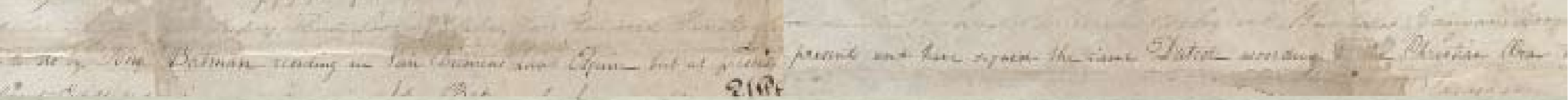

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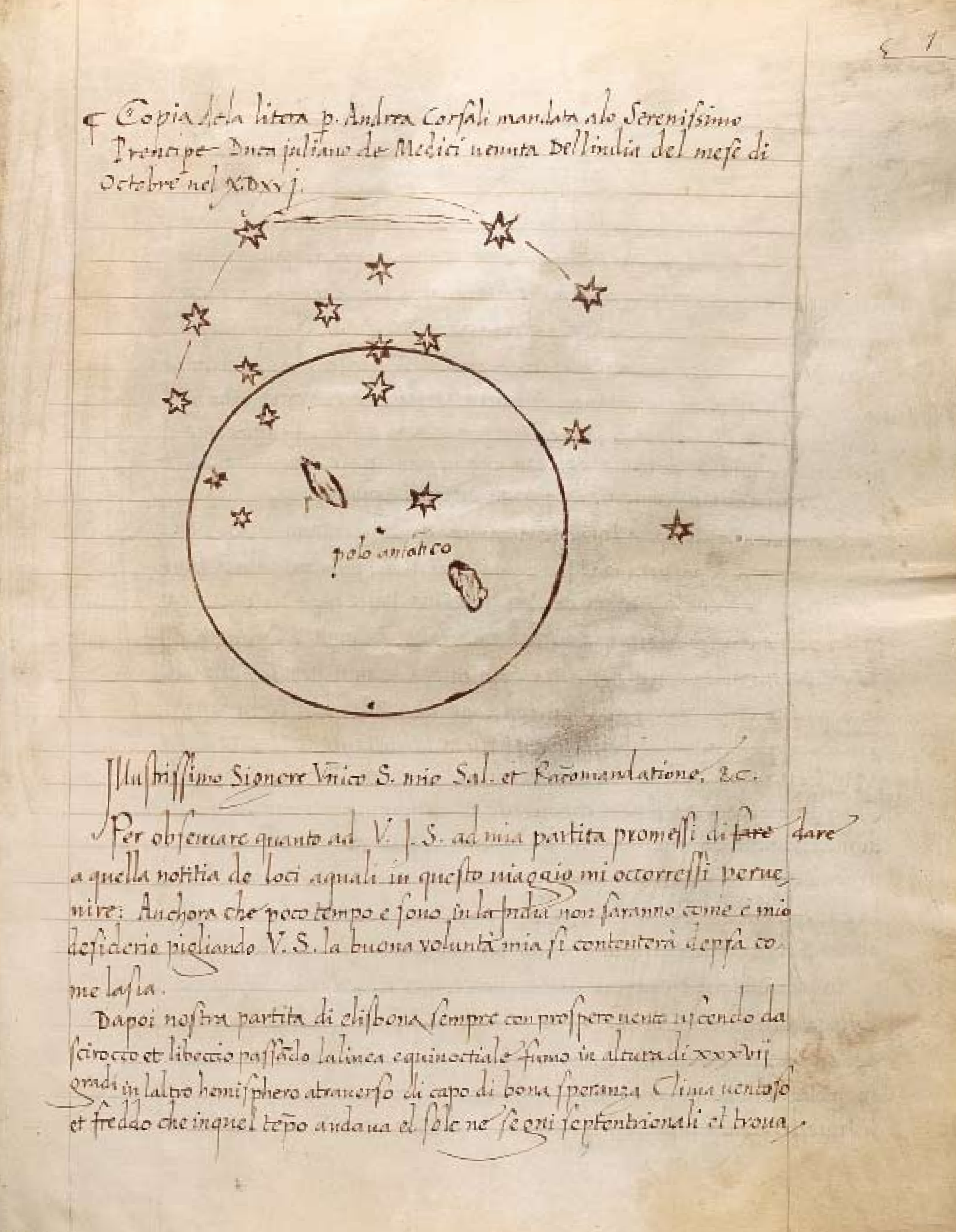


Copia dela litera p. Andrea Corsali mandata alo Serenissimo Prencipe Duca juliano de Medici uenuta dell'india del mese di Octobre nel X.D.xvj.

polo antartico

Illustrissimo Signore Unico S. mio Sal. et Racomandatione, &c.

Per observare quanto ad V. I. S. ad mia partita promessi di ~~fare~~ dare a quella notitia de loci aquali in questo viaggio mi occorressi pervenire: Anchora che poco tempo e sono in la India non saranno come e mio desiderio pigliando V. S. la buona volunta mia si contentera di essa come la sia.

Dapoi nostra partita di elisbona sempre con prospere venti uscendo da sirocco et libeccio passando la linea equinoctiale fumo in altura di xxxvij gradi in laltro hemisphero atraverso di capo di bona speranza Clima ventoso et freddo che inquel tepo andava el sole ne segni septentrionali et trova

1516

‘a marveylous order of starres’

FIRST REPORT OF THE SOUTHERN CROSS

In 1515 a young Italian adventurer named Andrea Corsali (*b*. 1487) accompanied a Portuguese voyage down the African coast, around the Cape of Good Hope, and into the Southern and Indian oceans. After rounding the Cape, Corsali observed the constellation of stars now known as the Southern Cross. At Cochin in southern India he wrote to his patron, Giuliano de Medici, in Florence. His *Lettera*, first published in 1516, was translated into English by Richard Eden in 1555. A fine manuscript copy of the letter, written on vellum by Andrea Gritti, a Venetian scribe, is owned in Australia by the Bruce and Joy Reid Foundation and is on loan to the State Library of New South Wales.

Corsali was not the first person to have sighted what he called ‘a marveylous order of starres’, but he was the first to describe its distinctive form of a cross and to depict it in a drawing.

In its identification of the Southern Cross, Corsali’s description is a document of high importance to Australia, where the constellation has assumed the status of a national symbol. A key marker for navigators, the distinctive pattern of the stars later appealed to the new settlers in Australia. By adoption, the Southern Cross became one of the foundations of Australian nationalism, a symbol of both unity and resistance: it appears on the Australian flag and it was adopted as a symbol of protest and defiance by the Eureka rebels at Ballarat in 1854. In his pioneering history *The Eureka Stockade* (1854), Raffaello Carboni described the rebel flag as ‘silk, blue ground, with a large silver cross, similar to the one in our southern firmament; no device of arms, but all exceedingly chaste and natural’.

ABOVE *Late fifteenth century portrait of Giuliano de Medici by Sandro Botticelli.*

OPPOSITE Lettera *of Andrea Corsali, sent to his patron Giuliano de Medici in 1516.*

After that we departed from Lisbona, wee sayled ever with prosperous wynde, not passynge owt of the Southeast and Southwest. And passyng beyonde the Equinoctial line, we were in the heyght of 37 degrees of the other halfe circle of the earth. And traversynge the cape of Bona Speranza a coulde and wyndy clime bycause at that tyme the soonne was in the north signes, we founde the nyght of xiii houres. Here we sawe a marveylous order of starres, so that in the parte of heaven contrary to owre northe pole, to knowe in what place and degree the south pole was, we tooke the day with the soonne, and observed the nyght with the Astrolabie, and saw manifestly twoo clowdes of reasonable bygnesse movynge abowt the place of the pole continually nowe rysynge and nowe faulynge, so keepynge theyr continuall course in circular movynge, with a starre ever in the myddest which is turned abowt with them abowte xi degrees frome the pole. Above these appeareth a marveylous crosse in the myddest of fyve notable starres which compasse it abowt (as doth charles wayne the northe pole) with other starres whiche move with them abowt xxx degrees distant from the pole, and make their course in xxiii houres. This crosse is so fayre and bewtiful, that none other hevenly signe may be compared to it as may appeare by this fygure.

