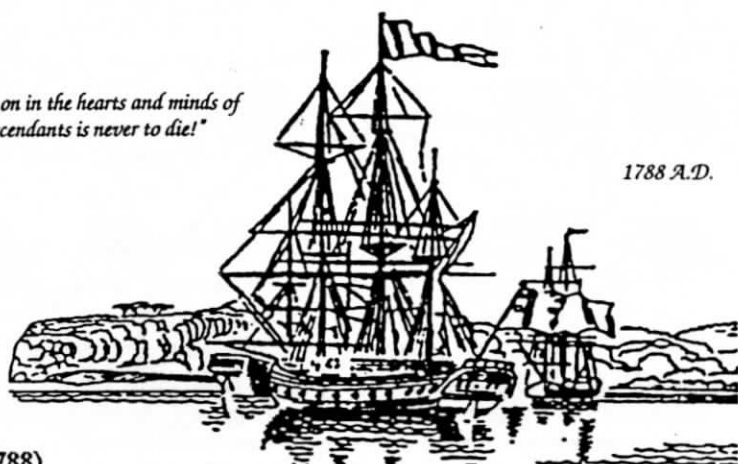


After her conviction at Preston in January 1787 Elizabeth was taken to Lancaster Castle gaol and with others sentenced to transportation was eventually taken by wagon to Portsmouth. We do not know the cost of this ride, but for a similar task of collecting ten prisoners and taking them to Woolwich the keeper of Lancaster Castle Gaol was paid £134-2s! Elizabeth was rowed out to the ship "Prince of Wales" by a prison officer at dawn on Sunday 13th May 1787 as the First Fleet was already weighing anchor for its voyage to Botany Bay.

## Fellowship of First Fleeters

*"To live on in the hearts and minds of  
Descendants is never to die!"*

1788 A.D.



(The descendants of those who arrived in 1788)

There were eleven ships in the First Fleet and they never lost sight of each other during the voyage. They were seaworthy but very small and overcrowded. Only two were naval warships, three carried stores, and the other six carried convicts, safely boarded in from the armed Marine guards, officers and crew. Four of the six transports, including the "Prince of Wales", were for women. Some of the officers and guards had their wives and children and even a few women convicts had children. The convicts were allowed exercise on deck in calm weather but only when out at sea, and for much of the time were bolted down below with very little ventilation. Very few of the convicts were dangerous criminals; the youngest was a boy chimney sweep aged nine, the oldest a woman rag dealer aged eighty-two. She survived the voyage, but the following year "in a fit of befuddled despair" she hanged herself from a gum tree at Sydney Cove and became Australia's first recorded suicide.

Long voyages such as this, into relatively unknown waters, were very much a gamble until the invention of an accurate ship's chronometer only a few years previously, by John Harrison of Warrington. But sailing ships still had to rely on the prevailing winds and currents, and the plan was to cross the Atlantic to South America and then to use the strong westerly winds in the Southern Ocean to cross to the Cape of Africa and hopefully on to find Australia. Captain Cook had proved that Australia really did exist, but this voyage with such a cargo of humanity and provisions and materials for founding a self-supporting colony of more than a thousand people for two years; this voyage was unique.

The convoy spent a week at Teneriffe and a month at Rio for maintenance and taking on provisions and water, and in a month at Cape Town one of the females' ships was filled with livestock and their fodder and the whole fleet loaded to the limit with a final intake of food and water.

Botany Bay was reached on 20th January 1788 but it was obvious that it was no place for a settlement. Captain Phillip took a small party up the coast and found one of the best harbours in the world, which Captain Cook had not entered, so a week later the First Fleet moved up to what became known as Port Jackson, now the city of Sydney. The natives watched them but did not resist, and working parties began clearing space and building huts. The women were not disembarked until 6th February and on the following morning in a formal ceremony with the Marine Band, Captain, now Governor, Phillip read his commission from King George 3rd to the whole party, convicts and all. Most of the early Governors were naval officers and were given the power of absolute dictator over the whole colony.

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