

Author's Note

Dear Reader,

Welcome!

While I have been a storyteller and an avid reader all my life, it took me until now to share this, my first novel, with the world. It is an historically based story but does not pretend to be history.

The major events described within this narrative, however, did happen, and most of the characters existed. How these people's interactions may have influenced the outcome of history, is the tale told within these pages.

The novel is set some two hundred years ago at the end of the Napoleonic Wars. After two decades of conflict, the sudden demobilisation of the British military machine created social and economic upheaval throughout Britain, where many now-unemployed, former military professionals began pursuing alternate careers throughout the British Empire.

As an example of an event that is historically correct, and that occurs early in the story, the East India Company's ship, the *Cumberland*, did sail out of Portsmouth in January 1816 bound for Bombay (now known as Mumbai), India, and the captain was one Thomas Hutton Wilkinson. The *Cumberland* made landfall in Cape Town, South Africa, for supplies before sailing north along the east coast of Africa during April of that year, arriving in Bombay in late May 1816.

The weather conditions during the voyage are not well detailed, and the extent that fluctuations in the weather during the trip may have influenced future world events is where this chronicle begins its journey.

I sincerely hope you enjoy reading this book as much as I have enjoyed writing it.

If you're interested in knowing more about me and where this story originated, I invite you to join me in my new digital basecamp:

www.philsmartauthor.com.au

Phil Smart