1768

Search for the great south land

THE SECRET INSTRUCTIONS FOR JAMES COOK

When James Cook sailed from Plymouth on the afternoon of 26 July 1768, he carried two sets of instructions. His first and public purpose, on behalf of the Royal Society, was to travel south to King Georges Island, modern-day Tahiti, to 'observe the Passage of the Planet Venus over the Disk of the Sun on 3rd June 1769'. The observations were needed to help establish the distance of the sun from the earth. But Cook was also secretly charged with a larger commission to search for *Terra Australis Incognita*, the great southern continent, thought to lie between the Cape of Good Hope and the Straits of Magellan. Dreams of that discovery had long inspired European interest in the Pacific. By the middle of the eighteenth century, Britain had set its sights firmly on the quest to unravel the mysteries of antipodean geography and with, of course, the aim of gaining control of new territory for both trade and strategic use.

Cook arrived in Tahiti on 13 April 1769, seven weeks before the transit was due. Despite some difficulty owing to poor weather, the observations were accurately made.

Cook then turned to his second set of instructions, making his way first to New Zealand, where he mapped the entire coast of the two islands, thus establishing that its northern tip was not in fact 'a part of the imaginary southern continent'. Having failed to locate the supposed great southern landmass, Cook then made what would prove to be the momentous decision to sail home along the unknown eastern coast of New Holland, the name which had been given to the Australian continent by the Dutch explorers in the seventeenth century. He charted the coast and named many landmarks. He made several landings, including at Botany Bay, and he had the first English encounters with the Indigenous inhabitants. The botanical discoveries made by Joseph Banks and Daniel Solander increased the tally of the world's known plant species by 10 per cent. On 22 August 1770, Cook claimed the East Coast of New Holland in the name of King George III and gave it the name New South Wales (see page 13). With Cook's *Endeavour Journal, 1768–1771*, the Additional Instructions is one of Australia's most significant foundation documents.

ABOVE *James Cook depicted in a lithograph by Josef Selb from the 1820s.*

Secret

By the Commissioners for executing the office of Lord High Admiral of Great Britain &c.

Additional Instructions for L[t]. James Cook, Appointed to Command His Majesty's Bark the Endeavour.

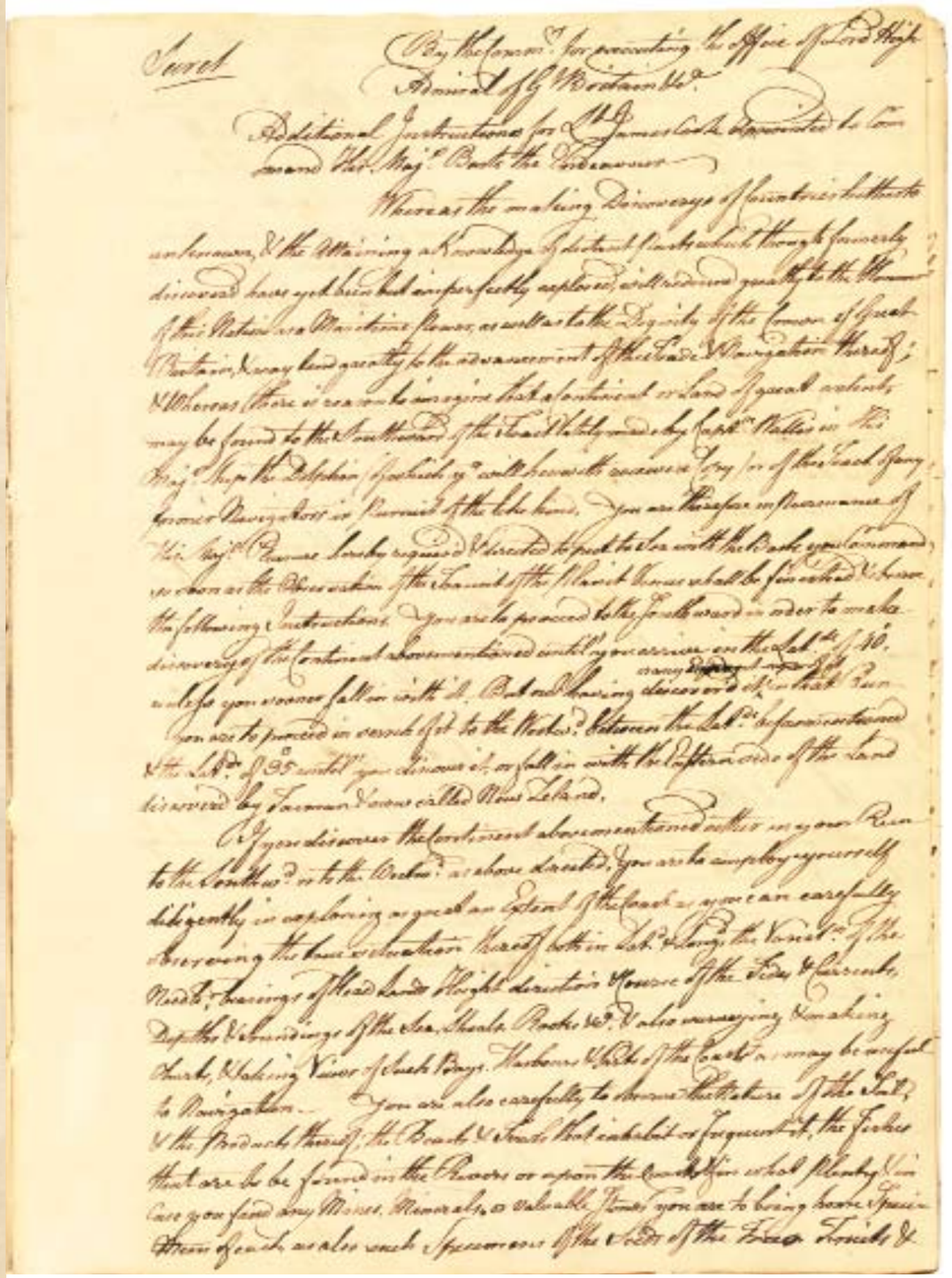
Whereas the making Discoverys of Countries hitherto unknown, and the Attaining a Knowledge of distant Parts which though formerly discover'd have yet been but imperfectly explored, will redound greatly to the Honour of this Nation as a Maritime Power, as well as to the Dignity of the Crown of Great Britain, and may tend greatly to the advancement of the Trade and Navigation thereof; and Whereas there is reason to imagine that a Continent or Land of great extent, may be found to the Southward of the Tract lately made by Capt[n] Wallis in His Majesty's Ship the Dolphin (of which you will herewith receive a Copy) or of the Tract of any former Navigators in Pursuits of the like kind; You are therefore in Pursuance of His Majesty's Pleasure hereby requir'd and directed to put to Sea with the Bark you Command so soon as the Observation of the Transit of the Planet Venus shall be finished and observe the following Instructions.

