

THE MASONIC HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF NSW

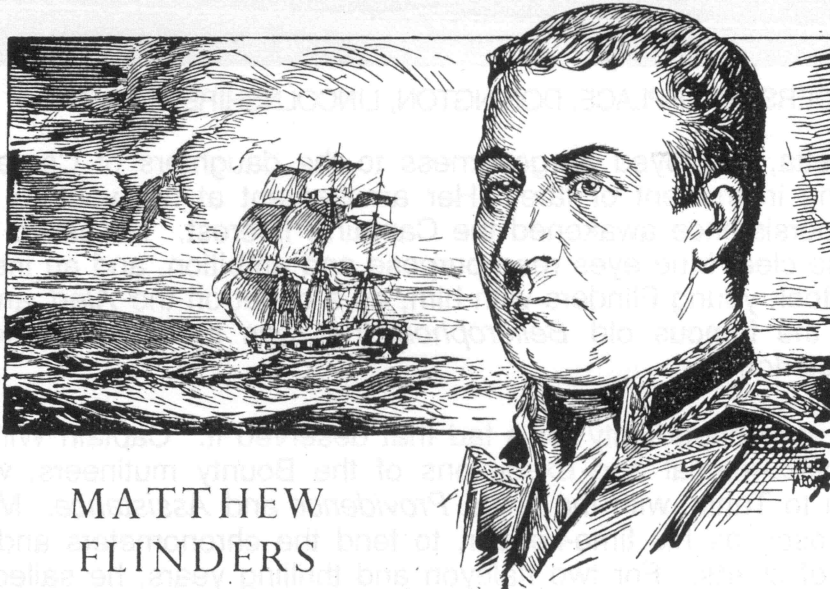
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CAPTAIN MATTHEW FLINDERS R.N. (1774 - 1814)

"No man that ever lived, even Captain James Cook, more deserves to be held in everlasting remembrance by Australians than does Matthew Flinders, the fearless young explorer who gave to a new continent its appropriate and beautiful name. He was a true hero, as genuine a philanthropist and as high-spirited a patriot as ever bore the English name. . . . The principal streets in every city in the Australian colonies ought to be adorned with a statue of this illustrious man". So wrote David Blair, Victorian journalist and historian some 112 years ago and that opinion must still be shared by all grateful and right thinking Australians today.



MATTHEW
FLINDERS

At Donington in Lincolnshire, on 16 March 1774, Matthew Flinders was born.

The eldest son of a country doctor, he was destined to follow his father's profession, and complete the third generation of surgeons and physicians in the county. It may be that his first inspiration for the sea came from the "Boston Stump", as it was called, the tower of St. Botolph's in the big market town nearby, that had been a lighthouse in the old Viking days. It is a striking and romantic fact that the "Boston Stump", commanding the marshes and the dykes for many miles, overlooked Aswarby and Spilsby, birthplaces of George Bass and Sir John Franklin, both distantly related to the Flinders family, and also Revesby Abbey, where lived none other than Bro. Sir Joseph Banks.

At Horbling Grammar School, Matthew in the early teens could enlighten his tutors in Euclid and trigonometry. His delight was to trace to their sources all the little