Memorands by James Martin

Causer, Tim

Published by University College London

Causer, Tim.
Memorands by James Martin: An Astonishing Escape from Early New South Wales.
University College London, 2017.
Project MUSE. muse.jhu.edu/book/81331.

For additional information about this book
https://muse.jhu.edu/book/81331

For content related to this chapter
https://muse.jhu.edu/related_content?type=book&id=2771990
Fair copy of *Memorandoms*
by James Martin
MEMORANDUMS BY JAMES MARTIN

James Martin being convicted at the City of Exeter in the County of Devonshire being found guilty of stealing 4½ lb. of salt, 4 lb. 10 oz. of old beer, the Property of Lord Courtney,Badgeburn Castle near Exeter. Removed, Sentence to be transported to Botany Bay for 7 years—Returned from the Strait to Exeter Jail and there remained 2 months. From thence sent on board the Dunkirk, thereafter remained on board the Charlotte, Transferred then bound to Botany Bay. March 12th, 1791, Sailed with the Governor, arrived in Botany Bay under the command of Governor Phillips. Made the Port of Teneriffe 14th of June, there remained 7 days, then sailed for the Island of Rio de Janeiro, being 9 weeks on our Passage, remained at those islands, then sailed for the Cape of Good Hope being 2 weeks and 9 days on our Passage, then sailed for Botany Bay being 10 weeks on our Passage. Came to anchor in Botany Bay, remained on shore 2 days, the Cows and Asses being set on shore began to work on Government account. Having landed we were quartered and formed into bands of eight in a line, after being quartered some of us were sent to clear the ground and to build Huts. I remained on the Islands from January 17th 1791 to March 17th 1791—On the 28th of March I made my escape on Company with 7 Men, one Woman, and two Children, on an open vessel, a man, having provisions on board one hundred Weight of Flax, one Cwt. of Rice, 40 cwt. of Pork, and about
Memorandoms by James Martin.