You are to proceed to the southward in order to make discovery of the Continent above-mentioned until you arrive in the Latitude 40 degrees, unless you sooner fall in with it. But not having discover'd it or any Evident signs of it in that Run, you are to proceed in search of it to the Westward between the Latitude before mentioned and the Latitude of 35 degrees until you discover it, or fall in with the Eastern side of the Land discover'd by Tasman and now called New Zeland.

If you discover the Continent above-mentioned either in your Run to the Southward or to the Westward as above directed, You are to employ yourself diligently in exploring as great an Extent of the Coast as you can; carefully observing the true situation thereof both in Latitude and Longitude, the Variation of the Needle, bearings of Head Lands, Height, direction and Course of the Tides and Currents, Depths and Soundings of the Sea, Shoals, Rocks &c and also surveying and making Charts, and taking Views of such Bays, Harbours and Parts of the Coast as may be useful to Navigation.

You are also carefully to observe the Nature of the Soil, and the Products thereof; the Beasts and Fowls that inhabit or frequent it, the fishes that are to be found in the Rivers or upon the Coast and in what Plenty; and in case you find any Mines, Minerals or valuable stones you are to bring home Specimens of each, as also such Specimens of the Seeds of the Trees, Fruits and Grains as you may be able to collect, and Transmit them to our Secretary that We may cause proper Examination and Experiments to be made of them.

You are likewise to observe the Genius, Temper, Disposition and Number of the Natives, if there be any, and endeavour by all proper means to cultivate a Friendship and Alliance with them, making them presents of such Trifles as they may Value, inviting them to Traffick, and Shewing them every kind of Civility and Regard; taking Care however not to suffer yourself to be surprised by them, but to be always upon your guard against any Accident.



ABOVE *The first page of the secret instructions issued to James Cook.*

‘The body will be cremated and the ashes taken to Australia’

THE LEGEND OF THE ASHES

In August 1882, on the hallowed ground of the Oval, colonial Australia won its first Test cricket victory on English soil. Out of this memorable Australian triumph emerged the concept of the Ashes, the Test cricket series played biennially between England and Australia.

With the dismissal of Ted Peate, England’s last batsman, the Australian victory by a mere seven runs led to two mock obituaries in the English press. The first appeared in the magazine *Cricket* on 31 August 1882 and mourned the loss of ‘England’s Supremacy in the Cricket-Field’. The second—and more famous—written by Reginald Brooks, appeared in the *Sporting Times* in London on 2 September 1882. It lamented the death of English cricket and noted that ‘the body will be cremated and the ashes taken to Australia’. In the week that the Australian team of 1882 returned to Australia, the Sydney *Bulletin* of 9 December 1882 referred to the ‘revered ashes of English cricket which had been laid on the shelf of the Australian Eleven’. With the prospect of the next contest in Australia (1882–83), the English media began to write of ‘the quest to regain The Ashes’. That contest evolved over the years into one of the most celebrated rivalries in international cricket. On both sides, the battle for the Ashes has generated an intense passion and interest that for some approaches fanaticism.

But on 28 September 1882, at a banquet held at the Criterion Hotel in London to farewell the victorious Australians, a whole-hearted toast was moved to ‘The Australian Cricket Team’. Responding on behalf of his players and his country, the Australian captain, William ‘Billy’ Lloyd Murdoch (1854–1911), delivered a speech notable for its grace and generosity, its quiet pride in victory and its high sense of honour. Having bearded the English lion in its den, Murdoch was quick to acknowledge the debt owed by the Australians to their English mentors and exemplars. At the same time he asserted the determination of his countrymen to play the game with honour and to play the game to win.

ABOVE *The Australian Eleven in 1880.*

I feel my position tonight very keenly for it is one I cannot but be proud of, and I am sure it is one that will be envied by the sportsmen throughout Australia. I desire on behalf of myself and my colleagues to return you our warmest thanks for the very great honour you have done us in so kindly receiving the toast which Sir Henry Barkly proposed. It is very gratifying to us to find that our exertions in the cricket field are considered worthy of such generous recognition and such openhanded hospitality. When we quitted Australia we did so as a band of cricketers, determined to do our best to uphold the reputation of the land of our birth, to leave no stone unturned to gain the laurels so dear to every true sportsman. In this spirit we started on our daring enterprise to beard the English lion in his den. The result you know. Since landing here in May we have been constantly engaged in playing matches. On all occasions we simply did our best to play up to the true letter and spirit of the game, and we always tried our very hardest to win. I can assure you that on the few occasions we lost there were not fourteen more grieved men in the world. We knew very well that the eyes of all Australia were upon us, and that the honour of Australia had been entrusted to our hands. The laurels we have won we shall on our return place at the feet of our fellow countrymen, and hope that the verdict be that we have been tried and not found wanting. If I may be permitted to say so, I feel at present something like your very able General Wolseley must feel when he contemplated the result of the Egyptian campaign. He was sent out to do a certain thing—to crush Arabi—and he has done it. I was sent home as a captain of an Australian cricket team to beat England and I am proud of having done it. Personally I have attained the height of my ambition, having captained a team which has beaten a representative Eleven of England. Having done this, I do not wish any more to play cricket. I do not care any more to run the risk of commanding a team which may possibly sustain defeat, but if I am called upon to occupy such a position I shall only be too proud to do so, and shall do my very best to win.

There are several gentlemen present tonight who have played cricket in Australia perhaps forty years ago. They, I trust will feel gratified at witnessing the cordial reception given tonight to those who have followed their example. English teams which have visited these colonies have taught us what we know of cricket. When the first went out there we knew little or nothing of the game, but we have since improved, as we have endeavoured to show on our present tour. If we have attained any position as cricketers, you in England have yourselves to thank for it, for you have been our instructors. We have been very ready and willing to learn, for the cricketing spirit is as strong in Australia as in England. It is the national game of the colonies, and we shall always be ready to take up the willow and do battle with any who desire to meet us in the field … Before resuming my seat I desire to propose the toast, ‘The English Cricketers, and success to Cricket’, coupled with the names of Mr A.N. Hornby and Mr C.I. Thornton [the English cricketers Albert Neilson Hornby (1847–1925) and Charles Inglis Thornton (1850–1929). Hornby captained England in the 1882 Test; Thornton offered generous encouragement to the early Australian teams]. Both these gentlemen have always exhibited the true spirit of the game, and I thank them for the cordiality of their relations with us.

1890

‘a stripling on a small and weedy beast’

