Land Hunger: Belfast, 1851

By Glen Foster

Belfast, Port Fairy.

Published by Sands & Kenny, Melbourne & Sydney. 1857.

An historical game using role-play and cards for 7 players from upper Primary school to adults.

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INTRODUCTION

'Fun with Local History' Series

An education series exploring European settlement in Australia through game playing and hypothetical scenarios that incorporate factual events and real characters from the times. The series combines role playing scripts with card games to explore key aspects of the life and times of European settlement in Melbourne, Portland, Port Fairy and Warrnambool.

The series is consistent with the Victorian and Australian Curricula for History. Teachers may also find the contents useful in other subject areas such as Drama, English, Geography and Mathematics.

The usual poetic license has been taken in the development of the scripts. Two crossword puzzles based on each scripted game are provided. For more information about this material contact Glen Foster at: gfoster2@me.com

About the Game – Land Hunger: Belfast, 1851

The setting of this game is the Victorian coastal township of Port Fairy or Belfast as it was known in 1851. The aims of the game are to:

- find out about the early European settlement in Belfast and have fun with history;
- accumulate wealth by investing in town land and local produce, discovering gold, avoiding fine and bushrangers; and
- eliminate the other players and win the game.

Each player takes on the role of one or more pioneers depending on player availability. Each character's lines are colour-coded to help players see when it is their turn to speak. If players would like to imitate an English, Irish, Scots or Aussie accent when speaking their lines, the script will help, somewhat!

Each player has a mathematically equal chance of winning the game – no matter how many players are playing the game.

Before reading the script, it is recommended that players read through the short history of Port Fairy that can be found on the Port Fairy Historical Society website: www.historicalsociety.port-fairy.com

PLAYERS

List of characters and their accents

- **Sir Charles Fitzroy**, *Governor of New South Wales*: aristocratic English accent.

- **Charles La Trobe**, *Lieutenant Governor of Victoria*: aristocratic English accent.

- **William Rutledge**, *entrepreneur*: Irish accent.

- **Eliza Rutledge**, *wife of William Rutledge*: Irish accent.

- **Charles Mills**, *ex-whaler and farmer*: Aussie accent.

- **John Ritchie**, *squatter*: Scottish accent.

- **James Atkinson**, *land investor*: Irish accent.

Character profiles

<u>Sir Charles Fitzroy</u>, *<u>Governor of New South Wales</u>*:

I arrived with my wife and second son in Sydney on 2 August 1846. In 1847 my wife was tragically killed in a carriage accident and I suffered leg injuries. As the Governor of New South Wales, I have been given credit for my tact, humanity and moderation. But I agree that I also had a jolly high opinion of myself and was self-indulgent. I returned to England in 1855 and died in 1858, aged 61.

<u>Charles La Trobe</u>, *<u>Lieutenant Governor of Victoria</u>*:

I was a man of a thousand occupations: I was a botanist, a geologist, a hunter of beetles and butterflies, an amateur musician, a half decent sketcher, and a sports tragic. I loved riding horses and walking through the countryside and enjoyed over 90 journeys in Victoria. Although accused of being indecisive I faced challenging issues such as a lack of money given to the district by our Government in Sydney, the possible resumption of transportation and the gold rush. I married twice and fathered six children. In 1854, I sailed back to England. I died in 1875, aged 74. By Jove!

<u>William, Rutledge</u>, *<u>entrepreneur, and his wife</u>*, **Eliza**:

Ahh, to be sure, I was born in Ireland in 1806 and arrived in Sydney in 1829. In 1840, I married Eliza Kirk and we had two sons and five daughters. In 1862 my competitors caused my firm Rutledge & Co. to become insolvent while I was away in England. This had a devastating effect on Belfast's progress and allowed Warrnambool to surge ahead. I left Belfast and lived on my farm, taking an interest in the progress of Warrnambool. But I made another fortune breeding Lincoln sheep.

I never fully recovered from an accident when I fell off a buggy. I died in 1876, aged 70. My wife **Eliza** was 'beloved for her kindness and hospitality' - and she had to put up with 'Terrible Billy' too. Eliza died on our farm in 1888, aged 68. Life is the game that must be played. Fiddly dee!

Charles Mills, *ex-whaler and farmer*:

Maates, I hunted whales until about 1846 when I obtained a grazing licence for 416 acres near Belfast. I grew wheat and potatoes and grazed cattle and sheep on my 'Woodbine' farm and was the go-to man when there was a wreck in the bay and people and cargo needed rescuing. I died suddenly in 1855 on my farm, at the age of 43, leaving my wife and seven children. Yeah! Me older bro, Captain Johnny Mills, became the town's first Harbour Master and Pilot. He continued to live in Belfast until 1871 when he moved to Echuca where he died in 1877, aged 67. Yeah!

John Ritchie, *squatter*:

Och aye, in 1839 I brought 2,000 wee sheep and two ex-convicts from Launceston to Port Fairy. My selection of 26,000 acres was between the Shaw and Moyne Rivers and was called 'Aringa'. But the land was too wet for sheep anyway so I had to change to wee cattle, which I later sold. I disliked horse-riding and active station work so I rented out my wee land and lived off the proceeds. I sold my property and returned to Scotland. After returning from Scotland I settled on another property. I became a wee Magistrate and Councillor in Belfast. When I was 51, I married 18-year-old Sarah Davis and we had seven wee children. I died in Belfast in 1887, at the age of 86.

James Atkinson, *land investor*:

I travelled around the colony and regularly sailed back to England and Ireland. I donated money and land to the town and worked to establish Belfast as a prominent town and port. But there's little information about me and no known portrait or photograph of me has ever been found. I married my cousin Emily Macartney and we had eleven children. After returning to Australia from Ireland in 1864 I died in Sydney later that year, aged 60. My family returned to Ireland. In 1887 the name of my town was changed to Port Fairy. Ah, sweeet!

PLAYING THE GAME

Introduction

The game commences with players reading the script. Throughout, players are required to use cards which either denote different amounts of money or provide players with options.