I James Martin being Convicted at the City of Exeter in the County of Devonshire being found guilty of Stealing 16th 1/2 of old Lead & 4th 1/2 of old Iron, the Property of Lord Courtney, Powderham Castle near Exeter—Received Sentence to be Transported to Botany Bay for 7 Years—Returned from the Bar to Exeter Goal and there remained 2 Months—from thence sent on Board the Dunkirk there remained 10 Months from thence put on board the Charlotte Transport then bound to Botany Bay—March 12th: 1787. Sailed round to Spithead there remained 7 days, then sailed for the Island of Rio de Janeiro, being 8 Weeks on our Passage remained there 1 Month, then sailed for the Cape of Good Hope being 8 Weeks and 3 days on our Passage, then sailed for Botany Bay being 10 Weeks on our passage.—Came to Anchor in Port Jackson—sent on shore in two days—the Convicts being sent on shore began to work on Government's account—on being landed we were Encamped and formed into squads of size in a tent—after being Encamped some of us were sent to clear the Ground others to build Huts—I remained on the Island from January 1788 till March 1791—on the 28th of March I made my Escape in Company with 7 Men, one Woman and two Children in an open six oared Boat, having of provisons on board one hundred Weight of flower, one Cwt. of Rice, 14lb. of Pork, and about
about 8 gallon of water; having a Compass, quadrant & Chart. After sailing 2 days we reached at little time, about 23 leagues to the southeast of Port Jackson; there we found a quantity of fine shores and we remained there 2 hours, & 1 day and found a great many Baggage trees growing at which we set down and pursued the Baggage. The harvest came down to whom we gave some blankets and other articles, and they went away very well satisfied. The Land appeared much better than at Sydney Cove; here we got a great many fiddles which were very refreshing to us — after our stay of 2 hours and one day we commenced our voyage to the northward. After two days we made at great fire harbour seeming to run up the Country for many miles and very commodious for the embarkage of shipping; here we found plenty of fresh water, we landed our boat & shore to repair her bottom with some Paces and also where we had a small quantity of Pate on the same night we were three off light-houses, which meant to destroy us, we launched our boat and rode off, as the stars were quite very bright of them. That being Sunday, Monday we were off on the stream we steered low or north, thinking to land some miles below — on Monday morning we attempted to land, and we found a place commodious for a repose and land, we accordingly put some of our things past being where whom the Indians came and great numbers armed with Spears and Shields, we find ourselves in panic, one party of us made towards them to pacify them by signals, but they took not the least notice accordingly we fired a match thinking to frighten them but they paid no attention to it — on perceiving them
about 8 gallons of water; having a Compass Quadrant & Chart. After Sailing 2 days we reached a little Creek, about 2 Degrees to the Northward of Port Jackson, there we found a quantity of fine burning Coal, we remained there 2 Nights & 1 day and found a great many Cabbage trees some of which we cut down and procured the Cabbage. The Natives came down to whom we gave some Cloaths and other articles, and they went away very well satisfied. The Land appeared much better than at Sidney Cove, here we got a great many fishes which were very refreshing to us—After our Stay of two Nights and one day we continued our Voyage to the Northward after two days sail we made a very fine harbour seeming to run up the Country for many Miles and very commodious for the Anchorage of Shipping; here we found plenty of fresh water, we hawled our boat a shore to repair her bottom with some Bees-wax and Resin which we had a small quantity of. But on the same Night we were drove off by the Natives, which meant to destroy us, we launched our boat and rode off in the stream quite out of reach of them. That being Sunday, Monday we were off in the Stream we rowed lower down, thinking to land some Miles below—on Monday morning we attempted to land, and we found a place convenient for to repair our boat, we accordingly put some of our things part being ashore when the Natives came in great numbers armed with Spears and Shields & c. we form’d ourselves in parts, one party of us made towards them to pacify them by signes, but they took not the least notice accordingly we fired a Musket thinking to affright them but they paid no attention to it—on perceiving them rush
...next we made sail to take to our boat and got out of their reach as far as we could, and for to we could not till, but when they opened two we determined to row up the harbour, which we did and succeeded. We made a little while and came to land in the middle of the harbour we landed upon and landed up our boat and repaired her bottom with what materials we had, taking the day of 2 days' and no more, and from the bottom then proceeded to the northward, having a land breeze from the S.W., but that night the wind changed and drove us out of sight of land, where we landed our land having a set of rats in the land, and on the next day we made close to land, but the land proving very hard we could not attempt to land but kept along there, and making no further we made for near 2 weeks we were very much disturbed for water & wood; but perceiving the bay we made two of our men some advice to get some water, but having a sound of the harriers which they came in numbers they returned without any but a little wood which they threw into the water and we took up.

