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Lachlan Macquarie in Russia¹

Despite the abundance of works in Australian and British historiography devoted to the life and career of Lachlan Macquarie, there is as yet no specialist study of the ‘Russian chapter’ in his biography: his journey through Russia from Astrakhan to St Petersburg in 1807.² At the same time, the story of the future governor’s sojourn in Russia is of interest not only for the light it casts on this little-known phase of his life; there is a sense in which it had a significant impact on the relationship between Britain’s Australian colonies and the Russian Empire in the first years of contact between the two countries. As Macquarie’s Australian biographer Robin Walsh has argued,³ the events which befell him in 1807 require closer investigation.

Macquarie, at that time a 45-year-old lieutenant in the British army, undertook his Russian journey on his way home from India. He was in some haste to take up a new appointment, and also to marry his fiancée Elizabeth Campbell as soon as possible. Accompanying him were his servant George Jarvis and two fellow-officers, George William Brande, a lieutenant, and William Thomas of the Medical Corps.⁴ The journey, it should be said, took place at a time of international crisis: Napoleon was continuing his triumphant advance over the European continent, while the alliance of his enemies (Britain, Prussia, Russia and Sweden) sustained defeat after defeat. In October 1806 the Prussian army had been virtually annihilated at Jena and Auerstadt, while his victory over the Russians at Friedland in June 1807 had allowed Bonaparte to occupy East Prussia

¹ This article was completed when the author held the post of Visiting Scholar in the School of Languages and Comparative Cultural Studies at the University of Queensland under the Australian Academy of the Humanities Visiting Scholar Programme. The author is further indebted to Robin Walsh, of the Lachlan Macquarie Collection, Macquarie University Library, and Yuri Dmitrievich Aksionov, former Consul-General of the Russian Federation in Sydney, for their assistance in gathering material and preparing the article for publication.

² A short article, ‘Gubernator Laklan Makuori i russkie’, by Elena Govor, appeared in the Sydney-based Russian language journal *Avstraliada*, 1996 (9), 1–4.

³ Robin Walsh, ‘1807: The Unknown Lachlan Macquarie’, *History: The Magazine of the Royal Australian Historical Society*, 86 (2005), 6–7.

⁴ See J. Ritchie, *Lachlan Macquarie: A Biography* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1988), 83.

and approach the Russian border. Influenced by French diplomacy and the desire to avenge its defeat in the Russo-Turkish War of 1787–1791, Turkey declared war on Russia in 1806. As an ally of Russia under the terms of the anti-French alliance, Great Britain entered the conflict on her side, and in February 1807 the Anglo-Turkish War began. A British naval expedition under Admiral Duckworth to Istanbul failed to force Turkey to comply with the ultimatum that she cease hostilities with Russia, cede the fortifications in the Dardanelles to Britain and break off relations with France. Duckworth was obliged to withdraw from the Sea of Marmora. In March 1807 London despatched another expedition to Egypt, a Turkish dependency, but this also ended in failure when the Egyptian ruler Muhammed Ali drove the British out in September. In spring 1807 Napoleon had tried to open up a new front in his battle with Britain and Russia. In May he signed a treaty with Persia by which the latter was to sever relations with Britain and (with French assistance) increase its efforts in the war it had been waging with Russia since 1804 for control over its Transcaucasian territories. It was only after considerable diplomatic efforts that Britain was able by the beginning of 1809 to end the alliance between Napoleon and the Persians.

Inevitably, this complex international situation forced certain changes in the travel plans of Macquarie and his companions. Leaving Bombay in March 1807, they arrived in Basra on 22 April. Here Macquarie learned of the outbreak of war between great Britain and Turkey and reconsidered his original intention of travelling overland to Istanbul and thence by ship to England. On 9 May his party arrived in Baghdad, where they were joined by Major Robert O'Neill of the 56th Infantry. They continued on to Qazvin and the Persian port of Anzali on the Caspian Sea. From there they sailed along the western coast of the Caspian, arriving in Baku on 30 June 1807.⁵ Their stay in the Russian-controlled city was longer than planned, for Baku had only recently (in October 1806) been occupied by Russian forces in the course of the ongoing war with Persia, and all foreigners were regarded with some suspicion. However, the Russian commander, Major-General Gavrila Petrovich Guriev, treated the new arrivals with every consideration, allowing them to continue on their way to Astrakhan and even issuing them with a health certificate; this could have proved useful, since in Astrakhan arriving travellers were at once placed in quarantine. The area was in the grip

⁵ Lachlan Macquarie, *Journal*, Mitchell Library ML: A771: 19 March, 22 April, 8 May, 30 June 1807.