- Players can share a script/ipad to read from (ie one script/ipad between two players) so there are less materials on the table.
- The game can be played from the beginning to the end with no interruptions or:
  - the game can be stopped at any point and once players have calculated and recorded how much money they have, the deck of cards can be put to one side until the game is resumed;
  - the script can be read without playing "Options" (for younger students);
  - the script can be read individually and not played in a group situation.

Before starting to read through the script

- Players may like to dress in appropriate clothing to reflect their particular pioneer's character:
  - for example, wearing an appropriate costume, hat, wig or drawing or wearing artificial facial hair.
- Players wear a name tag to help other players recognise the pioneer they are role-playing.
- Players make sure they understand the game of "Options" and how to use the money cards before beginning to read the script.
- Discuss the use of the different accents – various English, Irish, Scots, Aussie:
  - players could practice talking to each other using their accent before beginning to read the script.
- When three full stops, ie "…", appear in the script, the player pauses from speaking their lines momentarily and then continues to read.

RULES OF THE CARD GAME

Equipment

One deck of normal playing cards is sorted and organised into number groups and face cards (Jacks, Queens and Kings) plus the Joker.

Money cards

- Cards from a normal deck numbered Ace to 10 for each of the four suits represent the money used in the game - apart from the Aces, money value = card value x £10.
  - **'2'** = £20; **'3'** = £30; **'4'** = £40; **'5'** = £50; **'6'** = £60; **'7'** = £70; **'8'** = £80; **'9'** = £90; **'10'** = £100
  - **'Ace'** = £200
- Sir Charles Fitzroy and Charles La Trobe handle the money cards and exchanges them with players when directed to by the script.
- Sir Charles Fitzroy and Charles La Trobe do not personally receive or pay any money during the game.
- Using two blank pieces of paper, write the following words on each piece of paper:

" **On Demand / Rutledge & Co - £200** "

- William Rutledge is given these two '**On Demand**' loan notes before the game starts.
- It is important players keep a running tally of their money.
- If the game runs out of money, use cards from another deck or print your own money!

Option cards

- Option cards are the **Jacks**, **Queens**, and **Kings** of the four suits, plus the '**Joker**' - thirteen cards in total.
- Option cards are played when an amount of money is to be paid or received, or an outcome is to be determined.
- There are three options in each money or outcome situation.
- Each of the three options are linked to a Jack, Queen, or King:
  - sometimes abbreviated as a '**J**', '**Q**', or '**K**', in the script.

- The 'Joker' is the Master Option card and overrides all other cards and gives a player a free choice of Jack, Queen or King.
- Sir Charles Fitzroy shuffles the thirteen Option cards and places the pile of cards, facedown, on the table.

Playing the card game of "Options"

- When the word "**Now**" appears in the script, the game of "**Options**" must be played by the players and must be completed before players continue reading from the script – the game is described below.
- When it is their turn, a player turns over the top Option card from the pile of thirteen cards.
- That card will either be a Jack, Queen, King or Joker.
- When a Jack, Queen or King is turned over, an option has been selected.
- If the Joker is turned over, the player has a free choice of either the Jack, Queen or King option.
- Depending on the option, a player then usually has to pay, or will receive, an amount of money.
- When an Option card has been turned over and played, Sir Charles Fitzroy places the used card facedown at the bottom of the pile of thirteen cards on the table.
- After each "Options" situation is completed, players continue reading the script.
- The initial use of Option cards is on the second page of the script, when "Options" is first played in the 'Blind Wheelbarrow Race'. This was included to give players an opportunity to practice using the Option cards without the distraction of having to use the money cards. In all other occasions throughout the remainder of the script, when "Options" is being played, there will be three options and money will most likely be exchanged.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Special Surveys

The limited financial and administrative resources of the New South Wales Government to settle the southern coast prompted the idea of selling large plots of land to investors to encourage emigration from the British Isles to New South Wales. The Special Survey system was a land purchase arrangement, established in 1840 by the British Government.

It referred to a specific area of land – 5,120 acres or 2,070 hectares – that could be purchased anywhere in the Port Phillip District. Special conditions did apply. The cost of the land was one pound per acre.

The system was restricted to the Port Phillip District, which in 1851 would become Victoria.

Ten Special Surveys were approved despite the system being cancelled in 1841. James Atkinson's Special Survey wasn't approved until 1843 because there were ongoing disputes over his boundaries.

William Rutledge purchased two Special Surveys: one at Koroit near Tower Hill and the other at Kilmore. A third one in Port Albert was disallowed.

James Atkinson and William Rutledge

James Atkinson decided to create a township and port at Port Fairy. Atkinson named his new township Belfast, after his home city in Ireland.

Atkinson disposed of his land a number of ways by:

- leasing the land (the period of time for his leases was usually 21 or 31 years);
- leasing the land with the caveat that a dwelling be constructed on it to a certain value – usually to the value of £50, £75 or £100;
- selling the land;
- giving land to community groups, for example in 1849 James Atkinson donated two acres of land to the Catholic Church and £400 to assist the construction of a chapel. He donated a further £100.

People leasing the land also had the option of eventually buying it. In some instances, Atkinson offered an 'Agreement for Sale' to purchasers of his land. This allowed the land to be paid for over an extended period of time, sometimes up to thirty years.

Land in Portland, Warrnambool and Melbourne was sold at public auctions.

From 1844 to 1849 William Rutledge acted as James Atkinson's local land agent in Belfast.

In 1849 a lease for one acre in Belfast was sold for £200 and in 1855 one was sold for £130 – the money did not pass to Atkinson.

At the Melbourne land sales on 13 September 1838 William Rutledge purchased a block of land on the corner of Flinders and Russell Streets and a block in Flinders Street for £269.10.

In 'Port Fairy: The First Fifty Years', J. W. Powling describes William Rutledge as follows:

'The "King of Port Fairy" is what they called William Rutledge … he had become merchant, magistrate, mayor and alderman all in the one – The supporter and subsidiser of every local charity …. in all cases of disputed law, equity and arbitration his decisions were mostly final and conclusive …. acted on the committee of St John's Church, and the Benevolent Society, to be the judge at race meetings (he kept a shotgun beside him to shoot dogs that strayed onto the course) … a breeder of bloodstock horses and even a Member of Parliament … Although others described him as "Terrible Billy" … the laughing jackass of parliament … but a memorial tablet in St John's Church, Port Fairy, describes him as "Beloved, Esteemed and Respected by the District".'

