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The Collins expedition had everything that might have assured a successful settlement along the shores of Port Phillip. Muskets and ammunition, livestock, food, grain and farming implements had formed an important part of the "Ocean's" cargo. There were also vegetable seeds and laying poultry; in fact, there was everything that was needed for the welfare of a vanguard population such as this was intended to be, and with careful planning a healthy settlement could have developed. Only one thing was lacking, and that was enthusiasm. Where this lack of enthusiasm had found its roots will, possibly, never be reliably known as it could have stemmed from a number of sources.

Collins appeared extremely anxious to return to Van Diemen's Land, where his party had spent four days towards the latter end of their outward journey to Australia, and it may well have been during the time his ships were anchored in Oyster Bay that he made up his mind to seek King's permission to return to the island for the purpose of setting up camp, instead of proceeding as planned to form his settlement on the mainland side of Bass Strait. In any case, he lost no time in making such formal request. A jetty had been built to make the lot of unloading the "Calcutta" easier. With this done, the vessel was promptly relieved of her cargo and she was on her way to Sydney bearing the despatch.

Meanwhile, it will be seen from the various records of the attempted settlement which still survive that the opinions of the free men of the party (including that of James Grove, to whom unofficial freedom had been given) were at variance. Collins, for instance, was emphatic in his views of the place when he wrote: "It cannot be supposed that commercial people will be very desirous of visiting Port Phillip". At the same time his journalist, Lieutenant Tuckey, went into poetical mood to describe the bayside area. "I beheld," said the lieutenant, "a second Rome rising from the coalition of the banditti; I beheld it giving laws to the world, and superlative in arms and in arts, looking down with proud impervity upon barbarous nations of the northern hemisphere".

Then, to further his piece on behalf of the new "Rome", he went on to say: "The bed of the stream being covered with a foliaceous mico, which our people first conceived to be gold dust and hence expected they had discovered an Elstedorado". While Collins was condemning the countryside and Tuckey was praising it, the freed forger, Grove, was busy investigating it in a practical manner and jotting down his findings.