of a fever epidemic, and there were cases of the plague. The travellers left Baku only on 5 July, making their way to one of the inlets on the Apsheron peninsula to board a trading vessel whose owner had engaged to take them to Astrakhan. Due to storms and unfavourable winds, the voyage took longer than usual, and the vessel reached the estuary of the Volga only on 18 July. It was then that Macquarie set foot for the first time on actual Russian territory.⁶

In the early eighteenth century, Russia still lagged far behind the leading European powers. Its industry was underdeveloped, its economy was based on agriculture, and most of the cultivated land belonged to hereditary landowners and was worked by enserfed peasants whose lot was little different from that of slaves. Politically, it was an absolute monarchy whose subjects enjoyed no political or civil rights; tyranny and despotism at the highest levels – in degree depending only on the personality of the emperor – were matched by the arbitrariness of local bureaucracy. Governors and even minor provincial officials considered themselves virtually omnipotent masters of the territories entrusted to them. Their administrations were marked by inertia and overcaution in making decisions, each functionary anxious to agree with his immediate superior. Servility in the face of authority was a deeply engrained tradition, as much as the universal xenophobia which reflected both the ignorance of most of the population and the inbred Russian distrust of the whole non-Orthodox world. At the same time, since the reign of Peter I Russia had been a European power with considerable military might and aspirations to an active international role. As regards the culture and lifestyle of the educated classes, the process of Europeanization begun under Peter was already far advanced; alongside Russian, French was the *lingua franca* of the nobility, and Russian high culture in all its forms had developed entirely within the European tradition. It was this bizarre combination of traditional oriental despotism and European modernity which particularly struck Macquarie as he made his way through Russia. The impressions recorded in his journal entries enables us to follow in some detail the vicissitudes that marked his progress.

His problems began in Astrakhan. The future governor and his companions were not allowed into the city itself, and their medical certificate was disregarded. They were detained in quarantine in one of the villages at the mouth of the Volga. Although Macquarie wrote several letters to the Governor of Astrakhan request-

⁶ Macquarie, *Journal*, 5 and 18 July 1807.

ing some reduction in their quarantine, he received not a single answer. ‘My patience... [is] now almost exhausted in consequence of our cruel detention here and not receiving any answer to our Letters to the Governor’, he notes in his diary on 2 August.⁷ Only on 12 August, when the official quarantine period expired, were Macquarie and his companions allowed to move on. Two days later, he arrived in Astrakhan and applied for a travel warrant.⁸ This was a document in which were recorded the name of the traveller, the purpose of his journey, the details of his proposed route and his destination; it also authorised the use of a prescribed number of post horses. In the case of foreigners, travel warrants were issued by senior officials (generally the provincial governor) and used by the police to register the whereabouts of non-Russians in the Empire.

Having been issued with the necessary papers, Macquarie and his servant resumed their travels on 16 August, his other companions have elected to make their own way. His expectation was to reach St Petersburg within 12 days, with only the minimum of stops along the way, but in fact the journey across the expanses of Russia in a simple *kibitka* (covered wagon) took much longer: across the Kalmyk steppes to Tsaritsyn, then through the steppeland of the Don to Novokhopersk, and further to Tambov, Ryazan, Kolomna and Moscow. Departing the former capital on 1 September, Macquarie finally arrived in Petersburg on 6 September 1807.⁹ The reason for the delays is to be found not only in the wretched condition of the Russian roads, but also and more often in the exhausting negotiations with Russian officials. In almost every town the traveller was subjected to leisurely and time-consuming enquiries as to the purpose of his journey, and each time his travel permit had to be endorsed. If at first these tiresome checks were merely formal in character, then Macquarie’s real ordeal began after Kolomna, where he arrived on the evening of 23 August. This was the consequence of the significant change in Russia’s foreign policy which followed her defeat at the Battle of Friedland the previous month. Alexander I was left with no choice but to sign the Treaty of Tilsit, which transformed Russia in to virtual ally of Napoleon. Under its terms, Russia was to attempt to broker a peace between Great Britain and France, but in the event of the failure of this mission undertook to sever relations with the

⁷ Macquarie, *Journal*, 2 August 1807.

⁸ Macquarie, *Journal*, 12 and 14 August 1807.

⁹ Macquarie, *Journal*, 16 August, 1 and 6 September 1807.

former and join the continental blockade. Relations between Britain and Russia at once became strained, and in each country the nationals of the other became objects of particular suspicion.