In 'Port Fairy: The First Fifty Years', J. W. Powling also describes the firm of Rutledge & Co:

'Nowadays it is rather difficult to imagine a firm quite like Rutledge & Co. They were shipowners, importers and exporters, gold-buyers, stock and station agents, general merchants, ware-houes and bulk-store operators, insurance and commission agents, wine and spirit merchants, wool and produce buyers, mail contractors and merchant bankers and suppliers of virtually all the needs, not only of a growing town (Belfast) but of a spreading agricultural and pastoral district. They even issued their own currency, in the form of notes payable on demand, which were looked upon as legal tender over most of Australia. They advanced money or allowed enormous credit to farmers and graziers against their crops or wool clips or their draft of livestock.'

The big business firms had been unable to get a toe into Belfast because of the virtual monopoly of Rutledge & Co. The major Melbourne and Sydney and overseas banks and mercantile firms had been establishing themselves at Warrnambool, but there would be no future for them unless Rutledge of Belfast was got rid of. So the notes ('On Demand') of Rutledge & Co were gradually accumulated by the firm's rivals and Rutledge returned from England to find himself beset from all sides by those wanting payment on demand. In June 1862 Rutledge & Co went into liquidation with overall debts of £54,668.'

In 'Port Fairy: The First Fifty Years', J. W. Powling quotes from William Earle's book, 'Port Fairy':
'Squatters, who had always made Rutledge & Co their bankers, transferred their dealings elsewhere; farmers and others followed suit, and everywhere in Western victoria the big smash was hailed with regret, whereas in Port Fairy (Belfast) the effect was paralysing.'

Currency in the colonies

The First Fleet and subsequent ships did not bring an Australian currency with them. Instead coins from other countries were used. Coins from a variety of countries, which included England, Spain, Netherlands and India, were used. These coins were called Proclamation Coins. In 1800 Governor King set the value of a number of foreign coins being used in the colony. Because there was a shortage of currency, commodities such as rum were regularly used as an alternative form of currency. There were also locally minted copper trade coins, called tokens, which were produced by individual businesses. Private banks eventually began issuing bank notes. By the 1850s gold coins were minted in Sydney and Melbourne.

Land leasing by Charles Mills and John Ritchie

Marten Syme's book, *'Belfast Fantasy'*, gives detailed information about the disposal of Atkinson's land in Belfast between 1843 and 1864, the year James Atkinson died, and in the subsequent public auction of his remaining unconveyed Special Survey property in 1885. From this information, there are details about Charles Mills, younger brother of John Mills, leasing approximately one acre of land in Belfast for 31 years at an annual rent of £7 in 1845.
John Mills took over the lease in 1850 and bought a reduced portion of the land in 1857 for £250 from James Atkinson. The land was sold in 1912 for £300.
Also in 1845 John Ritchie leased one acre of land in Belfast at an annual rent of £8 for an unspecified term.

Potatoes

Like James Atkinson and William Rutledge many of the first immigrants to the southwest coastal region of Victoria came from Ireland. Some moved there to escape the Great Irish Potato Famine in the the 1850s.
In 'Port Fairy: The First Fifty Years', J. W. Powling describes the trade in potatoes at the time:
'The trade in potatoes, in which this district then had practically the monopoly, was to assume enormous proportions and at the height of the season one firm alone, William Bateman & Co., had eighteen vessels under charter to ship the crop to all parts of Australia.'

Nearby Tower Hill and Mt Eccles, Mt Napier and Mt Rouse to the north are part of a chain of volcanoes that were active in relatively recent geological times. Lava flow from Mount Rouse travelled to Port Fairy and formed Griffiths Island. Tower Hill formed from a violent eruption 30,000 years ago. The last eruption was about 6,000 years ago. Lava from these volcanoes gave rise to the very fertile farming soil that exists today.

Celebrations for the new Colony of Victoria

The year 1851 was very significant in Victoria's history. It became a new colony of Australia, the Gold Rush began, a major bushfire raged from Geelong to the South Australian border, wool was first sent direct to London from Port Fairy and Victoria was defeated by Tasmania in the first inter-colonial cricket match.

In 'Port Fairy: The First Fifty Years', J. W. Powling describes the celebrations in Belfast when the Colony of Victoria was formed on 1 July, 1851 - listed below is a selection of the events held on that day:
- Long game of quoits, 21 yards;
- Blindfold Wheelbarrow Race, 200 yards;
- Sack Race, 50 yards;
- Climbing the greasy pole for a new hat set on top;
- Catching a pig with a greasy tail.'

For interested readers, more detailed descriptions of the town's history can be found by consulting the list of references provided on page 29. The The Port Fairy Historical Society, located at 30 Gipps Street in Port Fairy, is another rich source of historical information and stories.

The First People

Before reading the script and playing the card game, it is also important to acknowledge that there were people already living in the southwest region of Victoria before Europeans arrived: the Gunditjmara Indigenous People. Archaeological evidence suggests the Indigenous people arrived in Australia approximately 40,000 years ago. However, recent evidence suggests that the time of their arrival might have been much earlier, at 65,000 years ago. There are many references to the Indigenous people living in the southwest region of Victoria in the journals of some of the first Europeans visiting this area.

Disclaimer: In the script, the pioneers refer to Indigenous people as 'Blacks' a term which was in common usage at the time. However, the term is now considered to be inappropriate and should not be used.

LAND HUNGER: BELFAST, 1851

Charles La Trobe:

By Jove … Hello everyone … I'm feeling jolly well excited about being here today.

As you know … I'm Charles La Trobe … The first Lieutenant Governor of Victoria … Our new colony.

And it gives me great pleasure to introduce Sir Charles Fitzroy, our Governor of New South Wales.

All players:

Hear! Hear!

Charles La Trobe:

Sir Charles has sailed all the way from Sydney to take part in our celebrations today … By Jove.