We put our on the other side of the bay expecting to meet with some land, but we found a little way which with great difficulty we got up our boat being very leaky at that time, but we was with great difficulty we could keep her above water; we were landed & landed by fortifying some deep in the channel which answered very well, at this place we could not stay if we had been without any boat but we stopped two days and two nights; there we left this place and went further down the bay about 10 miles expecting to meet with a harbour to get some refreshment but could not see.
rush forwards we were forced to take to our boat and get out of their reach as fast as we could, and what to do we could not tell, but consulting together we were determined to row up the harbour which accordingly we did 9 or 10 Miles till we made a little white sandy Island in the middle of the harbour which we landed upon and hawled up our boat and repaired her bottom with what materials we had: during our stay of 2 days we had no interruption from the Natives; then we rowed off to the main where we took in fresh water and a few Cabbage trees and then put out to sea—the natives here are quite naked, of a copper colour shock hair, they have Canoes made of bark—then we proceeded to the northward, having a leading breze from the S:W—but that night the wind changed and drove us out of sight of land—when we hawled our wind having a set of Sails in the boat accordingly the next day we made close into land, but the Surf running very hard we could not attempt to land but kept along Shore but making no harbour or creek for near 3 Weeks we were very much distressed for water & wood: but perceiving the Surf to abate two of our men swam ashore to get some water, but being afraid of the Natives which they saw in numbers they returned without any but a little wood which they threw into the water and we took up—We put over on the other side of the bay expecting to meet with a convenient harbour we found a littler river which with great difficulty we got up our boat being very leaky at that time that is was with great difficulty we could keep her above Water—were we landed & hawled her up putting some Soap in the Seams which answered very well—at this place we could get no fish of any kind here we stopped two days and two nights then we left this place and went farther down the bay about 20 miles expecting to meet with a harbour to get some Refreshment but could not see
we again near the end of the bay the wind being favourable we looked about and saw to how the land here seemed to be made see we are at Botany Bay according to my graphing and sound in the book word but our boat being very deep we are inclined to throw all our casting aboard the latter to lighten our boat as the land broke not as quite rapid that might have come into you play but could see no place to land on the shore nor so that we could get into our boat to sleep we came to a grouping in the bay the same night but about 2 Clock in the morning our graphing broke and we were in the middle of the bay expecting every moment that our boat would be threw to pieces and every boat perish let us get our boat after one shore without any loss but after looking over our land we landed our boat up and there remained 2 days & nights there we landed a fire with good difficulty any thing being very meagre we got plenty of shell fish with the natives came down in great numbers and carried a basket over their heads they departed immediately and went to no more of them we put our things in the boat and made good difficulty we got not to sea for 3 days we had very bad weather our boat shipping many being lost what our crew was always employed in taking out the water to keep her up at the next place we made was White Bay being 10 leagues from this we saw there that day 200 leagues before we landed a convenient place to land the boat running very high we saw two Whales & two Elephant with a fire boat on their land at this place we touched the two women being frightened ran away but on our land they wanted a light where they gave us water at the same time in that way we took all things out of the boat and put them in two boats which made one the next morning about 8 o’clock a great number of the natives came towards us we tow as we saw them we went to meet them and find a reach
see any nor the end of the bay the wind being favourable we tacked about and put to Sea the land here seemed to be much the same as at Botany Bay. Accordingly we up Grapling and stood to the Northward but our boat being very deep we were obliged to throw all our Cloathing overboard the better to lighten our boat as the Sea broke over us quite rapid—that night we ran into an open Bay but could see no place to land as the Surf ran so we afraid of staving our boat to pieces—we came to a Grapling in the bay the same night, but about 2 oClock in the morning our Grapling broke and we were drove in the middle of the Surf expecting every moment that our boat would be staved to pieces and every Soul perish but as God would have it we got our boat safe on shore without any loss or damage excepting an oar we hawled our boat up and there remained 2 days & 2 Nights—there we kindled a fire with great difficulty every thing being very wet, we got plenty of Shell fish & fresh water the natives came down in great numbers we discharg’d a Musket over their heads, they dispersed immediately and we saw no more of them we put our things in the boat and with great difficulty we put out to Sea for 2 or 3 days we had very bad weather our boat shipping many heavy Seas, so that one man was always employed in bailing out the water to keep her up—the next place we made was White Bay being in Latitude 27° 00 we ran down that bay 2 or 3 Leagues before we could see a convenient place to land the Surf running very high we saw two Women & two Children with a fire brand in their hand at this place we landed the two women being frightened ran away but we made Signs that we wanted a light which they gave us crying at the same time in their way we took our things out of the boat and put them in two huts which was there—the next morning about 11 oClock a great number of the Natives came towards us as soon as we saw them we went to meet them and fired a musket over
our main bands as soon as they heard the report they ran into the woods and we saw no more of them, the natives at gate none had never stopped to stop. So at night, the day was not very high the moon was in a great distance of traveling the land; that might be seen down to the base, heavy gate of sound, current expecting every moment to go to the bottom, next morning and so land the day was cloudy and misty high we were under these reefs normal and kept until night then came to under a large island the night more, we land to the land, thinking every moment to be the last the land was very heavy upon we every now and then that two bands were alleged to keep, but day was not gained very hard all that might be next morning, we took two hours to get out to any land, but landing to make the land so much it was even over, partial, the gate of the

continuing we keep on under a close reef normal but could not make land all that day. I would have you to consider what we refer you must to see the few and the two trails there were in a bad condition, everything being so wet that we could not mean a light first we had nothing to eat except a little raw fish at night we came to under a large island the night before the next morning we took in our bags and kept to the northward in purpose to make the land about 9 clock we made the land which proved to be a small Island about 20 leagues from the main the land was very high we were rather fearful of going in for fear of running over but we concluded amongst ourselves that we might do well there we are here to keep out to towing so probably but that if we kept out to sea we should very short period.

