From Terra Australis to Australia

The eleven ships of the First Fleet arrived in Sydney Cove on 26 January 1788 under the command of Governor Arthur Phillip.

The Library has an unrivalled collection of original journals, logbooks, letters, paintings, prints, drawings and books covering the voyage of the First Fleet, the mutiny on the *Bounty*, Matthew Flinders' mapping of the Australian coastline and other important events from the early years of Terra Australis.

The First Fleet

Over 252 days, the First Fleet brought over 1500 men, women and children half way around the world from England to New South Wales. On 13 May 1787, the fleet of 11 ships set sail from Portsmouth, England. Led by Captain Arthur Phillip, this historic convoy, which later became known as the First Fleet, carried officers, crew, marines and their families, and convicts from Britain to a distant and little known land on the far side of the world.
The Fleet consisted of two Royal Navy escort ships, *HMS Sirius* and *HMS Supply*. They accompanied six convict transports, the *Alexander*, *Charlotte*, *Friendship*, *Lady Penrhyn*, *Prince of Wales* and the *Scarborough*, and three store ships, the *Borrowdale*, *Fishburn* and *Golden Grove*.

Then, from Portsmouth the First Fleet travelled via Tenerife and Rio de Janeiro to the Cape of Good Hope, the Fleet's last port of call before striking out for Terra Australis.
Sirius track from England to the Equator, & of the Waakzammheydt from the Equator to England by William Bradley
Explore Tales from the First Fleet [6] and read first-hand accounts of the experiences of some of those who travelled south to Botany Bay.

The Fleet arrived first in Botany Bay on 18 January. Despite Sir Joseph Banks' glowing recommendation it proved to be unsuitable for a permanent settlement, especially as it lacked a supply of fresh water.

Then on 26 January, the Fleet arrived at a new anchorage at Sydney Cove in Port Jackson. The new site had everything our first settlers needed; deep water close to the shore, shelter and fresh water. Phillip named the site Sydney Cove, after Lord Sydney the British Home Secretary.

Today this date is still celebrated as Australia Day, marking the beginnings of European settlement.
Botany Bay; Sirius & Convoy going in ... 21 January 1788

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Next chapter
Tales from the First Fleet

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