

AN UNRECORDED HOBART TOWN GAZETTE

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by

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Part II : First two Books on Tasmanian Geography by Jeffreys (1820) and Evans (1822) ;
with Comments on Jeffreys' plagiarism of Evans' work and Wentworth's Contributions to it

1. *The Two Publications of Jeffreys and Evans*

The authors of the first two separate books on Tasmanian geography were Lieut. Charles Jeffreys (1820) and George William Evans (1822), sometime Surveyor-General. Apart from their early dates of publication, the two books are of interest to book-collectors and bibliographers, because their main matter has a common source, which is the subject of our investigation.

The first one, by Jeffreys, is entitled : "Van Dieman's [sic] Land : geographical and descriptive Delineations of the Island of Van Dieman's [sic] Land (London, J. M. Richardson, 1820 ; printed by W. T. Sherwin)."

The second, by Evans, has a not-unusual lengthy title :

A geographical, historical and topographical Description of Van Diemen's Land, with important Hints to Emigrants and useful Information respecting the Applications for Grants of Land ; together with a list of the most necessary articles for persons to take out. Embellished by a correct view of Hobart Town ; also, a large chart of the Island, with the soundings of the harbours and rivers. Added, an Abstract from the General Muster-books for the years 1819 and 1820, and a list of the Civil Establishment (London, Printed for John Souter by J. and C. Adlard, 1822).

The chart was issued separately, and the value of Evans' book depends upon the accompanying map.

Neither author was in London when the books were published. Both were resident in Tasmania.

The editor of Evans' book in his "advertisement" (p. vii) begins :

Having carefully perused the Ms., the production of Mr. Evans, submitted to him, and compared it with the topographical parts of the publication of Lieutenant Jeffreys, to which the Author alludes in his Preface, the Editor could not help feeling surprised at the coincidences throughout, with some trifling variations of language, and certain expletives which the imagination of the latter writer [Jeffreys], without an actual survey or a visit to the spots he describes, may readily have supplied.

"In explanation of this unison" Evans says ; "I was once a passenger in His Majesty's brig *Kangaroo*, under Lieutenant Jeffreys's command, and that, upon that occasion, I had the good fortune to recover some missing parts of my manuscript, from the hands of his clerk."

Between April, 1816 and January, 1817 the *Kangaroo* made two trips between Sydney and Hobart. On the first of these Evans was not a passenger. In December, 1816 he was on survey work at Port Dalrymple. About March, 1817 he was expected to join Oxley at Sydney in his expedition out west. On its last trip the *Kangaroo* sailed for Sydney from Hobart on 13 January, 1817. No list of passengers was given in the *Gazettes* at either place. It is most likely that Evans was then a passenger on the occasion he refers to in his Preface. It is probable that Jeffreys received the manuscript on loan during his former trip.

Evans states that Lieut.-Governor Sorell perused the manuscript "at the close of the year 1819, when it was not known in this Island that Mr. Jeffreys had any intention of publishing at all" (p. vi). In April, 1820, Jeffreys returned to Tasmania from England. Later in the same year copies of his *Van Dieman's Land* were probably on sale in Hobart. After reading the book Evans comments : "I am rather provoked to, than diverted from, the publication of my verbal description of the Island by a perusal of Lieutenant Jeffreys's 'Geographical and Descriptive Delineations' of the same country, the exaggerations and misrepresentations of which are only calculated to mislead and disappoint the Emigrant." Evans did not directly "accuse Jeffreys of plagiarism." "Nevertheless," he adds, "some few passages of the two books will be found too well to correspond ; that is to say, they concur *verbatim*,—as one of the

wits says in the Comedy of the Critic—'when they do agree their unanimity is wonderful.'” Evans decided to prepare his own manuscript for publication, and dated the Preface on 1 February, 1821. It was revised and added to by a London editor, who ended his “Advertisement” in the following paragraph :

The Editor, to bestow a general interest on Mr. Evans's work, has made copious extracts from various publications, and, among them, from that of Lieut. Jeffreys, to whose merits as a writer on subjects not connected with *topographical description*, he pays a cheerful tribute ; but he has not done this without a due acknowledgment of the sources whence he has derived his information ; and it is to be lamented that a similar liberality has not been displayed by the intelligent writer to whom, in justice to Mr. Evans, he has been, however reluctantly, thus compelled to allude. [P. ix]

It is not clear whether these “various publications” included the official report of Macquarie's visit to Tasmania in 1821. This was dated 16 July, 1821, and appeared in the *Hobart Town Gazette* for 1 September, 1821, about seven months after Evans had signed the Preface. We shall refer to this later on.

