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BRO. SIR HENRY BROWN-HAYES

On the 12th April 1903, the Grand Master of the U.G.L. of N.S.W. (Most Wor. Bro. J C Remington) held a Special Communication in the Sydney Town Hall for the purpose of celebrating the first one hundred years of Freemasonry in Australia. From that point on, Bro. Sir Henry Brown Hayes was assured of being a constant reference point in the history of Australian Freemasonry. Today it is considered that the assumption made by M. Wor. Bro. Remington was not quite correct in that Freemasonry in New South Wales could be dated from 1803 with the abortive quasi - Masonic Meeting which Brown Hayes had organised in Sgt. Thomas Whittle's cottage in Sydney town. Amongst many of our Freemasons he is only remembered for his attempt to hold an unauthorised Masonic meeting, whilst to others he is remembered as leaving behind Vaucluse House and a remembrance of a style of conduct which no self respecting Mason today would wish to emulate.

Messrs. Kramp and MacKaness ("K & M") in Volume One of their work "The History of the United Grand Lodge of Free & Accepted Freemasons for the State of New South Wales" present us with some material about this man. These details seem to have been generally accepted as fair and accurate enough for them to be, in turn, passed on by many Masonic lecturers, both registered Official and otherwise, over the years. However, not all the details provided by "K & M" in respect of Sir Henry withstands close examination. It is again unfortunate, in my opinion, that Sir Henry and his activities have been quoted by quite a number of Masonic writers in the history of their respective lodges who have chosen to supplement their booklets with an account of the general Masonic history of N.S.W. without really researching this particular matter for themselves - in the process taking previously published material as being completely and entirely accurate.

It is recorded that the somewhat limited Masonic activity of Captain Anthony Fenn-Kemp of the N.S.W. Corps, predated Sir Henry by roughly one year. Fenn-Kemp's Masonic activities, that is, whilst on the mainland of the colony, were apparently restricted to his meeting with some French Rose Croix Masons and his initiation into Ancient Craft Masonry aboard their vessel "La Naturaliste" whilst it was lying in Sydney Harbour during one of the French Exploration Fleet's visits during

1802 (Refer to Wor. Bro. Allan McL. Sharp's 1993 paper to the N.S.W. Lodge of Research and Q.C.C.C. Vol. 104 pages 150/165).

Note 1: Throughout this address the central character will have his surname spelled as Brown Hayes and not the incorrect form of Brown-Hayes as is to be found in many documents.

Ref. Early life and marriage. Page 4.

Note 2: It should also be noted that the Masonic activity of Sir Henry Brown Hayes whilst in New South Wales was limited to only one "Masonic meeting".

However, on most of the occasions whenever the history of the beginning of Craft or "Blue" Freemasonry in the Colony of New South Wales is being discussed, one of the names most likely to be raised is that of brother Sir Henry Brown Hayes - mainly because of the unusual and lurid nature of the man and the eventful life - he led not only in the penal colony to which he was rightfully sentenced but in his native Ireland as well.

It is quite possible that the subject of tonight's address would today be all but forgotten in the state of New South Wales other than by some passing reference to him as acquiring, on the 22 August 1803, an area of land comprised of some small farms situated close/or near to South Head. The farms were purchased by Sir Henry Brown Hayes from the executors of the late Captain Thomas Dennett for the modest sum of one hundred pounds, he being the highest bidder at an auction held by Simeon Lord, an emancipated convict who became a magistrate, an auctioneer and a very successful businessman within the colony.

Note A: Simeon Lord, originally a rag merchant, was born at the village of Pacit, near Rochdale in the County of Lancashire. His date of birth is uncertain being variously quoted as either 1773 or 1776.

Note B: At the Manchester Assizes held on the 22 April 1790, Simeon Lord was found guilty of, under force of arms, at Bury, in the County Palatine of Lancashire, stealing 100 yards of muslin and 100 yards of calico, and sentenced to be "transported to some part beyond the seas for seven years".

Note c: During his later years in the colony Simeon Lord became a Freemason.

