

Skeletons in the Closet: Convicts, Prisons & Asylums

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Talk Overview

- ▶ Convicts, Prisons & Asylums
- ▶ Lots of resources especially in State Archives, newspapers, online indexes etc
- ▶ Gateway sites, more popular sites, lesser known sites



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Convicts in Australia

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

Between 1788 and 1868, approximately 162,000 [convicts](#) were [transported](#) to the various [Australian penal colonies](#) by the British government.^[1]

The British government began transporting criminals to overseas colonies in the 16th century. When transportation to the [American colonies](#) declined with the move towards American independence in the 1770s, an alternative site was needed to avoid further overcrowding of British prisons and [hulks](#). In 1770, [James Cook](#) charted and claimed possession of the east coast of Australia for Britain. Due to the continent's isolation, it was considered ideal for a penal colony, and in 1787 the [First Fleet](#) of eleven convict ships set sail for [Botany Bay](#), arriving on 20 January 1788 to found [Sydney](#), the first European settlement in Australia. Other penal colonies were later established in [Van Diemen's Land \(Tasmania\)](#), [Queensland](#) and [Western Australia](#). Penal transportation to Australia peaked in the 1830s and dropped off significantly in the following decade. The last convict ship arrived in Western Australia on 10 January 1868.

Many of the convicts were transported for petty crimes; others were [political prisoners](#). More serious crimes, such as rape and murder, were not transportable offences. After their prison terms were served most stayed in Australia and joined the other settlers, with some rising to prominent positions in Australian society. Approximately 20% of modern Australians are descended from transported convicts. Once deemed the "convict stain", it is now considered by many Australians to be a cause for celebration to have a convict in one's lineage. The extent to which the convict era has shaped Australia's national character has been studied by many writers and historians.^[2]

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http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Convicts_in_australia





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Chief Secretary's Office Registered Papers 1818-1852

The Francis J Crowley Bequest project is a five year project at the National Archives of Ireland to catalogue and make available the papers of the Office of Chief Secretary of Ireland from 1818 to ... [more](#)

State Library of Western Australia - Guides to Family History - Australian Joint Copying Project (AJCP)

The AJCP is an important collection of microfilmed records from archives all over Britain. It includes records for convicts, the military, early settlers and much more. This AJCP guide is in two ... [more](#)

Linc Tasmania - Tasmanian Names Index

This site offers a single search across the following:• Arrivals (19th Century). Passengers and ships arriving, mainly in Hobart. Contains surnames A-K, L-Z to be added• Births (1803-1933). ... [more](#)

<http://coraweb.com.au/categories/convicts>



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Convicts to Australia

A Guide to Researching Your Convict Ancestors

Another [Perth DPS](#) Project www.convictcentral.com

Search These Lists Online:

- ★ [All the Convict Ships](#)
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★
*"The definitive site
 for Convict
 Research on the
 World Wide Web"*
 ★

★
 Use Search Box
 above to search
 the entire Site
 ★

Most family historians in Australia regard a convict in their ancestry as enormously desirable. "Convicts to Australia" is intended to guide, inform and entertain those just starting the hunt as well as the more experienced researcher. The site is a 'work in progress' and data is being added regularly. We hope your convict research is made easier by our efforts and above all we hope you have FUN. Although **feedback and suggestions** are welcome, unfortunately we are unable to answer individual questions and research requests.



What's New

W.A. - Vimeira 1865

(We're systematically expanding the WA Convict pages with trial details & physical

descriptions.)



Research Guide

An overview of Australian settlement and convict transportation. Helpful hints for convict

researchers on a wide range of themes.

<http://members.iinet.net.au/~perthdps/convicts>



Timeline

A year-by-year account of the settlement of Australia and convict transportation at a

glance. Gives perspective to a confusing period.



Convict Ships

Chronological Lists of all the Convict Transports sent from England. Includes Alphabetical Lists of

the First, Second and Third Fleet convicts.



Bound for W.A.

English, Irish, Scottish



N.S.W. Women

Convict Women



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Related sites, books, more

Convict transportation registers database

The **British Convict transportation registers 1787-1867** database has been compiled from the British Home Office (HO) records which are available on microfilm at all Australian State Libraries. You can find details for over 123 000 of the estimated 160 000 convicts transported to Australia in the 18th and 19th centuries - names, term of years, transport ships and more. More detailed information is available [about this convict database](#).

Please note: The original records on which this database is based are not an exhaustive list of all convicts sent to Australia.

Do you want to know more?

[Convict Queenslanders](#)

Profiles of some of the convicts that have made a significant contribution to Queensland.

[Related websites, books and more](#)

Useful links to the internet and the other resources held at the State Library of Queensland.

Find a convict

Go

Here are some [search tips](#) to help you locate your convict.

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www.slq.qld.gov.au/resources/family-history/convicts

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RICHARD WALKER, Royal Offences > coining offences, 2nd June 1813.

Reference Number: t18130602-37

Offence: [Royal Offences](#) > [coininq offences](#)

Verdict: [Guilty](#) > [pleaded guilty](#)

Punishment: [Transportation](#)

Related Material: [Associated Records](#)

User Wiki: [Corrections](#); [Add Information](#)

[See original](#)



552. **RICHARD WALKER** was indicted for that he, on the 26th of December , had in his custody and possession, a forged 2 l. bank-note, he knowing it to be forged .

To this indictment the prisoner pleaded

GUILTY .

Transported for Fourteen Years .

First Middlesex jury, before Mr. Recorder.