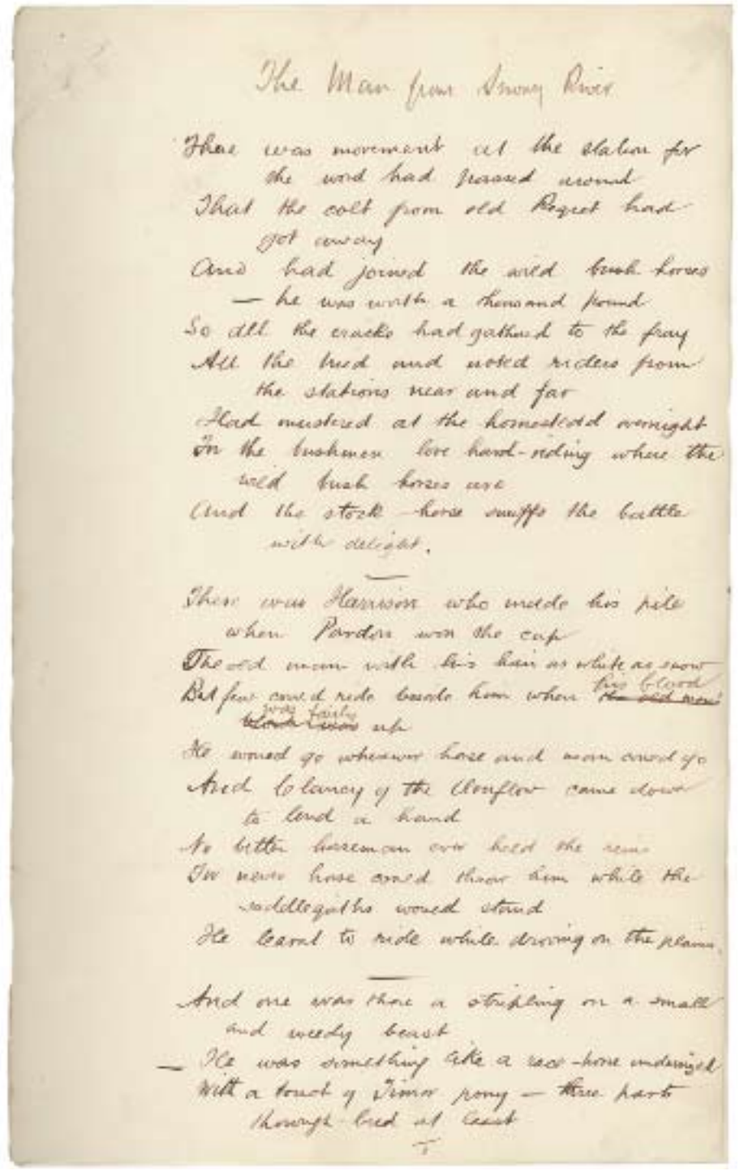
ANDREW BARTON ‘BANJO’ PATERSON’S ‘THE MAN FROM SNOWY RIVER’

ABOVE *Andrew Barton ‘Banjo’ Paterson, photographed around 1905.*

One of Australia’s most famous poems, Andrew Barton ‘Banjo’ Paterson’s ‘The Man from Snowy River’ was first published in the Sydney magazine the ***Bulletin*** in April 1890. In 1895 Paterson drafted a fresh version for a collected edition, ***The Man from Snowy River, and Other Verses***, published in Sydney by Angus and Robertson in 1895—a volume that achieved immense popularity in Australia. The 1895 manuscript version, now held in the Mitchell Collection, State Library of New South Wales, is presented here.

In the heady years of the 1890s when Australia was moving to a new identity as a federation and when a new sense of national consciousness was in the ascendant, Paterson’s poem was an immediate success. It has remained in the hearts and affections of Australians ever since. Generations of children learned the poem at school, and it was for long a favourite recitation piece in homes around the country. Paterson’s epic tale of the chase and capture of ‘the colt from old Regret’ has been filmed four times, first as a silent version in 1920. In 1982 the poem was given new life in another film version starring Jack Thompson, Tom Burlinson and Sigrid Thornton, with spectacular scenes of dare-devil riding shot in the high country of the Snowy Mountains so powerfully evoked in the original poem.

In 2005 Banjo Paterson’s 1895 manuscript was included in the national touring exhibition *National Treasures from Australia’s Great Libraries*—the first time that the document was shared with a wider audience around the country. Its inclusion in that exhibition reinforced the iconic status of Paterson’s poem while introducing the work to a new generation.



The Man from Snowy River

There was movement at the station for
the word had passed around
That the colt from old Regret had
got away
And had joined the wild bush horses
— he was worth a thousand pound
So all the cracks had gathered to the fray
All the bush and noted riders from
the stations near and far
Had mustered at the homestead overnight
For the bushmen love hard-riding where the
wild bush horses are
And the stock horse snuffs the battle
with delight.

There was Harrison who made his pile
when Pardon won the cup
The old man with his hair as white as snow
But few could ride beside him when his blood
was young
He could go wherever horse and man could go
And Clancy of the Overflow came down
to lend a hand
No better horseman ever held the reins
For never horse could throw him while the
saddle girths would stand
He learnt to ride while droving on the plains

And one was there a stripling on a small
and weedy beast
— He was something like a racehorse undersized
With a touch of Timor pony — three parts
thoroughbred at least

ABOVE *Paterson’s 1895 draft, including his amendments.*

There was movement at the station, for the word had passed around
That the colt from old Regret had got away,
And had joined the wild bush horses—he was worth a thousand pound,
So all the cracks had gathered to the fray.
All the tried and noted riders from the stations near and far
Had mustered at the homestead overnight,
For the bushmen love hard riding where the wild bush horses are,
And the stock-horse snuffs the battle with delight.

There was Harrison, who made his pile when Pardon won the cup,
The old man with his hair as white as snow;
But few could ride beside him when his blood was fairly up—
He would go wherever horse and man could go.
And Clancy of the Overflow came down to lend a hand,
No better horseman ever held the reins;
For never horse could throw him while the saddle-girths would stand—
He learnt to ride while droving on the plains.

And one was there, a stripling on a small and weedy beast;
He was something like a racehorse undersized,
With a touch of Timor pony—three parts thoroughbred at least—
And such as are by mountain horsemen prized.
He was hard and tough and wiry—just the sort that won't say die—
There was courage in his quick impatient tread;
And he bore the badge of gameness in his quick and fiery eye,
And the proud and lofty carriage of his head.

But still so slight and weedy, one would doubt his power to stay,
And the old man said, "That horse will never do
For a long and tiring gallop—lad, you'd better stop away,
These hills are far too rough for such as you."
So he waited, sad and wistful—only Clancy stood his friend—
"I think we ought to let him come," he said;
"I warrant he'll be with us when he's wanted at the end,
For both his horse and he are mountain bred.

"He hails from Snowy River, up by Kosciusko's side,
Where the hills are twice as steep and twice as rough;
Where a horse's hooves strike firelight from the flint stones every stride,
The man that holds his own is good enough.
And the Snowy River riders on the mountains make their home,
Where the river runs those giant hills between;
I have seen full many horsemen since I first commenced to roam,
But nowhere yet such horsemen have I seen."

So he went: they found the horses by the big mimosa clump,
They raced away towards the mountain's brow,
And the old man gave his orders, "Boys, go at them from the jump,
No use to try for fancy riding now.
And, Clancy, you must wheel them, try and wheel them to the right.
Ride boldly lad, and never fear the spills,
For never yet was rider that could keep the mob in sight,
If once they gain the shelter of those hills."

