



# Arthur Phillip: Australia's First Governor

*Derek Parker*

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## **Arthur Phillip: Australia's First Governor** Derek Parker

Over the two centuries since his appointment, commentators have been as surprised at the choice of Arthur Phillip as some were at the time (the First Lord of the Admiralty, to mention only the most distinguished critic). But was it really so surprising? What did the Home Office and the Admiralty expect of a man who was to navigate a fleet to the antipodes, and when he got it there unload its cargo of unregenerate criminals and forge them into some sort of a working colony? Apart from the necessary seamanship, they needed a man with a cool head who understood men and how to control them, a man capable of governing himself, possessed of calm and understanding and a thorough grasp of reality, with complete loyalty to the Crown and Government and a determination to plan and carry through an enterprise unlike any other within living memory. Fortunately, there were one or two men at the Admiralty who understood that Arthur Phillip possessed all these credentials. This new biography covers Phillip's whole life, but has a particular focus on his selection for the role of Governor, the preparation of the first fleet, the journey from England, the establishment of the colony and Phillip's governorship.

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