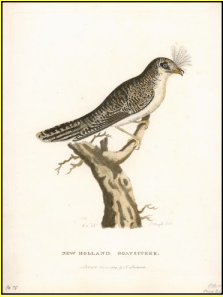


The Naming of SYDNEY



For thousands of years the Aborigines had called it Werrong: a deep-water cove bounded to the east and west by steep, heavily wooded slopes, and to the south by tidal flats across which flowed a stream of fresh water. Protected from the worst of the westerly and southerly winds that could make the larger harbour a rough and dangerous place, the cove provided the Cadigal band of the Eora people with shelter, good fishing and reliable drinking water.



On 22 January 1788, the Cadigals' ancient rhythm of life was shattered by the arrival of Governor Arthur Phillip and a small exploration party. The previous day, they had sailed up from Botany Bay in three small boats, searching for fresh water and a safe anchorage for the 1000 men and women and the First Fleet of eleven ships under Phillip's command. What made Werrong attractive to the Eora people also made it attractive to Phillip, who had been personally selected by the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Lord Sydney, to establish a British penal colony on the east coast of Australia at a place of his choosing.

After the disappointment of Botany Bay, which had been strongly recommended to Lord Sydney by the influential Sir Joseph Banks who had gone ashore there with James Cook in 1770, a no doubt anxious Phillip wrote diplomatically to the Secretary of State,

'I fixed on a cove that had the best spring of water and in which the ships can anchor...close to the shore... This cove I honoured with the name of Sydney.'

The larger harbour however retained the name of Port Jackson, which Cook had given it when he had earlier sailed by its heads.

On 26 January, Phillip's fleet entered Port Jackson and proceeded to Werrong where the masters of ships including the *Alexander* and the *Golden Grove* ruled off their logs with the words 'moored in Sydney Cove', signifying that Phillip's choice of name had taken hold immediately. Although some said Phillip had plans to call the town that soon sprang up around Sydney Cove, 'Albion', others such as Daniel Southwell, the master's mate on Phillip's flagship *Sirius*, were emphatic that, '*Sydney was the name decided on*'.

Indeed this name was soon entrenched by Phillip himself who invariably addressed his official despatches to London from 'Sydney Cove' or 'Sydney'. In an age when political patronage was central to career advancement, some said that it suited Phillip to flatter his political master in this way.

However there was more to it than that. Phillip, a naval captain, had been Sydney's choice for Governor, a decision that surprised many, including Phillip's naval chief, the First Lord of the Admiralty. But Phillip had long since impressed Sydney as an extremely effective part-time spy in the Secret Service that came within Sydney's portfolio. And Sydney strongly backed his man. So when Phillip complained that the First Fleet's tonnage was insufficient to carry 1000 people, Sydney promptly arranged for the *Prince of Wales* to be added to the fleet. Apart from their mutual professional respect, there was also evidence of a personal friendship in the Governor's letters, which in a familiar tone, asked Sydney to pass on Phillip's best wishes to Lady Sydney and their children.

In 1789, John Stockdale published a book based on Phillip's early despatches to Sydney. Although Phillip himself never made a mistake spelling the Secretary of State's name, one of the book's maps prepared by others referred to Sidney Cove, a common misspelling at the time.



Illustrated are some examples of the Natural History so eagerly set upon by those in Britain after the landing of the First Fleet and promptly reproduced with the technology of the era to be wondered at and puzzled over anticipating what future return voyages would bring to "Home" Shores.

