

SIR GEORGE GIPPS

Howells

I would find nothing in Palmer
in our library + manuscripts,
apart from the fact that in
1726 the Comptroller of the
Navy would be paid £500 p.a
(the Treasurer £2000). Source
CAD/S/S - estimates for 1976

Ans

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'Very irritable' and with an almost un-governable temper when excited or provoked, his failure as an official was offset by his success in business. From the beginning his interests were many and varied, including land, stock, money-lending and general trading. His ventures in land were among the most extensive in the province and included town acres in Adelaide (the largest holder in 1837) and Port Lincoln, sections in the suburbs and country, and a special survey of 4000 acres on the Murray River. Profiting by his experience in Germany he was an early importer of sheep from Van Diemen's Land and sheep and rams from Saxony. In 1839 he discovered silver-lead on his property at Glen Osmond, which yielded him substantial royalties until the mine was worked out. In all his business he had close connexions with Oakden and his brother Lewis.

Despite his temper, the dominant factors in his private life were his strong religious beliefs and generosity. Soon after arrival he helped the colonial chaplain, Rev. C. B. Howard [q.v.], to drag a handcart under a blazing sun from Holdfast Bay to Adelaide. There they draped a sail over a branch and held the first official service in Adelaide; when Trinity Church was built on the site Gilles was an active trustee and a generous supporter. He gave land and materials for St Saviour's, Glen Osmond, as well as endorsing its incumbent.

He also gave ready aid to many other churches of various denominations, and to many cultural societies and charitable institutions. Fluent in French and German he took a special interest in immigrant welfare, and in 1852 gave land in Adelaide for a German hospital. The annual gatherings of the German Rifle Club were held on his property.

He died at his home, Woodley, Glen Osmond, on 25 September 1866. As well as tablets in many churches, several streets and districts in Adelaide bear his name.

G. H. Jose, *The Church of England in South Australia 1836-1856* (Adel, 1937); D. Pike, *Paradise of Dissent* (Melb, 1957); A. A. Lendon, 'Kent v. Torrens', *PRGSSA* 27 (1925-26); *Southern Australian*, 30 Jan, 6 Feb, 20 Mar 1839; *Register* (Adel), 29 June, 24, 31 Aug, 26 Oct 1839, 30 Jan 1847; Knox and Hargrave papers (SAA); *Dispatches, Hindmarsh to Glenelg*, 1, 3 May 1838, Gawler to Hill, 8, 18 Apr 1839, 27 June, 18 Oct 1839 (SAA).

G. W. SYMES

GIPPS, SIR GEORGE (1791-1847), soldier and governor, was born at Ringwood, Kent, England, the eldest son of Rev. George Gips. He was educated at The King's School, Canterbury, with William Grant

Broughton [q.v.] and at the Royal Military Academy, Woolwich. Gipps entered the Royal Engineers as a second lieutenant in January 1809, was wounded at the siege of Badajoz in March 1812, continued service in the Peninsular campaigns and was promoted captain in September 1814. He was with Wellington's army from November 1814 to July 1817 but missed Waterloo because he was preparing fortifications at Ostend. After some years at Chatham he was sent to the West Indies, where he showed much administrative ability. His reports to the Colonial Office so impressed the ministry that he was appointed to two commissions of inquiry into the boundaries of electorates in England and Ireland. In 1830 he married Elizabeth, daughter of Major-General George Ramsay. In 1834 he became private secretary to Lord Auckland, first lord of the Admiralty, and then spent two years with the Gosford commission in Canada. Gipps's able memoranda in the Gosford report published by the House of Commons reveal him as a Whig, liberal and just towards the French Canadians. He was knighted, promoted major, and appointed governor of New South Wales on 5 October 1837. With his wife and son he arrived in Sydney on 24 February 1838.

His eight years as governor were very significant and demanded all his administrative skill. His duties as governor were difficult, challenging, and sometimes unpleasant. He had to serve two masters, Crown and colony. With slow and uncertain communications between Sydney and Whitehall he often had to act more independently than his instructions permitted, and at times he had to defy both Whitehall and the colonists. The secretaries of state to whom he was responsible changed frequently: Lord Glenelg, Lord Normanby, Lord John Russell, Lord Stanley, and W. E. Gladstone, although the permanence of James Stephen as under-secretary helped to maintain a consistent policy.