Henry Brown Hayes then began the consolidation of his properties to form what became the site on which he caused to be erected - Vaocluse House, possibly Australia's best known architectural structure dating from the Colonial era. At this stage it is interesting to note, in reference to this site,

that Sgt. Thomas Whittle is reported as having sold one of his small farms near to South Head to Captain Dennett, this farm became one part of the estate bought by Sir Henry. However, Sir Henry Brown Hayes claim to fame is not limited to his Vaucluse House activities as he was an extremely colourful character in the relatively early years of the colony of New South Wales as we shall see.

Sir Henry Brown Hayes Knt. is most likely to be remembered by us here tonight for his involvement in the unauthorised Masonic meeting held during 1803 at sergeant Thomas Whittle's cottage in Chapel Row. The site of this cottage was defined as No. 54 by Surveyor Meehan in his plan of 1810 and was located in what now forms a part of Macquarie Place. Sir Henry (as I will generally refer to him from now on, seems to have been the organiser of the meeting) and it is rather unfortunate for Australian historical (Masonic) purposes that no clear and definite record of his initiation into Irish Freemasonry has yet been discovered.

Dr Dunlop in his draft paper on Sir Henry refers to a paper read by G MacKanness on 19 August 1952 in which he stated that Sir Henry had received all three degrees on the same night. No one has been able to verify the accuracy of that particular statement to this date as the relevant lodge minute books have been lost.

Admittedly, there have been frequent references made to Sir Henry having been initiated into Lodge No. 71 Irish Constitution (which was located in Cork). This is obviously incorrect as the Minute book of that lodge (71 I.C.) also contains a reference to a letter having been Provincial Grand Secretary of Munster! However, on further investigation, it can be shown to have been another "Henry Brown Hayes" as the date of initiation previously given and accepted was the 16 November 1796 - some five years after the receipt of his letter!

Further, the letter of recommendation from Lodge No. 71 (I.C.) shown in respect of Sir Henry Brown Hayes and dated 9 July 1801 ("K & M", Vol.1 - Page 12 facing) does not refer the same person but rather the other Henry Brown Hayes referred to in the portion of the letter reproduced on ("K & M" Vol. 1 - Page 13 facing). As no verification to a particular lodge or date of initiation can be made it has been "accepted" by some researchers that Sir Henry was probably a member of Lodge No27 Cork (a lodge comprised mainly of affluent Freemasons in that district) or possibly Lodge No.1 (I.C.). The latter lodge's minutes bear no reference to 'our' Sir Henry. (Also refer to Philip Crossle's "Irish Masonic Records" [1973], this book [Call # IIR 203] is available in the reference library of our U.G.L.)

We will deal with Sir Henry's "Masonic" meeting in more detail later in this discourse.

Early Life and Marriage

Sir Henry Brown-Hayes was born in the town of Cork in the county of the same name, during the year of 1762. His father was Attiwell Hayes, and his mother was Mary Catherine Hayes (nee Brown). There were five children from this marriage, Henry was the oldest and was christened with his mother's maiden name (hence the non-hyphenated Brown Hayes). Most of the Hayes family are buried in the south transept of Christ Church which is situated on the South Main Street of Cork.

Attiwell Hayes who was a wealthy brewery magnate, glass merchant, manufacturer, ship-owner, and a staunch pillar of the Protestant faith. He was obviously somewhat mentally peculiar, but being rich, he was classed as being 'rather eccentric'. Tradition in the Cork area has made him famous through his keeping a large goat as a pet for many years and it is said to be the origin of the old Cork adage "as old as Atty Hayes goat!" He is recorded as attending local balls with his goat hitched to his carriage.

Young Henry Brown-Hayes, coming as he did from a wealthy Irish family, from his teens enjoyed a life of wine, women and song, this seemingly bred in him a lack of discipline was later to lead to his being sentenced to transportation for life to New South Wales. However, prior to that unfortunate happening he enjoyed the life style of rich man's son and entered public life at the ripe old age of twenty, being admitted as a Freeman of the City of Cork on the 12 November 1782.

Henry was only twenty-one years old when on the 19 May 1783 he married a Miss Elizabeth Smyth of Ballinatrea County, she was only twenty years of age. Elizabeth is reported to have been blind in one eye and rather plain but, possessed a great redeeming feature - a considerable fortune - which Henry then proceeded to rapidly fritter away. He achieved this by having a pretentious family mansion named 'Vernon Mount' built at Frankfield. Some of the money was spent on sweeping staircases of imported Portland stone and a celebrated artist, Angelica Kaufman, was brought over to paint the ornamented ceilings.