All round this Island there was nothing but reefs and so
over their heads as soon as they heard the report they ran into the woods and we saw no more of them, the natives are quite naked there we stopped 2 days & 2 nights, the Surf running so very high that we were in great danger of staving the boat; that night we were drove out to Sea by a heavy gale of wind & current expecting every moment to go to the bottom next morning saw no land the Sea running mountains high we were under close reef Mainsail and kept so untill night then came to under a droge all the night with her head to the Sea thinking every moment to be the last the Sea coming in so heavy upon us every now and then that two hands were obliged to keep bailing out it rained very hard all that night the next morning we took our droge in but could not see any land but hawling towards the land to make it as soon as possible the Gale of wind still continuing we keep on under a close reef Mainsail but could not make land all that day—I will leave you to consider what distress we must be in the Woman and the two little babies were in a bad Condition every thing being so wet that we could by no means light a fire we had nothing to eat except a little raw Rice at night we came to under a droge as we did the night before the next morning we took in our droge and kept to the northward on purpose to make the land about 8 oClock we made the land which proved to be a small Island about 30 Leagues from the main the Surf running so very high we were rather fearful of going in for fear of staving our boat but we concluded amongst ourselves that we might as well venture in there as to keep out to Sea seeing no probability but that if we kept out to Sea we should every Soul perish— All round this Island there was nothing but reefs and a little
little sandy land which we got in safe without much damage, and
landed our boat apart of out of the way of the surf and got out of
things out of the boat then we went to make a fire which with great
difficulty we did but young almost starving we put on a little wood to
work when we landed on this Island we had but one gallon of fresh
water for there was not a drop left in the Island this lake or
was about 1 mile in circumference after the tide fell we went to look
for some salt fish but found a good quantity of very fine large
Turtles which are left upon the reef we turned 5 of them and
hunted them upon the beach these were about 2 feet and a
half in the shell 3 or entirely dry when low water we killed
one of the Turtles and had a noble meat that night it rained
very hard when we opened our manuscript it filled our two
Breast full of water. We stood on the Island 6 days during
that time we killed 12 Turtles and some of them we took
and took our the Fire to take to bed with us it seemed
to me that there had never been any natives on this Island
there was a kind of fruit which grew like a kind pepper and
hunted very well there was a great quantity of fowl what
stayed at night on trees in the ground we could not think
of taking any law Turtles as we became more lost would not
attempt if we paid the chance of one boat out on with ship
before we set to sea at the end of the 6 days we launched our
boat 8 to 10 to sea at 9 o’clock on the morning and steer to
the northward, this Island was in Latitude 14 44 11 we made
the next land in the evening we found a great number
of small Islands and put into a great many of them ex-
pecting to find some Turtles but never found any in any
of the Islands we put into afterwards we found a great
good quantity of Salt fish but none of them very so good but being
very
little sandy beach which we got in safe without much damage and hawled our boat up out of the way of the surf and got all our things out of the boat then we went to make a fire which with great difficulty we did & being almost starving we put on a little rice to cook when we landed on this Island we had but one Gallon of fresh water for there was not a drop to be had on this Island the Island was about 1 mile in Circumference after the tide fell we went to look for some shell fish but found a great quantity of very fine large Turtles which were left upon the reef, we turned 5 of them and hawled them upon the beach this reef runs about a mile and a half out in the Sea & is entirely dry when low water we killed one of the Turtles and had a noble meal that night it rained very hard when we spread our mainsail & filled our two Breakers full of water. We staid on the Island 6 days during that time we killed 12 Turtles and some of them we took and dried over the Fire to take to Sea with us—It seemed to us that there had never been any natives on this Island there was a kind of fruit which grew like a bell pepper and tasted very well there was a great quantity of fowls which stayed at night in holes in the ground we could not think of taking any live Turtles with us because our boat would not admit of it we paid the Seams of our boat all over with Soap before we put to Sea at the end of the 6 days we launched our boat & put to Sea at 8 oClock in the morning and Steered to the northward; this Island was in Latitude 26° 27' we made the main land in the Evening, we passed a great number of small Islands and put into a great many of them expecting to find some Turtles but never found any in any of the Islands we put into afterwards we found a great quantity of shellfish but none of them very fit to eat but being very
very hungry, we were glad to eat them, & thank God for it. For I had not time for the small fish, and the little turtle which we had one must have guided, we very seldom put into any place but found plenty of fresh water, but we could not find anything fit to eat. When we came to the Gulf of Carpentera, which we entered, we