By the time Macquarie arrived in Kolomna, news of the Tilsit agreement and the change in Anglo-Russian relations (of which he himself remained in ignorance) had apparently reached the Russian provinces. Acting on instructions from Petersburg, local officials seized his passport and despatched it to the Governor-General of Moscow, who was required to check it and grant permission for the traveller to continue his journey. Macquarie was even forbidden to leave his wagon, where he was obliged to spend the night under guard by two drunken soldiers.¹⁰ In Kolomna, although allowed to stay at the hotel, he was obliged to mark time for a week until his papers and travel permit arrived back from Moscow. In Liubertsy, just outside Moscow, the process was repeated: his documents were again confiscated and sent for checking to Moscow, and a whole day was lost. Finally, at the very gates of the city, his passport was taken for the third time. Naturally enough, such treatment infuriated the Scot, and his diary is full of increasingly bitter imprecations against the Russian bureaucracy: '[this] is a severe disappointment to me', 'cruel and very unjust detention', 'my situation here [is] extremely mortifying indeed', 'I... [am] heartily tired of the Russian Police', 'extremely mortified and perplexed'.¹¹ What most outraged him was the fact the functionaries who began by being haughty and rude changed their tune as soon as his travel documents arrived, falling over themselves to be polite and even openly fawning on him. In Kolomna, for example, they would not let him leave before he had dined with the garrison commander Captain Dashkov, whose prisoner he was. Another whole day was wasted.¹² At the same time, it should be underlined that, despite being picked on by the Russian authorities, Macquarie nowhere even hints that he was ever accused or suspected of being a spy. Glyn Barratt's assertion that Macquarie was detained in Kolomna on suspicion of espionage remains conjecture, unsubstantiated by any documentary evidence.¹³

¹⁰ Macquarie, *Journal*, 23 August 1807.

¹¹ Macquarie, *Journal*, 15, 23 and 29 August, 10 September 1807.

¹² Macquarie, *Journal*, 29 August 1807.

¹³ See G. R. V. Barratt, *The Russians and Australia (Russia and the South Pacific 1696-1840, Volume 1)* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1988), 72.

Anxious to complete his journey in the shortest possible time, Macquarie had no intention of making any close study of the country through which he passed, and the notes in his diary are brief and to-the-point. They do, however, give us some idea of what Russia looked like to a British army officer of mature years and wide experience. Thus, in his brief account of the journey from Baku to Astrakhan, he not only describes the natural beauty of the Caucasus and the abundance of wildlife in the Caspian, but also mentions that Baku, a small town surrounded by a double ring of walls, as yet has no military fortifications.¹⁴ Noting that the water in the Caspian is not too salty – no doubt because of the volume of fresh water flowing into it from the surrounding rivers – he goes on to observe that in estuarine areas fresh water can be drawn directly from the sea up to a distance of several leagues: ‘We drank and used the water of the Caspian and found it perfectly fresh.’ He also records that the oilfields of the Apsheron peninsula are beginning to be exploited, and that sturgeon is one of the major exports of the region.¹⁵

Of the countryside between Astrakhan and St Petersburg he has little enough to say: thus, his impressions of the right bank of the lower Volga amount only to ‘flat, sandy, and very barren’ land ‘and only here and there a few scattered Kalmuck... villages’.¹⁶ In these parts only the German colonists’ settlement of Sarepta, at the confluence of the Volga and the river Sarepta wins his approval, the carefully tended fields and neat houses of ‘this pretty little well built town’ perhaps reminding him of his native Scotland.¹⁷ The area between the Volga and the Don – the distance between them at its narrowest he erroneously estimates to be only 50 miles¹⁸ – and the lands of the Don Cossacks he found more appealing: ‘a fine view of the great River Don... a pretty variegated Country of Hills and dales’.¹⁹ He pays considerable attention to agricultural activity in the countryside he passes through. He notes ‘large Drovers of Horses and numerous Herds of Black Cattle’ in Kalmykia, ‘extensive Fields of Corn and Grass’ in the Don region, ‘rich and well cultivated’ land promising ‘a most plentiful Harvest’

¹⁴ Macquarie, *Journal*, 1 July 1807.

¹⁵ Macquarie, *Journal*, 5 July 1807; Memorandum of 2 August 1807.

¹⁶ Macquarie, *Journal*, 16 August 1807.

¹⁷ Macquarie, *Journal*, 18 August 1807.

¹⁸ Macquarie, *Journal*, 19 August 1807. The distance is in fact approximately 100 km or 63 miles.

