

BDA Source Description Pages

<http://www.bda-online.org.au>**39th Regiment of Foot****History:**

This British regiment was first raised in 1702 as Colonel Richard Coote's Regiment of Foot. In 1751 it became the 39th Regiment of Foot. Between 1782 and 1807 it was known as the 39th (East Middlesex) Regiment of Foot. Between 1807 and 1881 it was the 39th (Dorsetshire) Regiment of Foot. In 1810-1814 the regiment served with distinction on active service in Spain against Napoleonic forces during the Peninsular War and was stationed in Australia between 1826 and 1833.

The explorer Charles Sturt (1795–1869) arrived in New South Wales as an officer of the regiment in 1827. In the same year Captain Henry Smyth and 30 rank and file men of the 39th took part of the expedition (including 14 marines, an assistant surgeon and the crew of HMS *Success*) to form a settlement on Melville Island near the future site of Darwin.¹

Records used:

This Dataset aims to create a record of each member of the regiment who served in Australia between 1826 and 1833. Original records dealing with the regiment are held in the War Office series at The National Archives in Kew, London, England. Some of these records have not been filmed and with the vast quantity of military records it is unlikely that they will be scanned for many years.

Some of the more important records which relate to the regiment's period in Australia were filmed under the Australian Joint Copying Project and are available in major libraries in Australia. The series from which BDA has extracted data are the Army Regimental Pay Lists, 1823-1833 (TNA WO 12/5263 & 4 & 5 filmed onto reels 3770, 3771 & 3772).

The original documents were bound into volumes and as a result, some details are hidden in the spines. Some are monthly pay lists, but most are quarterly returns. The men are divided into separate lists according to their rank, and are listed in each return in the same order except when they were promoted or demoted, in which case they were transferred into their new rank list. The movement of some men caused some confusion for the clerks in their compilation of these records and it is possible that occasional duplication has crept into this dataset.

¹*Historical Records of Australia*, ser 1 vol 13 p 315.

Data extracted:

Data has been extracted by BDA from each pay list starting with the month beginning December 1824 and ending with 31 May 1833. Not all the information was extracted, notably the rate of pay for each rank. Items extracted include: full name, rank, previous occupation and previous residence (if recorded), enlistment date and place (if recorded), length of service contracted, either 14 or 7 years, the company(ies) served in, birthplace, ship and date of arrival in NSW (generally added by the editors), dates and places of desertion, illness and discharge, if noted. Place of service (if noted) could be assumed because most of the men were in Sydney, unless noted otherwise. The date of departure is recorded for many and death details for those who died during service in the regiment.

The pay lists often contained variations in spelling of a man's name between one list and another. Some also had completely different given names. All these variations have been cross indexed into the Database.

The pay lists record the date and place of death of a soldier who died during the period covered. If recorded during 1832-1833 the death may have occurred during their first year in India.

Arrival in Sydney:

Most of the men began arriving during 1826. Detachments acting as guards on convict ships joined the following vessels in England or Ireland (numbers derive from newspaper reports and may be subject to typographical error in the original news report):

Woodman from Cork arrived Sydney 7 Jun 1826:
Capt Wakefield , Ensign Innes, 40 men.

Regalia arrived Sydney 5 Aug 1826:
Lieut Coke and 30 men.

Earl St Vincent arrived Hobart 13 Aug 1826:
Capt Smith, (Mrs. Smith, died on the passage), Sergeant George Millwood, Corporals Shaw and M'Donnough, 27 privates, 4 women, and 6 children.

England arrived Sydney 18 Sep 1826:
Major D'Arcey and a detachment.

Boyne arrived Sydney 28 Oct 1826:
A detachment under the orders of Capt Wright.

Woodford arrived Hobart 22 Nov 1826:
A detachment of rank and file.

Speke arrived Sydney 26 Nov 1826:
Lieutenant Seaman and 30 men.

BDA Source Description Pages

<http://www.bda-online.org.au>

Phoenix arrived Sydney 25 Dec 1826:
Lieut Cox, Ensign Lloyd, 1 corporal, and 28 privates.

