**Name:** Richard ORTON

**Personal Details:**
No personal details have been found.

**Position On-Board:** Captain’s Clerk

**Biographical Summary:**
In late June 1768, Captain Cook discharged James Griffiths, who had been acting as his clerk, claiming he was unsuitable. The next day, 30 June, Cook appointed Richard Orton as he clerk. He had previously served as a purser on a number of ships.

Many of the written records relating to the voyage were written by Orton. He even wrote letters for the Captain, leaving Cook just to sign them.

Orton was the unfortunate recipient of a malicious attack whilst he lay in a drunken stupor. On 22 May 1770, whilst sailing up the east coast of Australia, as Orton lay in his bunk, somebody cut off part of his ears. A prize of 15 guineas and 15 gallons of rum was offered as a reward for anybody who could identify the attacker. But nobody came forward with the information.

After the voyage, Cook recommended Orton for a position in a public office, but he opted for a life at sea, and became purser of the Levant on 12 August 1771.

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This information sheet was produced by the Captain Cook Society to commemorate the 250th anniversary of Captain Cook’s first voyage of exploration. For further information visit: www.captaincooksociety.com