¹⁹ Macquarie, *Journal*, 19 August 1807.

of wheat not far from Tambov.²⁰ The closer he approaches central Russia, the traveller records, the denser the distribution of population, and the fields are full of people – almost certainly bonded serfs – gathering in the harvest. He is pleased to note that ‘the Roads also now improve daily for Travelling’ as his journey takes him nearer the main centres.²¹

Macquarie has even less to say about the towns along his route, trying to spend in them as little time as possible. He writes only that Tsaritsyn (Volgograd) is ‘a small Fortified Russian Town’, that ‘Novochopersk’ [Novokhopersk] is ‘very romantically and beautifully situated on a Hill’, while Tambov is ‘full of churches, but the other buildings [are] mean’.²² He says little even of Moscow, where he spent virtually only one day, although his comments are complimentary:

As my time did not permit of my seeing a twentieth part ... [of this] ancient grand City,... I cannot attempt to give any description of it. It is certainly, however, a most elegant city, and one of the largest in the World.²³

Only the ‘new’ capital, St Petersburg, where he spent five days, rated a more detailed description. As the European face of Russia, it could not but delight him: ‘a most elegant City which is certainly by far the finest and most beautiful I have ever yet seen’. The broad Neva ‘with elegant Bridges of Boats across each Branch’, the ‘extensive and beautiful’ Summer Gardens, the palaces and the Mikhailovsky Castle, ‘particularly striking... in their outward appearance’ all made a profound impression on him. ‘I was highly gratified with the sight of the magnificent Galleries, fine Paintings, and beautiful Spacious Apartments in that part of the Emperor’s Winter Palace called the Hermitage’, and also with ‘the Statue of Peter the Great on Horseback, climbing up a huge Rock of Granite, situated in the great square of this magnificent City’.²⁴

In St Petersburg Macquarie presented himself to the British Ambassador, Lord Granville Leveson-Gower, who brought him up to date with events in Europe. Macquarie learned of the Peace of Tilsit, to which (as he writes) ‘Great Britain is invited to accede through the mediation of Russia’. The two men had ‘half

²⁰ Macquarie, *Journal*, 16, 20, 21, 22 August 1807.

²¹ Macquarie, *Journal*, 19, 22 August 1807.

²² Macquarie, *Journal*, 18, 20, 21 August 1807.

²³ Macquarie, *Journal*, 31 August 1807.

²⁴ Macquarie, *Journal*, 6, 8 September 1807.

and (*sic*) hour's private conversation... on the latter subject'.²⁵ The Ambassador gave his countryman some advice as to how he should conduct himself in Russia, and asked him to convey to London some diplomatic mail he had first intended to send with the captain of one of the British vessels then in port in Petersburg. Handing over these despatches a few days later, Leveson-Gower told Macquarie that they were 'of the greatest importance', and requested that on his arrival in London he 'deliver them with the least possible delay'.²⁶ Macquarie also met other members of the Embassy, as well as Lord Hutchinson, the British envoy to Prussia who had recently arrived in the city.

These conversations in St Petersburg may well account for the particular attention with which Macquarie inspected the fortifications of the Russian naval base of Kronstadt, not far from the capital on the island of Kotlin in the Gulf of Finland. Arriving here on 11 September, he wrote in his diary of the shipyards where eight vessels could be built or repaired simultaneously, and of 'the works and grand Batteries around the Town, which are very numerous and very strong', with up to 700 canon deployed for the defence of the port and the city.²⁷ There can be little doubt that information of this kind found its way into Macquarie's journal not only because it was of interest to him as a military man; his biographer John Ritchie believes he had a definite purpose: '[he] kept his eyes and ears open... [and] now endeavoured to gather intelligence of Russian dispositions to convey to Downing Street'.²⁸

In any event, the traveller's journey to Kronstadt, where he was to board the *Calypso* for the voyage to England, had not been without incident. In the best traditions of the Russian bureaucracy, the border guards decided that the passport issued to him by the British consul (Stephen Shairp) was insufficient, and that special permission would have to be obtained from the Petersburg Chief of Police. This was no simple matter, for the official in question had retired to rest (in the middle of the working day!) and none of his subordinates dared to wake him up. Macquarie was obliged to call on Leveson-Gower and ask for his help; he in turn wrote a note requesting the assistance of Count Saltykov, the Russian Foreign Minister. Macquarie took the note to the Minister, was received by him, and the

²⁵ Macquarie, *Journal*, 6 September 1807.

²⁶ Macquarie, *Journal*, 6, 10 September 1807.

²⁷ Macquarie, *Journal*, 11 September 1807.

