

1.4 ..Punishments..bananas..crab...and a drowning.

Swish ! Splat! Arghhhhh. "Number 35."

Swish ! Splat! Arghhhhh. "Number 36!"

"Punishment completed *Mr. Cunningham!* *Mr. Altree* please examine the offender and render medical assistance if necessary. You, *Marine Westbrook*, and you *Marine Kerridege*, assist *Marine Batchelor* to the Marines tent." *Lt. King* was very formal and precise.

"The rest of you must understand that I will not hesitate to punish anyone breaking the rules that I have previously explained." I could see that *Lt. King* was very angry that one of the people, a marine especially, would break his rules of behavior.

Batchelor, according to what *Lt. King* had read out loud to us all, was guilty of stealing rum from his, *Lt. King's* tent. The Marines as part of their service conditions were entitled to half a pint of rum every day, which they had daily. The convicts and the rest of us serving men did not get any, especially the convicts.

Lt. King, ordered as punishment, one dozen lashes for breaking into his, *Lt. King's* tent.

One dozen lashes for quitting his work, and one dozen lashes for breaking into the "*King of England's*" stores. Further, *Batchelor* would get no more rum, until his daily allowance of half a pint accumulated into the seven pints he had stolen.

I had seen punishments given aboard my merchant ship *The Lady Penryhn*, but they were given by a cane or a ropes end by the coxswain, or quartermaster, and only about half a dozen or at most a dozen, so that the men could resume work without too much difficulty. I had even had a couple

of belts of the cane. But this Naval punishment was meant to severely hurt, and incapacitate the offender for several days. The other Marines half carried and half dragged him to their tent.

For several days, we all just got about doing our allocated tasks. Then it was announced that *Charles MacLennan*, had been caught trying to steal rum from the tent of Surgeon Atree, and was to be given three dozen lashes.

I couldn't believe that he could be so stupid. We were all rounded up and stood in a circle, around *MacLennan* whose hands were tied above his head to a cross timber.

Again *Lt. King*, read out loud the charge, and punishment. He said that he believed other's were involved, but could not find out the truth, however *MacLennan* was to be punished.

What a dreadful sight and result. *MacLennan* was carried off nearly unconscious with pain. I made a promise to myself that I would never be so stupid as to incur this sort of punishment.

Bananas had been found growing in a very small protected area near the beach. How they got there, no one knows. *Mt Atree* had been ordered to cultivate them, and transplant roots into tubs so that they might grow food for us. The ones that I had at *Cape Town* tasted very good, and filled the belly. Young James was given the task of assisting the surgeon and that occupied a lot of his time.

Mr. Jamison, the other Surgeons mate from the *Sirius*, came up to me and said I was to assist him in completing the records for *Lt. King*, on what crops and vegetables had been sown, and what their progress was, and how many seeds of each kind we had left.

I didn't know we had planted so many crops.

"*Davie*, that's not spelt correctly. I'll sound it out for you. Burr ok oly. Got that?"

"Yessir."

"Thyme, and not ships time. Ty yum. Got that"

"Nossir!"

"Here give me the slate and I will show you." *Mr. Jamison* sounded a bit exasperated.

I couldn't help it, I didn't know the names in the first place and in the second I never had to write down vegetable names on the ship.

The small slate and chalk that I was using had to be rubbed out many times after *Mr. Jamison* had written in a log, for *Lt. King*.

Potatoes, beet, cabbage, cauliflower, cress, mustard, broccoli, fennel, thyme, marjoram, shallots, sorrel, sugar cane, parsnips, carrots, parsley, corn, lettuce, beans, rhubarb, turnips, radishes, wheat and five coconuts.

It was apparent that the grubs and rats had eaten a lot. When *Lt. King*, had talked to the other officers, he announced that from now on every male was to only get two thirds of the allocated food a day, and the women convicts were to only get half of their allocated food a day. He did not want to take too much out of the salted stores. Fishing was to become more important outside the reef. He also got *Marine Westlake* to make a rough catamaran, so that it could be used by a crew of two, to set and capture fish from fish nets and pots from the inner reef, without having the danger of fishing outside.

Macllenan was heard complaining about having to eat so much fish. That part was alright because most of us were not too keen on eating fish, but he also said out loud, that if more convicts were here they would all

refuse to eat the fish. The Officer who overheard that comment, reported it to *Lt. King*.

Lt. King, immediately ordered *Macllenan* to get three dozen lashes for trying to incite a mutiny. *Macllenan* is stupid, from now on he will be punished for the slightest thing he does wrong. His back will be very scarred and painful.

Several times when the weather was bad, some of us were detailed to help construct a crab from tree trunks. This was in a triangle shape about twenty feet high, and was to be positioned near where the *Supply* boats would beach, so that the stores could be brought on shore a lot quicker, without the ships boat dancing around in the surf and threatening to break a leg of someone or drop the cargo in the water. A rope was tied to pulleys on a beam that stuck out about ten feet horizontally and the hook at the end of the rope would be lowered into the boat, the cargo attached, then lifted up, and turned in any direction.

Another job, but very dangerous, was at very low tide, some of the reef at the entrance was to be broken off, to make it safer. This job was very difficult. The waves even at low tide were occasionally suddenly nasty, and the reef was very slippery with mollusks and other growth, so we kept on slipping, and the cuts hurt very much. Most of the people working could not swim so they became very fearful of falling in. We had some crow bars and other chopping axes but we couldn't do a lot. *Lt. King* abandoned the job when it looked like people could get seriously hurt, so the effort was discontinued.

"No, you can't come fishing today *Davie*, I must give a convict a turn."

"But *Mr. Cunningham*, I think we could be lucky today, and you know I catch more fish than anyone else."

"I know, I know, but I think today you are going to help *Marine Westlake* in erecting a signaling mast just up there, overlooking the entrance."

"Why?"

"Well *Lt. King* wants a signaling mast built so that he can talk to visiting ships, and tell them when it is safe to come in, or if it's dangerous. Anyway, that's it. You may be in a position to learn the flag signals and hoist them when *Lt. King* wants them. That would be a good job."

Sometime later, the ship's boat went fishing, outside the reef and towards *Phillip Island*. Coming into the entrance a large wave broadsided the boat, and flooded with water, *Marine Batchelor* stood up then fell over the side. According to the crew, the waves started to sweep him away, and because he could not swim towards a rope that was thrown to him, he simply disappeared. I was lucky I was not there. I probably would have been told to swim to him, and help him. He was bigger than me and he might have drowned me as well.

About a week later his body was seen floating in the inner reef. *Lt. King* conducted a religious service for him, and he was buried in a little flattish ground to the eastwards of our tents, near the beach.