

A Response to Imbolc 2004's article 'Shedding Light'...Who's telling stories?

by
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The 15th day of the 8th month, 1834 is an ominous date numerologically: 15 indicates that the persons influenced by this number 'will use every art of magic they can to carry out their purpose.' (*Cheiro's Book of Number's* p81) 8, indicates issues around 'Greed and Improvidence', intellectual 'Calculation', and instigates the 'Divine Principle of Justice'. (Sepharial, *The Book of Charms and Talismans*, p 22) 16, 'denotes ACCIDENT or CATASTOPHE', (Sepharial p26) and 'gives warning of some fatality awaiting one.' (Cheiro, p81) $15+8+16=39=12$ which, 'generally foreshadows one being sacrificed for the plans or intrigues of other.' (Cheiro, p 80)

On the 15th day of the 8th month, 1834, the British Parliament, by declaring 'waste and unoccupied' all the land destined to become the new province of South Australia, broke the Law of this Land and dispossessed "the Adynyamathanha, the Andagarinya, the Arabbana, the Aranda (southern), the Banggarla, the Biladaba, the Bungandidj, the Dhanggarli, the Dirari, the Diyari, the Erawirung, the Gugada, the Guyani, the Kaurna, the Malyangaba, the Marawara, the Meintang, the Mirning, the Narungga, the Nawu, the Ngadjuri, the Ngalia, the Ngamini, the Ngangurugu, the Ngarinyeri, the Ngarkat, the Ngawait, the Ngayawung, the Ngintait, the Nugunu, the Peramangk, the Pitjantjatjara, the Portawulun, the Raminyeri, the Tanganan, the Wadigali, the Wangngurru, the Warki, the Wilyagali, the Wirangu, the Wirdjaragadja, the Wotjobaluk, the Yandruwandha, the Yankuntjara, the Yaraldi, the Yardliwarra, and the Yawarawaga." (Mattingley and Hampton, *Survival in Our Own land*, p3)

It was 2.00 am during the last days of the session, that the South Australia Bill was 'debated and read a second time in an almost empty House of Commons,' and 'some members were critical of the haste with which the measure was being handled.' (Henry Reynolds, *The Law of the Land*, p103)

The South Australia Bill was drafted by barrister, Daniel Wakefield, brother of Edward Gibbon Wakefield, who historians credit as the 'father of South Australia'. Wakefield, in fact, formed his ideas on 'colonisation' while sentenced to prison for the kidnapping of a teenage girl. He'd forced her to marry him. This was the second time he'd committed such an offence. (The Newgate Calender - www.exclassics.com/newgate/ng596.htm) From Newgate prison, Wakefield wrote an anonymous letter entitled 'A letter from Sydney', as if he'd been there, to the 'London Morning Chronicle'. Wakefield wrote: '*The object is not to place a scattered and half barbarous colony on the coast of New Holland, but to establish a wealthy civilised society.*' Robert Gouger who in 1829 published Wakefield's writings also ended up in prison for debt. In South Australia, Gouger became Colonial Secretary and Member of the Executive Council.

So let's get it clear, 'the new free colony' (*Silver Wheel*, Imbolc 2004, p11) was, in fact, a fraud perpetrated by people who wished to make a lot of money. In 1830, Capt Charles Sturt had reported after his journey down the 'Murray' that the land was 'heavily populated', and those who wrote and voted for the 1834 Bill well knew it

was not 'waste unoccupied,' and knowingly put the lives and future of the indigenous nations 'very much in jeopardy'. (Jenkins, *Conquest of the Ngarrindjeri*, p28)

The 1834 SA Act placed a price of '12/-' on every acre of land, £35,000 of land were to be pre-paid sales and £20,000 were to be raised as 'a guarantee or security' so 'that no part of the expense of founding and governing the said intended colony shall fall on the mother country'. (Documenting a Democracy www.foundingdocs.gov.au/) South Australia covers 984,000 square kilometres.(Heinemann). If the 12/- per acre had gone to the real owners of the land rather than the SA Colonial Commissioners, 'South Australian' indigenous nations would have had a significant economic base with which to protect their cultural interests. In reality, 'within 10 years 300,000 acres of South Australian land were sold for £300,000, and 12,000 emigrants were sent out.' (Wakefield-
<http://gutenberg.net.au/dictbiog/0-dict-biogWa.html>). By 1860, a South Australian Select Committee of Enquiry into conditions of Aborigines recommended the implementation of ration stations due to widespread starvation (Bell, *Ngarrindjeri Wurruwarrin*, p638)

Just as numerology is open to interpretation, today's story tellers may also manipulate historical events. So, here's what people at the time thought of the 1834 Act:

- Secretary of the Methodist Mission Society, John Beecham, thought it was 'essentially and morally wrong.' The 'settler' would seek to 'obtain possession of the lands secured to him by Act of Parliament', the Aborigines would try to 'keep possession of those very lands which are theirs by prior right'. (Reynolds *Law of the Land* p104) Colonel
- Colonel Napier, who turned down the job of governor of the new colony, described the legislation as 'an act to seize by force' a territory as large as France and Spain. In his opinion, it was a way of depriving 'an inoffensive race of people of their property, without giving them the slightest remuneration,' (CJ Napier, *Colonisation: Particularly in South Australia*, p213)
- George Arthur, Governor of Tasmania, wrote to the Secretary of State for the Colonies. He advised that before 'settlers' arrived: 'Every effort ought to be made to come to an understanding with the natives of South Australia'. He wanted to 'avoid the bloodshed experienced in the island colony in the previous decade....on the first occupation of the colony it was a great oversight that a TREATY was not, at that time, made with the natives, and such compensation given to the chiefs as they would have deemed a fair equivalent for what they surrendered...'
(Reynolds, *Frontier*, p145)
- The Colonial Office sought protection of Aboriginal land rights in the new colony in provisions set out in the Letters Patent and Order-in-Council. It allowed the departure of the first South Australian immigrant ships only when Torrens offered to 'give precise and positive instructions' to the colonists 'not to colonize any district which the Aborigines may be found occupying or enjoying or possessing any right of property in the Soil.' (Reynolds *Law of the Land* p112)
- Torrens told Gouger that he hoped they would be performing 'an act of mercy for the natives of southern Australia by bringing them the gift of their great civilization and their Holy faith.'(Ernst Scott, *A Short History of Australia* http://www.nalanda.nitc.ac.in/resources/english/etext-project/history/aust_hist/)