Gipps treated the Colonial Office with marked respect, and his dispatches are models of their kind. His personal philosophy was expressed to La Trobe privately but firmly: 'My whole official experience teaches me, that in Downing Street at least the governor who keeps his government out of debt is the best'. He applied the same philosophy to his dealing with the Executive and Legislative Councils, in which he was loyally supported by his senior officers, particularly by the colonial secretary, Denis Thomson [q.v.]. At first he had fairly good relations with the Legislative Council, although its nominated members were mostly 'exclusive', anti-

municipalist, and self-interested. The beginning of transition to representative government, however, provided unusual opportunities for differences of opinion, and the political atmosphere became charged with excessive bitterness.

An imperial Act of 1842 added to the Legislative Council a two-thirds proportion of members elected on a franchise high enough to exclude two-thirds of adult male voters. When the new council met in August 1843, most of the twenty-four new seats had been won by the graziers and their friends. They combined with some of the wealthy nominees to swamp the few members who urged further reforms. The council persistently opposed Gipps, but his later efforts in defence were masterly and forthright. Gipps himself was a brilliant speaker but, faced by such orators as W. C. Wentworth, Robert Lowe and J. D. Lang [q.v.], he felt that the council talked too much, worked too little, and was left too often without a quorum through seasonal occupations. In November 1843 he commented sadly to La Trobe: 'There are about five or six men in the council who are personally my enemies . . . for no better reason than that I am aware of, than because they were not received as dinner guests at Government House'. Wentworth's enmity, however, was more serious; it went back to 1840 when his scheme to purchase most of New Zealand's South Island for a song was blocked by Gipps who reported to the Colonial Office: 'If all the jobs which have been done since the days of Sir Robert Walpole were collected into one job, they would not make as big a job as the one Mr Wentworth asks me to lend a hand in perpetrating; the job, that is to say, of making to him a grant of twenty million acres at the rate of one thousand acres for a farthing'. Wentworth never forgave him and never missed an opportunity from then on to speak against him.

In governing New South Wales Gipps had many problems with the settlers in the Port Phillip District until October 1839 when La Trobe became its superintendent. The close, cordial, personal relation that developed between the two men is revealed in their private correspondence, of which some 324 letters by Gipps and 21 by La Trobe remain.

The Port Phillip settlers' sturdy economic development bred a spirit of almost arrogant self-confidence; the label of 'southern province' reminded them too much of government from Sydney. They demanded separation, which Gipps had predicted as early as December 1840 and was constantly reminded that it did not come during his

administration. The imperial Act of 1842 gave only six seats to Port Phillip and granted no separate colonial status. Time and expense prevented local residents from travelling 600 miles to Sydney to attend Legislative Council meetings, and denied the district proper representation. Another reason why Port Phillip demanded separation was the convict problem. The district had received very few convicts after its settlement and, wanting no more in any form, strongly resisted the sending of 'exiles' under the Pentonville system in 1844.

The great issue of the abolition of penal transportation confronted Gipps from the moment he landed in Sydney. In 1838 the Molesworth committee had recommended abolition to the House of Commons; in Sydney some denounced the proposal because convicts, through the assignment system, provided landowners with essential labour. In 1840 an Order in Council halted the flow of convicts to New South Wales while continuing to send them to Norfolk Island, which was under Gipps's jurisdiction, and to Van Diemen's Land. Indeed, the Colonial Office had already permitted an experiment in penal reform to be introduced on Norfolk Island by Captain Alexander Maconochie [q.v.].