But firstly … As is our custom … Join with me as we pay our respects to, and salute, Queen Victoria.

All players – standing and saluting:

Queen Victoria … God Save The Queen!

Charles La Trobe:

Jolly good show … Please be seated.

Sir Charles Fitzroy:

Yes, yes … Jolly good … Thank you for your welcome.

And I'm jolly well excited to see you celebrating Victoria's separation from New South Wales.

Charles La Trobe:

By Jove … You're just in time to start our next game … A Blindfold Wheelbarrow race … Over 200 yards … Here's what can happen to our players in this exciting race:

"**J**"= **Wheelbarrow breaks**; "**Q**"= **Tripped over**; "**K**"= **Went backwards**; "**Joker**"= **The winner.**

Sir Charles Fitzroy:

On your marks … Ready … Steady … Play "**Options**" and let's find out how you finished … **Now**.

Jolly good show … Hearty congratulations to our … Hmm … Did anyone manage to finish the race?

Who else is here to play some more of these thrilling games?

Charles La Trobe:

Mr. Rutledge is here … The 'King of Belfast' … Or 'Terrible Billy' … As some people like to call him.

I certainly hope you're not going to be 'Terrible Billy' today … And cause us trouble in the games.

Ah, but your lovely wife, Eliza, is here to keep an eye on you … By Jove.

Eliza Rutledge:

Ahh, to be sure … Billy will behave himself all right … I'll see to that.

We welcome you to Belfast.

Sir Charles Fitzroy:

Jolly kind of you … Thank you, Mrs. Rutledge.

Now who else is here today … And please tell me about yourself.

Charles Mills:

Big Charley Mills here … Maate … Er … Guv.

You might know me bro … The famous whaler, Captain Johnny Mills … We was born in Launceston.

I'm a farmer now 'cos there are no whales to hunt here … But Johnny still sails the seas … Yeah.

John Ritchie:

Och aye … I'm John Ritchie … A canny Scot and squatter … Came to Belfast from Launceston tooo.

Lieutenant Governor La Trobe might remember staying with me on his way to Portland … In 1843?

Sir Charles Fitzroy:

Jolly good … I'm sure he does … And how much land have you taken … Er … Squatted on?

John Ritchie:

Och aye … I've got a wee selection of 26,000 acres of land … Not far from wee Belfast.

James Atkinson:

Hmm … Land … 26,000 acres of delicious dirt … Irresistible.

Charles La Trobe:

By Jove … So, the other famous Irishman in Belfast is also with us today … Mr. James Atkinson.

Sir Charles Fitzroy:

Hmm … Just jolly wondering … Didn't he buy all the land here and create the township of Belfast?

Ah yes … I remember … He paid £5,120 to my predecessor, Sir George Gipps … For 5,120 acres.

Sir George called this kind of land purchase a Special Survey … A Special Fiasco more like it.

Charles La Trobe:

Yes, indeed … The whole scheme went somewhat pear shaped … By Jove.

Goodness gracious me … There just weren't enough surveyors to sort out the boundaries.

Sir Charles Fitzroy:

Jolly big farce really … But of course, the initial idea of the scheme was quite sensible.

To raise funds to assist emigration from England and soothe investor's demands for land.

But to pay only one pound an acre … That was an appalling decision … An absolute booboo.

Charles La Trobe:

And I understand you've been buying land all over the colony, Mr. Atkinson?

Why goodness me … It sounds to me like you've got a bad case of … 'Land Hunger'.

Land certainly seems to have a hypnotic effect on you … By Jove.

James Atkinson:

Ahh, sweeet … Funny you should say that Guv.

Before we continue … I'd like to hypnotise everyone.

To help you enjoy the next game … And have lots of fun … Everyone OK about that?

Fitzroy, La Trobe, Rutledges, Mills & Ritchie:

Hmm … Yes … Sounds very exciting.

James Atkinson:

Ahh, sweeet … All of you close your eyes and keep them closed.

Players must close their eyes and keep them closed.

When I snap my fingers … You wake up and believe the game is real life.

When I snap my fingers a second time at the end of the game … You'll come back to reality.

Atkinson snaps his fingers.

Ahh, sweeet … You can open your eyes now.

Sir Charles Fitzroy:

Yes, yes … Jolly good … Thank you for your welcome.

And I'm jolly well excited to see you celebrat … Er … That's a bit odd … I think I've already said that.

James Atkinson:

Ahh, sweeet … I'm feeling in a generous mood today.

I'm to receive money from some of my land sales … Along the Molonglo River in New South Wales.

Let's play "**Options**" … I'll give some of my money to the squatter and Big Charley … Then Billy.

• Firstly … The Guv pays me for the land: "**J**"= **£540**; "**Q**"= **£600**; "**K**"= **£660** - I'll play … **Now**.

• Squatter and Big Charley … Here are your gifts: "**J**"= **£100**; "**Q**"= **£110**; "**K**"= **£120** – Play … **Now**.

• Billy … Here is your gift: "**J**"= **£240**; "**Q**"= **£250**; "**K**"= **£260** – Play … **Now**.

Mills & Ritchie:

But why should Terrible Billy get more than us?

That's so unfair!

Eliza Rutledge:

Ahh, to be sure … Some folk want their luck buttered.

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Charles La Trobe:

But why shouldn't he? … By Jove … Hasn't his firm Rutledge and Co. made Belfast prosperous? Goodness me … He even issues his own currency … To help the likes of you squatters and farmers. I think you'd have to agree … The 'King of Belfast' deserves a little bit more than everyone else?

William Rutledge:

Fiddly dee … Thanks Guv … And today I'll be acting as Jimmy Atkinson's land agent too … We've signed an agreement stating that I'll collect land rents and money from sales of his land … We also agreed that I'll give him £640 each year … I'll pay whatever I owe him later … So, Ritcho and Big Charley … You both owe me £10 for the land you're renting off Jimmy … Pay me … **Now**.

Mills & Ritchie:

Whaat? … 'Terrible Billy' gets even more money.

Sir Charles Fitzroy:

Jolly well stop squabbling … And could someone tell me where all these ships are sailing to? I saw them in the bay when I arrived … And men were loading bags of produce onto two of them.