New South Wales, Tasmania & Western Australia Convicts

- ▶ State Records New South Wales
www.records.nsw.gov.au
- ▶ Tasmanian Archive and Heritage Office
www.linc.tas.gov.au/tasmaniasheritage
- ▶ State Records Office of Western Australia
www.srowa.gov.au/collection/convict.asp
- ▶ How to information
- ▶ Indexes online & Digitised records



WALKER, Richard

1810 Dec 22 Juror at inquest on James Davis held at Sydney (Reel 6021; 4/1819 pp.157, 159)

WALKER, Richard

1816 Mar 12 Evidence at inquest on Thomas Robinson (Reel 6021; 4/1819 pp.599-600)

WALKER, Richard

1819 Feb 15 On list of applicants for renewal of spirit licences in Sydney (Reel 6006; 4/3499 p.318)

1820 Dec 20; 1821 Nov 14 Juror at inquests on Ellis Colebrooke & William Tibbet held at Sydney (Reel 6021; 4/1819 pp.83-4, 687, 689)

WALKER, Richard. Per "Admiral Gambier", 1808

1817 Petition for mitigation of sentence (Fiche 3182; 4/1853 p.351)

WALKER, Richard. Per "Lord Sidmouth", 1819

1823 Apr 11, Nov 5 On list of prisoners assigned (Fiche 3291; 4/4570D pp.130, 132)

1825 Servant of William Henry Moore of Sydney; testimony as to his character for a ticket of leave (Reel 6027; 4/1717.2 pp.16-7)

WALKER, Richard. Per "Somersetshire", 1814

1814 Oct 25 On list of convicts disembarked from the "Somersetshire" & forwarded to Windsor for distribution (Reel 6004; 4/3493 p.346)

1819 Jan 25; 1820 Jun 24 Clerk. On returns of storekeepers & extra clerks in Commissariat Department (Fiche 3301, 4/1093.2 p.1; Reel 6049, 4/1744 p.373 & 4/1745 pp.1, 2)

1819 Dec 4 Clerk in Commissariat. Petition for mitigation of sentence (Fiche 3201; 4/1860 p.72)

1821 Sep 8 Clerk, Commissariat Department. On list of all persons victualled from H.M. Magazines; with wife & three children (Reel 6016; 4/5781 p.64)



Colonial Secretary Papers, 1788-1825

Arranged by surname and subject this is the most comprehensive index of early NSW settlement.





LINC

Research

Family history

convict



How can I find out about someone's life as a convict?

The British Government transported about 76,000 convicts to Tasmania between 1804 and 1853. You can search for them online.

What's online?

Indexes searchable by name

- With the Tasmanian Names Index you can search and view many records, including those related to convicts

Convict employment records online

- Appropriation Lists 1822-1846 (CON27)
- Assignment lists and associated papers, 1810-1859 (CON13)

Conduct records



All guides to records

Tasmanian Names Index



Need help using our family history resources? Ask us!

Ancestors outside Tasmania...

Useful resources

www.linc.tas.gov.au/research/browse-by-category/familyhistory/convict





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WESTERN AUSTRALIA



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CONVICT RECORDS

The Swan River Settlement had been in existence for twenty years when it took the unusual step of electing to become a British penal settlement in 1849. Eager Home authorities accepted the offer and quickly dispatched the barque Scindian, which arrived in Gage Roads on the 1st June 1850 with a cargo of 75 male convicts aboard. This was to be the first of 43 shipments of convicts to the colony over an 18 year period.

Although a total of 9,925 convicts were officially transported during this period, it is estimated that some 500 of these were local prisoners intermixed with the transported convicts.



www.sro.wa.gov.au/archive-collection/collection/convict-records

Shauna Hicks
History Enterprises

UTP Baltic Cruise Jul 2015





PROVguide 57: Convict Records

Courts and Criminal Justice – Convict Records

Convicts as referred to in this PROVguide are those people convicted of an offence in Britain, or a British colony, whose sentence was to be transported to New South Wales, Tasmania or Western Australia. Transportation officially ceased in New South Wales and Tasmania in 1853 and in Western Australia in 1868. Strictly speaking, no convicts were transported directly to the Port Phillip District of New South Wales. However convicts did find their way to the District, and this generally happened in one of three ways: a convict from Sydney could be assigned to a work gang in Port Phillip; a ticket of leave holder might enter Port Phillip from either New South Wales or Tasmania to work and was required to register with the authorities; or the convict may have been an Exile.

A select list of convict records held at PROV

The following records are available on microfiche or microfilm through PROV's reading rooms and do not have to be ordered.

Registers and indexes

VPRS 2149 Register of Convicts (Superintendent, Port Phillip District) 1842 – 1854. This is a microfilm copy of VPRS 110 which is available online. This single volume covers Melbourne, Bourke and Westernport.