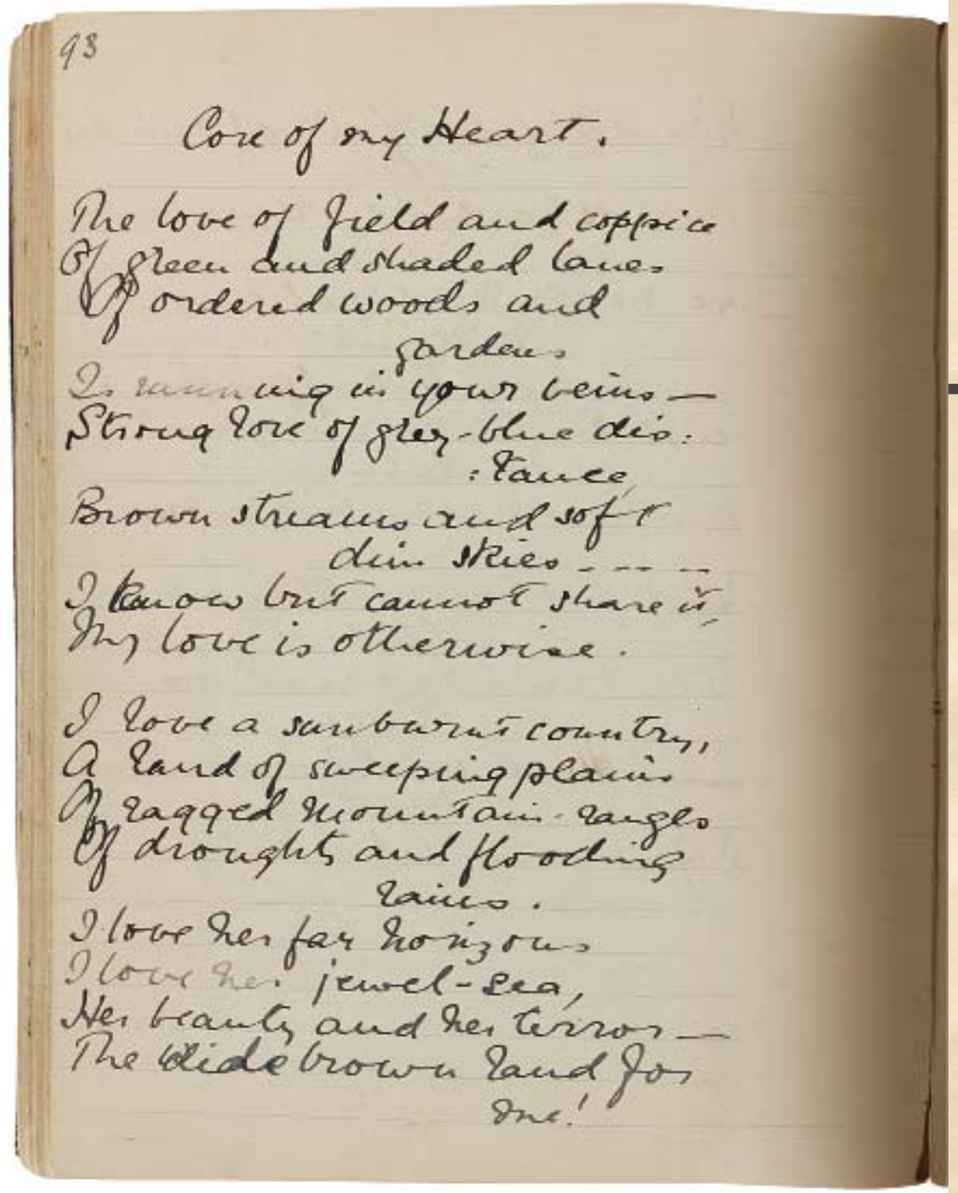
So Clancy rode to wheel them—he was racing on the wing
Where the best and boldest riders take their place,
And he raced his stock-horse past them and he made the ranges ring
With the stockwhip, as he met them face to face.
Then they halted for a moment, while he swung the dreaded lash,
But they saw their well-loved mountain full in view,
And they charged beneath the stockwhip with a sharp and sudden dash,
And off into the mountain scrub they flew.

Then fast the horsemen followed, where the gorges deep and black,
Resounded to the thunder of their tread,
And the stockwhips woke the echoes, and they fiercely answered back
From cliffs and crags that beetled overhead.
And upward, ever upward, the wild horses held their way,
Where mountain ash and kurrajong grew wide;
And the old man muttered fiercely, "We may bid the mob good day,
NO man can hold them down the other side."

When they reached the mountain's summit, even Clancy took a pull—
It well might make the boldest hold their breath;
The wild hop scrub grew thickly, and the hidden ground was full
Of wombat holes, and any slip was death.
But the man from Snowy River let the pony have his head,
And he swung his stockwhip round and gave a cheer,
And he raced him down the mountain like a torrent down its bed,
While the others stood and watched in very fear.

He sent the flint-stones flying, but the pony kept his feet,
He cleared the fallen timber in his stride,
And the man from Snowy River never shifted in his seat
It was grand to see that mountain horseman ride.
Through the stringybarks and saplings, on the rough and broken ground,
Down the hillside at a racing pace he went;
And he never drew the bridle till he landed safe and sound
At the bottom of that terrible descent.

He was right among the horses as they climbed the farther hill,
And the watchers on the mountain, standing mute,
Saw him ply the stockwhip fiercely; he was right among them still,
As he raced across the clearing in pursuit.
Then they lost him for a moment, where two mountain gullies met
In the ranges—but a final glimpse reveals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Core of my Heart.

The love of field and coppice
Of green and shaded lanes
Of ordered woods and
gardens
Is running in your veins—
Strong love of grey-blue distance
Brown streams and soft
dim skies — — —
I know but cannot share it
My love is otherwise.

I love a sunburnt country,
A land of sweeping plains
Of ragged mountain ranges
Of droughts and flooding
rains.
I love her far horizons
I love her jewel-sea,
Her beauty and her terror—
The wide brown land for
me!

ABOVE *'Core of My Heart' from Dorothea Mackellar's 139-page notebook, held in the State Library of New South Wales.*

1908

'I love a sunburnt country'

DOROTHEA MACKELLAR'S AUSTRALIA

ABOVE *Dorothea Mackellar, pictured in an undated photograph.*

In 1908 in the *Spectator* in London, the young Australian Dorothea Mackellar (1885–1968) published a poem she called 'Core of My Heart'. It was destined to bring her enduring fame. The poem itself, renamed 'My Country' in 1911, went on to become what writer Peter Luck has called 'Australia's unofficial spoken national anthem'. Learning Mackellar's poem by heart and reciting it was an essential part of the education of many generations of young Australians until the 1960s. The poem gained renewed attention in 2008 with the celebration of the centenary of its first publication.

Although the poem does not survive in Mackellar's earliest drafts, it does exist in a manuscript held in the Mitchell Library collection in the State Library of New South Wales. There, in a modest notebook inscribed by Mackellar as 'Verses 1907–1908', is an early version of the poem that was later revised and polished to become the much-loved Australian classic. After its debut in London, the poem was published in the *Sydney Morning Herald* in October 1908. It also appeared later as 'My Country' in Mackellar's first book *The Closed Door* (1911), and it is as 'My Country' that it has been known ever since. Written in Mackellar's robust and determined hand, the manuscript is a document of a very special kind. It has an urgency that expresses the irritation and anger she felt for Australians of her generation who gave their primary allegiance to a distant 'Mother Country' in the northern hemisphere.

'Core of My Heart'

The love of field and coppice,
Of green and shaded lanes,
Of ordered woods and gardens
Is running in your veins,
Strong love of grey-blue distance,
Brown streams and soft, dim skies—
I know but cannot share it,
My love is otherwise.

I love a sunburnt country,
A land of sweeping plains,
Of ragged mountain ranges,
Of droughts and flooding rains.
I love her far horizons,
I love her jewel-sea,
Her beauty and her terror—
The wide brown land for me!

The tragic ringbarked forests
Stark white beneath the moon,
The sapphire-misted mountains,
The hot gold hush of noon,
Green tangle of the brushes,
Where lithe lianas coil
And orchids deck the tree tops
And ferns the crimson soil.

Core of my heart, my country!
Her pitiless blue sky,
When sick at heart around us,
We see the cattle die—
And then the grey clouds gather,
And we can bless again
The drumming of an army,
The steady, soaking rain.

Core of my heart, my country!
Young land of Rainbow Gold,
For flood and fire and famine,
She pays us back threefold—
Over the thirsty paddocks,
Watch, after many days,
A filmy veil of greenness
That thickens as we gaze ...