²⁸ Ritchie, 86.

matter was resolved: when the required document was issued late in the evening of the day of his departure.²⁹

Macquarie left Russia on 13 September 1807. After delays in Sweden and Denmark due to the hostilities in Europe, he arrived home only on 16 October. In London the following day he delivered the dispatches he had brought from Russia to the Foreign Secretary, Lord Canning. The information he conveyed was apparently of some importance, since Canning authorised the payment to him of £750 for his trouble, £250 more than Macquarie had reckoned on receiving.³⁰ Seventeen days after arriving home, Lieutenant-Colonel Lachlan Macquarie was married to Elizabeth Campbell.

His Russian journey produced an ambivalent impression on Macquarie: on the one hand, he certainly suffered from the red tape and pathological suspiciousness of petty officialdom, but at the same time the ‘retentive soil’ (to use Malcolm Ellis’ phrase³¹) of bureaucratic Russia could not conceal from him the attractive side of the country and its people. He never fails to record in his diary instances of the warmth and goodwill shown to him by many individual Russians, or of the help extended to him during his journey. He writes of the ‘true Russian sincerity’ with which the British travellers were received by officers of the Russian garrison in Baku like Naval Lieutenant Vladimir Grigorievich Ushinsky, Second Captain Egor Vasilievich Veselogo and Major Ivan Khristianovich Trusson. Trusson, later a lieutenant-general and Commander of the St Petersburg Engineering Corps, accompanied the Scot on his visits to local officials and acted as his interpreter, while Ushinsky (later an admiral) put him up in his lodgings during his sojourn. Much moved, Macquarie presented his host with his musket and bayonet, and also gave the Russian officers his address in Scotland, ‘in case either themselves or any of their friends should ever have occasion to visit that Country’.³² With obvious emotion he also records his gratitude to the health inspector and the doctor who visited the travellers during their detention in quarantine near Astrakhan. The Russians showed ‘hospitality, great kindness and attention’, and throughout their

²⁹ Macquarie, *Journal*, 10 September 1807.

³⁰ Ritchie, 87.

³¹ M. H. Ellis, *Lachlan Macquarie: His Life, Adventures and Times* (Sydney: Angus and Robertson, 1970), 141.

³² Macquarie, *Journal*, 3, 4 July 1807.

confinement ‘supplied us with everything we wanted’.³³ Macquarie remembered too the warm welcome he received in Kronstadt, where during his two-day stay he was befriended by Second Captain Ivan Petrovich Bunin and Admiral Petr Ivanovich Khanykov, Commander-in-Chief of the naval base.³⁴

It was perhaps such positive recollections of Russia that remained with Macquarie, while all the more painful and less pleasant ones were in time erased from his memory. At all events, Macquarie did not forget the kindness shown to him, and during his term as Governor of New South Wales he was to repay in kind his debt of gratitude to the Russian mariners who arrived in Sydney in the course of their voyages of circumnavigation.

The visits of Russian sailing vessels to the ports of Sydney and Hobart represented the main (if not the only) means of contact between Russian nationals and white Australians in the first third of the nineteenth century, and it was thanks to the Russian Navy that the relationship between the two countries was established and developed. The first Russian ship to anchor in Australian waters was the sloop *Neva*, under the command of Lieutenant Leontii Andrianovich Gagemeister (Hagemeister), which visited Sydney in 1807.³⁵ Between then and 1835, fifteen Russian naval vessels made the voyage to Australia, putting in at Sydney or Hobart on seventeen separate occasions.³⁶ These included ships on expeditions of circumnavigation and vessels chartered by the Russian-American Company to deliver freight to Russian America (the Russian territories in Alaska controlled by the Company). Sydney and Hobart were ports of transit where crews could enjoy shore-leave, fresh supplies of water and provisions could be taken on, and repairs might be carried out. The reception accorded the Russian visitors in the colonies depended on the state of relations between London and St Petersburg, but until the end of the 1820s was generally cordial. During Macquarie’s term as Governor (1810–1821), Russian mariners arriving in New South Wales were assured of a particularly warm welcome, reflecting the nature of his personal feelings for

³³ Macquarie, *Journal*, 12 August 1807.

³⁴ Macquarie, *Journal*, 11, 12 September 1807.

³⁵ See my article ‘The Visit of the Russian Sloop *Neva* to Sydney in 1807: 200 Hundred Years of Russian–Australian Contacts’, *ASEES* 20, 1–2 (2006), 203–214.