2. *The Matter Common to their Contents*

The matter common to Evans and Jeffreys may be summarised as follows : Jeffreys, pp. 8-48 (Chapter I) are similar to Evans, pp. 26-51 (Chapter II) ; and Jeffreys, pp. 49-105 (Chapter II) to Evans, pp. 60-84 (Chapter III). These equivalences concern mainly topographical description. Two or three of the opening paragraphs in Chapter I (pp. 1-7) of Jeffreys resemble those of Evans Chapter I, which altogether is a hotch-potch of quotations from other writers, including even Jeffreys. In Jeffreys Chapter III, particularly the paragraphs referring to animals (pp. 108, 109, and 111), there are a few sentences similar to those in Evans Chapter II (pp. 56 and 57).

The set-out in Jeffreys Chapter I, dealing with the face of the country, mountains, rivers, harbours, *etc.*, has an arrangement similar to that in Evans Chapter II (excepting the long quotation from Wentworth on soil and agriculture [pp. 28-32]). But in Evans Chapter III, dealing with the interior, the original counties of Buckinghamshire and Cornwall, towns, *etc.*, while the opening pages on Hobart Town and surroundings conform to Jeffreys' arrangement, the remainder of the common paragraphs are so dislocated that a glance at them would not readily uncover the plagiarisms. The variations in sequence were largely due to insertions from Macquarie's report of his tour of inspection in May, 1821, and later descriptions of the Upper Derwent country beyond New Norfolk (*cf.* Evans, pp. 66-9). Other breaks in Evans' original arrangement were due to Jeffreys' own account of his Pittwater farm and his overland journey from Hobart to Launceston and other personal experiences (Jeffreys, pp. 64 and 110, and *H.R.A.*, Series I, vol. iii, pp. 447-8, 453-4).

It is here convenient to quote a sample or two of the paragraphs common to Jeffreys and Evans.

A. Jeffreys (pp. 8-9) :

The face of the country is richly variegated, and diversified by ranges of moderate hills, and gently undulating vallies, forming the most exquisitely beautiful amphitheatres, pregnant with whatever a rich soil and salubrious climate can yield. The hills, whose ridges generally form irregular circles, are for the most part well wooded ; and from their summits may be seen an expanded area of level pasture land, with but little wood, the grass growing in the utmost luxuriance.

Evans (p. 27) :

The surface of Van Diemen's Land is richly variegated and diversified by ranges of moderate hills and broad valleys, presenting the most agreeable scenes, and replete with whatever a rich soil and fine climate can produce. The hills, the ridges of which form irregular circles, are for the greater part wooded ; and from their summits are to be seen levels of good pasture land, thinly interspersed with trees, the grass growing most luxuriantly.

B. Jeffreys (pp. 81-2) :

... The valley becomes narrower towards the extremity, when abruptly passing between two hills, we arrive at that delightful country called Scantlin's Plains. The author's powers of language are inadequate to the description of this enchanting spot. Indeed, without an actual survey, the mind is not capable of conceiving the exquisite beauties of the scenery, where sloping undulating vallies, formed by numerous hills of about five hundred feet in height, four of which are nearly equi-distant from each other, with

a most enchanting sylvan prospect, aided by that indispensable object in every perfect landscape, water, conspire to form one of the most beautiful views imaginable.

Evans (pp. 73-4) :

This valley becomes narrower toward the extremity, when, abruptly passing between two hills, you arrive at a most agreeable tract called York Plains. Without an actual survey, the mind is not capable of conceiving the grandeur of the scenery here displayed. Sloping valleys, formed by numerous hills, four of which are nearly at equidistant points from each other, of about two hundred feet in height, present one of the most beautiful landscapes imaginable.

3. Differences in their Contents, due mainly to quotations from Wentworth and others

The differences between the contents of the two books largely concern "the copious extracts from various publications," including Jeffreys, made by the editor, as we have stated (page 60), in order "to bestow a general interest on Mr. Evans's work." On the question of authorship it is important to set out these extracts, as they reveal the extent of the editor's contribution to Evans' book.