Details recorded are:

- assigned servants
- nominal list of ticket of leave holders in Port Phillip District 1843-1848
- applications for ticket of leave commencing 1 Jan 1843
- applications for pardons Feb 1845 – May 1854

<http://prov.vic.gov.au/provguide-57>



- T
- U
- W
- Y
- Application for Tickets of Leave
- Applicants for Pardons
- Certificates of Freedom Delivered
- Application for Alteration of Ticket of Leave
- Tickets of Leave**
- Certificates of Freedom
- Pass Register
- Fees Received
- Nominal List of Ticket of Leave Holders
- A
- B
- C
- D
- E
- F
- G
- H
- I
- J
- K
- L

Tickets of Leave

name	Ship	no of Y	Remarks
William Norri	Reef Murchant	43/305	Letter Plc 8/4/1843.
William Lee	Andromeda	39/295	
William Furlong	Albion	36/694	
John Egan	Eliza	42/364	
Geo Davenport	Claudine	39/303	
William Norri	Reef Murchant	43/305	
Caleb Sandy	Alia 5	42/2607	renewal due charge 2/3
John Drury	Midas	43/187	
William Goldby	Laxton	38/269	
Sam Bulmer	Claudine	39/173	
Thomas Collison	St. H. account 15	40/778	
John Crocombe	Neoa	42/359	
William Leake	Camroth	39/952	
William Chapman	Aster 131	40/590	
James Brown	Turney 141	40/376	
John Brown	Phoenix	36/1247	
Joseph Woodhead	Maj Hastings 121	39/630	

<http://prov.vic.gov.au>





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Maps



Diaries, letters, archives

Archived websites (1996 - now)

People and organisations

Lists



Trove spotlight:



<http://trove.nla.gov.au>



In inquest was holden on Thursday last, at the *Black Dog*, Cambridge-street, on the body of an old man named Richard Walker. It appeared in evidence, that on the morning of Thursday last the deceased had called at his daughter's house on the Rocks, and that he had gone into the back-yard, and remained there such an unusual time, that his daughter was induced to go and seek him. She found the old man extended in the yard in a fit. She called her husband and some of the neighbours and removed him into the house and put him to bed. The son-in-law immediately repaired to Dr. Hosking, and after stating the nature of the fits, requested him to give his attendance. The Doctor enquired who was to pay him? The son-in-law pleaded poverty, and declined becoming security for any sum, however small, though a good shoemaker. Accordingly the Doctor finding that the charity was to be all on his side, did not go. The old man lingered in the fits until three o'clock in the afternoon, and then he expired. The Jury returned a verdict—"That the deceased had died by the visitation of God."

To the Editor of the Sydney Gazette.

SIR,—I cannot allow the aspersion thrown out against my professional character in your report of the Coroner's inquest held on the body of Richard Walker, which appeared in your last *Gazette*, to pass without notice—especially as I consider no Coroner's Jury have a right to call in question the motives of any medical man for not doing what *they* may consider to be his duty.

In the first place, I have to state, that although the applicant had no pecuniary means of remunerating me, as stated at the inquest, had it been otherwise, I could not have gone at that time to visit the person, having but a few moments returned from a patient whom I could not have left for any length of time. Finding I was engaged, why could not the messenger have sought other medical assistance? and, moreover, it would have been useless had I gone, as I have heard since that the man was dead before he returned home.

Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser

30 June 1832 and 3 Jul 1832



Criminals Overview

- ▶ Very similar records as convicts
- ▶ State Archives – Courts, Police, Prisons
- ▶ Coraweb www.coraweb.com.au
- ▶ Trove
- ▶ Police Gazettes



About the Index

There are currently c.40,000 entries, from the photographic description books listing prisoners from the following gaols:

- ▶ Albury (1876-1929) [NRS 1966](#)
- ▶ Armidale (1894-1915) [NRS 1989](#)
- ▶ Bathurst (1874-1930) [NRS 1998](#)
- ▶ Berrima (1883-1888) [NRS 2021](#)
- ▶ Biloela (1885-1906) [NRS 2027](#)
- ▶ Broken Hill (1904-1929) [NRS 2057](#)
- ▶ Darlinghurst (1869-1914 - now complete) [NRS 2138](#)
- ▶ Deniliquin (1895-1929) [NRS 2191](#)
- ▶ Dubbo (1889-1920) [NRS 2202](#)
- ▶ Goulburn (1884-1930) [NRS 2232](#)
- ▶ Grafton (1894-1929) [NRS 2258](#)
- ▶ Maitland (1885-1898) [NRS 2326](#) and (1875-1903) [NRS 2327](#)
- ▶ Parramatta (1881-1930) [NRS 2397](#)
- ▶ State Reformatory for Women, Long Bay [NRS 2496](#)
- ▶ Trial Bay (1892-1901) [NRS 2549](#)
- ▶ Young Gaol (1894-1920) [NRS 2605](#)

Index to the Gaol Photographs

We are progressively adding other gaols to this index in alphabetical order of the gaol.

www.records.nsw.gov.au/state-archives/indexes-online/gaol-records/index-to-the-gaol-photographs



St Helena Convict Indexes 1863-1936



These indexes record the names of all convicts (prisoners) who were held at St Helena Penal Establishment. The records were created in part by the Police Department, Water Police 1863-1867 and, H M Penal Establishment, St Helena 1867-1886, and the Brisbane Correctional Centre 1917-1923.

Each series has been individually indexed under its series title.

Background

1. Series ID 7299 General record and description of prisoners admitted to St Helena, 1917-1923

The following details are recorded in the register ([Item ID 271421; A/18565](#)):- prisoner number, name of prisoner and alias if used, papers, date of receipt in prison, offence, date of sentence, sentence, special remission, date of discharge by remission, date when discharged, by whom sentenced, remanded or committed for trial, previous convictions, trade or calling, date of birth, height, colour of hair and eyes, remarks.

This register appears to have been written at H.M. Prison, Brisbane, and may have been a central record for the disposal of prisoners throughout Queensland. This particular section refers to those admitted to St. Helena. Although the register generally records those prisoners admitted from 1917 onwards, prisoners who were already at St. Helena in 1917 are also recorded, together with their date of admission.