Eliza Rutledge:

Ahh, to be sure … One of those two ships is taking those bags to Adelaide … For the squatter. The other ship is sailing to Melbourne with the same bags of produce … For Big Charley. And by-the-way … Billy owns a ship that's sailing from Sydney to Belfast … As I speak.

Sir Charles Fitzroy:

Jolly ship ahoy … But can someone please tell me what's in those bags that's so important?

William Rutledge:

Ahh, to be sure Guv … Jimmy Atkinson's not the only one who bought a Special Survey. One of my two Special Surveys is near Tower Hill … Where my Irish tenant farmers grow potatoes.

Eliza Rutledge:

Ahh, to be sure … Growing and selling potatoes can be very profitable most years, Guv. So Jimmy thought the squatter and Big Charley could invest in Billy's spuds. Their ships will take the spuds to Adelaide and Melbourne … Where they can be sold for a profit.

Mills & Ritchie:

But we've already got other ships ready to sail. Another ship just gives us more to worry about.

William Rutledge:

Ahh, to be sure … Worry is interest paid on trouble before it happens.

John Ritchie:

Och aye … 'Cos us squatters are exporting our wee wool in the wee barque … '*Sydney Griffiths*'.

But it's the first time we're sending it to wee London from Belfast … Could take a wee six months.

It's a big wee worry … Who knows what might happen on the wee way?

Charles Mills:

Crikey … And we're exporting our wheat and flour … I'm very worried about that … Yeah.

Sir Charles Fitzroy:

Mr. Mills and Mr. Ritchie … Here are your potato investment prices: "**J**"= **£70**; "**Q**"= **£60**; "**K**"= **£50**.

Mr. Mills and Mr. Ritchie each play "**Options**" and pay Mr. Rutledge for their investment … **Now**.

Mills & **Ritchie**:

Terrible Billy's getting all our money.

And shipping spuds is risky … It's a very big worry, too … 'Cos some of them might rot.

William Rutledge:

Ahh, to be sure … Living at risk is like jumping off a cliff and building your wings on the way down.

John Ritchie:

Och aye … And what's in your wee ship, Billy … Spuds tooo?

William Rutledge:

Fiddly dee … I import all sorts of things like, like ale, wine and spirits, tobacco and cigars, shoes …

But there are no potatoes on this trip.

Eliza Rutledge:

Ahh to be sure … And Billy … Don't forget you also import cheese, fish and fruit, pots, furniture,

crockery, candles, rope, pumps, spades, clothing, gunpowder … And a lot more.

Billy pays extra for lost or damaged cargo … Or if his ship is wrecked and people's lives are lost.

William Rutledge:

Fiddly dee … And that's why I also import tombstones … Never know when you might need them.

I trade all these goods … And others … Here in Belfast … And also in Portland and Warrnambool.

My goods will cost about £400 … But I pay nothing until they arrive here in Belfast.

Mills & **Ritchie**:

But why can't he pay now?

That's so unfair.

Eliza Rutledge:

Ahh to be sure … One can avoid criticism by … Saying nothing … Doing nothing … Being nothing.

Charles La Trobe:

By Jove … Do stop all this squabbling.

And Mr. Ritchie … It's high time you paid your Squatters' Licence fee.

John Ritchie:

Och aye … Why should us squatters have to pay that wee fee?

We supply meat and wool to the wee colony but can't properly own the land.

James Atkinson:

Hmm … Land … Delicious dirt … Irresistible.

Sir Charles Fitzroy:

Well … You're jolly well not going to get 26,000 acres for £26,000 … No more Special Surveys.

So, stop your squabbling, squatter … Pay me the £10 Licence fee so we can continue … **Now**.

Charles La Trobe:

Mr. Atkinson tells me Mr. Ritchie has agreed to build a home on the land he's leasing.

I understand this is part of his lease agreement with Mr. Atkinson … By Jove.

John Ritchie:

Och aye … But I don't have much wee money left … I won't be able to pay.

Charles Mills:

Crikey … Stop complaining, squatter … You Scots are all the same when it comes to money.

You're as tight as a … … Yeah.

Sir Charles Fitzroy:

Yes, yes … That's so jolly typical of the Scots.

If anyone needs more money … You'll just have to borrow some.

Charles La Trobe:

By Jove … Mr. Rutledge, give your firm's 'On Demand' loan notes to these two squabblers … **Now**.

And please explain how to use them.

William Rutledge:

Ahh, to be sure … If you need more money … Give your loan note to the Guv.

He keeps it … And he gives you a bank loan of £200.

Eliza Rutledge:

Ahh, to be sure … When you can … Pay back £240 to Billy.

The Guv then gives Billy the loan note … And Billy pays the bank £220.

William Rutledge:

Ahh, to be sure … There's to be no borrowing or lending of money between players.

Fiddly dee … I'm not missing out on my £20 interest.

Mills & Ritchie:

But why should we pay any interest to Terrible Billy … That's so unfair.

John Ritchie:

Och aye Billy … You're like a rooster who thinks the wee sun rises to listen to you crow.

Sir Charles Fitzroy:

Goodness gracious … What's all this nonsense about squabbling roosters … And stop crowing.

Mr. Ritchie … Give me your 'On Demand' loan note … I'll give you your £200 loan … **Now**.

Mr. Ritchie … Here are your home prices: "**J**"= **£80**; "**Q**"= **£70**; "**K**"= **£60**

Play "**Options**" Mr. Ritchie … And pay me for your home … **Now**.

Charles Mills:

Hey maate … Er … Guv … I'm going to need one of them loans too.

Wanna buy part of the land we've been leasing.

For me bro … Captain Johnny …Yeah.

Charles La Trobe:

Well then … Mr. Mills, pass me your 'On Demand' loan note … I'll give you your £200 loan … **Now**.

But by Jove … Is that right? … Can he buy a reduced allotment of the land he's been leasing?

William Rutledge:

Ahh, to be sure … Yes, it is … And … Yes, he can … For £250, Guv.

That's part of Jimmy's agreement with Big Charley.

Eliza Rutledge:

But the contract for the sale only requires Big Charley to pay a portion of the £250 today.