Note: Sir Henry seems to have carried on with his liking for a rather grandiose style of house even towards the latter part of his sentence as a convict ie. Vaucluse House.

From this marriage there were four children, the first was a son named Attiwell (after his father), then there were three daughters, Mary, Penelope and Elizabeth. Unfortunately, Hayes

wife died on the October of 1794, following her death he made frequent attempts to re-marry, probably due to pressing financial problems brought about through the construction of the mansion at Vernon Mount. Finally, an attempted remarriage resulted in his being sentenced to transportation for life.

Sir Henry's Public Life and His Knighthood

His progress in the public arena was relatively rapid after he became a lieutenant in the local militia and Brown-Hayes was officially thanked for his part in assisting in the putting down some minor local rebellion. For this service and other matters, in 1790, at the age of twenty-eight Henry Brown-Hayes was made the Sheriff of the City of Cork.

A visit was made by the Lord Lieutenant to Ireland, when he arrived at Mitchelstown, the first county town en route from the capital, Sir Henry - forever with an eye open to advance himself, was waiting and had arranged a rather splendid dinner for him. Arising from this "gallant conduct" a favourable report was sent back to London which resulted in Henry being knighted on the 20 October of 1791 - for "services rendered".

Sir Henry's appointment as Sheriff also carried with it the position of Crown Agent for the County of Cork and whilst acting in that role he achieved the unenviable position in Australia's history as being the man first responsible for committing Irish convicts, one hundred and fifty of them, to Port Jackson by the ship "Queen" in 1791. Unfortunately, Henry Brown-Hayes administration as Sheriff of Cork was not very efficient for the documentation which should have accompanied the Irish convicts did not arrive in Sydney until 1797, by which time the sentence on those sentenced to seven years transportation had almost expired!

It was during this period that Sir Henry became a Freemason, rising soon afterwards to the position of Provincial Grand Secretary of Munster.

Sir Henry's abduction of Miss Mary Pike (1797).

As previously mentioned following the death of his wife, Margaret, Sir Henry had been left with four children and in a difficult financial situation. He decided that a second marriage was the only solution. However, with no interested, wealthy, young ladies on the horizon, he resorted to a more vigorous approach in obtaining a new wife.

At that time one of Cork's major banks was owned by a Quaker family named Pike. Miss Mary Pike was to inherit 20,000 pounds and that would appear to have made her quite irresistible to Sir Henry, so the wealthy heiress was the one Sir Henry set his beady eyes on.

His amorous adventure reached its climax when on the 21 July 1797, Sir Henry enticed Mary Pike from her home by means of a forged note, supposedly from her mother's doctor - in which she was urgently requested to return to the family home as her mother was dying. Mary Pike left forthwith, whilst en route, Sir Henry in company with some of his friends, abducted her, and she was then taken to Sir Henry's home at Mount Vernon. There she was forced through a spurious form of marriage in front of a bogus clergyman and a ring forced on her hand. Following on this event a reward was advertised, on a weekly basis, for six months in the "Hibernian Chronicle" - the reward being of 1,000 pounds. Half of the reward for the arrest of Sir Henry was offered by Richard Pike - the unfortunate young lady's uncle, the reward notice described Sir Henry as follows:

"The said Sir Henry Brown-Hayes was lately a lieutenant in His Majesty's regiment of militia, commanded by Lord Doneraile, is straight made, rather fresh coloured, a little pock-marked, and brown hair, with remarkable whiskers; about five feet seven inches high, and about forty years old."

Note: The unit of militia was not that of South Cork as is often quoted but Lord Doneraile's.

Brown-Hayes went immediately went into hiding, but not for a very long period as he thought that his standing and position in local society and the usual turmoil existing in Ireland during that period would probably be sufficient to allow him to get away with his misdeed. In the January of 1801 (some two and a half years after the crime), he wrote to Miss Pike who, thinking herself pregnant had gone to England. In his letter to her, thinking himself by now fairly well clear of any local prejudice, he offered to stand trial. He then arranged (on the understanding of sharing in half of the 1000 pounds reward) with a former servant, then in trade as a hairdresser, for him to file the information leading to his arrest.

