

For Immediate Release

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CHRISTIE'S TO AUCTION THE LOG OF A CONVICT TRANSPORT SHIP, THE MARQUIS CORNWALLIS

Exploration and Travel

Christie's London

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London - A previously unknown log from the early days of transportation to New South Wales will be sold in Christie's *Exploration and Travel* sale on 23 September. The transport ship, the *Marquis Cornwallis*, set sail from Cork on 9 August 1795 with 244 mutinous Irish male and female convicts on board. The 18th century log is to be sold with two manuscript charts showing the ship's track from Port Jackson to Norfolk Island and on towards India, and a contemporary painting of the transport ship by Francois Balthazar Solvyns (1760-1824): the lot is estimated to realise £100,000-150,000.

"This log has real power as a relic of this fearsome time," says Director Nicholas Lambourn, specialist in charge of the Exploration and Travel sale. *"The coarse linen or canvas cover, lettered 'SHIP MARQS CORNWALLIS LOG BOOK 1795 & 1796', is highly evocative, as are the pages inside, stained with sea water and spilt ink, all describing, as much as any of the entries in the log, this rough and terrible passage in history."* The convicts, described as *"A desperate set of villains"* by Governor Hunter of New South Wales, included political prisoners, the Catholic 'Defenders' and the Protestant Break-of-Day men, as well as more than 70 females. Men of all ages were transported, their crimes ranging from twelve-year-old Patrick's McDonough's highway robbery, to murder, assault and burglary. Women were sentenced to seven years transportation for such petty crimes as stealing gloves and sugar.

The voyage of the *Marquis Cornwallis* was one of the most eventful of any of the early convict transports because of a mutiny of the convicts and their guards, which took place in September 1795, a month out of Cork. The convicts had hatched a plan, with one of the guards, to seize the

master and take the ship to America. The plans were leaked (the informer was strangled below decks) to the Captain, Michael Hogan, who, with his officers, managed to put down the 'mutiny', firing into the convicts as they tried to break out through the fore hatchway onto the deck. Subsequently forty-two of the male convicts were flogged on board, six female convicts were punished and eight people perished either in the incident or from their wounds. The Court of Enquiry into the incident which followed on arrival in Port Jackson required Captain Hogan to remain at Sydney Cove in Port Jackson for three months.

The surviving log begins shortly before the ship's arrival off the Australian coast and covers the landing of the convicts at Sydney Cove along with a box of dried fruit, two large cheeses and one case of potatoes for Governor Hunter, and 95 sets of convict apparel, spare handcuffs, leg irons and thumb screws amongst the deliveries for the settlement. The log covering the first part of the outward voyage, including the attempted mutiny, was probably disbound and used in evidence at the Court of Enquiry on arrival in Sydney and is not known to have survived.

Captain Hogan, accused of 'Inhuman treatment & false Imprisonment &c.' was cleared and departed from Port Jackson for India, taking more convicts to the penal settlement at Norfolk Island en route. Hogan had entered the navy at the age of ten and subsequently acquired a fortune as a merchant, slave trader and privateer. He settled in New York in 1804, acquiring a mansion on the Hudson River before founding the town of Hogansburg. He was appointed first American consul to the newly independent Chile and spent his last days in Washington DC.

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Images available on request

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