- Once in the colony, along way from the Colonial Office, Torrens sold land believing that ‘the wandering tribes’ were ‘unlocated’ and ‘never held a single acre in permanent occupation.’ (Reynolds p114)
- In September, 1838, Robert Cock, was so distressed by the failure of the Commissioners to honour their promises that he sent to the Protector of Aborigines the sum of £3 16s. 6d. *‘being the interest, at the rate of 10 per cent, on the one-fifth of the purchase-money of the town land, purchased by me, on the 27th March, 1837...I feel it my duty to pay to the proper authorities for the use of the natives this yearly rent...I disclaim this to be either doantion, grant or gift, but a just claim the natives of this district have on me as an occupier of those lands.’* Signed ‘A Tenant’ (Reynolds, *Dispossession*, p81)

Survival In Our Own land, ‘Aboriginal’ experiences in ‘South Australia’ since 1836 makes clear indigenous opinion of the 1834 Act:

‘No one asked us if we agreed to the change. Our ancestors had no choice... our sovereign status was changed....From that moment the tragedy began which is the bitter and often brutal history of the past 150 years for all our people in ‘South Australia’ (Mattingley and Hampton, p3)

More numerology: On the 1st day of the 10th month, 1836, the *Rapid*, the first colonial ship to sail towards Port Adelaide, arrived. Surveyor General, Colonel William Light was on board...1 the number of ‘beginning’ (Cheiro, p 37) 10 ‘one’s name will be known for good or evil, according to one’s desires’ (Cheiro, p80) 18 ‘symbolic of materialism striving to destroy the spiritual side of the nature. It generally associates a person with bitter quarrels...also with war, social upheavals, revolutions;...also danger from the elements, such as storms.’ (Cheiro, p81) In total, 1+10+18= (11) 9 ‘may lead the personality to do humanitarian work’ (Margaret Arnold, *Love Numbers*, p70)

On the 1st day of October, 1836, a strong gale blew up and the heavy swell forced the *Rapid* out into deeper anchorage. Light couldn’t land until the 3rd. Was it mere coincidence that when the immigrant ships *Africaine* and *Cygnat* arrived in early November, the weather was again ‘atrocious’ and it was difficult landing the ‘settlers’ in the ‘high swell and surf’? (Patawalonga & The Reedbeds, Holdfast Bay-
<http://users.senet.com.au/~hitek/holdfastdatasa/Pat.htm#CH>)

Your Silver Wheel article ‘Shedding Light’ says that ‘William Light was an uneducated soldier’. I wonder what he was ‘uneducated’ in, since he could speak several languages, and was a ‘competent painter.’ Light was the son of the Governor of Penang and when only 6 years old was sent back to England to be educated. (<http://www.southaustralianhistory.com.au/southaustralia.htm>.) Perhaps the fact that he was born in Malaya and his mother was not of English descent had something to do with it. (Colonel William Light 1786-1839
<http://users.senet.com.au/~hitek/holdfastdatasa/HomeCL.htm>)

Light certainly died ‘ostracised by Adelaide society’. Perhaps the fact that of Light’s cordial relationship with ‘the natives’ had something to do with that. Light’s arrival at Patawalonga was guided by a Tasmanian Aboriginal woman Sal Cooper who’d been living on Kangaroo Island. Was she grateful to Light for the opportunity to escape the lawless conditions on Kangaroo Island? Since the early 1800s sealers were ‘a complete set of pirates going from island to island along the southern coast, and carrying off by force females. (Major Lockyer, Kangaroo Island,

<http://www.southaustralianhistory.com.au/>) 'Patawalonga' which means 'boggy and bushy stretch, with fish, was what Sal Cooper called the area. (Patawalonga & The Reedbeds, Holdfast Bay).

I also wonder why this article has come to 'light' now. It was back in 1994 that a Dr D Langmead wrote *Accidental Architect: The Life and Times of George Strickland Kingston*. Does it have anything to do with the fact that the 'mother' of this article appears in *The Adelaide Review*? In a stolen land where the indigenous life expectancy is worse than in Nigeria, Nepal, Bangladesh, India, Thailand and Vietnam, does it make right-wing Adelaideans comfortable to think their city is based an ancient Greek 'ideal city' plan? (Statistics: ANTaR Healing Hands Indigenous Health Rights Campaign-www.antar.org.au)

'Our true father was a hard-working Irishman' wrote Chris Bowe, 'A history of the Kingston plan of Adelaide' *The Adelaide Review*, July 2004). Personally, I reckon that claim and 'Shedding Light' *Silver Wheel*) are a cover up... a cover up of the 'ongoing colonisation of Indigenous space... appropriated Indigenous space that reproduces the denial of the history of dispossession, genocide/indigenocide ... and oppression which makes its existence on the Adelaide Plains near Tandanyungga (the place of the Red Kangaroo Dreaming).' (Steve Hemming & Daryle Rigney *Adelaide Oval: a postcolonial site*?)
<http://www.borderlandsejournal.adelaide.edu.au/index.html>)