Sir Henry appeared before Mr Justice Day at the Cork Assizes on the 13 May 1801. At the trial Sir Henry was charged with abduction (rape was not alleged but insinuated). The only witnesses allowed to testify were either members of the Pike family or their friends (Mary Pike herself gave evidence but was not a good witness). Sir Henry did not think it necessary to contest any of the circumstantial evidence which constituted the majority of the prosecution's case. You can well imagine his surprise when he was found guilty after the jury had spent only one hour in deliberation! However, the jury made a strong recommendation for mercy as a guilty verdict then carried the death penalty. Sir Henry appealed against his conviction on the grounds of insufficient

evidence, this was dismissed and the death sentence was passed on the 10 August 1801 - just over four years after the offence was committed. His sentence was commuted to transportation for life.

Whilst the "Hibernian Chronicle" and "Cork Advertiser" practically ignored the case and giving it little space, the local balladeers had a fine time at the former sheriffs expense. One example of their doggerel verses follows:

"The fate of Sir Henry is sure a hard case,
Unable in Cork to exhibit his face,
Pursued by the brethren, proclaimed in the papers,
Though his mighty misdeeds were mere boyish capers;
Since Mercy, High Goddess, revisits these climes,
And rebels and traitors are pardoned their crimes,
Tho' different his guilt let them all share alike,
He was not United and gave up his Pike."

Sir Henry remained in jail until the final chapter in this particular episode took place on the 6 July 1802, when the former sheriff of Cork who had sent the first Irish convict ship to Botany Bay some eleven years previously, also left the Port of Cork to join his fellow Irishmen as a convict.

A sad footnote to this section now tells of what happened to the unfortunate Miss Mary Pike. The Pike family were Quakers and her father, Samuel Pike, one of the founders of Pike's Bank had left the sect shortly before his death in 1796. Mary, who is reported as being somewhat "highly strung" had also left the family home shortly before she was abducted and was living on her own some distance from her mother. Following her abduction, she was not pregnant as she had thought and after the trial of Sir Henry, returned to Cork but never returned to her family again. She never married and died a certified lunatic during the year of 1832. Her estate was taxed at over 55,000 pounds, a huge sum for those days.

Sir Henry's voyage to Australia and Doctor Jamison.

The ship "Atlas", under the command of Captain Richard Brooks, left the port of Cork on the 28 November 1801 with Sir Henry aboard. He did not travel in the same harsh conditions as the remainder of the convicts packed aboard for he had paid some 300/400 pounds to the captain for his passage. For that sum he was given the best cabin and dined at the captain's table. This style of affairs upset another passenger, a Dr Thomas Jamison - famous historically in the Penrith area of NSW, who was also en route to the penal colony. The good doctor was not only annoyed at a convicted felon travelling in a better style than himself but at having to surrender part of his own accommodation to store some of Sir Henry's somewhat voluminous luggage.

A relaxed or even neutral social situation could not be expected to develop, this was worsened to some extent by the heavy drinking of Captain Brooks and Dr Jamison. Matters deteriorated to the point where insults were exchanged and there was a fight on the quarter deck in Rio de Janeiro between the captain and Dr Jamison. Finally, Jamison could take no more and he left the "Atlas" in Rio de Janeiro, there boarding a faster vessel which arrived in Australia before the "Atlas" arrived at Sydney Cove on the 6 July 1802. It was unfortunate for Sir Henry that Dr Jamison, who in the intervening period had been made a magistrate by Governor King, was an extremely vindictive man who would soon find a way to even his score with Sir Henry.

Note: The duration of this voyage to NSW by the "Atlas" was thirty-one weeks, during which period over seventy of the convicts died. Some of the convicts in the last stages of scurvy died in their chains after their arrival at Sydney.