³⁶ Alexander Massov, ‘Russian Voyages to Australia in the Honeymoon Period, 1897–1835’, in Alexander Massov, John McNair and Thomas Poole (eds.), *Encounters under the Southern Cross. Two Centuries of Russian–Australian Relations 1807–2007* (Adelaide: Crawford House Publishing, 2007), 29.

them. During these years, the crews of no fewer than five Russian vessels were entertained in Sydney: the Russian American Company's *Suvorov*, under the command of Lieutenant Mikhail Petrovich Lazarev, put in at Sydney in August–September 1814 in the course of a round-the-world voyage, and the vessels of two other Russian expeditions of circumnavigation visited Sydney in 1820. The first of these, comprising the sloops *Otkrytie* and *Blagonamerenny* under the command (respectively) of Mikhail Nikolaevich Vasiliev and Gleb Semenovich Shishmarev, was charged with discovering a sea route between the Atlantic and Pacific oceans, while the second was the celebrated Antarctic expedition of the sloops *Vostok* and *Mirny* under Bellingsgauzen (Bellingshausen) and Lazarev. The *Otkrytie* and *Blagonamerenny* visited Sydney in February–March, while the *Vostok* and *Mirny* expedition (credited with the discovery of Antarctica) was in port there twice that same year – in April–May and September–November.

Already in 1814, the ship's company of the *Suvorov* had observed that the Governor's hospitality exceeded the requirements of official protocol. To be sure, the colonial administration had good reason to give the Russians a warm welcome: they were the first to bring to Australia the long-awaited news of the Allies' occupation of Paris and the overthrow of Napoleon. The occasion was marked by an official celebration in Sydney, and as Aleksei Rossiiskiy, navigator of the *Suvorov*, was to remember: 'it was a sight to behold with what rapture they met us... They forcibly dragged our seamen off to taverns, wining and dining them as brothers'. Lieutenant Semen Unkovsky, the ship's First Officer, noted also the particular consideration shown by the Governor: 'he did all he could to see we had what we needed us and gave orders that ... we be treated as compatriots'.³⁷

The officers of the other expeditions also underline the personal efforts of the Governor to ensure that the Russians received the best possible welcome. 'We had every sign of his goodwill and that of his family', recalled Vasiliev, commander of the *Otkrytie*.³⁸ By Macquarie's command the ships of both expeditions were allowed to stand at anchor off Sydney Town, rather than in Neutral Bay, the usual anchorage for foreign vessels. This distinction was all the more appreciated, as

³⁷ A. Rossiiskiy, 'O prebyvanii korablia *Suvorova* v Novoi Gollandii', *Sorevnovatel' prosveshcheniia i blagotvoreniiia*, 1820, pt 12, bk 11, 131–132; S. Ia. Unkovskiy, *Zapiski moriaka 1803–1819 gg.* (Moscow, izd-vo im. Sabashnikovykh, 2004), 91.

³⁸ M. N. Vasiliev, 'Zapiski o snariazhenii ekspeditsii i plavanii ee do Porta Zhaksona', Russian State Naval Archives (hereafter RGA VMF), *f.* 213, *op.* 1, *d.* 102, *l.* 22.

Bellingsgauzen noted, because Freycinet's French expedition had not been shown the same favour when it visited Sydney at the end of 1819.³⁹ The Governor also saw to it that the Russian expeditions were supplied with fresh water and timber for repairs free of charge. Bellingsgauzen considered it necessary to make special mention of this in his report to Ivan Ivanovich de Traversay, Minister of the Navy: 'All vessels pay large sums of money [for these services], but for all these essential items nothing was taken from us.'⁴⁰

Macquarie also provided invaluable assistance in organizing the scientific expeditions undertaken by Russian mariners during their sojourn in Australia. Not only did he give permission for Fedor Shtein, naturalist on the *Otkrytie*, to explore the Blue Mountains, but (as Shtein himself wrote) 'with the greatest foresight and graciousness'⁴¹ helped to equip the expedition with everything necessary, especially saddle- and pack-horses. The expedition lasted twelve days, during which time the travelers conducted a study of the geology, flora and fauna of the mountains. The British botanist Allan Cunningham, who also took part in the expedition, wrote in his diary that 'every remarkable stone... was examined and the quality of every rill of water ascertained by its sediment'.⁴² By command of the Governor, the members of the expeditions of 1814 and 1820 were allowed to pitch camp on the north shore of Port Jackson near Kirribilli Point, where they set up a workshop for the repair of rigging and sails, as well as a field observatory. Ivan Mikhailovich Simonov, naturalist and astronomer on the voyage of the *Vostok* and *Mirny* (and later professor and rector of Kazan University) in more than 700 observations calculated the latitude and longitude of Sydney with a precision that was recognized by European scientists like Franz Xavier von Zach, who wrote that thenceforth the coordinates of Sydney were 'parfaitement fixés'.⁴³

³⁹ See F. F. Bellingsgauzen, *Dvukratnye izyskaniia v Iuzhnom Ledovitom okeane i plavanie vokrug sveta v prodolzhenie 1817, 20 i 21 godov, sovershennoe na shliupakh 'Vostoke' i 'Mirnom'*. Part I. (St Petersburg, 1831), 242–243. Translated by F. Debenham as *The Voyage of Captain Bellingshausen to the Antarctic Seas, 1819–1821*, Vols 1–2 (London: Hakluyt Society, 1945).