Evans Chapter I on "Historical Geography" (pp. 1-25) consists almost entirely of quotations :

- i. Pages 2-8, from David Collins' *Account of the English Colony in New South Wales*, v. 2, 1802, pp. 178-89, "abstracted from the Journal of Mr. Bass."
- ii. Pages 11-12, from ch. V of J. J. Labillardiere's *Voyage in Search of La Perouse*, 1800, ch. V, pp. 95-135.
- iii. Pages 12-14, from W. C. Wentworth's *Statistical, Historical and Political Description of the Colony of New South Wales*, 2nd ed., 1820, pp. 149-50.
- iv. Pages 15-24, from C. Jeffreys' *Van Dieman's* [sic] *Land*, 1820, pp. 116-31.

The matters in Evans' Chapters II and III, additional to the topographical descriptions that coincide with those in Chapters I and II of Jeffreys, are given under paragraph headings such as Botany, Zoology, Mineralogy (Chapter II) and Roads, Field Sports, Commerce, Manufactures, Administration of Justice, Defence, Bushrangers (Chapter III). A comparison of these matters ("copious extracts from various publications") will reveal the extent to which Wentworth's *Statistical . . . New South Wales* was drawn upon by Evans' editor.

A. Evans' Chapter II on "Natural Geography" :

- i. Pages 27-32 ; 47-9 ; 56-7 ; from Wentworth, with minor verbal variations, pp. 183-9 ; 156-8 ; 152.
- ii. Pages 53-4 ; 57 ; 59 ; being summarised references from Labillardiere, Ch. V, pp. 97, 103-9, 113-6, 126, 133-5.
- iii. Pages 55-6 ; from Jeffreys, pp. 110-11.

B. Evans' Chapter III on "Civil Geography" :

- i. Pages 61-2, 70, 79-82, 84-5 ; from Macquarie's Report (*Hobart Town Gazette*, September 1, 1821, previously in *Sydney Gazette*).
- ii. Pages 85-7 ; 88-9 ; 91-2 ; 92-4 ; 95-6 ; 97 ; 98 ; 98-108 ; 109 ; from Wentworth, with minor variations, pp. 163-5 ; 57-9 ; 318 ; 416-7 ; 158-9 ; 165 ; 166 ; 166-78 (also from *Sydney Gazette*) ; 180-1.
- iii. Pages 87-8, 89, 94-5 ; from Jeffreys, pp. 64, 101, 74-5.

C. The contents of Jeffreys' last Chapter IV comprise a comparison of the commercial relations between Van Diemen's Land and Port Jackson (pp. 138-58) ; and hints to emigrants (pp. 158-68) ; whereas, in his last part under the heading of "Appendix," Evans has an article on "Emigration to Van Diemen's Land" (pp. 111-24, 140). With the exception of pp. 111-2 taken from Macquarie's Report (1821) and pp. 112-3 from Reid's *Two Voyages to New South Wales and Van Diemen's Land* (1822), pp. 238, 259-60, 267, the greater portion of the article (with adaptation to Van Diemen's Land) is contained in Wentworth's "A Word of Advice to Emigrants," included for the first time in the second edition of his *Statistical . . . New South Wales* (pp. 473-81). The last pages on "Emigration" (pp. 121-2) are taken from Jeffreys (pp. 68-71).

The remainder of Evans' "Appendix" follows the lines of Wentworth and lists "Abstracts from General Muster Books" for 1819 and 1820, Civil Establishment and Land Grants (pp. 125-39).

In these latter portions of the books of Jeffreys and Evans, what is common to them comprises three pages from Jeffreys. Evans supplied no original matter, being dependent mainly upon Wentworth and official documents.

Of the 124 pages of text in Evans (*i.e.*, excluding lists and tables of about fifteen pages), about seventy pages are contributed by other authors. These include about fifty pages from Wentworth, the remainder being from Jeffreys, Macquarie, Bass, Reid, and Labillardiere. The number of pages of strictly topographical description totals a little more than fifty pages, and of these Wentworth and Macquarie contribute about ten pages. The topographical matter, exclusively from Evans, amounts to a little more than forty pages.

