Abstract: Matthew Flinders started his Private Journal on the day his active career as an explorer and navigator finished, the day he was detained on Mauritius by Governor Decaen. He kept the journal almost daily until 10 days before his death. In this paper I will trace his inner journey - the ways he changed and developed over the decade covered by the journal, and how this is reflected in the Private Journal. During the six and a half years of detention on Mauritius he broadened his intellectual and cultural horizons considerably. He learned French, and read many classics of French literature and science. After some initial shyness in mixed society, he participated freely in the French plantation society of Mauritius and befriended French naval officers who were officially his enemies. With time on his hands, he undertook projects such as his biographical tribute to Trim, a study of the history of Madagascar, and observations on the marine barometer. By sheer force of will he conquered the black depression which threatened to engulf him as his detention extended indefinitely. Back in England, reunited with his wife after 9 years, he set to work on his major work, *Voyage to Terra Australis*. When he set out on his voyage of discovery in 1801, he had asked an Oxford-educated cousin if he would consider helping him write the account of the voyage, believing that his own skills would not be adequate to the task. Somewhat to his surprise, ten years later he found he no longer needed any help. *A Voyage to Terra Australis* is a testament to the fact that Flinders' inner journey was in its own way as valuable as the voyage he made in the *Investigator*. 