2. Series ID 7300 Register of Male Prisoners Admitted to St Helena (with descriptions) - Sentences 12 months and upwards, 1919-1924

This register ([Item ID 271422; A/18565](#)) records details of male prisoners serving sentences of twelve months and upwards at HM Penal Establishment, St Helena, kept by HM Prison, Brisbane (Boggo Road).

The following information is recorded : number, name, prison, date of receipt in prison, offence, date of sentence, sentence, special remission, date of discharge by remission, date when discharged, where sentenced, remanded or committed for trial, previous convictions, trade or calling, age, height, colour of hair and eyes, papers and remarks.

www.archives.qld.gov.au



Courts and Criminal Justice – Prison Records

The administration of gaols and penal institutions in the nineteenth century

Prior to 1871 penal institutions and gaols were separately administered by officers located within the Chief Secretary's Department ([VA 475](#)). In 1871 under the provisions of the *Statute of Gaols Amendment Act 1871*, the Inspector-General of Penal Establishments assumed responsibility for the administration of gaols, and a Penal and Gaols Branch ([VA 1464](#)) was established within the Chief Secretary's Department. The branch was responsible for the management of Victorian gaols and penal institutions and the control and supervision of the adults and minors who were detained.

The earliest penal institutions were almost entirely punitive in emphasis, while gaols were used for the detention of prisoners not sentenced to hard labour, such as debtors, lunatics, the old, the destitute and children who had been convicted of vagrancy. For more information about records concerning the administration of prisons, probation and parole, and for records of individual institutions see [VRG 9 Prisons and Youth Training Centres](#) and [VRG 93 Corrections](#) on PROV's online catalogue at www.access.prov.vic.gov.au.

Records relating to gaols and penal institutions: a select list

Victorian prisons were required to submit information about the prisoners in their custody to the Penal and Gaols Branch ([VA 1464](#)) of the Chief Secretary's Department. There was no state-wide centralised registration of prisoners until 1985. In the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries it was common practice for a prisoner to be moved directly from the court where the trial was held to a local prison, such as Beechworth. If the trial took place outside the Melbourne area researchers are advised to consult the records of local prisons. For records of individual institutions see [VRG 9 Prisons and Youth Training Centres](#) on PROV's online catalogue.

From around 1860 Pentridge became the central prison for the Melbourne area, and registers were kept for both male and female prisoners who passed through Pentridge. These prisoners were registered in [VPRS 515 Central Register of Male Prisoners](#) [1850 – 1948] and [VPRS 516 Central Register of Female Prisoners](#) [1857 – 1948]. Please note that these registers only contain details of prisoners that passed through Pentridge and were not state-wide central registers. Unless a prisoner passed through Pentridge it is unlikely that there will be a reference to them in VPRS 515 and VPRS 516.

<http://prov.vic.gov.au/provguide-58>



[illegible]

PHOTOGRAPHS.

No. 27899

Name Smith Stephenus

140

Height ...
Weight ...
Complexion ...
Hair ...
Eyes ...
Nose ...
Mouth ...
Chin ...
Eyebrows ...
Visage ...
Forehead ...
Date of Birth ...
Native Place ...
Trade ...
Religion ...
Read or Write ...

Sentence ...
Date of Conviction ...
Offence ...
Where and before whom tried ...

Particular Marks.

Scar, little finger at hand, left thumb and left chin, antenatal tooth upper jaw
Scar mark right side of body

Previous History.

Per Name 1880 - Ardour French. No. 1880, living in, 12 George St. Sydney.



RETURN OF PRISONERS DISCHARGED FROM HER MAJESTY'S PRISON, FORTITUDE VALLEY, DURING THE MONTH OF DECEMBER, 1900.

Name.	Where Tried.	Date of Discharge.	Offence.	Sentence.	Native of	Age.	Stature.	Make.	Complexion.	COLOUR OF		Remarks.
										Hair.	Eyes.	
Christina Campbell	Brisbane	1900. 1 December	Drunkenness	7 days' imprisonment or £1 fine	Scotland	45	4 11	Stout	Sallow	Dark-brown	Dark-brown	Minus teeth upper jaw.
Ellen Ferguson	ditto	6 "	Obscene language	1 month's imprisonment or £3 fine	ditto	39	5 4½	Medium	Fresh	Brown	Brown	Second finger right hand disfigured.
Maria Bilton	ditto	7 "	Drunkenness	7 days' imprisonment or £1 fine	England	64	4 1½	Slight	Sallow	ditto	Blue...	Nil.
Ellen Murphy	ditto	7 "	Obscene language	48 hours' imprisonment or £2 fine	Ireland	56	5 1½	Stout	ditto	Grey	ditto	Blind right eye.
Mary A. McGregor	ditto	9 "	Drunkenness	14 days' imprisonment or £1 fine	England	46	5 2	ditto	ditto	ditto	ditto	Lame from rheumatism.
Ellen Hayes	ditto	9 "	ditto	7 days' imprisonment or £1 fine	Ireland	33	5 2	Medium	ditto	Brown	Brown	Second finger right hand disfigured.
Sarah Palmer	ditto	10 "	Obscene language	ditto	ditto	62	4 10	ditto	Pale	Grey	Blue...	Scar over right eye; lobe left ear scar neck.
Sarah Martin	ditto	10 "	ditto	48 hours' imprisonment or £2 fine	Queensland	28	5 1½	Stout	Fresh	Brown	ditto	"I love F.H. Fred Hayes" right arm.
Catherine Ferguson	ditto	17 "	Drunkenness	7 days' imprisonment or £1 fine	Ireland	60	4 11	Medium	Sallow	Grey	ditto	Right wrist dislocated; scar right cheek.
Mary Healy	ditto	21 "	ditto	ditto	ditto	39	5 5½	Slight	ditto	Brown	ditto	Nil.
Catherine Hannen	ditto	21 "	ditto	7 days' imprisonment or £2 fine	ditto	52	5 1½	Medium	ditto	ditto	Brown	Scar left eyelid; minus all her teeth.
Lizzie Kelly	ditto	22 "	Obscene language	48 hours' imprisonment or £2 fine	ditto	37	5 0	Stout	ditto	ditto	ditto	Nil.
Emily Meredith	ditto	25 "	ditto	7 days' imprisonment or £1 fine	N. S. Wales	58	5 4	Medium	ditto	Grey	Hazel	Mole right cheek; scar on chin.
Annie Maher	ditto	28 "	ditto	14 days' imprisonment or £2 fine	Ireland	49	5 1½	Stout	ditto	ditto	Blue...	Nil.