Gipps approved Maconochie's appointment and was determined to support him, but for years he did not appreciate Maconochie's reforms in penology. Maconochie's theories and practices were far ahead of their time, especially his central idea that punishment should be the instrument, not the aim, of penal policy. He was certain that coercion alone did nothing but harden and degrade and that sentence for a fixed and irreducible time was the prisoner's worst enemy. Instead he proposed that labour and good conduct should be awarded marks or points and that the accumulation of so many thousand marks should win the convict his freedom. Maconochie reached Norfolk Island in March 1840, where he introduced his mark system to those felons recently sent direct from England. Because the island was so small he wanted the old convicts from New South Wales, who were doubly convicted, to be absorbed into the mark system, but Gipps refused to allow this on legal grounds. To Maconochie the decision dimmed the prospects of a successful experiment. More crucial was the uncertainty that the value of Maconochie's marks might be confirmed or rendered worthless by a decision of the Colonial Office. Thus there was always a doubt lurking in each prisoner's mind that his conduct, whether good or bad, would in-

fluence the fulfilment of his sentence. Maconochie, and Gipps too, pressed for resolution of this uncertainty, and the Colonial Office finally decided against Maconochie.

This decision was reached before Gipps paid a long-awaited visit to Norfolk Island in March 1843. Though his arrival was a surprise, Gipps was much impressed by finding everything in good order. On 1 April 1843 he penned one of his longest dispatches; the subject was confined to Norfolk Island and the tone clearly favoured Maconochie. Always scrupulously fair, Gipps was careful to admit the success of part of the system, while finding sensible and adequate reasons for the failure of other parts. He asked that Maconochie's experience should not be 'wholly thrown away . . . Captain Maconochie desires very anxiously that I should certify that his system has not had a fair trial: but I go further than this, and am willing to certify that his system . . . has never been tried at all'. Maconochie was, however, removed by the British government and left the island in February 1844.

The third great issue facing New South Wales was the demand by the squatters for security of tenure. By the time Gipps reached the colony its economy was riding on the sheep's back. Graziers were squatting both within and without the boundaries of location. As early as 1840 Gipps wrote resignedly: 'As well might it be attempted to confine the Arabs of the desert within a circle, traced upon their sands, as to confine the graziers or wool-growers of New South Wales within any bounds that can possibly be assigned to them'. The battle lines were clearly drawn and the positions defined early in Gipps's administration. On the Gosford commission he had supported the control of crown lands by the imperial parliament; now he believed that the surrender of that power to the Legislative Council in Sydney would place the property of 'all the subjects of the Empire' at the disposal of a group that did not even represent the people of New South Wales. He expressed these views in more than one dispatch, but nowhere more clearly and concisely than to Stanley on 18 April 1843: 'The lands are the unquestionable property of the Crown, and they are held in trust by the government for the benefit of the people of the whole British Empire. The Crown has not simply the right of a landlord over them, but exercises that right under the obligation of a trustee'. His policy has been misinterpreted by historians; the best summary is by K. Buckley (*Historical Studies*, May 1955, p. 396): 'Gipps's proposed remodelling

of the squatting system was intimately connected with the need for funds to assist immigration; the same need for immigration funds led Gipps to adopt policies, mainly in relation to quit-rents and Crown land within the boundaries, which antagonized landowners; the great chorus of opposition which greeted Gipps's squatting proposals in 1844 is inexplicable in terms of the squatting issue alone, but is understandable in the light of official land policy as a whole; the larger squatters had very sound reasons for opposing the Governor's policy; and the "revolutionary" aspect of the agitation has been exaggerated by historians'.

Besides defending imperial interests, Gipps wanted to improve the social condition of the squatter by allowing him to purchase his homestead, and he insisted that all squatters should be treated alike. Nevertheless, his proposed changes in the squatting system in 1844 were intentionally designed to increase crown revenue in order to promote immigration. However, drought and a fall in wool prices had already reduced land sales and wages. They were further discouraged when the British government, by the Australian Lands Act of 1842, raised the minimum price to £1 an acre and brought the auction system, which Gipps had insisted upon, into universal operation.

