

2.0. Tarjack's story

2.1. Tarjack and the Arrest of Governor Captain Bligh....

I was drowsing, sitting on a bench at the end of the long corridor at the *Governor's Mansion*. By being here, I was taking the place of my friend young *Robert Campbell*, the nephew of my *Master Mr. Robert Campbell*. He had been arrested recently, then released after a little time. It was not thought wise for him to be at the *Governor's Mansion* for dinner that night. My duties were to accompany my master walking from his home to here and return to his home so that blackguards would not annoy him, and also to carry out any errands he may send me on.

During my drowsing I thought that someone had entered the corridor and then gone into the large reception dining room. Noises of shouting and voices raised woke me up quickly. Both the large reception room doors were suddenly flung wide open with a crash.

"Sergeant! Sergeant! Have my horses and carriage made ready. You *Mr. Campbell* follow me upstairs immediately. I will put on my uniform and we will both look at the legal documents for *Macarthur's* arrest."

As my master *Mr. Campbell* started up the stairs after the *Governor*, he shouted to me to be ready to do his bidding, because *Major Johnson* has ordered *Macarthur* to be released from goal.

Suddenly screaming and other loud voices sounded out the front of the *Mansion*.

"*Adam*, follow me quickly," shouted *Mr. Campbell* who had rapidly come down the stairs and was heading for the front door. The other gentlemen in the reception room were still talking and gesturing loudly.

We quickly went out the door, and saw *Mrs. Putnam*, the *Governors daughter*, shouting and pleading with an Officer of the Corps on duty, not to open the large front gate to the *Mansion*, and let other soldiers in to the property. Suddenly the gate was open. Outside it a large party of Officers and men prepared to enter.

"Quickly *Adam*, back to the *Mansion* and stay by my side."

The *Mansion* was quickly filled with soldiers who were crowding everywhere and making threatening gestures with their muskets with fixed bayonets. All the servants were pushed into the down stairs rooms. Some were crying, others were very scared.

"How dare you enter my residence, in this threatening disgraceful manner," called out the *Governor*.

"You know who I am. I am *Major Johnson* of the *New South Wales Corps*. I am here to dismiss you from office. I am declaring Military Law, and as such I am now in charge of the colony!"

"Sheath your sword you blackguard, and get out of my house. I will have you and your Officers arrested, on a charge of treason. I have been appointed by the King and only he may change that." *Governor Bligh* at this stage went quiet, and allowed an officer to take him into the drawing room, then he went quietly up the stairs.

"You, *Captain Kemp* go and examine the *Governors* secretary's papers authorizing *Mr. Macarthur's* arrest. Take *Mr. Campbell* with you as a civilian witness." *Major Johnston* was obviously in charge now.

The *Mansion* became quiet, but people and soldiers were on edge at the slightest sound or gesture.

"I am going to read out a formal document to *Captain Bligh* saying that I am arresting him and confining him to this Mansion. You *Mr. Campbell, Mr. Fulton, Mr. Palmer, Mr. Williamson, Mr. Atkins*, and you *Mr. Gore* consider yourselves under house arrest. You will be escorted to your homes. Do not! Leave them without orders.

By this time my master was very white, and shocked. A soldier saluted him, and ordered him to follow him to his home.

We went out the front doors, into the front garden, through the front gates and strode very quickly and hard to Mr. Campbell's warehouses and home.

During the next few days, I carried out my clerical duties at the wharf warehouse. Counting bales of goods or counting the contents of bales and packages of items. Checking the documents that said how many items there were. It went on and on. Occasionally "*Young Robert*", as he is known, sometimes helped me, but I could see he was not his usual friendly self.

Eventually one afternoon, we had finished counting. He found two mugs and a bottle of sarsaparilla. We went and sat on a pile of sacks filled with wheat.

"What 's going on Rob," I asked.

"Well young *Tarjack*, it's a bit complicated. Especially with my uncle and other people confined to their homes by the military. Although Uncle has had to go to the *Military Barracks*, and subject himself to questioning by *Captain Kemp*, and *Charles Grimes* who has just been made *Judge Advocate*.

"Why did that happen?"

"They seem to think that Uncle wants to expand his business into importing and selling all the goods in the colony. They are stating that he wants to keep *Macarthur* locked up, and take away all the rights of the *Military Officers* to be the only ones to sell grog, that comes to the colony in ships."

'But that's the way it's always been *Rob*. The military use grog as payment for doing everything."

"That's the problem *Tarjack*, nobody can make any money without the Military becoming rich. Even the *Governor* has to pay for things in quantities of rum.

"Why did you get arrested?"

At this *Rob* sighed, then said, "It was poorly done. Uncle was made *Naval Officer*, which means he is responsible for all the shipping that comes in and out of the *Port*. He has to make sure that fees are paid to the *Government*, and only goods that the *Governor* wants brought in and unloaded into the colony. *Governor Bligh* found out that *Macarthur* had brought aboard his ship the *Parramatta* two stills that made grog."

"The *Governor* immediately wanted the stills recovered from where they were located, and put under guard on Government property. My uncle made me *Deputy Naval Officer* and sent me to a place to recover the stills. When I got there with some people I loaded the stills onto a cart and brought them to town. However I did not have proper paperwork to prove I had the authority to take the stills away.'

" *Macarthur* charged me with theft and I was put in goal for a short time until Uncle got me freed. Unfortunately it gave *Macarthur* and other of his Officer cronies the ability to start agitating against the *Governors* rule. So that's how they trumped up a charge against the *Governor* and deposed him."