Queensland Police Gazettes

ARRESTS REPORTED DURING THE WEEK ENDED 21st MAY, 1904—continued.

Name of Offender.	Place of Arrest.	Nature of Charge.	If Arrested on Warrant or Otherwise.	Reference to Police Gazette or Criminal Offence.	How Case Disposed of.	Arresting C.
Neswidgeaw (S.S.I.)	Plane Creek	Threatening words	No warrant	Nil	Fined £5 or 3 months' imprisonment	First-class Constable B.
Ellen Chick, alias Ellen Ferguson	Barcardine	Vagrancy	ditto	ditto	3 months' imprisonment	First-class Constable J.
George Hammond	Muttaborra	Hawking without a license	On summons	ditto	Fined £10 10s. and 10s. 4d costs or 3 months' imprisonment	At the instance of Acti
Thomas Henry Burchill	Cunnamulla	Stealing	No warrant	ditto	Committed for sentence, District Court, Roma, 14th June, 1904	Constable H. J. Houston
Frank Lyons	Nambour	ditto	On warrant	Police Gazette, 1904, page 193	Fined £2, 13s. 3d. restitution, or 1 month's imprisonment	Constables W. Adams
Ditto	ditto	Stealing conjointly	ditto	Nil	Fined £2 or 1 month's imprisonment (cumulative with previous sentence)	ditto.
John Haygart	Ingham	Supplying liquor to a South Sea Islander	On summons	ditto	Fined £5 or 1 month's imprisonment	At the instance of Con
Wat-teet Win (kanaka)	ditto	Aggravated assault on a female	No warrant	ditto	4 months' imprisonment	Constable J. Brady.
Arthur Mason	Brisbane	False pretences	ditto	ditto	3 months' hard labour	First-class Constable R.
Charles Hutchinson	ditto	Obscene language	ditto	ditto	Fined £5 or 3 months' imprisonment	W. E. Foster (C.I.B.) Constable J. Sexton.

Print PDF JPG TXT Cite Buy

Lists Add to List

Finn Family in QLD (yours) x

Tagged Add Tags

By you: Denis Patrick Finn x

Comments (None yet) Add New Comment

Electronically Translated Text Fix this Text

Why may this text have mistakes?
How to correct this text?

No corrections yet

FOUR MEN REMANDED

SUSPECTED PERSONS

Four men appeared in the Police Court yesterday, before Mr. W. E. H. Ferguson, P.M., charged with being suspected persons. They each pleaded not guilty, and were each remanded on a bail of £20, with one surety of £20. Senior-Sergeant F. B. Kearney appeared for the prosecution.

Roy Matthews (21), motor mechanic, and Charles Davies (21), labourer, were each charged with having been found in a place adjacent to the warehouse of Noyes Bros. (Sydney), Ltd., Adelaide Street, Brisbane, with intent to commit an indictable offence. Defendants were remanded until April 6.

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John Foster, alias John Harrison, alias John Hardy (32), salesman, and Denis Finn, alias Denis Patrick Finn, alias Johann Romanoff (35), salesman, were each charged that on March 31, at Brisbane, being a suspected person, he was found in the Town Hall with intent to commit an indictable offence. Both were remanded until April 9.

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BURNING agony
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back and legs, or
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they may mean the
life-long misery.

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called cures without
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Queensland."