To increase his revenue Gipps became the first, and last, governor of the colony to make a serious effort to collect quitrents, thereby adding to his unpopularity. At the same time he felt that the government was being cheated by graziers who refused to pay rent for squatting within the boundaries of location. Commissioners of crown lands were supposed to initiate action against squatters who were in arrears, but as most commissioners were graziers themselves, class sympathy usually deterred them. Early in 1844 Gipps appointed some licensed surveyors as commissioners and assigned them to work within the boundaries of location on an incentive basis. Their actions irritated the graziers greatly. Another source of irritation to both graziers and land buyers was Gipps's policy after 1839 of fixing the upset price of town and suburban lots as much above the minimum as the market would tolerate. Many times he disregarded the prices suggested by his surveyor-general, Sir Thomas Mitchell [q.v.], and increased the figure. Thus by 1844 Gipps had aggravated the squatters in a number of different ways; landowners and squatters allied against him in an uneasy marriage of convenience.

The first test came on 2 April 1844 when Gipps issued new occupation regula-

tions. They defined a station or run as an area of not more than 20 square miles capable of carrying not more than 4000 sheep or 500 head of cattle; from 1 July 1845 each station so designated had to have a separate annual licence of £10. The squatters were furious and darkly spoke of ruin. Some even threatened rebellion. A Pastoral Association was formed, headed by Wentworth and Windeyer [q.v.]; Robert Lowe added his voice in the Legislative Council and, after November in his newspaper, the *Atlas*. There was vehement opposition. Public meetings were held and speakers hit hardest at the lack of security for the squatter. Gipps finally decided to publish, unofficially, his purchase regulations, which were not to become effective until advice had been received from Down-street. They appeared in the *Sydney Morning Herald*, 13 May 1844, and proposed that the squatter be granted the right to buy not less than 320 acres of his run as a homestead at a minimum price of £1 an acre after five years occupation. Such purchase would secure his use of the whole run, for which he was to pay the annual licence fee, for eight years, after which the purchase of another 320 acres would be necessary to ensure security for another eight years, and so on. If someone outbid him and bought the extra land, the squatter was to be compensated for his improvements. Gipps recognized that his proposals were ill timed, for he deliberately postponed their operation for fifteen months to permit recovery from the depression. Unfortunately the newspapers almost unanimously opposed his policy. Most disapproved the highly personal and vitriolic tone which Wentworth used against Gipps, but otherwise they charged the governor with pro-Crown and anti-colonial interests.

In retrospect, the regulations were fair and the public opposition seems unreasonable. Small and medium-sized squatters were to lose nothing by them, and security of tenure was certainly granted to all by the purchase regulations. Had Gipps published both sets of regulations simultaneously he would have found many supporters among the squatters. Tactically speaking, the landowner-squatter alliance had a field day for six weeks, giving an impression of overwhelming opposition to Gipps. This was the impression carried by squatters to London, where a special agent, F. Scott, M.P., was paid to represent them in parliament. Petitions flooded the House of Commons.

At first the British government supported Gipps which made him over-confident. He wrote privately to La Trobe: 'I feel, however, perfectly sure that I

shall beat them, and that they will in the end be sorry for what they have said and done'. Justifying his position, he concluded: 'I am now passed the usual term of a Colonial Government and may expect a recall ere long—but had I quitted this colony without bringing forward the subject of squatting, and left it to my successor to meet the present storm instead of facing it myself, I feel that I should really have had good cause to be ashamed of myself'. His six-year term expired in February 1844, but the Colonial Office valued his achievements and extended his appointment. In June 1845 Gipps jubilantly received Stanley's approval of both sets of regulations, and immediately brought them into force, though in a modified form. By December 1845 he was disappointed to learn that the crown lands amendment bill had been postponed. The squatters continued their pressures in London. Stanley went out of office, and his successor was more favourable to the squatters' demand for long leases.

When Gipps left the colony in July 1846 he did not know that the graziers had won most of their demands in the imperial Act of 1846. In London, however, Gipps was consulted by the Colonial Office before the Order in Council was issued in March 1847 giving the squatters in 'unsettled lands' leaseholds of fourteen years with rights of pre-emption. Lowe, once opposed to Gipps, turned on the squatters, whose monopoly was now entrenched, and the landowner-squatter alliance was shattered. This fact underlines one of Gipps's deficiencies, his lack of political craft. High-minded, proud and honourable, he chose to fight hard, but to fight alone, aloof from political factions. Had he chosen to play the farmers, workers, and small squatters against the large squatters, his whole land policy might have succeeded.

