

Thomas Paine

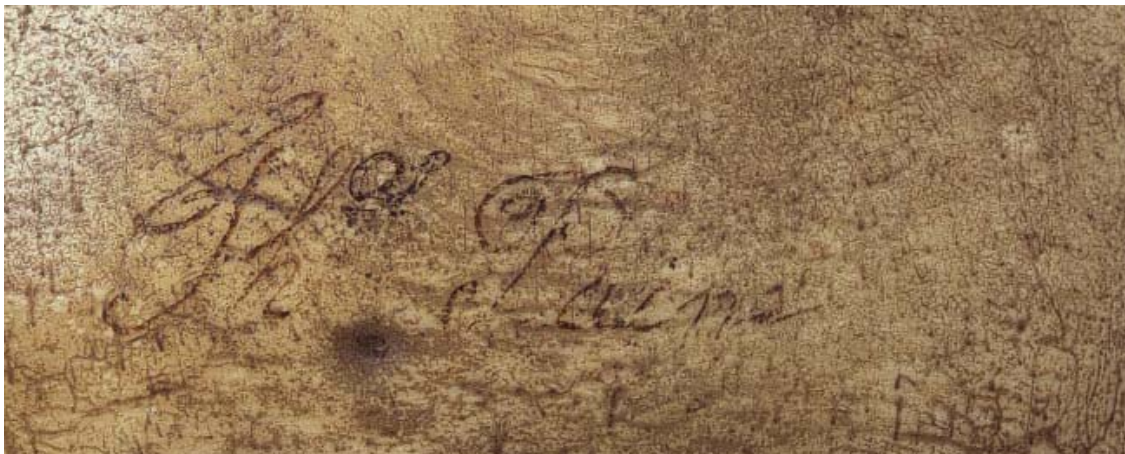
1737 - 1809

Thomas Paine died at Greenwich, New York in 1809 and was buried on his estate at New Rochelle. The body was disinterred by William Cobbett in Sept. 1819, who rightly considered that such an important Englishman, author of "The Rights of Man" and "The Age Reason" should be returned to British soil. His remains were taken back to England by Cobbett in Nov. 1819, and kept by him on his mantel piece at Normandy Farm, near Farnham until his death in 1835. Cobbett 's son then inscribed Paine's name on the skull and various limbs and put them in a trunk. Shortly afterwards he was arrested for debt and the trunk and other Cobbett property was seized by the receiver, who held it until 1844 when the debts were discharged. Payment of these reduced Cobbett junior to become a farm labourer and Paine's remains then passed to Mr. Tilly of Bedford Square, London, who still had them in 1846.

Paine may be considered by default one of the founders of Australia. He was responsible for drafting the suppressed clause against the slave trade in the American Declaration of Independence and for raising the sum of 2.5 million livres in silver during a trip to Paris thus enabling Washington to win the Battle of Yorktown in 1781 thereby gaining America its independence. With the loss of the American colonies the United Kingdom had to find a new home for those in penal servitude. The first settlement being made in New South Wales in 1788.

Thomas Paine will be spending the Bicentennial year in New South Wales and attending the Antique Dealers Fair at Lindesay in 1988.

J.B. HAWKINS



Cobbett 's son then inscribed Paine's name on the skull - as above