An opal-hearted country,
A wilful lavish land—
All you who have not loved her,
You will not understand—
Though earth holds many splendours,
Wherever I may die,
I know to what brown country
My homing thoughts will fly!

1908

A national capital for Australia

AN ACT TO DETERMINE THE SEAT OF GOVERNMENT OF THE COMMONWEALTH

When plans were being formulated for the new Australian Commonwealth in the 1890s, one of the potential points of conflict—the selection and location of a seat of government—was avoided by a compromise defined within the Constitution itself. Since neither New South Wales nor Victoria was willing for the other to have the national capital in the cities of Sydney or Melbourne, politicians provided an arrangement determined as much by expediency as by the idealism that later informed the building of Canberra as a model city. Section 125 of the Constitution provided for the placement of a new federal capital within territory to be granted or acquired within New South Wales but sited not less than 100 miles from Sydney. This section of the act also provided for the Commonwealth to conduct its affairs in Melbourne until such time as Parliament could meet at the new seat of government.

While the Commonwealth soon turned its attention to the question of choosing a site for the new capital, the issue would not be resolved until 1909. In 1902 a Capital Sites Enquiry Board inspected several potential sites, which led in 1903 to the tabling of the first Seat of Government Bill that resulted in a vote for the Snowy Mountains town of Tumut. This aroused strong public criticism, and also led to a deadlock in Parliament, with the Senate favouring Bombala on the south coast and the House of Representatives continuing to support the choice of Tumut. With the lapse of the 1903 bill, the matter was brought forward again in 1904. On this occasion the bill was passed into law as the *Seat of Government Act 1904*, with the town of Dalgety named as the chosen site.

Subsequently, negotiations with New South Wales were impeded by a disagreement concerning the size of the proposed federal territory. The Commonwealth then removed Dalgety from the list of acceptable sites and agreed to review other choices, including Yass–Canberra in the Monaro district of New South Wales. Further delays occurred in protracted negotiations with New South Wales, in the difficult process of evaluating other sites and in strategies for advancing the matter within the uncertain political flux of the early Commonwealth Parliament, where governments were short-lived. The matter finally reached its legislative resolution in 1908, though work was still to be done on the best siting of the new capital city within the Yass–Canberra district that was now specified in the act as the location of the future capital. Viewed with the knowledge of history and of fulfilment, founding documents can surprise with their modesty. So it is with the Act to determine the Seat of Government of the Commonwealth: in Australian fashion, it is prosaic—a piece of legislative machinery. It does its business in workmanlike style without any flourishes and without any statement of ambition or aspiration.

The question of a name for Australia's new city was not resolved until 1913, when Lady Denman, the wife of the governor-general, declared: 'I name the capital of Australia Canberra'. For years Canberra was derided as 'the bush capital'. Visitors remain bemused by the lack of a discernible metropolitan presence and the mix of national monuments against a backdrop of dormitory suburbs and car parks, pockets of bushland and remnant pastures surviving from the days when Canberra was little more than a sheep run. And yet, as urban historian Graeme Davison has commented, Canberra is the most affluent, best-planned and best-educated city in Australia. These are the inevitable consequences of the power Canberra has come to exercise over the lives of all Australians. In Davison's observation, 'no other Australian city is visited more religiously, admired more grudgingly, or reviled more unreasoningly. Once a symbol of national ideals, it is also, for some, a symbol of national disenchantment.'

An Act to determine the Seat of Government of the Commonwealth.

[Assented to 14th August 1908]

Be it enacted by the King's Most Excellent Majesty, the Senate and the House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Australia, as follows:—

1. This Act may be cited as the *Seat of Government Act* 1908.

2. The *Seat of Government Act* 1904 is hereby repealed.

3. It is hereby determined that the Seat of Government of the Commonwealth shall be in the district of Yass–Canberra in the State of New South Wales.

4. The territory to be granted to or acquired by the Commonwealth for the Seat of Government shall contain an area not less that nine hundred square miles, and have access to the sea.

5. — (1.) Any person thereto authorized in writing by the Minister may, for the purposes of any survey of land with a view to ascertaining the territory proper to be granted to or acquired by the Commonwealth for the Seat of Government, enter upon and remain on any lands whether Crown lands of the State of New South Wales or not, and do thereon all things for the purposes of the survey, and shall do no more damage than is necessary.

(2.) The Commonwealth shall, out of moneys appropriated for the purpose, make compensation for any damage done to the property of any person in the exercise of powers conferred by this section.

6. The amount of compensation to be paid by the Commonwealth for any land to be acquired by the Commonwealth within the territory granted to or acquired by the Commonwealth for the Seat of Government shall not exceed the value of the land on the eighth day of October One thousand nine hundred and eight, and in other respects the provisions of the *Lands Acquisition Act* 1906 shall apply to the acquisition of the land.

ABOVE *Charles Coulter's 1901 watercolour,* An ideal federal city, Lake George, NSW, *features Lake George filled with water.*

1911

Australia in Antarctica

DOUGLAS MAWSON'S AMBITIONS FOR THE ANTARCTIC EXPEDITION OF 1911–14

The Australasian Antarctic Expedition of 1911–14 falls within what is known as the heroic age of Antarctic exploration and stands as a landmark in Australia's efforts to explore the sub-Antarctic and Antarctic regions, to claim new lands for the British Empire and to establish a significant Australian presence on the Antarctic mainland.

The expedition was vigorously promoted by its leader, the young Australian scientist Douglas Mawson (1882–1958), as both an imperial and an Australasian venture. Mawson personally conducted a campaign of letter writing, meetings with political leaders and public addresses to raise funds for the expedition in England, throughout Australia and in New Zealand. In a stream of letters to scientific leaders, press barons and politicians, Mawson conveyed a persuasive enthusiasm for his enterprise; he was adept in constructing arguments to appeal to the sometimes different interests of those from whom he sought financial backing. Even so, some of his appeals for funds were unsuccessful. Queensland, Western Australia and New Zealand were unmoved by his eloquence, but private backers included such figures as Australian businessmen Samuel Hordern and Robert Barr Smith, Governor-General Lord Denman and opera singer Nellie Melba.

Mawson's passion for the Antarctic had begun during his first visit to the continent with the British expedition led by Ernest Shackleton in 1907–09, when he had been among the first to scale Mt Erebus and to sledge to the South Magnetic Pole. Thereafter he became not only a powerful advocate for his own great enterprise of 1911–14, but also a driving force for the rest of his life in the expansion and consolidation of Australia's interests in Antarctica. In this document Mawson lists his key points in making the case for Australian support for the expedition of 1911–14. This summary—urgent, visionary and patriotic—was the basis of Mawson's many fundraising addresses and also informed the many long letters he wrote to advance his cause.

Mawson's expedition was a feat of human endeavour carried out in the harshest physical conditions and marked by the tragic loss of some of its participants. The survival of Mawson himself was nothing short of remarkable. It is that human record that stands as the most accessible story of the expedition. But the achievements, too, are significant. The new regions explored and claimed formed the precedents for the establishment of the Australian Antarctic Territory, which was formally proclaimed in 1936, and much valuable scientific data was accumulated. Honouring the venture, Mawson's leadership, and the achievements of Mawson and his party, the original expedition base camp and its immediate surrounds have been placed on the Australian Heritage Commission's Register of the National Estate. And, remarkably, as Mawson predicted, Antarctica has become a destination for tourists.