Gipps was an advocate of free immigration. In his opening speech on 29 May 1838 he told the Legislative Council that he would give it every encouragement in his power. Two concurrent immigration schemes were then in operation: the government scheme which gave free passages paid from government funds, and the bounty system by which individual settlers were subsidized from government land revenue to bring out their own nominated immigrant workmen. By 1839 the bounty system had fallen into the hands of speculators, but it was generally preferred to the government scheme because it was cheaper, a smaller proportion of children were introduced and, despite abuses, on the whole it brought out better immigrants.

On arrival Gipps had been solicited by colonists to increase the labour supply by issuing more bounty orders. Because he knew transportation was to end in 1840 and because of 'the great apparent prosperity' he acceded to these requests. On the recommendation of a select committee of the Legislative Council in 1841, he increased the scale of bounties, but neither Gipps nor the Colonial Office would agree to import indentured Indian or Chinese labour.

Drought in New South Wales from 1837 to 1842 contributed to a catastrophic fall in land sales and the onset of depression in 1841 reduced the demand for labour. Bounty immigrants arrived in ever greater numbers: 20,103 came in 1841 compared with 6637 in 1840. Gipps unsuccessfully sought English aid in cancelling immigration orders worth nearly £1,000,000. Severely censured for issuing orders in excess of land revenue, he unsuccessfully suggested the floating of a short term loan of £1,000,000 in London. Meanwhile he drew on the military chest and, when that was exhausted, he was assailed by the press, bankers and merchants for withdrawing government deposits from the banks in 1842 to meet the deficits already incurred in the land fund for bounty payments. When these measures proved inadequate, he borrowed £50,000 in debentures, a daring innovation. The problem of finding work for newly arrived female immigrants, however, was left to Caroline Chisholm [q.v.] who helped them and many urban unemployed to move to the country where labour was still in demand.

Although eager to keep his government out of debt, Gipps was not prepared to assist private enterprise. He believed that the depression was a result of excessive speculation. In 1842 he opposed the grant of a charter to the Union Bank and to the British Colonial Bank & Loan Co. because he thought thrift, not more capital, was necessary. 'I cannot contemplate without alarm the ultimate consequences of the heedlessness with which people are now mortgaging their estates to these companies'. Next year a committee of the Legislative Council deprecated any legislative enactments to check the evil consequences of the depression and, although financial measures were later proposed, Gipps withheld assent from some and others were defeated in the council.

Between 1838 and 1846 the population of New South Wales almost doubled to reach more than 190,000. The question of educating the children was therefore crucial to Gipps. His predecessor, Governor Bourke, when faced with the need of an

educational system, had assumed that the government must help to pay for it. In 1836 he tried to introduce the Irish system, which reconciled the principle of secular education with that of separate religious instruction, but it failed when Anglicans combined with Dissenters to defeat him. When Gipps arrived the government was doing little more for education than to make grants on the so-called 'half-and-half principle', matching the funds raised by each school from private sources. Gipps objected to this practice as expensive and inefficient and advocated a comprehensive public school system. Although he was prepared to allow denominational schools to continue on the 'half-and-half principle', he boldly included in the 1839 estimates the sum of £3000 to establish government schools on the principle of the British and Foreign Society. The council chamber rang with his speech defending his proposal. The high point of his oration came when he dramatically declared: 'disguise it as you may, gentlemen, evade it as you may, put your finger on this loose point in my argument or that loose point, you will still be brought back to the question of will you have a comprehensive system, or will you have none'.

He had not reckoned with Bishop Broughton, who spoke against the system for three hours. Gipps gave up; he continued the 'half-and-half' subsidies but was adamant in urging the Colonial Office to support a comprehensive system which would be nondenominational and government-supported. The newspaper reaction to this whole episode gave Gipps both concern and encouragement. Editorial comment was, at times sharp and partisan, but generally agreed that a National system of secular education was desirable.

