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# Royal New South Wales Veteran Companies 1826-1832

This dataset generates a biographical profile of members of the Royal New South Wales Veteran Companies recorded on regimental muster books and pay lists as serving in Australia 1826-1832. Some entries from 1826 and most of 1827 have not yet been included but will be added at a later date.

The records are held by the UK National Archives, Kew, London (ref: WO12/11230, reel 3917, June 1826-June 1832). They were microfilmed by the National Library of Australia's Australian Joint Copying Project as 'New South Wales Royal Veterans' and are now available for online viewing on the Trove [www.trove.nla.gov.au](http://www.trove.nla.gov.au) under the 'Diaries, letters, archives' tab. The records, some faded and difficult to read on the microfilm version, were transcribed for BDA by Keith A Johnson AM and processed by BDA staff and volunteers.

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, demoted or discharged, in which cases they were added to their new rank list. The dataset records by name 189 individuals who came to Australia. Many of the men were married with children but wives were not mentioned by name in the pay lists.

### Background

Three Veteran Companies were formed under a Royal Proclamation issued at the Royal Hospital, Chelsea, London, on 12 September 1825 which stated (as reported in *The Australian* on 17 March 1829):

Notice to the out-pensioners, belonging to his Majesty's Royal Hospital, at Chelsea (including those transferred from Kilmainham Hospital [Dublin]), who reside in London and its neighbourhood. "His Majesty having been pleased to approve of the formation of three veteran companies, for service in New South Wales and Van Diemen's Land, each to be composed of three serjeants [sic], three corporals, and fifty privates, for the purpose of being employed as superintendents and overseers of convicts, in addition to their military duty; and that such companies should consist of volunteers of the out-pensioners of this establishment, who shall have borne good characters while in the army, and whose subsequent conduct shall have been such as to recommend them for the service in question; a preference being, however, given to those pensioners who were discharged as non-commissioned officers, or who have acted in in that capacity: "Notice is hereby given that such out-pensioners of the description aforesaid as reside in London and its neighbourhood, and may be desirous of volunteering their services in the said companies, are to signify their intention to the Field-officer who will be appointed to examine them, and who will attend at the Board-room of the Hospital for that ... And such out-pensioners are at the same time to produce to the said Field-officer, certificates from the minister and officers of the parish where they reside, or from some other respectable persons, to the effect that their conduct and habits have been such as to qualify them for the employment above described...."It is to be observed that this notice does not extend to such men as by the Hospital books exceed fifty years of age, or who have lost a limb, or who labour under any serious bodily infirmity. Pensioners eligible in other

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respects will not be objected to on account of their having families, if not too numerous.—By order of the Lords and other Commissioners.’

### Posting in Australia

The Army List for 1830 names the officers as three captains: retired Lieutenant Colonel Henry Dumaresq, Robert Robison [Robson in the pay list] and John D’Arcy and three lieutenants (William Bell, Jonathan Warner and Robert Travers). Dumaresq’s role was minimal as he was serving as private Secretary to Governor Ralph Darling (his brother-in-law) following his arrival in the colony in 1825.

The main body of veterans arrived on the ship *John Barry*, from London via Portsmouth and Cape Town. On board were D’Arcy, his wife and son, Bell and his two daughters and two sons, Lieutenant Travers, Assistant Surgeon Gibson (medical attendant to the Veterans) and 84 non-commissioned officers and privates with their families, comprising 66 women and 73 children (*Sydney Gazette* 12 July 1826). Lieutenants Samuel North and James Sweeney arrived separately.

The Veterans served in settled areas of the colonies, including Tasmania, the Sydney region (Parramatta, Liverpool, Longbottom, Pennant Hills, South Head and Windsor), Newcastle, Port Macquarie, Moreton Bay (now in Queensland but then part of New South Wales) and King Georges Sounds (Western Australia). Robert Robison became an active political opponent of Governor Darling and was court martialled and dismissed in 1828. Some rank and file Veterans returned to England and others received land grants and settled in the colonies.

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Great Britain. Parliament. House of Commons, 'New South Wales Veteran Companies. Copies of instructions relative to the raising and calling up from the out-pension list the late New South Wales Veteran Companies'. Accounts and papers [1834]; (515) House of Commons parliamentary papers 19th century, 1801-1900.

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War Office, United Kingdom, *A List of the officers of the army and Royal Marines full, retired and half pay, War Office 1<sup>st</sup> February 1830*.

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See also references to New South Wales Veteran Companies 1825-1832 in Trove Newspapers & Trove Diaries letters archives: <https://trove.nla.gov.au>

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For of all British regiments included in the BDA see

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