Dr Jamison, by now the new colony's Principal Medical Superintendent, forced an inquiry, charging Capt. Brooks with unduly delaying the voyage and other crimes. Captain Brooks was fined 100 pounds and ordered to pay the costs. Sir Henry was gaoled for six months, five of which were spent in the Parramatta gaol for "threatening and improper conduct" to Dr Jamison, with a threat of Norfolk Island if he caused any more trouble.

The "Masonic" meeting at Sergeant Whittle's cottage.

There has been so much written about the unauthorised "Masonic" meeting held on the 14 May 1803 at Sergeant Thomas Whittle's cottage located in what is now Macquarie Place that, in my opinion, I could expect to add little if anything to what is already known. It is easier to refer others to the many worthwhile accounts which have been produced, all those mentioned below are readily available through the U.G.L. of N.S.W. Library. These books range from such as the hard cover U.G.L. Souvenir program of 1903, the "History of Lodge Australian Social Lodge No.260 I.C." by Wor. Bro. W Henley [1920], "History of the U.G.L. of N.S.W." by Cramp and MacKanness (Vol.1) [1938], History of Lodge Leinster Marine Lodge of Australia" by Phillips and Fleming [1939], through to more modern treatments such as that in 1992 by Grahame Cummings. Of these, perhaps Wor. Bro. W Henley's book gives a better impression of research and opinion into this particular area. Supplementing the above listed are a great number of lodge centenary and other anniversary books, most which only seem be rehashing Wor. Bro. Henley's material and adding little if anything to what is already known.

To briefly state the known facts, Sir Henry claimed that he had a warrant which enabled him to hold a Masonic meeting (the actual nature, origin, existence of and ultimate fate of this charter are today unknown - if such a document ever existed).

Note: Some wishful persons have conjectured that the document in question was a travelling warrant carried aboard either H.M.S. "Buffalo" and "Glatton". This is rather unlikely as the number of warrants issued to British naval vessels was very small, some three in all are known of - Ref. Gould's "Masonry under Arms" and A.Q.C. Vol.104. (Smyth) Page 223.

He applied for permission from Governor King to hold a Masonic meeting, permission was refused. Governor King refused permission on three main grounds:

- (a) Initial fear of Freemasonry as such considering it be a dangerous secret society that would attract the Irish convicts, etc.
- (b) Concern that large groups of persons, whom he thought might be disruptive elements in the colony, could band together and resist/usurp his authority.
- (c) A personal dislike he had developed of Sir Henry Brown Hayes.

Sir Henry went ahead and organised a meeting at Sgt. Whittles cottage at which he presided over a small group which included some sailors from the ships H.M.S. "Buffalo" and "Glatton" and some local citizens.

Dr Jamison informed of his knowledge of the intended meeting. Governor King then authorised him to stop the meeting and read the Riot Act. In the ensuing fracas, in which Driscoll - the Bosun of the "Glatton" was prominent, most of those in attendance at the meeting escaped. Sir Henry was the only one to actually stand trial and receive any form of punishment.

Therefore to summarise, as the so-called Masonic meeting was held against the express wishes of the lawful civil authority, Governor King, it cannot be classed as a proper Masonic meeting only a social get together. In fact it is quite possible that actions of Sir Henry Brown-Hayes may have set back more legitimate Masonic activities by other Freemasons in the colony who did not wish to incur the wrath of an all powerful and known anti-Masonic governor.

Sir Henry Brown-Hayes and Vaucluse House. (1803-181)

To other than Freemasons, Sir Henry Brown-Hayes is best known to most Australians as the man who built Vaucluse House, possibly Australia's most famous house of the Colonial period. The land on which Vaucluse was built consisted of a collection of small farms near South Head and comprised 150 acres. Very soon after his purchase of the land, Sir Henry started to improve on his investment and had organised for the clearance of most of the timber. By the year 1812 the accounts for Vaucluse show that over two thousand, one hundred and seventy pounds has been expended.

Four hundred and fifty pounds of this expenditure was incurred for the payment of an Irish free settler, named Samuel Breakwell, as his land steward. Breakwell was a hard worker and soon after he started his employment he had cleared over fifty acres of snake infested bush for agricultural purposes. Several thousand fruit trees are also reported as having been planted.

