

# **'FLINDERS - Uncharted Waters'**

*The man who named Australia*

**Tells the true story of British Naval Captain and explorer, Matthew Flinders, seven year imprisonment on the paradise island of Mauritius during the Napoleonic Wars, and his love affair with the daughter of a French plantation owner.**

Matthew Flinders was just 26 when he was given command of the *Investigator* in 1801, and a commission to chart the new territories of the South Pacific that had been discovered 30 years before by Captain James Cook. Without informing the Admiralty he hastily wed his long standing friend, Ann Chappelle, and smuggled her aboard the ship. Such impetuosity incurred the wrath of his benefactor, Sir Joseph Banks, and he was given a stark choice, leave his wife ashore or give up his voyage of discovery.

Two years later, in 1803, having successfully beaten the French in circumnavigating Australia, proving it to be an island continent, FLINDERS, now anxious to get his priceless charts back to the Admiralty in London, sets sail for England as a passenger aboard the *Porpoise*. Tragedy strikes on the Great Barrier Reef. Taking command of the survivors of this and her sister ship, the *Cato*, that also crashed upon the reef, FLINDERS establishes a camp on a remote sandbank deep in the Pacific Ocean. Taking the only lifeboat and a small crew, FLINDERS rows the 720 miles to Sydney, from where he is to mount a rescue.

Returning to 'Wreck Reef' with three ships, FLINDERS, now ever more desperate to get home with those precious charts, that are destined to establish his rightful place in navigational history, embarks for England aboard the smallest, and most unseaworthy vessel of them all, a former spy ship, the *Cumberland*.

In danger of sinking in the middle of the Indian Ocean FLINDERS seeks refuge in the French colony of Mauritius, unaware that war has once more broken out between their two nations. Unable to provide the correct papers FLINDERS is arrested as a spy. Removed to the centre of the island, on his own parole not to venture more than six miles from the perimeter of the plantation, FLINDERS becomes embroiled in the local politics, where the monarchists, who had fled the French revolution, are in almost constant dispute with the despotic rule of Napoleon's henchman, Captain-General DECAEN, the tyrannical Governor of Mauritius.

As the years wear on FLINDERS is lured into an affair with the beautiful DELPHINE d'Arifat, the daughter of the plantation owner where he resides. Torn between her and the love of his wife, Ann, whom FLINDERS had been forced to abandon in England, causes emotional turmoil for a man of honour. A situation complicated by orders received from the British Navy, who are now blockading the island, that FLINDERS engage in real acts of espionage. They want him to furnish them with local charts and details of the French defences. An act his French colonist friends condone, as they too want to see the British oust DECAEN, leaving them free to build an independent nation.

With the British determined to take the island and Flinders torn between loyalties to his country, his French friends and his love for two women, as well as his overwhelming desire to be acknowledged as a great explorer, he is in a quandary about what to do; his fate is the balance...

On the eve of the Battle of Grand Port, the only French naval victory over the British, DECAEN has FLINDERS despatched to Cape Town, forcing an emotional separation from DELPHINE, but an eventual reunion with his wife from whom he had been separated for over nine years. And, it was in Cape Town, during his debriefing, that FLINDERS set down the basis of the treaty that was to see Mauritius capitulate to Britain upon terms that not only survive to this day, but were also applauded by Napoleon himself, as the best treaty he had seen.

**This is a story of forgotten values, honour and chivalry, war and love set against a steamy tropical backdrop, and the epic events that created a new nation.**

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