The coming of representative government gave fresh impetus to the whole problem. In the newly elected council, Dr Lang was soon urging the need of a National system. In June 1844 Lowe succeeded in having a select committee appointed to study the state of education in the colony and to make appropriate recommendations. Before the committee of four Anglicans, two Roman Catholics, two Presbyterians and a Quaker, witnesses were hopelessly split over which system of public education might be adopted and which version of the Bible should be used. In August the report was presented by Lowe to the council; the findings were damning. Of the estimated 25,676 children between four and fourteen, 7642 received instruction in public schools, 4865 in private schools, and the rest no instruction at all. The committee's proposed solution

was the immediate introduction of the Irish system.

The outcry was immediate, vociferous, and deafening. Accusations of partisanship and dishonesty were hurled at the committee. Although press opinion was mostly uncertain, clergy and laity held heated meetings, their petitions swamping the council. Anglican and Catholic clergy violently opposed the Irish system, while the Dissenting clergy, headed by Dr Lang, who had been a member of the committee, supported it. Many of the laity of all sects followed their leaders. Appeals were made to the crudest form of prejudice. In October Wentworth with a narrow majority in the council moved that the Irish system be introduced with one modification: instead of clergymen giving religious instruction in the schools, children were to be allowed one day's absence from school each week to receive religious instruction. What was Gipps to do? He finally counted the petitions and signatures and found that a majority favoured the clerical position. In November he sent the council a message which affirmed his support of a National system but doubted 'whether the time be yet arrived, at which an attempt to introduce a better system is likely to be successful'. Stanley, even though his own system was involved, concurred with Gipps. Lang and others accused Gipps of selling out to Broughton, insinuating that as an old friend from school days, the bishop was being repaid for supporting him against the squatters. Modern historians have repeated this interpretation, but the facts do not warrant it. It was simply another example of Gipps's lack of political craft.

Gipps's policy towards the Aborigines was humane, practical, and courageous. Over the years settlers had constantly pressed the Aborigines back into the interior; strife had occurred when whites kidnapped native women, shot the wild game, or seized vital waterholes, and when blacks speared cattle and sheep or killed occasional explorers and stockmen. Officially the Aboriginal was considered a British subject, sheltered by British law and justice. The best expression of official policy was set out in the report of the Aborigines committee to the House of Commons in 1837: its special suggestions for Australia were the reservation of lands so that Aborigines could continue as huntsmen until tilling the soil ceased to be 'distasteful' to them, education of their children, increased expenditure for missionaries and for protectors, and, if necessary, the prosecution of the whites. In January 1838 Glenelg sent Gipps this report and an elaborate plan for the unsettled part of

the Port Phillip District into four provinces. They were to be administered by a chief protector, G. A. Robinson [q.v.], and four assistants, who were to be part-time missionaries and schoolteachers and full-time defenders against the land-greed and vindictiveness of less responsible settlers. The scheme was known as the 'Protectorate', and its officers were paid from local revenue. Gipps and the southern colonists were very dissatisfied with this financial arrangement, and soon transferred it to the land revenue account. In Sydney a select committee of the Legislative Council under the chairmanship of Bishop Broughton was appointed to study the Aboriginal question. They reached only one conclusion: not to transfer the Tasmanian Aborigines from Flinders Island to the mainland as recommended by Robinson, who had been one of the main witnesses.

Weakened by inadequate finance, the official policy collapsed in the face of the explosive dangers inherent in frontier contact. How could the government control the venturesome settlers whose philosophy was that the only good Aboriginal was a dead one? 'Your Lordship is, I am sure, well aware of the extreme difficulty of devising any measure, that shall effectually check the outrages', Gipps wrote in 1838, 'which, I regret to state, are now of frequent occurrence beyond the boundaries of location'. On the frontier an atmosphere of force and fear prevailed. The Aborigines did not combine, and most of the incidents were small in size. The most infamous incident was the Myall Creek massacre in 1838, when some stockmen and convict-shepherds, goaded by sheep and cattle spearings, brutally shot and burned some twenty-two Aboriginal men, women, and children. Gipps acted swiftly, placed eleven of the offenders on trial for murder and, when they were acquitted, ordered a second trial. Seven were found guilty and condemned to be hanged. The colony was appalled. One magistrate even chaired a meeting to raise money for the defendants. Signatures asking for clemency poured in. But the execution took place in December 1838, and the Colonial Office upheld Gipps.