very soon after we passed one of the Islands we steered down towards them, as soon as they saw us they cast their 3 Canoes round to the back of the Island with 1 man in each, when we came down to them they seemed to stand in a posture of defense against us, & fired a Muskett over them, & immediately they began firing their 3 Canoes and arrows at us; we immediately hoisted up our rails, and rowed away from them, but as God would have it none of their arrows came into the boat but dropped along side; we could not get hold of any of them, but they seemed to be about 100 in number, the Indians seemed to be very short, and fat and blacker than we saw in other parts; there was one which we took to be the chief, and some

shoulders were Armed a little further down the Gulf, & thought upon the Indians as to get some order in joining closely, and saw a small boat of Ind. about 20, and they were the fresh water was there, we found an Island inhabited, in their boat, and about them, we could see their boats were large enough for 10 of them to stand upright in, they were made of kohn & covered on with grape & filled with water.
very hungry we were glad to eat them & thank God for it for if it
had not been for the Shell fish and the little Turtle which we had
we must have Starved: we very seldom put into any place but found
plenty of fresh water but we could not find any thing fit to eat
when we came to the Gulph of Carpentara which is in latitude
10°: 11m we ran down the Gulph 9 or 10 Miles & saw several small
Islands on which were several of the Natives in 2 Canoes landing
upon one of the Islands we steered down towards them
as soon as they saw us they sent their 2 Canoes Round to the
back of the Island with 1 man in each when we came down
to them they seemed to stand in a posture of defence against
us we fired a Musket over them & immediately they began
firing their Bows and Arrows at us we immediately hoisted
up our Sails and rowed away from them but as God would
have it none of their arrows came into the Boat but dropped
along side we could not get hold of any of them but they
seemed to be about 18 Inches long the Natives seemed to be those
very stout and fat and blacker than they we saw in other
parts; there was one which we took to be the chief with some
shells round his Shoulders we rowed a little farther down the
Gulph & landed upon the Main for to get some water we found
plenty and saw a small Row of huts about 20 just by were
the fresh water was there were not any of the inhabitants in
their huts or about them as we could see their huts were
large enough for 6 or 7 of them to stand upright in they
were made of bark & covered over with Grass we filled our
two
Brothers with fresh water and came aboard of our boat again for we were afraid of staying ashore for fear of the Indians, went 2 or 3 miles from the shore and kept our Kettles and stopped there all night the next morning we went to the same place to recruit our water but as we made our way towards the shore we saw two very large Canoes coming towards us and we did not know what to do for we were afraid to meet those there seemed to be about 30 or 40 men in each. Since they had made seemed to be made of three or four of the canoe was a board of the other a little way at about till the other canoe we and then she landed her stuff and made after us as soon as we saw that we talked about with what water we had determined to run’s the Gulf which was about 300 miles but as God would have it we not now them they followed us till we lost sight of them. Having but little fresh water and no wood to make a fire with, but one four days and a half we made the other side of the Gulf we put on shore to look for some fresh water but could not find any at that place we kept along shore till the evening we saw a small river which was made to and get plenty of fresh water we put off and saw the same night’s we more land there was another latitude of North end of the Island we headed up to make the land to get some fresh water but saw nothing but a heavy swell which had broke to have stranded as up then we concluded the best way to shape our course would be for the Island of honor with what little water we had which we made on St. Howe we ran along the Island of honor all in curve to the South