Allowing for the differences in type, it is found that a page in Jeffreys contains about one-third less the number of lines than a page in Evans. On this basis, omitting Jeffreys' own contributions, the textual matter common to the books of both authors is roughly less than fifty pages. And these have verbal variations.

4. *Jeffreys and Evans as Authors*

In recording the fact of the plagiarisms neither Evans nor his editor is vituperative. Indeed, the latter prefers merely to expose the exaggerations and inaccuracies of Jeffreys when he makes statements on his own. In some respects, even here, Jeffreys scores on the rebound.

The Editor says :

If the latter [Jeffreys] had drawn, from any other source beside that of Mr. Evans, his topographical notices of Van Diemen's Land, he would not have omitted, as he has done in his description of the interior, a very interesting portion of its surface. He does not take the slightest notice of Elizabeth Town, founded by Governor Macquarie, and is equally silent as to the Fat-Doe River, the Shannon, Lord's Storekeeper's Hut, etc. Here his clerk must have been at fault, or, in other words, had not time to complete his task before the recovery of the missing parts of the Ms. by Mr. Evans.

This statement is not altogether accurate. Jeffreys does mention the Fat (Black) Doe river and the Shannon (pp. 31 and 104), but does not give particulars. He refers more than once to New Norfolk (pp. 14, 55-6, 60), comparable to what Evans says of it (pp. 63-4, 66). (The name Elizabeth Town was afterwards superseded by New Norfolk). And, in any case, Jeffreys would omit a reference to Elizabeth Town in view of its close association with Macquarie.

And we may add that, with the exception of his large separate chart and his drawing of Hobart Town, engraved by H. Adlard, Surveyor-General Evans was scarcely in order in allowing his name to appear on the title-page of his book without qualification.

In order to cover up or modify his dependence on another for his information (whether that other be a ghost-writer or an apparently independent authority), Jeffreys frequently plays on the role of a self-dependent author by indicating his period of residence in the Colony and the variety of his colonial experience (see pp. V, 29, 58, 64, 68, 71, 75, 82, 163). In pages 40-4 he set forth in detail his own directions for the navigation of Port Dalrymple. These were omitted by Evans, who, in his "Appendix" (pp. 123-4), substituted those of Captain William Kent of H.M.S. *Buffalo*. In his last chapters (III and IV, pp. 104-68), Jeffreys certainly goes on his own, and from then Evans' editor takes over several pages by way of quotation. But generally we may conclude that Jeffreys obtained a copy of Evans' original draft of his two chapters on "Natural Geography" and "Civil Geography," so far as these dealt with topographical descriptions. As Jeffreys officially left Tasmania early in 1817, the material then at his disposal did not go beyond the year 1816, to which he refers in some places.

In Evans' book, on the other hand, there are some direct references to 1817; but in the topographical description of George Town and Launceston, as well as of some Midland districts, the editor, either on his own, or as directed by Evans, included extracts from Macquarie's report on his tour of the Island in May, 1821 (*Hobart Town Gazette*, 1 September, 1821). Linked with the quotations from Wentworth on "Emigration" was an extract from the Colonial Office's Memorandum of January, 1822. Nevertheless, it seems that Evans' revision of his original draft did not go beyond the year 1820. In his Preface he refers to Sorell's reading of the manuscript towards the close of 1819, and adds that in 1820 it was available to Commissioner Bigge. In the book itself abstracts from General Muster Books were given up to October, 1820. The Preface was dated 1 February, 1821.

It would seem then that before the date of Macquarie's visit in May, 1821, Evans had sent his manuscript to London, and was in touch with his editor. He would have noticed that Jeffreys omitted any complimentary reference to Macquarie's earlier actions. For example, in commenting on the decay of Launceston in consequence of Macquarie's preference for George Town at the mouth of the Tamar, Jeffreys says: "The policy of this measure, in the present infant state of the Colony, is, perhaps, somewhat problematical" (p. 97). It may be

queried whether this was not Evans' own opinion at the time, and whether Jeffreys allowed it to stand as being against Macquarie. On the other hand, Evans, who was in Macquarie's entourage in May, 1821, emphasised "the flourishing condition of this new settlement," and quoted extensively from Macquarie's report in favour of George Town as against Launceston (pp. 79-81). He continued with a summary of the new townships which Macquarie had named on his journey south to Hobart (pp. 81-3). Later on he quoted Macquarie's comments on the roads from Hobart to the settlements in the interior (pp. 84-5). It was possible for Evans to send these quotations to his editor for insertion in Chapter III on "Civil Geography." These could have reached London about February, 1822, when the printing was likely to be in process. By that time, also, the *Sydney Gazette*, as well as the *Hobart Town Gazette*, with Macquarie's report would have been available in London.