⁴⁰ On the departure of the expedition see RGA VMF f. 166, op. 1, d. 660 pt 2, l. 358. Published in part in M. P. Lazarev, *Dokumenty*, Vol I (Moscow: Gosvoenmorizdat, 1952).

⁴¹ F. Shtein, 'Mineralogicheskie zamechaniia, proizvedennye v Iuzhnom Valisse na puti k Sinim goram', *Trudy Mineralogicheskogo obshchestva v Sankt-Peterburge*, 1830, Pt 1, 442.

⁴² Quoted in Barratt, 103.

⁴³ I. M. Simonoff, 'Observations à Port Jackson dans la Nouvelle Hollande,' in *Corrèspondance astronomique, géohydrographique et statistique du baron de Zach*, 1824, t. 10, No 1, 44.

As well as extending them assistance in his official capacity, Macquarie devoted much of his personal time to the visitors. The Governor and his family, as Simonov wrote, showed the Russians ‘sincere cordiality’ and the desire ‘to make our sojourn in Sydney both useful and pleasant for us’.⁴⁴ To judge from the notes in his diary concerning the visit of the *Otkrytie* and *Blagonamerennyi* in 1821, for example, he saw the Russians almost every day,⁴⁵ and as Elena Govor has observed, the documentary evidence shows how much store he set by ‘the Russians’ appreciation of his reception of them’.⁴⁶ More than once he notes their reaction: ‘The Russian officers expressed themselves very highly pleased’, ‘The Russian officers... went on board... highly delighted’.⁴⁷ He for his part was impressed by the reception he received when visiting the Russian vessels. ‘I was received on board both Ships with the most marked attention and respect’ he writes following a courtesy call on 3 March 1820.⁴⁸ Almost three weeks later, on 23 March, he visited both ships again, this time accompanied by his family. Once more he records how they ‘were most kindly and politely received by their respective Commanders and officers’.⁴⁹

Macquarie considered it his duty to accompany the Russian officers on their excursions around Sydney, as well as to Parramatta and Windsor.⁵⁰ ‘The obliging general afforded us every means of seeing all the amenities of the town, which for the most part are indebted to him for their existence or improvement’ writes Simonov in this regard;⁵¹ he is echoed by Lieutenant Aleksei Lazarev of the *Blagonamerennyi* (younger brother of M. P. Lazarev): ‘Governor Makvari [Macquarie] and his estimable wife received us as their own’, he wrote in his diary. ‘In spite of his advanced years, the good general himself came with us

⁴⁴ I. M. Simonov, *Shliupy Vostok i Mirnyi*. Department of Manuscripts and Rare Books, Kazan University Library, ed. *kh.* 4533, l. 122 ob., 131. Published in part in E. V. Govor, A. Ia. Massov comp., *Rossiiskie moriaki i puteshestvenniki v Avstralii* (Moscow, Vostochnaia literature, 2007), 59–82.

⁴⁵ Macquarie, *Journal*, Mitchell Library ML: A774: 3.4.16.17.18.19.20.22.24.25 March 1820.

⁴⁶ Govor, 1.

⁴⁷ Macquarie, *Journal*, 19, 22 March 1820.

⁴⁸ Macquarie, *Journal*, 3 March 1820.

⁴⁹ Macquarie, *Journal*, 22 March 1820. Although Macquarie himself gives this date, the ship’s logs of the *Otkrytie* and *Blagonamerennyi* make it clear the visit took place on 23 March. See RGA VMF, f. 213, op. 1, d. 65, l. 53; and f. 870, op. 1, d. 3473, l. 113 ob.

⁵⁰ Macquarie, *Journal*, 18, 19 March, 28 April 1820.

⁵¹ Simonov, ed. *kh.* 4533, l. 137.

