worcestershire, and was convicted at Shrewsbury in July 1788 of stealing three pigs, and was sentenced to transportation for
and Nathaniel Lilly\textsuperscript{304} alive


\textsuperscript{304} Nathaniel Lilley/Lillie (1753–?). Boswell stated that Lilley was born in Sudbury, Suffolk, whereas the Newgate criminal register puts his native place as Ireland. Lilley was convicted at Bury St Edmunds on 19 March 1788 for the theft of a fish net, and was sentenced to transportation for life. He was transported to New South Wales by the Scarborough, part of the Second Fleet, and arrived on 28 June 1790. For his convict indents, see NRS 12188 4/4003, pp. 275–76, and NRS 1150 SZ115, p. 17, SRNSW.

After being recaptured, Lilley arrived back in England on 18 June 1792 aboard HMS Gorgon with the other surviving escapees. He was detained for returning from transportation and held at Newgate gaol, and at the Old Bailey on 7 July 1792 the escapees were ordered to ‘remain on their former sentence, until they should be discharged by course of law’ \textit{(London Chronicle, 7–10 July 1792)}. The Newgate criminal register for 25 June 1792 describes ‘John Butcher’ as being aged fifty, 6’ 1” in height (1.85m), with grey eyes, sandy hair, and a ‘fresh complexion’, and is described as a ‘labourer’ \textit{(HO26/56, p. 7, NA)}.

In his petition of 4 May 1793 on behalf of the escapees, Boswell reported that Lilley had a wife and four children (‘one since his return home’), and that he would be supported by his family, an uncle who was a joiner in Gatney Street, Pimlico, and a brother who was a waiter in Old Russell Street. Lilley was a weaver and fish-net maker, and Boswell expected that he would ‘get a livelihood by his own trade’, Lilley having been employed at Newgate in making nets to support his family \textit{(Great Biographer, p. 218)}.

Lilley served out the remainder of his sentence in Newgate, and was released by proclamation on 2 November 1793.