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for over 40 years).
and women all ov
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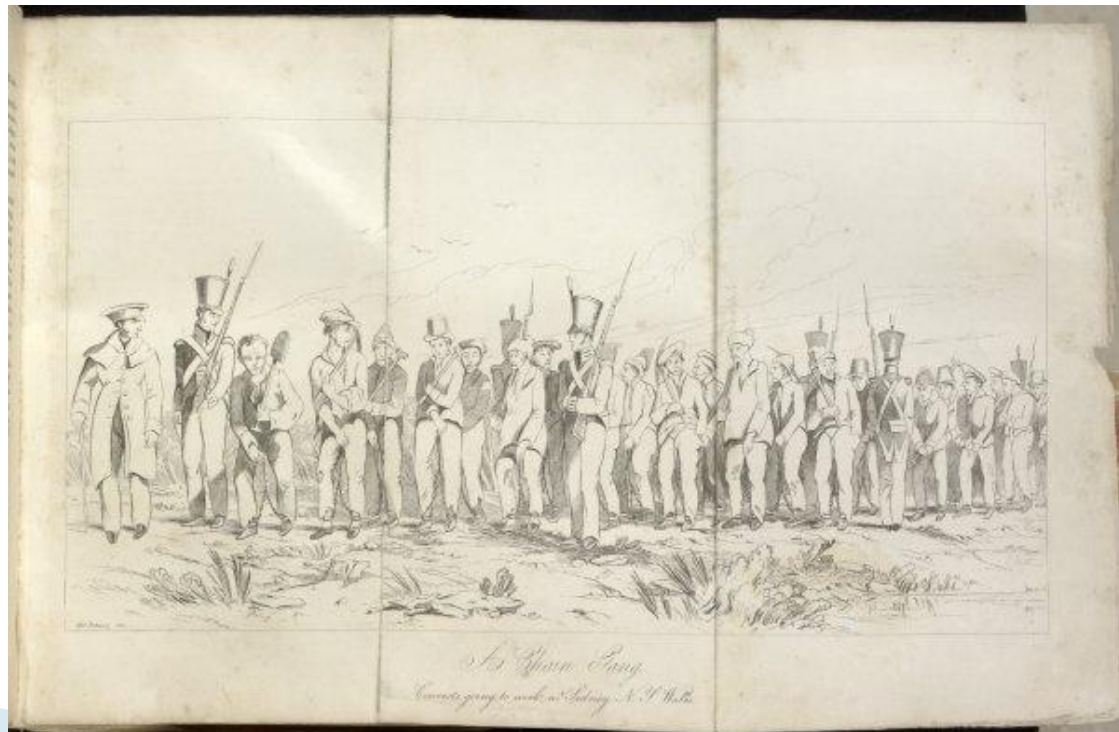


Old Bill Thompson
Tasmanian convict,
Linc Tasmania

<http://trove.nla.gov.au>

Chain gang
near Hobart
1833 (Edward
Backhouse)

National Library
of Australia



What are asylums?

- ▶ Terms include benevolent, mental, psychiatric hospitals, sanatoriums
- ▶ For the sick, not just mental illness
- ▶ For the aged
- ▶ For the destitute
- ▶ For the forgotten
- ▶ For those with no one else to care for them



Reasons for Female Admission into Victorian asylums (examples)

- ▶ Change of life
- ▶ Desertion of husband
- ▶ Destitution
- ▶ Lonely life in the bush
- ▶ Religion, Religious mania
- ▶ Senility
- ▶ Worry
- ▶ Worry about family
- ▶ Worry & hard work
- ▶ Alcohol
- ▶ Child birth
- ▶ Climacteric (menopause)
- ▶ Heredity
- ▶ Influenza
- ▶ Fright caused by child nearly drowning in river
- ▶ Shipwrecked at one time
- ▶ Shock, death of husband



Agencies Creating Records

- ▶ Asylums
- ▶ But also
 - Colonial (Chief) Secretary's Office
 - Hospitals
 - Justice Department (inquests)
 - Police Department
 - Prisons Department (gaols)
 - Newspapers



Types of Records

- ▶ Admission files
- ▶ Admission registers (registers of patients)
- ▶ Case books (case files)
- ▶ Indexes and alphabetical lists
- ▶ Medical case books
- ▶ Warder's diaries
- ▶ Access varies around Australia



Finding Aids

- ▶ Records usually with the State Archives
- ▶ Brief Guides or Fact Sheets
- ▶ Online Indexes and Databases
- ▶ Digitised Records
- ▶ Now we will have a look at the various Australian states



Queensland

Queensland State Archives

- ▶ www.archives.qld.gov.au
- ▶ Brief Guide 26 – Guide to Dunwich Records
- ▶ Brief Guide 39 – Insanity/Mental Asylum Records
- ▶ Wolston Park Hospital (Woogaroo Asylum)
1865 – current
- ▶ 100 years access
- ▶ Public Curator Insanity Files



Insanity / Mental Asylum Records

Brief Guide 39

A 3 page
guide listing
main series

This Brief Guide provides an overview of Queensland State Archives records relating to mental health patients. Prior to the separation from New South Wales in 1859, there were no facilities for psychiatric treatment in the Moreton Bay Region. As such, mentally disturbed persons, or “lunatics”, would have been sent to Brisbane Gaol or possibly to an asylum in Sydney. Woogaroo Lunatic Asylum opened in 1865 with 69 patients, and has undergone many name changes and renovations since.

There are two main types of mental asylum records held at Queensland State Archives: Public Curator Insanity files and Goodna Case Books.

Public Curator insanity files

In general Public Curator insanity files held at Queensland State Archives consist of records of people who were admitted to the institutions in Goodna (Woogaroo), Ipswich (Sandy Gallop), or Toowoomba (Willowburn).

The main series of records at Queensland State Archives that relate to insanity and

www.archives.qld.gov.au



No. 34

FINN J

INMATE'S NAME FINN JOHN

ADMITTED 8.2.21

34

Date of Admission	8. 2. 21	Whence Admitted	Longreach
Cause of Admission	Senility		Hospital
Age	63 years	Birthplace	Wicklow, Ireland
Religion	R. C.	Education	R & W
Trade	Labourer	Married or Single	Widower
Father's Name and Profession	James Finn, Farmer		
Mother's Maiden Name	Rose Barry		Peninsular
Wife's Maiden Name	Barah Tegan		
Age when Married	24 years		
Where Married	County Wicklow Ireland		
Children	Albert; James; John; Dennis; Margaret Rose; M. Mary Kennedy & M. Cath. Duesbury.		
Other Relatives	Nil		

Electorato { Stato
Federal

History.

34 years in Queensland. 15 years on Railway Maintenance work in different parts. Westfield Station 3 months. Had a farm at Hambour for a number of years. Been in Longreach Hospital since 28.12.20. R. Rheumatism. Twelve in M.L. Hospital prior to going to Longreach.