ABOVE *Douglas Mawson sitting on the rail of the Aurora, 1911.*

I **The Expedition is an Australasian scientific effort.**

II **It will advance & stimulate science throughout Australasia.**

III **It has National and Imperial aspects advancing Australia in the world's estimation.**

IV **It will stimulate enterprise in young Australians reviving the spirit of discovery which laid the foundations of the British Empire and to which the State of Queensland certainly owes everything.**

V **We ask to take possession of the new Land for the Empire—the Empire has for all time helped us—now surely it will be a fair return for us to help the Empire.**

VI **There is a considerable prospect of a commercial future for the Australian Quadrant of the Antarctic Continent—sealing, whaling, fisheries, minerals etc. The whole of the food supplies and equipment for such Antarctic settlement will come from Australasia and will therefore be a source of wealth to Australia.**

VII **A meteorological station on the Antarctic coastline adjacent to Australia will certainly be of value in weather predictions in Australia.**

VIII **The Antarctic shores are sure to be the scene of summer tourist visits & sanitoria before long.**

IX **An unknown sea and an unknown land lies at our very doors. Surely this stigma on an enlightened 20th century is sufficient for us to unite in clearing away reproach.**

X **Our magnetic observations will complete the South Magnetic Pole problem and earmark that as an Australian achievement.**

XI **The oceanographic and magnetic survey will be of direct practical benefit to shipping in Australasian waters.**

XII **The development of an Antarctic whaling & sealing industry will lead to the building of a hardy class of seamen to whom may be looked recruits to the Australian navy.**

XIII **Our collections will be of practical benefit to our museums.**

The birth of the Anzac legend

THE FIRST PUBLISHED ACCOUNT OF THE ANZAC LANDING

The news of the landing on Gallipoli by men of the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps (Anzac) on 25 April 1915 was delayed by the censors for four days for security reasons. But as soon as the objectives of the operation became known—the capture of the Dardanelles and the intimidation of Germany's ally Turkey—and as soon as the casualty lists began to appear in the press, praise began to flow from political leaders in Australia, New Zealand and Britain for the gallantry and skill of the troops in their first encounter with a brave and tenacious enemy. It quickly became apparent that in their 'baptism of fire', the Australians and New Zealanders had performed with exceptional valour and courage. For all the tragedy and waste caused by the larger strategic failure of the Gallipoli campaign, it has long been accepted that the feats of the Australians and New Zealanders in April 1915 brought credit and distinction to both their countries and marked for each a national coming of age.

As it turned out, the first comprehensive report in Australia of the Anzac landing was made, not by the nation's own correspondent C.E.W. Bean (1879–1968), but by an Englishman, the experienced journalist Ellis Ashmead-Bartlett (1881–1931). Bean's report had been held up pending his formal accreditation to report from Gallipoli, and his account of the landing did not appear in the Australian press until some time later. At the time of Ashmead-Bartlett's death in 1931, Bean wrote in tribute that 'the tradition of the Anzac landing is probably more influenced by that first story than by all the other accounts that have since been written'.

Ashmead-Bartlett's account was reported in England before it appeared in Australia on 8 May 1915, when the story was published in the *Sydney Morning Herald* and in the two Melbourne dailies, the *Age* and the *Argus*. The story carried immense authority. Ashmead-Bartlett was a senior journalist with experience of several other conflicts, including the Boer War in South Africa in 1901 and the Russo-Japanese war of 1904. In 1912–13 he covered the Balkan wars for the *Daily Telegraph* in London, and it was through that assignment that he obtained his official accreditation for the campaign in the Dardanelles. For the rest of his life, Ashmead-Bartlett continued to pay honour to the courage and skill of the Anzac troops he had observed at close quarters in 1915. His written account of the landing is complemented by a film he made, which provides the only moving picture of the campaign.

The Australian press gave generous space to Ashmead-Bartlett's account, immediately recognising that the Australian and New Zealand soldiers had indeed made a remarkable debut. On the morning of 8 May the *Sydney Morning Herald* announced the 'Glorious Entry into War' by the Australasians, while drawing the attention of its readers to the praise expressed by Ashmead-Bartlett that 'there has been no finer feat of arms in this war than that of the Colonial troops'. On 12 May, when the *Hobart Mercury* published Ashmead-Bartlett's account (the version printed here), its praise for the Australian achievement was absolute. Its headline reported that the Australians had covered themselves with glory. The account by Ellis Ashmead-Bartlett marks the beginning of the shared Australian and New Zealand veneration of the Anzacs that continues to be expressed in both countries in their respective national Anzac Day commemorations.

At 2 o'clock on April 24 the flagship of the division conveying the Australians and New Zealanders passed down the long line of slowly-moving transports, amid tremendous cheering and was played out of the bay by the French warship.

At 4 o'clock the ship's company and troops on board assembled to hear the admiral's proclamation to the combined force. This was followed by the last service before the battle, in which the chaplain uttered a prayer for victory, and besought the Divine blessing for the expedition, all the men standing with uncovered, bowed heads.

At dark all the lights were put out, and the troops rested for their ordeal at dawn. It was a beautiful calm night, with a bright half-moon.

By 1 o'clock in the morning the ships reached their rendezvous, five miles from the intended landing place. The soldiers were aroused, and served with their last hot meal before landing. The Australians, who were about to go into action for the first time under trying circumstances, were cheerful, quiet, and confident, and there was no sign of nerves or excitement.

As the moon waned, the boats were swung out. The Australians received their last instructions, and these men who only six months ago were living peaceful, civilian lives, began to disembark on a strange, unknown shore, and in a strange land to attack an enemy of a different race ...

At 3 o'clock it was quite dark, and a start was made towards the shore with suppressed excitement. Would the enemy be surprised or be on the alert?

At 4 o'clock three battleships, line abreast and four cables apart, arrived 2,500 yards from the shore, with their guns manned and their searchlights in readiness. Very slowly, the boats in tow, like twelve great snakes, moved towards the shore. Each edged towards each other in order to reach the beach four cables apart. The battleships moved in after them until the water shallowed. Every eye was fixed on the grim line of hills in front, menacing in the gloom, and the mysteries of which those in the boats were about to solve.

Not a sound was heard, not a light seen, and it appeared as if the enemy had been surprised. In our nervy state the stars often were mistaken for lights ashore.

The progress of the boats was slow, and dawn was rapidly breaking at 4.50 when the enemy showed alarm for a light which had flashed for ten minutes and then disappeared. The boats appeared almost like one on the beach. Seven torpedo-boat destroyers then glided noiselessly towards the shore.

At 4.53 came a sharp burst of rifle fire from the beach. The sound relieved the prolonged suspense which had become almost intolerable. The rifle fire lasted a few minutes, and a faint British cheer came over the waters, telling that the first position was won.

At three minutes past 5 the fire was intensified. By the sound of the reports we could tell our men were in action. The firing lasted for twenty three minutes, and then died down somewhat ...

The Australians rose to the occasion. They did not wait for orders, or for the boats to reach the beach, but sprang into the sea, formed a sort of rough line, and rushed at the enemy's trenches. Their magazines were not charged, so they just went in with the cold steel, and it was over in a minute for the Turks

in the first trench had either been bayoneted or had run away, and the Maxim guns were captured.

Then the Australians found themselves facing an almost perpendicular cliff of loose sandstone covered with thick shrubbery. Somewhere half-way up the enemy had a second trench, strongly held, from which there poured a terrible fire on the troops below and on those pulling back to the torpedo-boat destroyers for a second landing party.