[to inspect the sights]... They tried by all means to see that we were entertained and occupied.⁵² In Parramatta, where they spent a number of days, they were accommodated in the Governor's own residence. Here, Lazarev recalls, 'we were met by the Governor's wife, who on purpose had arrived there before us and gave us all lodging in her house. Trying to anticipate all our needs, she contrived under the pretext of casual conversation to find out what food Russians prefer, what time of day do they eat etc, and everything was done to oblige us.'⁵³

On the day the *Otkrytie* and *Blagonamerenny* left Sydney, the Macquaries had delivered to the vessels fruit, preserves and liqueurs, which was seen by the Russians as a further unofficial expression of their goodwill.⁵⁴ The departing guests were further impressed when, as they sailed out of Port Jackson into the open sea, they saw to their surprise 'the Governor and his nephew [Hector Macquarie – *A.M.*] standing on the cliffs at South Head, seeing us off, waving their hats and crying "Hurrah!"'. In reply, seamen from the *Otkrytie* were at once ordered to the shrouds and 'five times cried "Hurrah!"'.⁵⁵ Clearly, the Russians took Macquarie's appearance as a sign of special favour, although from his diary it is plain that the Governor and his party had not gone to farewell the Russian ships, but simply noticed them during a tour of inspection of the lighthouse on South Head.⁵⁶

The Russians themselves ascribed Macquarie's friendliness to the fond memories he retained of his visit to Russia. He did not hesitate to share his impressions with his guests, one of them recalling in his unpublished memoirs that 'in 1807 he made the journey from Persia to... Petersburg, [and] tells how he was well received everywhere, and still remembers a few words of Russian'. It is no accident that one of these was *podorozhnaia* [travel warrant], which as Aleksei Lazarev notes in his diary 'was indelibly imprinted in his memory, because he was asked for it at every posting station'.⁵⁷

⁵² A. P. Lazarev, *Zapiski o plavanii voennogo shliupa 'Blagonamerennogo' v Beringov proliv i vokrug sveta dlia otkrytii v 1819, 1820, 1821 i 1822 godakh, vedennye gvardeiskogo ekipazha leitnantom A. P. Lazarevym* (Moscow: Geografizdat, 1950), 151–2.

⁵³ A. P. Lazarev, 152.

⁵⁴ Macquarie, *Journal*, 27 March, 1820; N. D. Shishmarev, *Zapiski (putevoi zhurnal)*, RGA VMF f. 203, op. 1, d. 730b, l. 31 ob.

⁵⁵ Shishmarev, l. 31 ob.; Ship's Log of the sloop *Otkrytie*, RGA VMF f. 213, op. 1, d. 65, l. 55.

⁵⁶ Macquarie, *Journal*, 28 March 1820.

⁵⁷ Vasiliev *Zapiski*, l. 22; A. P. Lazarev, 150.

The cordial reception extended by Macquarie and his family to their Russian visitors in 1814 and 1820 inspired a gratitude that found its expression not only in the official reports of the expedition commanders (Vasiliev, Bellingsgauzen and Lazarev), but also in their personal accounts and in the travel diaries of those who served on their vessels. Such documents were never intended for publication, and so are free of hypocrisy or dissembling. ‘The kindness of this estimable man inspired in us a special respect for him’ writes Lieutenant Unkovsky of the *Suvorov* in his memoirs, while the captain of the *Otkrytie* records: ‘I cannot thank the Governor enough... for his hospitality... It seems the Governor had no occupation but to afford us endless enjoyment; we saw always [evidence of] his friendliness towards us and his unfeigned respect for Russia.’⁵⁸ ‘The name of Governor Macquarie must not be erased from the hearts of any of us’, declares Midshipman Nikolai Shishmarev of the *Blagonamerenny* in his journal;⁵⁹ while Mikhail Lazarev, commander of the *Mirny*, writing privately to his friend Aleksei Shestakov expresses the general consensus: ‘It was not without regret that we left this fine port where, one might say, we were received as true friends or relations.’⁶⁰

The tradition of hospitality to Russian visitors begun by Governor Macquarie in 1814 and 1820 became the rule whenever Russian vessels called at Australian ports. During the next decade until the end of 1820s, when relations between Great Britain and Russia began to cool, Russian seafarers were able to obtain in Sydney or Hobart all the assistance they required to repair and provision their ships, while individual crew members had the opportunity to study life in the Australian colonies without hindrance. The mutual regard which developed between the Russians and the colonists in the years of Macquarie’s governorship and which in many ways sprang from his own sympathy for Russia determined the friendly and practically conflict-free character of Russian–Australian relations in this initial stage of their development.

Translated by John McNair

⁵⁸ Unkovskii, 91.

⁵⁹ Vasiliev, *Zamechaniia*, 226; N. D. Shishmarev, *Zapiski (putevoy zhurnal)*, RGA VMF f. 203, op. 1, d. 730b, l. 31 ob.

⁶⁰ M. P. Lazarev, letter to A. A. Shestakov, 24 September 1821, in *Morskoi sbornik*, 1918 (1), 57.