Faith 23 arrived Sydney Dec 1826:
Adjutant Me(y)rick, 39th Regiment and Mrs. Meyrick, Lieutenant-Colonel Balfour; 40th Reg. and 3 children, Mrs. Chapman, Mrs. Wright, and 31 rank and file .

Albion arrived Sydney 12 Feb 1827:
Capt. Crotty, 39th Regiment, Assistant Surgeon Evans, 57th Regiment, a detachment of the 39th.

Andromeda arrived Hobart 23 Mar 1827:
Lieutenant Burrough and 30 rank and file of the 39th; 3 women and 3 children [including a company of buglers]; 2 Sergeants of the Veteran Corps; 1 woman and 3 children.

Mariner: arrived Sydney 23 May 1827:
Captain Sturt, a detachment.

Guildford arrived Sydney 25 July 1827: Captain Forbes, Surgeon Hamilton, 30 men.

Governor Ready arrived Hobart 31 July 1827: detachment under the command of Lieutenant Butler.

Manlius, arrived Sydney 11 Aug 1827: Dr. Conway, R. N. Surgeon Superintendent. Quarter-master Lloyd, 30 men.

Cambridge arrived Sydney 17 Sep 1827:
Lieutenant Colonel Lindsay, the headquarters and band of the 39th.

Champion arrived Sydney 17 Oct 1827:
A detachment of 29 men, under the orders of Ensign Reid, Surgeon Superintendent, Francis Logan, Esq. R. N.

Layton arrived Hobart 9 Oct 1827:
Dr. Evans, R. N. who has visited this Colony before, is the Surgeon and Superintendent. Detachment commanded by Capt. Geddes, and three women and one child.

Phoenix arrived Sydney 18 Jul 1828:
1 Captain, 1 Lieutenant, 1 Sergeant & 29 men.

Bengal Merchant arrived Hobart 10 Aug 1828:
1 Captain, 1 Ensign, 2 Sergeants & 27 men.

William Miles: arrived Hobart 28 July 1828; arrived Sydney 22 Aug 1828:
1 Lieutenant, 1 Ensign, 1 Sergeant & 29 men.

Bussorah Merchant arrived Sydney 26 July 1828:
1 Ensign, 1 Sergeant & 29 men.

BDA Source Description Pages

<http://www.bda-online.org.au>

Woodford arrived Hobart 25 Aug 1828:

4 men who formed part of Lieutenant Frazer's detachment.

A total of 912 men are recorded of whom three died on the voyage to Australia. With some cross references to other people mentioned and some variation in names, the Dataset contains 984 names.

No specific details of the ships carrying the detachments of the regiment to Australia appear in the *Historical Records of Australia (HRA)* volumes but names of officers and numbers of soldiers arriving on specific ships are given in colonial newspaper shipping notices indexed on www.trove.nla.gov.au.

Officers

War Office, the Army List for July 1829 (p 32).

39th or Dorsetshire Regiment

Memorable battles:

Gibraltar, Albuera, Vittoria, Pyrenees, Nivelles, Nive, Orthes, Peninsular.

List of officers of the 39th regiment in 1829 with rank, name and date of last promotion:

