DIARY OF JAMES BELBIN for the years 1808 to 1810, in the possession of Mr. L. S. Rogers of Alma Road Lower Sandy Bay.

4th June 1808. City of Edinburgh arrived off Norfolk Island.

3rd September. Embarked on board.

Sept. 9. Took departure from island.

28th Sept. Arrived off Van Diemen’s Land.


Oct. 3 1808. Landed at Hobart Town.

5 Oct. 1808. Victualled from the Stores.


1809. May 21st. Mr. Knowlwood read Col. Paterson’s Proclamation and a General Order enforcing the same by Col. Collins. (It was also read in the Lumber Yard).

The same —— sent an address to His Excellency C. Bligh signed by many of the Norfolk settlers.

March 31st. His Majesty’s ship Porpoise with Govr. Bligh and brought back the Hunter with her. Govr. Bligh landed and was saluted with the Great Guns but did not remain on shore to dine with Govr. Collins.

April 4. At night 7 men ran away belonging to the Porpoise, taking with them her Jolly Boat—destination not known.

6. Porpoise Boat found 2 men taken the same night.
24. Monday morning about 8 o'clock was forcibly dragged from my children and my dwelling by Mr Lord and a written address left in my hands for the signature of the loyal settlers and inhabitants of Norfolk Island and address to Excellly W.Bligh Esq Govr Chief was also forcibly taken from me and myself kicked and thrown down in the mud and otherwise ill-treated on the road to the Guard House by the aforesaid Mr Lord, who delivered me in charge to 2 of the Stroes of the names of the Younger Taylor and who conducted me to the Guard House. There I was given in charge to Sergeant Angel as a Mutineer with the prohibition of not suffering me to speak to any person but my children and the said Mr Lord saying he would hang me for a Mutineer—where I remained until Wednesday morning 26 of April between 11 and 12 o'clock I was discharged by the Rev Rich(sic) Knopwood Esq, the said Edwd Lord Esq sitting as a Magistrate on condition of my not sending written letters or addresses to His Exc W.Bligh without first showing them to his honor Govr Collins Esq, agreeable to a General Order issued the day before 25 April, which I acceded to.

Mr Knopwood behaved as a gentleman acting with candour and impartially. Mr Lord turbulent and prejudiced against me, upbraided me with once being a convict which sarcasm retorted on himself.
Tuesday 23 May. After sitting as one of the Jurors on the body Boyd who was found dead the same morning I retired to spend the evening with Thos R. Crowder another of the Jurors, when on returning home about half an hour past eight o'clock I was met by Mr Knopwood and the Military Patrols, when I was confined to the Guard House from half past eight o'clock till after six o'clock the next evening when I was discharged by the order of Govr Collins without even being brought before a Magistrate. The charge laid against me was for being out after hours by Mr Knopwood, tho' I behaved myself in a becoming and orderly manner and accounted to him where I had been. Went on board the Porpoise to see His Excelly Govr Bligh and had an interview with His Excelly, the first time of speaking to His Excelly.

Oct 3. Heard Mr C mention the particulars of the Spirits run by L and C at Newtown from the L Barlow and lodged at Mr W-h-ds.

Note. At this time kangaroo meat was being issued from the Store instead of flour.
1809. Oct 12th. Farmer Tom free Settler from England punished for
from writing a contumelious letter to G Collins at the time
of punishment Govr Collins in the hearing of Thos Gay and
Jos Peck expressed himself in the most malignant manner to
W. Collins Sup't that Crowder and Belbin ought to have been
there as deserving of the same punishment.

23 Oct. Mr K called to look at the house and began a conversation
with me respecting the Bondage Spirits landed from the
Barlow being all gone.

26 Oct. (Survey ordered by Collins of the Public Store, and deficien-
cies, and some stores condemned)

Nov 7. Committed to the Guard House by Mr Harris on a False Charge
of Insolence because I thought proper to correct my daughter
Sarah for a fault the evening before.

Dec 4. Brought before a Bench of Magistrates Messrs K and L and G
being held in confinement from my children till that time
altho Thos O, B, and G Porter, settlers offered bail for me,
which was refused. The same day was sentenced to receive
500 lashes by Lt G Collins order for denying Col P Proclama-
tion and because I would not acknowledge any person but H.E
W.B. Esq as the Govr in Chief without a legal cause for
changing my opinion, but owing to the distress state of mind
I laboured under from being confined 27 days from my mother
less children I was rendered incapable of receiving but 50
lashes and was afterwards held in confinement till Monday
the 15th of Jany 1810 when I was brought before Mr K and H
and dismissed after being confined for 10 weeks wanting 1 day, during which time was prohibited from speaking to any person but my children, and during my unfortunate confinement my daughter Elizabeth was seduced by W. Sherrard which information I did not receive till the 9th of Decr in the evening 1809, tho the seduction took place a few nights after my confinement by Mr Harris. 23rd my son James received a hurt that obliged me to apply for medical assistance and to keep him in the Guard House with me till I was liberated.

1810. Jany 3rd. Sailed H.M. Ship Porpoise for Pt Jackson with His Ex W.B. Esq- the next day my children was locked out of the house I was billeted in when my children Kitty Susan and James was obliged to lay in the God House with me. 10th. Application was made to me for my daughter Kitty by B. Edgington through the channel of J. Michaels for her to live at Govt House to nurse her daughter's young child, when I denied her going, which was the means of prolonging my confinement till the 15th, as Sergt Davis told me that the Govr meant to release me that day, only that I denied him my daughter.


July 2. Confin'd in the Guard House.

4. Punished by the sentence of the Court 300 lashes and 2 years fine for sticking up a Paper with the Settlers thanks for the impartial conduct of Capt
Belbin family

James Belbin  born Feb 11th 1771
Mary Ann Merridith  Feb 10 1773
Elizabeth Belbin  Feb 26 1775
Sarah Belbin  Jan 29 1797
Harriott & Catherine  Sept 12 1798
Susannah Belbin  June 27 1805
James Belbin  Aug 30 1803
Mary Brooks Belbin  July 31 1807

Left at Norfolk Island with her mother.

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Ann Merridith Belbin died in childbed May 31 1806, aged 35 year.

Harriott Belbin Twin died June 13 1805 aged 6 yrs 9 mths 7 days.
Both buried at Norfolk Island.
1. Victualling Order dated 29 April 1814.

"Vicual James Belbin wife & son a new Settler for 15 months
from this day and then discharge them without further orders.
(signed) T. Davey
Lt Govr."

A True Copy
of the Victualling Order
Received."

2. 12 Sept 1840. Letter from J. Belbin to (addressee not stated)
re fees &c received by him as Inspector at the Slaughter
House under the Slaughtering Acts of 1817 and 1830.

3. Testimonials (copies only) dated 1843 in connection with Belbin's
application for a Pension. From the following - all highly
laudatory:

Sir J.L. Bedder, who says he had lived opposite B
in Macquarie St for 14 years.

H. Forster
W. Fletcher
Wm. Kermode
C. Swanston
John Kerr
G.T. Boyes.