In 1840 Gipps was required by Downing Street to forward a comprehensive annual report on the entire Aboriginal problem, and he continued to send them for the duration of his administration. These reports furnish vital information. They include reports from the mission stations, the Port Phillip Protectorate, and some eighteen land commissioners. By 1841 Stanley considered the protectorate a failure and doubted the value of mission

stations. His authority to Gipps to discontinue government grants to these missions was implemented in 1843.

Gipps's reports in 1845 and 1846 were pessimistic, giving no sign of improvement in the condition of the Aborigines. Although Gipps often raised the problems of admitting the evidence of Aborigines in court and of their use of firearms, no solutions were reached. Newspaper attitudes to the whole subject tended to reflect the feelings of the dominant class in the community, with editors showing only occasional sympathy for the Aborigines. The protectorate was the most ambitious and comprehensive effort ever made in eastern Australia to civilize, Christianize, and protect the Aborigines. It lasted from 1838 to 1849 and was strongly supported by La Trobe. Besides inadequate financial support, its officers were untrained and even the experienced Robinson was distrusted by Gipps. The final causes of failure, however, were that atrocities continued unabated and that newspapers in Melbourne and Sydney were unrelenting in their criticism. The policy of Whitehall was too idealistic: the heart of the matter, according to James Stephen, was 'the hatred with which the white man regards the black'.

Gipps was vitally interested in exploration during his administration. Strzelecki [q.v.] pushed south through the Australian Alps in 1840 to reach Westernport. Ludwig Leichhardt [q.v.], pushed north and west in 1844 and successfully travelled overland to Port Essington. Sir Thomas Mitchell set out in 1845 to find a practicable route to the Gulf of Carpentaria. He discovered the Victoria River, (Barcoo), and returned after Gipps had left the colony. Angus McMillan [q.v.] made several expeditions into the rugged terrain of the south-east corner of Australia which he named Gippsland.

Throughout his administration the newspapers of the colony constantly attacked Gipps. After a brief honeymoon, the editorials soon hardened into a hostile mould; only rarely was he praised. Nearly all the papers regretted the loss of his skill and brilliance in debate, when he could no longer participate in the council's meetings after 1842, but nearly all the editors supported the council's struggle for fiscal control of the colony. They painted Gipps as a creature of the Crown, opposed to colonial interests. They presented the squatting struggle in this light. By 1846 they were sympathetic and concerned with Gipps's ill health, but otherwise continued their hostility and often focused on the governor's personal weaknesses. A few

days before he left, the *Sydney Morning Herald* stated its firm conviction 'from the matured observation of eight years that . . . Sir George Gipps has been the worst Governor New South Wales ever had'.

On 11 July 1846 Gipps sailed from Sydney a very sick man. He did not wait for his successor, Sir Charles FitzRoy, who arrived in August. In letters to La Trobe that year, Gipps had mentioned his health more and more. On 8 May he had written: 'I cannot even get up the long staircase in the house without making a halt or two on the way'. He even mentioned in public that the strain of governing had been too much for him. Five months at sea failed to revive him; in London he was put under immediate medical care, which prescribed complete rest; even writing and visits to the Colonial Office were not permitted. Gipps was delighted to be reunited with his son, whom he had sent back to school in England in 1843. He wrote to La Trobe that he and Lady Gipps had 'found our boy everything which the fondest parents could wish'. Gipps appeared to improve remarkably. Then on 28 February 1847 he had a fatal heart attack. He was survived by his wife and only son, Reginald Ramsay Gipps, who became a general in the army and was knighted.