The specific reasons which led to Jeffreys' decision to absorb Evans' topographical material in a book to be published under his own name, as "late Commander of His Majesty's Brig Kangaroo," are not easy to hit upon; but we may surmise that Jeffreys desired to appear in London as a person of prominence, particularly at a time when Macquarie's charges against him were pending before the Admiralty early in 1818. He had, as we have seen, gained publicity as a navigator in a London press reprint (March, 1818) of the account of his voyage from Port Jackson to Ceylon in 1815 which first appeared in an extraordinary issue of the *Hobart Town Gazette* on 11 May, 1816. It would seem that a descriptive work by him on Van Diemen's Land, as a Colony suitable for the emigration of free settlers, would enhance his reputation among the colonists as well as the home officials. He was an officer of the Royal Navy that had withstood the castigation of a military governor, Lachlan Macquarie. And so he did not hesitate to work up Evans' material into a book that he might claim as his own. He may have presumed that Evans would acquiesce in such a course. The practice was not altogether unusual among authors. And he himself was about to return to Tasmania where he had landed interests—the very colony in which Evans then served as Surveyor-General. By the publication of the book both men would have contributed to the further prosperity of the island. Jeffreys was due to arrive at Hobart early in 1820, some months before its publication.

Up to that time it did not appear that Evans had any definite idea of publishing his manuscript, the matter of which did not then date beyond 1817. But, as he says in his Preface, he was "provoked" to the publication of it "by a perusal of Lieutenant Jeffreys's 'Geographical and Descriptive Delineations'." And thus he immediately prepared his "verbal description of the Island" for publication in London. This decision was probably taken towards the close of 1820.

5. *Wentworth's Contributions*

When Evans was engaged in this revision, the first edition of Wentworth's *Statistical, Historical and Political Description of the Colony of New South Wales* (1819) could have been in his hands. Wentworth had included Oxley's reports on his expedition to the Bathurst plains in 1817-8, in which Evans took part. He was favourably commented on by Oxley. Evans would have been gratified at Wentworth's reprinting of Oxley's praise. As a tribute to Wentworth, Evans may have been induced to include in his manuscript the quotations from Wentworth on "Soil and Agriculture" (pp. 27-32) and on Hobart's harbour (pp. 47-9); and he may have desired to use Wentworth's book in other ways. The upshot appears to be that when Evans' final additions to his manuscript reached London during the second half of the year 1821, it came, whether directly or indirectly, into the hands of Wentworth, who at the time was completing his legal studies. If Wentworth was not the actual editor of Evans' book, he was certainly in close touch with the individual who acted in that capacity, for it turned out that when the book was actually printed, Wentworth's total contribution practically equalled in extent that of Evans himself, as we have shown.

Mostly unacknowledged, the greater portion of the Evans' appendix on "Emigration" was extracted from the "Word of Advice to Emigrants" included in Wentworth's second edition. Though Wentworth's name appeared as quoted seven times at least, there were as many more unacknowledged quotations. This was probably done by design. We may presume that Wentworth relished the publicity he received through Evans' book. And he would welcome a chance to blazon forth the opportunities that awaited emigrants to Australia in contrast to the United States and as an off-set to transportees. At the time Wentworth was struggling to maintain himself in London until he was called to the Bar. Evans was induced to make use of his early acquaintance with Wentworth which occurred shortly after the latter had taken part in the first crossing of the Blue Mountains with Bland and Lawson.

It is almost certain that Wentworth was acquainted with Jeffreys as commander of the *Kangaroo*, the sister ship to the *Emu*, on the last voyage of which to London in 1816 Wentworth was a passenger. (The *Emu* went aground near Cape Town.) Jeffreys may have met Wentworth in London during his stay there in 1817-9, and would readily inform the latter of his quarrels with Macquarie and Sorell. The lengthy quotations from Jeffreys, given in Evans' book, may have been suggested by Wentworth, who would get an author's amusement from the plagiaristic situation as between Evans and Jeffreys. At all events the extensive quotations from the second edition of Wentworth's *Statistical . . . New South Wales* transformed Evans' manuscript, and added substantially to its temporal importance and indeed to its bibliographical interest.