Colonel Sir George Airey KCH 28 Oct 1823

Lieutenant-Colonel P Lindesay 12 Aug 1824

Major D Macpherson 12 Aug 1824

Major Thomas Poole 21 Feb 1823

Captain Francis C Crotty 5 May 1814

Captain J Wakefield 29 Jul 1819

Captain Henry Smyth 17 Apr 1823

Captain D Urquhart md 21 May 1808

Captain C Barker 16 Jun 1825

Captain J D Forbes 10 Jun 1826

Captain Horace Walpole 13 Jan 1823

Captain S J Hodgson d 30 Dec 1826

Lieutenant Thomas Meyrick 9 Sep 1813

Lieutenant Charles Cox 1 Oct 1812

Lieutenant James H Leckie 12 Aug 1824

Lieutenant J FitzGerald 7 Apr 1825

Lieutenant T H Kirkley 25 Feb 1813

Lieutenant H C Scarman 22 Mar 1814

Lieutenant G C Borough 17 Sep 1825

Lieutenant George Sleeman 5 Jan 1826

Lieutenant J FitzGerald Butler 10 Jun 1826

Lieutenant W Y Moore 12 Dec 1826

Lieutenant Michael Spencer 8 Jan 1828

Lieutenant G A Pook d 25 Nov 1813

Lieutenant Joseph L Innes ad 14 Aug 1823

Lieutenant Aug Berkeley 13 Aug 1829

Ensign Nath Reid 9 Apr 1823

Ensign Charles B Lloyd 6 Apr 1826

BDA Source Description Pages

<http://www.bda-online.org.au>

Ensign Laud Maule 24 Aug 1826
Ensign W K Child 12 Dec 1826
Ensign John Farmer May 1827
Ensign F Dunbar 2d Lt May 1827
Ensign B G Layard 13 Aug 1829
Paymaster George Aug Durnford 13 Feb 1827 captain
Adjutant J L Innes Lt 26 Jul 1827
Quartermaster B Lloyd 4 Jun 1818 ensign 21 Apr 1814
Surgeon A Hamilton 20 Oct 1825?

Additionally, the *1812 Army List* volume was consulted for extra details on the officers.

Service in Australia:

Whilst the headquarters of the regiment was in Sydney, men were stationed in various parts of New South Wales and Van Diemens Land (Tasmania) and in remote outposts including King George Sound (Western Australia), Port Essington and Melville Island (Northern Territory) and Norfolk Island.

The death dates of 89 of the men are recorded in the pay lists of whom three died at sea before reaching Australia and seven died in India.

Leaving Australia:

A letter dated 30 March 1831 from British Prime Minister Viscount Goderich gave notice of orders for the transfer of the regiment to India. The exact departure date of most of the men is not individually recorded in the pay lists, but many departed in 1832, with some sailing as late as the first quarter of 1833.²

References:

Some of the above details have been extracted from:

Dress & Insignia of the British Army in Australia & New Zealand 1770-1870
by R.H. Montague, p.28. Sydney, Library of Australian History, 1981.

Shipping Arrivals and Departures, Sydney, 1788-1825
by J.S. Cumpston. Roebuck Press, 1977.

Original Sources used are detailed above under Records Used.

Further reading:

² *Historical Records of Australia*, ser 1 vol 16, p 230.

BDA Source Description Pages

<http://www.bda-online.org.au>

Historical record of The Thirty-ninth, or, The Dorsetshire Regiment of Foot containing an account of the regiment in 1702 and of its subsequent services to 1853 by Richard Cannon, London: G.E. Eyre and W. Spottiswoode, Parker, Furnivall and Parker, 1853.

Military Forces in New South Wales - an Introduction - Part 1, 1788-1904, 3rd edition by Ralph Sutton, Ken Thompson & Bill Storer. The Army Museum Foundation, 2000.

Manuscripts in the British Isles relating to Australia, New Zealand and the Pacific, Editor Phyllis Mander-Jones. Canberra, Australian National University Press, 1972.

Abbreviations:

HRA - *Historical Records of Australia*.

TNA - The National Archives - Kew, London, England.

List of all British Regiments that served in Australia:

(see [Military - British Regiments In Australia](#))

Acknowledgements for the Dataset:

Keith A Johnson AM: Data extraction from Pay Lists, editing this Information page.

John Ross of Surry Hills: Data entry.

Malcolm R Sainty AM: General editing of the dataset.

Michael Flynn, MA: Historical research and this Source Page text.

Historical resources available from the BDA Shop

<http://www.bda-online.org.au/shop>

For of all British Regiments included in the BDA see

<http://www.bda-online.org.au/sources/military/>

These Information pages are copyright. Any request to reproduce them should be directed to BDA.