

Letters from the Lost Parcel

Reverend Richard Johnson's Letter

The Rev Richard Johnson to
Under Secretary Nepean.

Port Jackson, in the
county of
Cumberland
New South Wales

Hon'd Sir

You may remember, sir, a circumstance which greatly interested the public a little before our leaving England.

This was respecting the Norwich goaler and two convicts, Susannah and Henry, which, with a child, were removed from Norwich gaol to Plymouth in order to be embarked on board one of the transports bound to New South Wales.

These two persons I married soon after our arrival here.

Some persons made a charitable contribution for these two persons, collected the sum of 20pounds, and laid this out in various articles, at the same time requesting I w'd see this delivered to them upon our arrival here.

Unfortunately, these have not been found,

This circumstance has been brought before the Civil Court here, when a verdict was found in their favor ag'st the captain of the Alexander.

Am sorry this charitable intention and action has been brought to this disagreeable issue, the more so because the public seemed to be so much interested in their welfare.

The child is still living – of a weakly constitution, but a fine boy.

Richard Johnson.

The Kables' Letter

To Mrs Dinah Cable
Laxfield Suffolk
England

Sydney Cove
New South Wales
17 November 1788

My dear mother, brother and sisters,

We have an extreme good and healthy climate, very heavy rains and prodigious heavy claps of thunder. Here the sun goes to the left from the eastwards, our summer is very hot, our winter which commences at May is not altogether very cold but very sharp.

When we arrived here, we made application for the parcel that was sent over in the Alexander, but could get no account of it; however, Capt. Collins, our Judge here, made the Captain of the Alexander give us a note of hand for £15 which we transmitted to England. We have a little garden, which supplies us with cabbage and turnips in plenty; likewise I have gathered a small crop of peas ... Some officers have been so pleased with my conduct, that they continue me in the office of an overseer over the women, there being several overseers over the men.

Our little boy Harry (Henry) is a promising little fellow, and goes to school ...

It is day here when it is night with you.

Henry and Susannah Cable.