Here was a tough proposition to tackle in the darkness, but these Colonials are practical above all else, and went about it in a practical way. They stopped for a few minutes to pull themselves together, got rid of their packs, and charged the magazines of their rifles. Then this race of athletes proceeded to scale the cliffs, without responding to the enemy's fire. They lost some men, but did not worry. In less than a quarter of an hour the Turks had been hurled out of their second position, all either bayoneted or fled.

As daylight came it was seen that the landing had been effected rather further north of Gaba Tepe than had originally been intended, and at a point where the cliffs rise very sheer. The error was a blessing in disguise, for there were no places down which the enemy could fire, and the broken ground afforded good cover once the Australians had passed the forty yards of the flat beach.

The country in the vicinity of the landing looked formidable and forbidding. To the sea it presents a steep front, broken into innumerable ridges, bluffs, valleys, and sandpits, rising to a height of several hundred feet. The surface is bare, crumbly sandstone, covered with shrubbery about six feet in height.

It is an ideal place for snipers, as the Australians and New Zealanders soon found to their cost. On the other hand, the Colonials proved themselves adept at this kind of warfare ...

When the sun had fully risen we could see that the Australians and New Zealanders had actually established themselves on the ridge, and were trying to work their way northward along it. The fighting was so confused and occurred on such broken ground that it was difficult to follow exactly what had happened on the 25th April, but the task of the covering forces had been so splendidly carried out that the Turks allowed the disembarkation of the remainder to proceed uninterruptedly, except for the never-ceasing sniping. But then the Australians, whose blood was up, instead of entrenching, rushed to the northwards and to the eastwards searching for fresh enemies to bayonet. It was very difficult country in which to entrench, and they therefore preferred to advance.

The Turks only had a weak force actually holding the beach, and relied on the difficult ground and the snipers to delay the advance until reinforcement came. Some of the Australians and New Zealanders who pushed inland were counter-attacked and almost outflanked by oncoming reserves, and had to fall back after suffering heavy losses.

The Turks continued to counter-attack the whole of the afternoon, but the Colonials did not yield a foot on the main ridge.

Reinforcements poured up from the beach, but the Turks enfiladed the beach with two field guns from Gaba Tepe. This shrapnel fire was incessant and deadly, and the warships vainly for some hours tried to silence it.

The majority of the heavy casualties received during the day were from shrapnel which swept the beach and ridge where the Australians had established themselves. Later in the day the Turkish guns were silenced or forced to withdraw, and a cruiser, moving close in shore plastered Gaba Tepe with a hail of shell.

Towards dusk the attacks became more vigorous. The enemy were supported by powerful artillery inland which the ships' guns were powerless to deal with. The pressure on the Australians became heavier, and their lines had been contracted ...

Some idea of the difficulties in the way can be gathered when it is remembered that every round of ammunition and all the water and stores had to be landed on a narrow beach, and carried up pathless hills and valleys several hundred feet high to the firing line. The whole of the troops were concentrated upon a very small area, and were unable to reply, though exposed to a relentless and incessant shrapnel fire, which swept every yard of ground ...

The most serious problem was the getting of the wounded to the shore for all those unable to hobble had to be carried from the hills on stretchers; then their wounds were hastily dressed, and they were carried to the boats.

The boat parties worked unceasingly the entire day and night.

The courage displayed by these wounded Australians and New Zealanders will never be forgotten. Hastily placed in trawlers, lighters or boats, they were towed to the ships, and, in spite of their sufferings, they cheered the ship from which they had set out in the morning.

In fact, I have never seen anything like these wounded Colonials in war before.

Though many were shot to bits, and without hope of recovery, their cheers resounded throughout the night and you could see in the midst of a mass of suffering humanity arms waving in greeting to the crews of the warships. They were happy because they knew they had been tried for the first time, and had not been found wanting.

For 15 mortal hours the Australians and New Zealanders occupied the heights under an incessant shell fire, and without the moral and material support of a single gun from the shore. They were subjected the whole time to violent counter-attacks from a brave enemy, skillfully led, and with snipers deliberately picking off every officer who endeavoured to give the command or to lead his men. No finer feat has happened in this war than this sudden landing in the dark, and the storming of the heights, and, above all, the holding on whilst the reinforcements were landing. These raw colonial troops, in these desperate hours, proved worthy to fight side by side with the heroes of the battles of Mons, the Aisne, Ypres, and Neuve Chapelle.

Early on the morning of April 26 the Turks repeatedly tried to drive the Colonials from their position. The latter made local counter-attacks, and drove off the enemy with the bayonet, which the Turks will never face ...

ABOVE *Australian troops charge towards a Turkish trench.*

‘one of the most terrible chapters in our history’

KEITH MURDOCH’S LETTER TO PRIME MINISTER ANDREW FISHER

While the experience of the Australian soldiers at Gallipoli in 1915 has been invested with almost mystical significance and is honoured in the national commemoration of Anzac Day, the landing itself foundered and ended in the evacuation of the peninsula after an occupation of eight months. Although the Anzacs had performed heroically in establishing a toehold on the ridges above Anzac Cove, they were unable to make much progress towards the strategic objective of winning the summit and capturing the Turkish gun emplacements protecting the Dardanelles: some remarkable gains were made but there were some terrible losses. Defending home soil, the Turks were tenacious and had the advantage in managing an unfavourable terrain, but the campaign was also handicapped by failings in the British High Command and the lack of resources—both men and equipment.

Influential in exposing the flawed campaign in the Dardanelles was a long letter written by the Australian journalist Keith Murdoch (1885–1952) to the Australian prime minister, Andrew Fisher, on 23 September 1915. Murdoch—later a newspaper proprietor and founder of a media dynasty—was a correspondent with the Melbourne *Sun* when he was narrowly defeated by C.E.W. Bean in an Australian Journalists’ Association ballot to be appointed an official Australian war correspondent. But when he travelled to London in 1915, he agreed to a request by Andrew Fisher and the minister of defence, George Pearce, to investigate Australian Imperial Force mail services and other matters.

On his journey, Murdoch visited Gallipoli where, over the course of four days, he was gravely disturbed by what he saw and heard about the management and direction of the campaign. In this he was much influenced by the views of the British journalist Ellis Ashmead-Bartlett, who had asked him to carry a secret letter addressed to the British prime minister setting out detailed criticisms of the incompetence and amateurism of the British command. Before it could be delivered, however, the letter was seized at Marseilles by a British army officer. Continuing his journey, Murdoch composed his own 8000-word letter with an account of ‘the unfortunate Dardanelles expedition … undoubtedly one of the most terrible chapters in our history’, though he lavished praise on the Australian soldiers for their spirit and their triumph in adversity.

Murdoch’s letter was not without its errors of fact and exaggeration, and nor was it the only criticism then being made of General Sir Ian Hamilton, the British commander-in-chief. In London, however, Murdoch’s views gained considerable attention and were taken seriously. He was able to present his criticisms in person to several cabinet ministers and his letter was printed as a secret state paper and circulated to the members of the Committee of Imperial Defence.

In a private reflection in 1933 Murdoch admitted and regretted the mistakes he had made in the letter, but he stood by the essence of his account. In this he was vindicated by the consensus that the British command had failed on the ground and that, notwithstanding the larger strategic ambitions of the campaign in the Dardanelles, the investment of resources had been inadequate to the task at hand. It was this situation that Murdoch addressed and in this he was both persuasive and effective. In the letter itself he made no direct case for an evacuation, though he put this view forward in his meetings with British cabinet ministers. The criticisms in his letter, though sometimes impressionistic and anecdotal, have overall the force of witness, and on the failings of the command they are damning. In his official Australian history of the 1914–18 war, C.E.W. Bean later judged the letter as containing ‘important truths’.