So … Listen carefully Big Charley.

Billy will read out the three options for what you have to pay today.

William Rutledge:

So … Big Charley … That's "**J**"= **£170**; "**Q**"= **£150**; "**K**"= **£130**.

The remainder can be paid off in a couple of years.

Eliza Rutledge:

Ahh, to be sure … Big Charley … Play "**Options**" and pay Billy … **Now**.

John Ritchie:

Och aye … I want to buy some cattle … They're better suited to the wet land here than wee sheep.

By the way Guv … I understand transportation might be coming back?

Does that mean I can use free convict labour on me wee farm? … And to work on me wee house?

Charles La Trobe:

By Jove … No, it does not.

No more convicts are coming here.

Sir Charles Fitzroy:

Was jolly well annoying when the Squattocracy tried to have transportation reintroduced.

Charles La Trobe:

By Jove … It was … But I put a stop to that … And them.

When a convict ship tried to dock in Port Phillip Bay … I sent it straight back to Sydney … By Jove.

Sir Charles Fitzroy:

Jolly good show … And I'll wager the Squattocracy didn't like that one bit.

Charles La Trobe:

It was one of my finest moments … I was a hero of the Port Phillip District … By Jove.

Sir Charles Fitzroy:

Yes … But I'm jolly sick of hearing … "I was a hero of the Port Phillip District" … Over and over again.

So, squatter … Here are your cattle prices: "**J**"= **£80**; "**Q**"= **£60**; "**K**"= **£40**.

Play "**Options**" Mr. Ritchie … And pay me for the cattle … **Now**.

William Rutledge:

Ahh, to be sure … What a shame there won't be any convicts to work on your farm land, squatter.

James Atkinson:

Hmm … Land … Delicious farm dirt … Irresistible.

Eliza Rutledge:

Ahh, it's like this Mr. Ritchie … Jimmy wants to donate some of his dirt ... er … land to the church.

And also donate a sum of money to help the priests build a chapel.

William Rutledge:

So, Jimmy … If I pay your donation as part of what I owe you … I'll square up with you later.

And get this, squatter … Jimmy's donation of money pays for any labourers working there.

Ha, ha squatter … Fiddly dee.

Charles La Trobe:

By Jove, squatter … Sounds like there aren't going to be any labourers left for you to employ.

So, Mr. Rutledge … Here are some possible donations: "**J**"= **£170**; "**Q**"= **£160**; "**K**"= **£150**.

Play "**Options**" Mr. Rutledge … And pay me for Mr. Atkinson's donation … **Now**.

John Ritchie:

As for you giving money to any wee labourers working there … Och aye, Billy … You're a …

Charles Mills:

Crikey squatter … Stop your squabbling.

Blimey … Billy's one of our Magistrates … And our first Member of Parliament.

And he gives real good advice when you need it … Like those quirky insights into life.

Real hilarious … Yeah.

Eliza Rutledge:

Thanks, Big Charley … For your support … Next thing you'll be talking with an Irish accent.

Ahh, to be sure … Now that would be a crime.

Charles La Trobe:

Speaking of which … I have just found out you've all been charged with committing a crime.

"*James Atkinson … You have been charged with stealing dirt and eating the evidence.*"

"*William Rutledge … You have been charged with discharging a fire-arm whilst watching your wife … Eliza Rutledge … furiously riding through the town … Sitting on her horse … Backwards.*"

"*John Ritchie and Charles Mills … Both of you have been charged with allowing your dogs to attack each other … And yourselves … And other innocent folk … Causing chaos in the town.*"

Here are the three possible verdicts:

- *Jack: Player is 'Guilty' and also commits perjury … Player pays me a £20 fine.*
- *Queen: Player is 'Guilty' … Player pays me a £10 fine.*
- *King: Player is 'Not Guilty'.*

To find out your verdict: In turn … Play "**Options**"… Pay me the fine if you are found guilty … **Now**.

Sir Charles Fitzroy:

Jolly poor form you lot … But aren't dogs fun to watch … All that barking, sniffing and tail wagging.

I especially love how they get so excited digging up their bones … It's like they've discovered gold.

Charles La Trobe:

Speaking of digging up gold … I well remember my good friend Governor Gipps once saying:

"If the convicts find out about the gold, we shall all have our throats cut" … By Jove.

Sir Charles Fitzroy:

Jolly scary stuff … But I say … Let's have an exciting adventure … And go looking for gold?

Everyone else is … So why not us?

But let's not tell any of the convicts.

Charles La Trobe:

Well … I visited the Ballarat goldfields recently.

While I was there, five men found 136 ounces of gold … In a single day.

All together it was worth about £400.

Now that's what I call exciting … By Jove.

Sir Charles Fitzroy:

Jolly lucky weren't they … But Mount Alexander might have even more gold than Ballarat.

I hear that gold nuggets are lying just under the surface of the land just waiting to be discovered.

James Atkinson:

Hmm … Land … Nuggets buried in delicious dirt … Irresistible.

Charles Mills:

Crikey … I reckon all them underground nuggets will be gone … He'll have eaten them all … Yeah.

So … We'll have to pan for gold in creeks or streams.

But I don't wanna dig a mineshaft … They're real dangerous … Yeah.

John Ritchie:

Och aye … Or we could use a wee cradle.

So we can wash a lot more soil or sand.

Eliza Rutledge:

Ahh, to be sure … Well then … We'll do a bit of puddling for you.

To separate the gold from the clay.

You boys can pan or cradle what's left and hopefully find some more gold … Fiddly dee.

William Rutledge:

Fiddly dee my foot, Eliza … Haven't you all forgotten something really important?

If everyone goes off to the goldfields, who's going to be left to work on my potato farms?

And I hear Warrnambool's like a ghost town these days.

Everyone's rushing off looking for gold.

Charles Mills:

Crikey Billy … Isn't that why everyone's calling it a … "Gold Rush" … Yeah.

Charles La Trobe:

Well … We all jolly well know how you solved that problem … Don't we … "Terrible Billy"?

You kidnapped 70 migrants who were going to be settled in Portland.