"Well at least you are free now!"

"Yes, but Uncle must be cleared of the charges brought against him by some of the Officers. We also have a business to run, and I can't do it on my own. I don't know enough of the business affairs yet."

I replied, "*Mr. Campbell* said that I was increasing my usefulness to him by diligently carrying out tasks, like counting stock against the stock record documents in the warehouse, as well as keeping records of all ships that entered and left the Port, and what cargoes they carried. Where they were from and where they were going."

Robert then said "I know that. I also said to my Uncle that when you are several years older you could probably go to our base in *Madras India*, and show them how to create more accurate stock record documents. Who knows maybe you could also accompany me back to England to do the same thing."

"What's going to happen to the *Governor* now?"

"Well," *Rob* replied. "He is still under house arrest. He cannot leave his mansion, or communicate with any Officer's or officials. He has to obey *Major Johnston*."

"Gee, that's pretty tough," I said.

"Yes, and you know what *Tarjack*,? my Uncle said it's the third time *Governor Bligh* has been involved in a mutiny. Once, when half the Navy, refused to sail the ships in some of the *English Ports*. I think one or two may have been hanged. The second mutiny was when *Lt. Fletcher Christian* took over the *HMS Bounty*, and put *Governor Bligh* in the ships boat with other people and set them adrift. Now this situation. The Military were lucky the Naval ships *HMS Porpoise* and the brig *Lady Nelson* were away transporting

Norfolk Island settlers, military and convicts to *Van Diemens land*, or there could have been a blood bath in the streets. *Army* against *Navy*, because *Governor Captain Bligh* is the Senior Officer in the *Navy*."

"Tell me *Rob* about the *Bounty* mutiny."

"Well *Tarjack*, it appears that *Fletcher Christian*, and other sailors wanted to return to and live on the islands of *Tahiti*, despite *Admiralty* orders regarding carrying the small vegetable plants of bread fruit, back to *England*, and despite *Captain Bligh's* orders to the seamen."

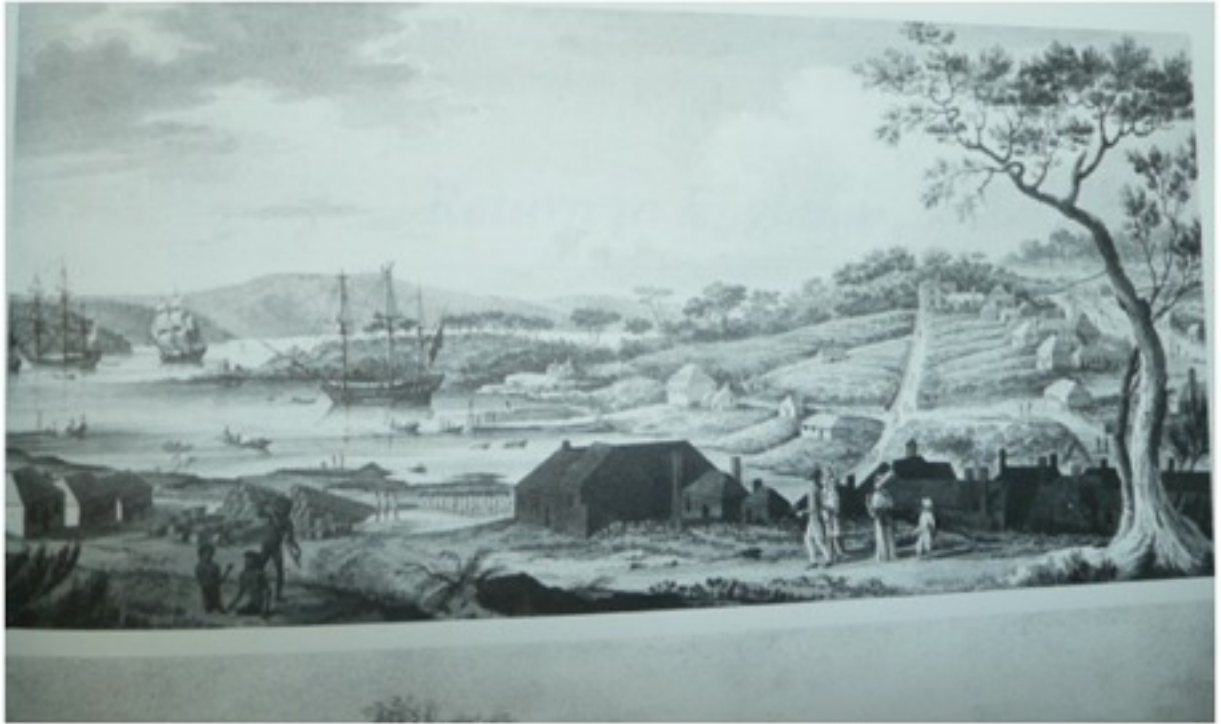
"What happened?"

"*Christian* put *Captain Bligh* and about twenty others in the ships boat, and.....

I interrupted loudly, "Twenty people can't fit into a ships boat!"

"But they did. Further *Captain Bligh* sailed and rowed about 3000 miles, in open seas to the *Dutch* settlement at *Kupang*. When he finally returned to *England*, the *Admiralty* , at his court martial for losing a ship of the King's, said he was not guilty of any blame. They sent a ship to retrace his voyage found some of the deserters, took them back to *England*, put them on trial, and a couple were hanged."

'Do you think the same thing might happen here?'



A contemporary painting of Early Farm Cove.