Samuel Breakwell had arrived in New South Wales on board the same ship as Sir Henry, the "Atlas" in 1802, and proved himself to be a faithful associate and confidante of Sir Henry over many years. At this time, 1803, Sir Henry was still a convict and under no form of parole, therefore in order to overcome any possible legal problems, he granted Samuel Breakwell a seven year lease of Vaucluse commencing on the 31st December 1804 for a rental of twenty seven pounds per annum. In 1812 Breakwell was granted a further lease of ninety-nine years by his employer for a rental of one peppercorn per annum.

A story which tradition has surrounded Sir Henry and his property at Vaucluse with is the reported importation of 500 casks of Irish turf/soil to be spread around the perimeter in order to prevent snakes from entering his property. This is believed to be based on the Sir Henry's understanding that as Saint Patrick had banished all snakes from "auld Ireland", then Irish turf/soil would continue to have the same salutary effect in NSW. To ensure that the soil's application was made as effective as possible he managed to arrange for only Irish convicts to lay the turf. Despite applying today's common-sense and logic, somehow, snakes no longer seemed to want to enter the property and the desired effect was achieved!

In 1804, the Irish led Castle Hill rebellion did nothing to improve Brown-Hayes standing with Governor King's administration for Sir Henry was known to be familiar with several of the militant leaders. Following the violent suppression of the rebellion Sir Henry, circumspectly, assumed a much lower profile within the colony and virtually retired for a period to his Vaucluse property where he lived with Sam

Breakwell in what is now the kitchen area of Vaucluse House. Both during and after the revolt Sir Henry was strongly suspected of being deeply involved in the uprising but no evidence has to this date been found linking him to, or taking any active part, in the actual uprising.

With Governor Philip King gone and Captain William Bligh becoming the new Governor of New South Wales on 7 August 1806, Sir Henry again began a more active public life, in the course of which he supported the unpopular Bligh and made such a favourable impression on Governor Bligh that he was considering recommending Sir Henry for a full pardon.

Bligh's recommendation was not acted upon immediately for the historical incident now referred to as the "Rum Rebellion" intervened and there was more on Governor Bligh's mind at that point in time to occupy his excellency. It was during the period of the New South Wales Corps ascendancy that Sir Henry was subjected to a considerable amount of persecution due to his previous support for Bligh and ongoing vocal criticism of MacArthur and Johnson and the others. This persecution culminated in Sir Henry being arrested by Redmond, the Chief Constable, on the 16 March 1806 whilst having dinner with some "commanders of vessels" at Vaucluse. Hayes was bundled aboard the "Recourse" and being banished to the Coal River penal settlement, where he remained for a period of eight months.

On his return to Sydney he stayed close to his home at Vaucluse until, he made a visit to a doctor in Sydney and whilst walking quietly in a street was attacked by a party of armed constables (this scene is depicted in Norman Lindsay's 1910 illustration for the book "Lone Hand"). He was hustled in to prison without any charges being laid and packed off the next morning, to the Coal River penal settlement once again. During this second period at Coal River his treatment was much more severe (under a Lieutenant Lawson) who demanded off Hayes the keys to his house, Hayes refused, was beaten and threatened with a severe flogging if he would not comply with any further orders. After refusing to hand over the keys, Sir Henry managed to get a petition through to the new governor, Bro. Colonel Lachlan Macquarie, who ordered the immediate restitution to Sir Henry of his belongings and demanded from Lt. Lawson an explanation for his conduct in this matter.

Following the "Rum Rebellion" on the 27 March 1810 ex-Governor Bligh, recommended to Earl Liverpool that Sir Henry Brown-Hayes be granted a full pardon stating that "he should have granted him his freedom had he still been the Governor." Earl Liverpool then forwarded the Bligh's letter to Governor Macquarie and suggested that if Sir Henry's conduct had been of a good character since Bligh's overthrow, then Macquarie had it within his power to affix his seal to a pardon. The pardon was in fact confirmed on the 17 August 1811.

Macquarie, after a period replied to Earl Liverpool on the 17 November 1812 and in his answer stated "The free and conditional pardon your Lordship has been pleased to order to be given by me to Sir Henry Brown-Hayes has been granted to him."

Note: Sir Henry had served a total of twelve years transportation, for his crime, during this time he had spent some six periods in detention including time spent at Parramatta, Norfolk Island, Sydney Gaol, Coal River (twice).