William Rutledge:

Ahh, to be sure … It was just a lucky coincidence that my ship the *Black Pearl* just happened to be anchored in Portland Bay.

Right next to the *Runnymede …* which was carrying those 70 migrants.

Sir Charles Fitzroy:

That sounds like a load of nonsense to me.

I jolly well don't believe in coincidences.

William Rutledge:

Ahh to be sure … We boarded the *Runnymede* early one morning and woke the gentle English folk from their peaceful slumber and told them about Belfast.

"Gosh" … they said … They'd love to live here instead.

Charles La Trobe:

By Jove … That's balderdash.

William Rutledge:

Fiddly dee … Luckily by chance we had enough blank forms of agreement for all of them to sign.

Charles La Trobe:

Poppycock … You pirate.

Eliza Rutledge:

Ahh, to be sure … Portland's Police Magistrate, Mr. James Blair, got very upset with Billy.

He wrote some very unkind and hurtful things about Billy in a letter he sent to you, Lieutenant Governor La Trobe.

But Billy didn't mean to cause any harm to anyone … Honest … Fiddly dee.

Charles La Trobe:

I don't wish to be rude, Mrs. Rutledge … But your husband's an obstinate … Recalcitrant … By Jove.

John Ritchie:

Och aye … So now I'll have to pay a wee Miner's Licence fee as well as the Squatter's Licence fee.

Reckon that wee mining fee will cause you some wee big trouble in the future, Guv.

'Cos the miners don't like it.

Charles La Trobe:

By Jove … Stop complaining, squatter.

But thank you for reminding me.

Each player pays me £10 for a Miner's Licence … **Now**.

Sir Charles Fitzroy:

Here are three jolly possible discoveries for what we find on the goldfields:

- *Jack*: Fool's Gold … £0.
- *Queen*: £30 gold nugget.
- *King*: £50 gold nugget.

Charles La Trobe:

To find out what you discover: Play "**Options**" … I'll pay you for your gold nugget … Or not … **Now**.

Charles Mills:

Crikey … But we'll have to watch out for them bushrangers when we travel back to Belfast.

They rob people, banks and stagecoaches looking to take any money, jewellery or gold … Yeah.

Charles La Trobe:

By Jove you're right … Here are three possible outcomes for our dangerous trips back to Belfast:

- *Jack*: Bushranger holds up player and takes £20 from player … Guv keeps money.
- *Queen*: Bushranger holds up player … But escapes with nothing.
- *King*: Player captures bushranger … Guv gives player £30 reward.

To find out what happens on your trip: In turn … Play "**Options**" … **Now**.

Eliza Rutledge:

Ahh, to be sure … Bushrangers are becoming a major problem in our colony.

They've even held up the mail coaches … Fiddly dee.

Charles Mills:

Crikey … That William Green fella … He was a bushranger … Held up the Belfast mailman … Yeah.

John Ritchie:

Och aye … I thought his wee name was Codrington Leviston?

Or was it Carrington Gessington?

William Rutledge:

Ahh, to be sure … I know him … He was brought before me and I sent him off for trial at Geelong.

Charles Mills:

Crikey Billy … Didn't he say to you … "I'll be back!" … Yeah.

William Rutledge:

Ahh, to be sure … He did say that … The cheeky scoundrel … And yes … He escaped from my ship.

Then he stole a horse … And held up the same mailman … In the same spot … Fiddly dee.

John Ritchie:

Och aye … He told the wee poor mailman the police were as tough as a "set of apple-women".

James Atkinson:

Hmm … Apples … Picked from apple trees growing in delicious dirt … Irresistible.

Charles La Trobe:

By Jove … I offered a reward of £30 for Green's capture.

And then he put an advertisement in the *Belfast Gazette*.

He offered a £100 reward for my carcass … So he could beat the shine out of my backside.

Sir Charles Fitzroy:

Very jolly funny … Er … How outrageous of him.

John Ritchie:

Och aye … But there's only one thing worse than the wee bushrangers … And that's the Blacks.

William Rutledge:

Ahh, to be sure … Don't you start … We're all sick and tired of hearing the squatters' pathetic excuses for hunting down the poor souls.

Like "If dingoes didn't kill my sheep … the Blacks did … And some of us too".

But the Blacks had nothing to match their guns … Fiddly dee.

Eliza Rutledge:

Ahh, to be sure … And the children weren't spared either.

They'd burn or bury the corpses … To hide the evidence.

William Rutledge:

Ahh, to be sure … And it would all happen at night and then they'd all keep quiet about it.

The silence was deafening.

Eliza Rutledge:

'Cos they were all scared stiff of being caught … Knowing they'd be hanged for their dirty deeds.

Ahh … Fiddly dee … Dee.

Charles Mills:

Crikey … You're right, Miss Eliza … Yeah.

And us whalers were no better … A lot of Blacks were slaughtered along the coast.

Eliza Rutledge:

Ahh, to be sure ... Like the massacre near Portland … On the Convincing Grounds beach … in 1834?

Charles Mills:

Crikey …Yeah … Just because the Blacks were eating a beached whale the whalers had harpooned.

The stories of bloodshed on that beach keeps me awake some nights.

And I wasn't even there at the time … Yeah.

John Ritchie:

Well … I'm not apologising for what us wee squatters did.

The government told us the wee land belonged to nobody … '*Terra nullius*' … They called it.

So … We've just taken what's been legally up for grabs.

Och aye … Life wasn't meant to be easy … For them … Or us.

William Rutledge:

Fiddly dee … Life? … It's a dream for the wise … A game for fools … A comedy for the rich … And a tragedy for the poor.

Eliza Rutledge:

Ahh, to be sure … And an unspeakable tragedy for the Blacks too.

Dear, oh dear … Man's inhumanity to man … Fiddly dee.

Charles Mills:

Crikey … Yeah well … Because I was a whaler … I would like to apologise for the mistreatment handed out to the Blacks … By the whalers … In the past … Here in Belfast … And in Portland.

I know this won't fix all the wrongs that have been committed … But it might be a start … Yeah.

Sir Charles Fitzroy:

That's jolly well … Er … Decent of you Mr. Mills.