The quotations from Labillardiere, included at the end of Evans' Chapter II, raise a query difficult to answer. These are collected mainly under the paragraph headings of Botany (pp. 53-5) and Zoology (pp. 57-9), and cover about two pages. The quotations are not actual passages. They are scarcely more than name-lists of plants, flowers, and animals under their scientific terms, some being given in the vernacular. And they are not collected as they appear in Labillardiere's chapter, which must have been carefully read for their listing. On a point of editorship, who listed them? We may presume that Evans had a direct interest in natural history and was responsible for the compiling work done in these brief sections. As Wentworth is drawn upon for almost the whole of the corresponding non-geographical paragraphs in the succeeding Chapter III, under the headings of field sports, commerce, government, etc., we may take it that these captions were selected by the editor from Wentworth's book.

6. Summary

As the first two separate publications on Tasmanian geography, the books of Jeffreys and Evans are of historical significance. They appeared within twenty years of the founding of the first settlement in the Island. To some extent Wentworth's *Statistical, Historical and Political Description of the Colony of New South Wales and its dependent Settlements in Van Diemen's Land* (1819) may be accepted as their predecessor, and in some respects Evans copied Wentworth's pattern. Following the coastal surveys of the oceanic navigators, the historical student may turn to these publications for a presentation of the results of inland exploration and settlement. And the devotee of natural scenery will find much in them to delight his heart, as these exponents open up for him landscapes of intimate beauty. Though the authors are generally halting in literary expression, some of their passages reveal how nature awakened in them self-sufficing reflections on the sublime. Tasmanians may claim them both as local authors in distinction from overseas observers who came and went. Both men settled here, Evans through his official appointments as a surveyor, and Jeffreys as a sea-captain who, though he worried Macquarie by the excessive delays in the turn-round of his ship, was allured by the prospects of a successful settler's life, and paved the way for his ultimate residence during four years of colonial service in command of the *Kangaroo*.

Biographical Note : Jeffreys (continuing text references) : Early in 1820, with his wife Jane, Charles Jeffreys arrived at Hobart Town from London in the ship *Saracen*. He settled on his farm in the Pittwater district and later was granted a pew in St David's. For his services as commander of the *Kangaroo* Jeffreys received a land grant of about 1300 acres. His estates, known as Frogmore and Sweetwater, bordered on Pittwater lake and the Orielson Creek, adjoining David Lord's property. He died on 8 May, 1826, aged forty-five years. He was held in repute as "the author of the first work published in England respecting Van Diemen's Land". The *Colonial Times* (4 and 18 August, 1826) referred to complaints by some over-sanguine emigrants that they had been deceived by Jeffreys' representations in his book. The newspaper defended the author and praised him for his effort in helping to colonise Van Diemen's Land as a British community. A water-colour sketch of Hobart Town, dated 1817 and signed by Jeffreys, has been reproduced on occasion.

Evans : George Williams Evans, born at Warwick, England, in 1778, came to Sydney in 1802 after a brief period of service as a surveyor in Cape Town. In the following year he acted as Surveyor-General in New South Wales during the absence of Charles Grimes. In 1812 he carried out surveying duties at Port Dalrymple, and later assisted in the laying out of Hobart Town under Meehan. Next year he was recalled by Macquarie to serve under Oxley who had been commissioned to survey the country west of the Blue Mountains, following the crossing of Blaxland, Wentworth and Bland in 1813. Evans' work of exploration

was highly praised by Oxley, whose reports were included in Wentworth's book (1819). In 1816 Evans was appointed Deputy Surveyor-General of Van Diemen's Land. Early in 1817 he proceeded from Hobart to carry out further survey work in New South Wales. On its completion he returned to Hobart Town, and in May 1821 he accompanied Macquarie during his tour of inspection. In December-January 1821-2 Evans surveyed Macquarie Harbour. For health reasons he retired in 1825 and received a pension. After a brief stay in England he came to Sydney in 1832. Ten years later Evans again took up residence in Hobart where he died on 16 October, 1852.

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