Sir Henry's return voyage.

Once Sir Henry Brown-Hayes had received his full pardon little time was wasted in shaking the New South Wales "penal dust" from his heels. Vaucluse House was advertised as being available for leasing with the son-in-law of William Bligh (now Admiral Bligh) being the successful applicant. His manager's lease did not enter into consideration as Sam Breakwell (who was a free settler) also wanted to return to Ireland with Sir Henry. Two passages then were secured on the vessel "Isabella" from London. Also leaving the penal colony on the "Isabella" was another historically famous passenger who was also an emancipated convict - General Joseph Holt, a renowned Irish rebel leader. Another passenger was, by some quirk of fate, Mr Richard Brooks (captain of the "Atlas" - the vessel on which Sir Henry had been transported, on the 6 July 1802). His presence was to prove to be very much a blessing in disguise. All in all, including the Captain, officer and crew along with the paying passengers, on the "Isabella" totalled 54.

Governor Macquarie paid a special visit to the "Isabella" to personally farewell Sir Henry and General Holt. Following this, the "Isabella" then departed from Sydney on 4 December 1812, but it was not to be "plain sailing" by any means for Sir Henry's problems were by no means over.

For the first three weeks of the voyage there was good sailing weather. However, the Christmas Day of 1812, saw a strong gale blow up during which the vessel lost four sails, tackle and some of the crew were injured. As the Panama Canal had not yet been constructed, the return to Europe was made by way of Cape Horne. Having successfully "rounded the Horne" they sailed on to the Falkland Islands. Unfortunately, the Captain of the "Isabella" (George Highton) became drunk and went to bed, and, soon after the ship lost its rudder - and striking some rocks was held fast.

It was only through the skill of Captain Brooks (of dubious "Atlas" fame) that they managed to free the ship and then somehow steered the stricken vessel through the raging sea, between two great rocks and managed to beach the wreck on

Eagle Island with such skill that not a single life was lost. Just prior to this Sir Henry and three other men had manned a small boat and only just made it to the shore. The incident involving Sir Henry was later mentioned in an American sea-captain's (Charles H Barnard) memoirs who claimed that Sir Henry and others had taken the boat which had been assigned for the women and children.

However, the American ship was not present at the time of this incident and no other version of this story was ever known to have been published, this version of the truth of the incident has never been properly verified. Further, as the United States and Great Britain at that time were at war, and, as Captain Barnard's ship was seized shortly afterwards by a British naval vessel close to Eagle Island in the Falkland's, this may just have been a story to further denigrate the enemy British and to divert attention from the loss of his ship.

By the next day a camp had been set up and Captain Brooks began thinking about a rescue mission. He asked for some provisions from the passengers stores so that he and some volunteers from the crew could set out for help in a boat which he named "Faith and Hope". This party left on the 21st February 1813. They had favourable winds and reached St Lucia on the River Plate thirty-three days later. Hearing that a British naval vessel was in the area, Brooks then set sail for Buenos Aires arriving there on the 11 April 1813. The brig H.M.S. "Nancy" immediately set out for the Falkland's and rescued the survivors, who then continued their journey on to Britain.

Captain Brooks did not accompany the H.M.S. "Nancy" to pick up the survivors on Eagle Island. Instead, after his arrival in Buenos Aires, he left for England where he bought a ship, loaded it with merchandise, and migrated with his family to N.S.W. They settled in the Lower Minto area and were recorded in the census of 1828 as:

Richard Brooks, wife Christina and three children,
Landowners at Lower Minto.
Total acres, 13,364, with 48 horses, 2127 cattle and
3,800 sheep.

Life and death back in County Cork.

Returning to Ireland, Sir Henry appears to have led a blameless life and refraining from any involvement in either public life or romantic activities from that time on. The "Cork Advertiser" reported "He was a kind and indulgent parent and a truly adherent friend. The suavity and gentlemanly manner he possessed made him endeared to everyone who had the honour to make his acquaintance."

He never remarried and was blind and feeble for many years before dying, aged seventy at his home "Grantham Hill" in Cork on the 13 April of 1832.

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