But I've heard enough … So, there's to be no more talk about the Blacks.

Mr. Rutledge … I hear you still have to pay for that land you bought in Melbourne?

James Atkinson:

Hmm … Land … Delicious Melbourne dirt … Irresistible.

Eliza Rutledge:

Ahh, to be sure … Billy's got a great memory for forgetting.

Charles La Trobe:

So, Mr. Rutledge … Here are your land prices … By Jove … "**J**"= **£270**; "**Q**"= **£260**; "**K**"= **£250**.
Play "**Options**" Mr. Rutledge … And pay me for your land … **Now**.

Sir Charles Fitzroy:

Oh, dear me, Mr. Rutledge … I've just received a jolly exciting … Er … Distressing message.
Goodness gracious … The bankers say you owe them hundreds of pounds.
The bankers are insisting I give you those two 'On Demand' loan notes … **Now**.

William Rutledge:

Ahh, to be sure … I don't have enough money to pay these bankers.
Sadly … I have but one choice.
I'll have to declare my firm Rutledge & Co ... Insolvent.

John Ritchie:

Och aye … But why would the wee banks want to do this to Billy?
Those bankers were supposed to be his wee friends … Not his wee enemies.

Charles Mills:

Hey maate … Guv … Come on maate … How about we sell our spuds to help out Billy? … Yeah.

Charles La Trobe:

Oh … Possibly … All right … I suppose we can buy your potatoes.
And your land or lease too.
And yes … You can use the money to pay off your loans from Mr. Rutledge … By Jove.

Sir Charles Fitzroy:

Just a jolly second … Some jolly recent news has just come in.
Your ships may have arrived at their destinations.
So, I will be able pay Mr. Ritchie and Mr. Mills for their bags of potatoes.
•Mr. Ritchie, your prices are …
 "**J**": **some bags contained rotten potatoes**, **£140**; "**Q**"= **£210**; "**K**"= **£280** … play "**Options**" … **Now**.
•Mr. Mills, your prices are … "**J**": **Ship wrecked**, **£0**; "**Q**"= **£90**; "**K**"= **£180** … play "**Options**" … **Now**.

Charles La Trobe:

And I'll pay Mr. Ritchie and Mr. Mills for their land or lease … By Jove.
• Mr. Ritchie … Your lease prices are … "**J**"= **£100**; "**Q**"= **£120**; "**K**"= **£140** … play "**Options**" … **Now**.
• Mr. Mills … Your land prices are … "**J**"= **£240**; "**Q**"= **£250**; "**K**"= **£260** … play "**Options**" … **Now**.
Mr. Mills and Mr. Ritchie each pay back Billy £240 for your 'On Demand' loan note … **Now**.

Sir Charles Fitzroy:

It's jolly well your turn, Mr. Rutledge.

First … You pay me £440 for both of the 'On Demand' notes I gave you … **Now**.

Next … I'll pay Mr. Rutledge for his land … The land prices are …

- "**J**"= **£630**; "**Q**"= **£640**; "**K**"= **£650** … Mr. Rutledge, play "**Options**" … **Now**.

Charles La Trobe:

By Jove … More shipping news has just come in.

Mr. Rutledge's ship has anchored in Port Fairy Bay.

But some of his cargo has been damaged … Or lost.

Here are the costs you pay me … "**J**"= **£570**; "**Q**"= **£560**; "**K**"= **£550** … play "**Options**" … **Now**.

Finally, … Complete your payments to Mr. Atkinson … As you previously promised.

Mr. Rutledge, … pay Mr. Atkinson one of … "**J**"= **£100**; "**Q**"= **£50**; "**K**"= **£0** … play "**Options**" … **Now**.

James Atkinson:

Ahh, sweeet … There's only one thing left to do … Find our winner.

Charles La Trobe:

By Jove … Mr. Atkinson has finally stopped raving on about eating dirt … For goodness sakes.

Rightly or wrongly … people have accused you of being an 'absentee landlord' in Belfast.

Because … apparently … you're hardly ever here.

Well today … you have been here … But you've been our 'absent minded fruitcake' … By Jove.

Sir Charles Fitzroy:

You're jolly well right about that.

Fortunately for you, Mr. Atkinson … you keep a very low profile.

However, … thank you all very much for meeting us today.

It's been jolly well … really good fun.

James Atkinson:

Ahh, sweeet … I'll be doing plenty of talking now.

I'm going to explain how you can win … So, do the following:

Add up all your money and read out your total … **Now**.

Next … The 13 Option cards are collected and shuffled by Sir Charles Fitzroy … **Now**.

Governor Fitzroy deals the following number of cards to each of us:

- 2 cards each to La Trobe, Mills, Ritchie, Rutledge and me … 3 cards to Governor Fitzroy … **Now**.

James Atkinson:

Ahh, sweeet … I'll read out the five rules of the game before we start playing:

Rule 1: The Option cards are ranked … Jack (lowest), then Queen, King and Joker (highest).

The four suits of cards are also ranked … Diamonds (lowest), Hearts, Clubs, and Spades (highest).

Rule 2: One Option card is placed **face-up** on the table by each player in the following order:

•From the player with the **lowest** amount of money to the player with the **highest** amount;

•Next … Charles La Trobe plays one of his Option cards; and finally,

•Governor Fitzroy plays one of his Option cards.

Rule 3: The player with the lowest ranked card is **eliminated**.

Rule 4: The eliminated player collects the Option cards played, shuffles them and deals out one
replacement card to each of the remaining players.

Rule 5: Rules 2, 3 and 4 are repeated in the same playing order minus the eliminated player(s),
until there is only one player remaining … Our winner … So, let's play … **Now**.

When there is a winner … Atkinson snaps his fingers for the second time … To end the game.

Ahh, sweeet … Congratulations to our winner.

Fitzroy, La Trobe, Rutledges, Ritchie & Mills:

Whaaat?

But we haven't started playing yet?

THE END

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- The Australian Museum: australianmuseum.net .au
- The Australian Government: australia.gov.au
- The Australian Dictionary of Biography: adb.anu.edu.au
- State Library of Victoria: slv.vic.gov.au
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