CLINICAL RECORD.

Certified on Admission as Suffering from

Date.

Disorder.

Proscription.

Remarks.

Leave of Absence.			Transfers, Discharges, etc.		
From.	Period.	Date Ret'd.	Ward.	Date.	Remarks.
			4 P. 1.	8.2.21 21.2.21 25.7.21	Admitted Struck off reported died in Am. Hospital -

For continuation of Record see over leaf.

New South Wales

State Records New South Wales (SRNSW)

- ▶ www.records.nsw.gov.au
- ▶ Archives in Brief (AIBs)
- ▶ Resources for Family Historians – Asylums

Sydney Benevolent Asylum (Mitchell Library)

- ▶ www.sydneybenevolentasylum.com
- ▶ Online index to admissions & discharges 1857–1900 (78,000 records)



The State Archives

Activities Program

Copy service

Digital Gallery

Discoveries @ SRNSW

Exhibitions

Guides and finding aids

Indexes Online

Presentations

Preservation work

Register of Access Directions

Research topics

Architecture

Asylum records

BDMs

Colonial Secretary

Convict records

Court records

Asylum records

A common way of finding out if a relative was in a mental hospital is to check the death certificate. If a person died in a mental hospital or asylum it will be stated on the death certificate.

- ▶ [How do you know if your ancestor was in an asylum?](#)
- ▶ [How to access patient records](#)
- ▶ [What records do we hold?](#)
- ▶ [Patient records](#)
- ▶ [For more information on mental health records](#)
- ▶ [Gallery](#)

How do you know if your ancestor was in an asylum?



You may also know that an ancestor spent some time in an asylum from hearsay or family stories.

Try to gather as much information as you can.

What we need to know

To help you track down the records we need to know

www.records.nsw.gov.au/state-archives/research-topics/asylum-records/asylum-records



Victoria

Public Record Office Victoria (PROV)

<http://prov.vic.gov.au>

- ▶ PROV *guide* 23 PROV's Digitised Records and Online Indexes
- ▶ PROV *guide* 59 Mental Health Records
- ▶ PROV *guide* 71 Inquest Records



Mental health

Digitised records

[VPRS 7446/P1 Alphabetical Lists of Patients in Asylums, 1849-1885](#)

[VPRS 7427/P1 Nominal Register of Patients, Ararat Asylum, 1867-1906](#)

[VPRS 7426/P1 Nominal Register of Patients, Ballarat Asylum, 1893-1907](#)

[VPRS 7428/P1 Nominal Register of Patients, Ballarat/Sunbury Asylums, 1877-1907](#)

[VPRS 8236/P1 Register of Patients, Ballarat/Sunbury Asylums, 1877-1920](#)

[VPRS 7395/P1 Case Books of Male Patients, Beechworth Asylum, 1867-1912](#)

[VPRS 7396/P1 Case Books of Female Patients, Beechworth Asylum, 1878-1912](#)

[VPRS 7493/P1 Register of Patients, Bendigo Receiving Ward, 1874-1908](#)

[VPRS 7721/P1 Register of Patients, Collingwood Asylum, 1866-1873](#)

[VPRS 7425/P1 Nominal Register of Patients, Kew Asylum, 1871-1906](#)

[VPRS 7690/P1 Nominal Register of Patients, Kew Asylum, 1871-1914](#)

[VPRS 7680/P1 Register of Patients, Kew Asylum, 1871-1919](#)

[VPRS 7423/P1 Nominal Register of Patients, Royal Park Hospital for the Insane, 1907-1913](#)

[VPRS 7490/P1 Asylum Records \[Case Books\], Sunnyside Licensed House, 1905-1915](#)

[VPRS 7422/P1 Index to Male and Female Case Books, Yarra Bend Asylum, 1848-1912](#)

Records are digitised and
freely accessible online

Ararat, Ballarat, Beechworth, Bendigo,
Collingwood, Cremorne, Kew, Royal Park,
Sunbury, Sunnyside, Yarra Bend



Name

E-liza Jeffers

Form of Insanity

By whom brought

Previous residence

Age and sex

Married, single, or widowed

If any family, and age of youngest child

Occupation

Habits of life

Native place

Religion

Duration of present attack

If disordered before, and how long

Supposed cause

If hereditary

Specific signs of insanity

Whether subject to epilepsy

If suicidal

If dangerous

If destructive

State of bodily health

Name and address of nearest relative or friend

Request to receive signed by

Facts indicating insanity before admission certified to by

Melancholia
 Husband Nathaniel
 Nathaniel N.

42

m

11 - family

Housewife

actin - 80/12

German town

Wesleyan

3 day 1 on 2

15 year ago in Bath I. A

Child bath - Baby 6 weeks old

Mother in Melbourn I. A

will not eat or speak

? Rote Mal

no

no

no

Weak

Husband

Refused to speak, C. W. G. M.