[Handwritten note]
breakers with fresh water came aboard of our boat again for we were afraid of staying ashore for fear of the Natives, we went 3 or 4 miles from the shore and dropt our Killock and stopped there all night the next morning we were determined to go to the same place to recruit our water but as we were making towards the shore we saw two very large Canoes coming towards us we did not know what to do for we were afraid to meet them there seemed to be about 30 or 40 men in each Canoe they had sails seemed to be made of Matting one of the Canoes was a head of the other a little way it stopt till the other came up and then she hoisted her Sails and made after us as soon as we saw that we tacked about with what water we had determined to cross the Gulph which was about 500 Miles but as God would have it we out run them they followed us till we lost sight of them, having but little fresh water and no wood to make a fire with, but in four days and a half we made the other side of the Gulph we put on shore to look for some fresh water but could not find any at that place we kept along shore till the evening, we saw a small river which we made to and got plenty of fresh water; we put off to sea the same night & saw no more land till we came into Latitude of North End of the Island we hawled up to make the land to get some fresh water but saw nothing but a heavy swell which had liked to have swallowed us up then we concluded the best way to shape our course would be for the Island of Timor with what little water we had which we made in 36 Hours we ran along the Island of Timor till we came to the Dutch Settlements
Statements when we went on shore to the governors house which was extremely well built in timber and brick built as double, with many doors that were very well fixed. The governor remained very happy for two months till Wm. Bryant had words with his wife who went and informed against himself, wife, children and all of us, we were immediately taken prisoners and put in the Castle and strictly confined. Afterwards we were allowed to go out of the Castle 2 or 3 times a day and the next day. I once saw we continued till Capt. Edwards who had been in search of the Bounty. Principal who had taken some of the Protestant Orphans when he left the Bounty Heights between New Guinea and New Holland, he made the Island of Tener in the Tenera, two years and his long boat & 100 horses which were armed. The Capt. Edwards sent to us to know who we were. We told him we were Convicts and had made our escape from Botany Bay. He told as we were the Protestants to put ourselves the Tenera, sail company's ship and protect our interest or called the Delmon in which we were conveyed to Botany Bay, which had been taken out of the Tenera and put aboard a Southward ship in the same again. We had the ship, 2 days after the Tenera, his ship and the old ship we were both bared at Botany. 3 weeks after we were put in 3 different ships bound to the Cape of Good Hope, we were 3 months before we reached the Cape where we came to the Governor of the Cape which had brought the Inmates from Botany Bay which were put on board of and were known by all the Marine officers. We were all glad that we had not arrived at sea we were brought to England in the Governor.
Settlements where we went ashore to the Governors house who behaved extremely well to us filled our bellies and Cloathed us double with every thing that was worn on the Island where we remained very happy for two Months till Wm Bryant had words with his Wife who went and informed against himself, wife, Children and all of us; we were immediately taken prisoners and put in the Castle and strictly examined afterwards we were allowed to go out of the Castle 2 at a time for 1 day and the next day 2 more & so we continued till Captain Edwards who had been in search of the Bounty Pirates who had taken some of the Pirates at Otaheite when he lost the Pandora Frigate between New Guinea and new Holland, he made the Island of Timor in the Pinnace two Yawls and his Long Boat & 120 hands which were saved: which Captain Edwards came to us to know who we were we told him we were Convicts and had made our escape from Botany Bay he told us we were his Prisoners & he put us on board the Rambang Dutch Companys Ship and put both our legs in irons called the Bilboes in which we was conveyed to Batavia where we were taken out of the Rambang and put on board a Dutch Guard Ship in irons again there we lost the Child 6 days after the Father of the child was taken bad & died they were both buried at Bretava 6 Weeks after we were put in 3 different Ships bound to the Cape of Good Hope we were 3 Months before we reached the Cape when we came there the Gorgon Man of War which had brought the Marines from Botany Bay we were which we were put on board of and was known well by all the Marine officers. We were all glad that we had not perished at Sea we were brought to England in the Gorgon and
estricted from thence conveyed by the Constable to
Bow Street Office London, and taken before Justice Beale & was
fully committed to Newgate.

James Cow
James Cook
Wm. Braynt
A Boy of 13 Months old.
and a little girl 5 Years and a quarter old died
The father of the 2 Children Mary Braynt
James Motton
Wm. Allen
John Brcoon
and Nathaniel, 5ly above.
set ashore at Purfleet from thence conveyed by the Constables to Bow Street Office London; and taken before Justice Bond and was fully committed to Newgate.

- Wm Moatton Navigator of the Boat
- James Cox
- Samuel Burd
- Wm Bryant
- A Boy of 12 Months old
- and a little Girl 3 years and a quarter old died
- The Mother of the 2 Children Mary Bryant
- James Martin
- Wm Allen
- John Broom
- and Nathaniel Lilly alive