

## Additional Notes on Surgeon Arthur Bowes

By K. A. HINDWOOD, R.A.O.U., Willoughby, N.S.W.

In *The Emu* for July, 1932 (Vol. XXXII., 1932, pp. 17-29, pls. 4-6), I wrote of an original manuscript journal, written by Surgeon Arthur Bowes and now housed in the Mitchell Library, Sydney. From certain remarks in that journal it was apparent that some of it at least was transcribed from another source.

Since the publication of the paper in question I have noticed in the *Historical Records of New South Wales* (Vol. II, 1893, p. 389, *et seq.*) extracts quoted from "An Officer's Journal", the officer being Surgeon Arthur Bowes. The period covered is from April 5, 1787, to April 30, 1788 — that is, from the time that Bowes left England until shortly before his ship was discharged at Sydney Cove.

It is possible that this journal is the original on which portion of the journal in the Mitchell Library is based. In a general sense the remarks from it, as quoted in the *Historical Records*, agree with those in the manuscript copy here, but hardly ever in detail.

That two manuscript journals (both seemingly originals) are in existence is not surprising when we take into account the following facts. Customarily the Admiralty took possession of the diaries, log-books, or papers of officers, relating to a voyage, either when the ship was discharged from service or when the voyage was completed. As the ship in which Bowes sailed, the *Lady Penrhyn*, was discharged at Sydney the journal as handed over (presumably) to the Admiralty would close towards the end of April or May. That is not so with the copy in the Mitchell Library. There is evidence enough in that journal that some of the descriptions of events up to the discharge of the ship on May 25, 1788, have been copied from another source; thenceforth there is almost a daily record of the homeward voyage when the *Lady Penrhyn* touched at Lord Howe Island, the Kermadecs and China, eventually reaching England under charter to the East India Company.

The Editor of the *Historical Records* does not state the whereabouts of the journal from which he quotes. In an endeavour to trace it I wrote to the Public Record Office, London, and received the following reply: —

"With reference to your letter of 10th March, concerning the journal of Surgeon Arthur Bowes . . . I am directed to say that search has been made in the Admiralty and other records, but that the journal has not been found. Enquiry was also made of the Admiralty Librarian, without success."

The observations by Bowes, as given below, are chiefly concerned with birds. Being unable to trace the MSS.

journal from which they were originally taken I have extracted them from the *Historical Records*. They are, of course, additional to those quoted by me in *The Emu* from the Mitchell Library copy of Bowes' journal.

It will be remembered that most of the First Fleet sailed into Botany Bay on January 20, 1788, but Captain Arthur Phillip, after exploring the surrounding land and then investigating the possibilities of Port Jackson, ordered the fleet to the latter place, where the Colony was established on January 26. Bowes was much impressed by the scenery, and not less so by the bird-life, as he sailed up Sydney Harbour on that historic day. He remarks:—

"To describe the beautiful and novel appearance of the different coves and lakes as we sail'd up is a task I shall not undertake, as I am conscious I cannot do justice to the subject. Suffice it to say that the finest terres's, lawns, and grottoes, with distinct plantations of the tallest and most stately trees I ever saw in any nobleman's grounds in England, cannot excel in beauty those w'h nature presented to our view. The singing of the various birds amongst the trees, and the flight of numerous parraquets, loriquets, cockatoos and maceaws, made all around seem like enchantment."

How different is the scene to-day after the passing of 145 years of civilised progress.

Other items of interest are:—

February 5, 1788.

"Saw 4 Kangaroos and 2 Ostriches" [Emu].

February 16, 1788.

"An alligator ab't 8 feet long, was seen close by where I go to bird lime just behind the camp, and has been seen amongst the tents at night more than once."

The "alligator" was evidently a large "goanna" (*Varanus varius*).

---