Silence - 12 years with 12 of Melbourn

Beechworth
 Females
 1904-1911



228 NAME	Harry Smith
Name and address of nearest relative or friend	Chiltern Road Isabella Gower Mother
By whom brought...	His Mother
Previous residence	Chiltern Road
Age and sex	18 years. Male
Married, single, or widowed...	Single
If any family	None
Occupation	Miner
Habits of life	-
Native place	
Form of insanity	Episcapaliam Epileptic Mania
Duration of present attack	18 months
If disordered before, and how long	No
If hereditary	No
Specific signs of insanity	Wandering in the bush - loss of memory &c
If suicidal	
If dangerous	yes?
If destructive	

Beechworth Males 1867-1872

Bodily Conformation :-
Head
Chest

Marks of violence (if any) ...
 This patient had fracture of the skull
 twice - first fr. a fall off a horse & second fr.
 a mining accident. Has been excited
 a little since admission. General health fair.
 His mother states that he is subject to
 Epileptic fits. Pat on Minic Bread
 Must keep ans 317

Tasmania

- ▶ Tasmanian Archive and Heritage Office
- ▶ www.linc.tas.gov.au/tasmaniasheritage
- ▶ Hospital Records – some inc Royal Hobart and Royal Derwent hospitals (75 years closed access)
- ▶ Inquest Records – index online and digitised copies



Royal Derwent Hospital 1827-2000

The Hospital was created to provide in-patient treatment and rehabilitation of mentally ill and mentally handicapped persons, including treatment of alcoholics.

It has been known by various names throughout its history. In 1968 the Lachlan Park Hospital, as it was then called, was merged with the Millbrook Rise Psychopathic Hospital to form the Royal Derwent Hospital, the name it would retain until its closure in 2000.



What is online?

- Admission papers, 1843-1964 (HSD285) Not all admissions have been scanned. It is better to conduct an **item search** on the patient's name (in the form Citizen, John). This will display other records that are available, such as the patient file. The admission papers can still be viewed online using this method.
- Records of patients transferred from the Asylum at Port Arthur, 1877-1893 (HSD54) There is an index that has been digitised.
- Alphabetical monthly register of patients and attendants 1841-1842 (HSD104) indexed in Patient records, administration papers (HSD285)

www.linc.tas.gov.au/tasmaniasheritage/search/guides/rdh

What else is there?

- Patient files, 1857-1993 (HSD284) Not all files have survived. An item search is preferable (see above).
- Admission registers, 1830-1954 (HSD247) See also the following source.
- New Norfolk Invalid and Mental Asylum: Patient admission register, 1830 - 1930 by Dianne Cassidy. This work is based on the admission registers (HSD247 above) and is easier to use than the original source
- Register of death, transfer or discharge of patients, 1830-1966 (HSD254) Chronological. Note: There are access restrictions. Please contact us for more information.
- Alphabetical register of patients, 1888-1974 (HSD252)
- Patient files of the Millbrook Rise Psychopathic Hospital, 1934-1968 (AB372) Millbrook Rise merged with Lachlan Park Hospital in 1968 to form the Royal Derwent Hospital. These files contain only administrative correspondence. Clinical data is on the Case Book sheets, AB479 (see below)



South Australia

State Records South Australia (SRSA)

- ▶ www.archives.sa.gov.au
- ▶ Adelaide and Parkside Lunatic Asylums later Glenside Hospital
- ▶ Alphabetical lists of patients 1846–1901
- ▶ Record of Patient Deaths 1891–1909
- ▶ Correspondence, police reports



Western Australia

State Records Office Western Australia (SROWA)

- ▶ <http://www.sro.wa.gov.au>
- ▶ Hospitals and Health Records
 - Fremantle Asylum est 1865 closed 1909
 - Claremont Hospital for the Mentally Insane est 1903
 - Lemnos Hospital
 - Whitby Falls
 - Heathcote Mental Hospital
 - Greenplace Hostel





Search A-Z of record sets in Australia & New Zealand








Showing records from

- United States
- United Kingdom
- Australia & New Zealand**
- Ireland
- World

[Show list of everything](#)

Search

[Clear search](#)

Title ^	Category ^	Sub-category ^
 New South Wales Police Gazette	Institutions & organisations	Courts & legal
 Queensland Police Gazette	Institutions & organisations	Courts & legal
 Queensland Police Gazettes	Institutions & organisations	Courts & legal
 South Australian Police Gazette	Institutions & organisations	Courts & legal
 Tasmania Police Gazettes	Institutions & organisations	Courts & legal
 Victoria Police Gazette	Institutions & organisations	Courts & legal
 Victoria Police Gazettes	Institutions & organisations	Courts & legal

www.findmypast.com.au



ESCAPED LUNATIC.

ESCAPED from the Woogaroo Asylum on the 12th instant, Lewis Moniz, 32 years of age, 5 feet 11 inches high, sallow complexion, dark eyes, dark hair, small dark moustache and imperial ; wore moleskin trousers, white jumper, blue twill shirt, felt hat, blucher boots ; clothes branded "L.A." with crown.

23rd April, 1888.

QLD Police
Gazette 1888

ESCAPED LUNATIC.

GOODNA. — Escaped from Woogaroo Lunatic Asylum, on the 19th instant, Thomas Quinn, an Irishman, 40 years of age, 5 feet 7 inches high, fair complexion ; wore blucher boots, moleskin trousers, twill shirt, grey tweed coat ; he has friends in Brisbane ; his wife resides at Toowoomba.

24th September, 1888.

ESCAPED LUNATIC.

(*Vide Police Gazette*, 1888, page 331.)

THOMAS QUINN'S body was found in the Brisbane River, near Dinmore, on the 24th ultimo.

9th October, 1888.





Ararat Asylum

Image State Library of Victoria

Shauna Hicks
History Enterprises

UTP Baltic Cruise Jul 2015



Conclusion

- ▶ Lots of resources – use portal sites
- ▶ Biographical & physical information not always found elsewhere
- ▶ Online indexes & digitised records ongoing
- ▶ Missing ancestors or undiscovered skeletons? Why not have a look?