A memorial to Gipps is at Canterbury Cathedral. In his portrait in the Mitchell Library, the keen black eyes and bushy eyebrows are arresting, the face intelligent, shrewd and handsome, the chin firm and decisive. The perceptive Lady Franklin [q.v.], on a visit to Sydney in 1839, described him as somewhat peppery, straightforward and frank when asked questions but asking none himself. She also noted that he was good-hearted, laughed little and was utterly devoted to his wife. He was regular in his devotions in the Anglican church, though he admitted that Bishop Broughton's sermons were too much for him, and that he occupied his thoughts with his official dispatches. Gipps was certainly governed by high principles, a strong sense of justice, and unostentatious generosity. He was blessed with a logical mind and had a sharply analytical bent, a sense of detail, and unimpeachable moral character. Like many very intelligent people, he was impatient and somewhat irascible. His private letters to La Trobe reveal a whimsical sense of humour, quite absent from his official letters, and a deep quality of warm and loyal friendship. They also reveal his health problems: headaches, sick spells, malaria, and finally a heart condition. Above all, he was a prodigious worker. This propensity for putting tremendous labour into everything

helped to make him an able administrator. It is revealed in the terse and practical minutes he wrote on the local colonial secretary papers, now in the Mitchell Library, every one of which he read with scrupulous care. His acquaintance with the machinery of government was unusual. He was not afraid to criticize, to use his authority, or to make decisions. He clearly discerned the colony's potentialities, yet understood what could and could not be achieved. He was personally acquainted with many of the officials in the colony. He was always efficient, and he wanted his orders carried out promptly. Gipps hated delay. Above all, he coupled his amazing command of detail with a wider perspective of viewing policy as a whole. He kept in mind over-all objectives and could consider the government's long-range policy. A final facet of his administrative ability was his capacity for gathering able subordinates around him, and for winning their loyal support. On Australia's roll of governors his name must rank high.

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SAMUEL CLYDE MCCULLOCH

GISBORNE, HENRY FYSHE (1813-1841), domestic servant, was born on 1 October 1813, the second son of Thomas Gisborne Edge Hall, Chapel-en-le-Frith, a Whig landowner for Stafford, England, and country gentleman with business interests in Manchester, and his first wife Elizabeth Edge, née Palmer.

Gisborne was at Harrow School (1826-31) and at Eton (1829-31); he entered Trinity College, Cambridge, in 1831 and graduated without a degree. Arriving in Sydney in 1834 he was appointed by Governor Macquarie as the third police magistrate next year.

Resigning after two years through ill health he accepted an invitation to become Bourke's private secretary, because he 'did not think it proper to refuse'. When Bourke left the colony in October 1837 Gisborne was appointed police magistrate in the Wellington valley on the road from Bathurst to the western plains. Later, at an official inquiry into the rivalry between settlers and missionaries at Wellington, Gisborne's evidence showed him a clear thinker and a fluent speaker.

In 1839 Gisborne was appointed commissioner of crown lands in the Port Phillip District. In August he began his ride from Sydney to Melbourne with troopers, servants, government horses and forty mares for sale in Melbourne. In September 1839 the cavalcade reached Melbourne.

Gisborne was the sole commissioner and his district was enormous for one man: his duties involved long rides and much camping out, conditions he liked, thinking them good for his health. Between excursions he took a leading part in various activities of the growing town of Melbourne. He was a founder of the Mechanics' Institute, now the Athenaeum Library, and of the Pastoral and Agricultural Society. An accomplished horseman, he took part in race-meetings and in the decision to transfer them from Batman's Hill to Flemington. At the request of Count Strzelecki [q.v.] Gisborne wrote the first published report of the explorer's Gippsland journey and defended him ardently against claims that Angus McMillan [q.v.] had discovered that country first.

Before sending Gisborne to Port Phillip, Governor Gipps had 'thought him an active and intelligent fellow', but he became vexed by Gisborne's sociableness. La Trobe was bidden to give Gisborne a hint that 'it brings discredit on the Government to see his name figuring in the newspapers as a Steward at Races and at Balls when he ought to be otherwise employed' and that he might be replaced. La Trobe is unlikely to have conveyed the hint: when the governor's letter came, Gisborne was very ill. In May 1840 he resigned and became free to use his last energies in urging support for a petition for the separation of Port Phillip from New South Wales. He drafted the petition, and at the public meeting on 13 June made what the *Port Phillip Herald* called 'the speech of the day', before his voice failed. Later that month he left Melbourne for Sydney where, before sailing for England, he interviewed Gipps about the petition. When his ship reached India he disembarked. He