Convict Indents

Convict Transports 1787-1800
Convict Transports 1801-1812

Convict Transports 1787-1800

Introduction

Between the years 1787 and 1800, no systematic approach was used to record the details of the convicts who were to be transported to NSW. Most surviving lists record name, place and date of trial, and sentence. Some lists provide considerably more detailed information such as age, occupation and crime, while others included so little information that the colonial authorities had difficulty in determining when a convict's sentence had in fact expired.

The lists recording Irish convicts were different to those recording English convicts, both being discussed below.

General information

English transports

A number of different lists provide details of English convicts. These are found in the Convict Indents, Musters and Papers Lists, Transportation Registers and Colonial and Home Office Lists, which are discussed below. Multiple lists have generally survived for English transports.

Irish transports

The first transport carrying Irish convicts was the *Queen* in 1791 followed by *Boddingtons* and *Sugar Cane* (1793), *Marquis Cornwallis* (1796), *Britannia* (1797), and *Minerva* and *Friendship* (1800). The English transport *Kitty* (1792) also embarked some Irish female convicts. Books on each of the first five transports (1791-1797) have been written and published by Barbara Hall and are available from the BDA Shop http://www.bda-online.org.au/shop.

For most of the Irish transports only one official convict list has survived with little information being recorded. Trial details rarely included the day of trial and often only included the year. For the *Friendship* (1800) and *Anne* (1801) no trial details were recorded at all.

The convict lists for the Irish transports are stored with those for the English transports in the source reference identified as Convict Indents [SZ115] & [4/3999]. Some papers relating to the *Queen* are also found in the Musters and Papers Lists [2/82…]. These sources are discussed below.

Non-arrivals

In addition to recording details of the transports that reached Australia, the Database includes details of the convicts who sailed on board transports that did not arrive, namely the *Guardian* (1789) and the *Lady Shore* (1797). Although most of these convicts did not ever land in Australia, their fate could still be of interest to descendants of their own or of family members who remained in the UK, or to other interest groups such as those researching all convicts from a particular area.

Naturally as these vessels did not reach Australia, their convict lists have survived in material held by The National Archives, London.

Extant Lists

Most of the extant lists of transportees are found in Australian record repositories although some lists have survived in English records. The different series of available lists are discussed below:

Convict Indents [SZ115]

The main lists of convicts sent with the transports arriving in NSW between 1788 and 1799 are found at the following location:

> State Records Authority of New South Wales: Principal Superintendent of Convicts; Convict Indents of the First Fleet, Second Fleet and ships 1788-1799 CGS 1150 (SRNSW ref: SZ 115; SR Fiche 620-624, SR Reel 24).

These lists include official convict indentures, "orders in council" (discussed below) and general convict lists. Some of these lists were earlier obsolete lists, the more up-to-date list either being found in the Musters and Papers Lists [2/….] (see below) or occasionally in Colonial Office or Home Office Returns [CO/… & HO/…]. For some transports no final list was apparently made.

The lists included with an Order in Council were not lists of convicts ordered to be transported on a particular vessel. An Order in Council was an official document changing the "destination" of convicts who were to be transported on that particular vessel. When a sentence was passed in an English court, a transportation destination was usually noted, for example, "beyond the seas", "to colonies or plantations abroad", "to New South Wales" and so on. For those convicts who had not previously been ordered to "New South Wales", the Order in Council served to change their destination accordingly.

Interestingly enough, in the 1790's most convicts who had originally received capital convictions were sentenced to be transported to "New South Wales", while those

receiving lesser sentences were ordered "beyond the seas" or to other destinations. Therefore, for this period most Orders in Council only include convicts with lesser sentences and were generally incomplete lists. In addition, many of those named in the Orders in Council were not transported for some reason, eg. ill health, a pardon prior to transportation, and so on.

Convicts Indents [4/3999]

The above reference Convict Indents [SZ115] includes transports arriving in New South Wales between 1788 and 1799. The years 1800-1801 are covered by the following source:

> State Records Authority of New South Wales: Principal Superintendent of Convicts; List of Convicts: "Minerva", "Speedy", "Royal Admiral", "Minorca", "Canada", "Nile" 1800-1801 CGS 1151 (SRNSW ref: 4/3999; SR Reel 2719).

The page numbering for the lists included in this source [4/3999] continue the page numbering used for the above source [SZ115] indicating that this was merely a continuation of the above series of records, albeit with a different source reference. It is worth noting however that two lists with page numbers indicating that they followed those listed in [SZ115] and preceded those listed in [4/3999], were once held by the authorities but cannot be found within the material stored at State Records. One is currently deposited with the National Library in Canberra, the other has not been located.

For further general information about this source see the above reference Convict Indents [SZ115].

Musters and Papers [2/….]

Another series of lists are found at the following location:

> State Records Authority of New South Wales: Principal Superintendent of Convicts; Musters and other papers relating to convict ships, 1790-1849, CGS 1155 (SRNSW Ref: 2/8240-2/8282; SR Reels 2417-28)

Most of the lists for pre-1801 transports found in this source were extracted from Individual Indents [4/4000-4/4002] (see below) that were apparently brought out by the master of the transport. The connection between these two lists became obvious when it was found that the Musters and Papers Lists recorded errors and discrepancies also found in the Individual Indents. For example, when trial dates occurred in the latter part of the year after 25 October, the trial year in the Musters and Papers Lists was recorded incorrectly, one year later than the trial actually occurred. The error was most obvious when the Musters and Papers Lists recorded a date of trial that was after the transport arrived in NSW. This error occurred because the Individual Indents noted the year of trial in terms of the length of King George's reign. As George III ascended the throne on 25 October 1760, the number of years of his reign increased by one year on that date each year. However the clerks who copied the information from the Individual Indents into the lists that are

stored with the Musters and Papers Lists were obviously unaware of this distinction and converted the year incorrectly. This inaccuracy is noted where relevant in the Database.

Individual Indents [4/4000 – 4/4002]

A number of English transports carried official convict indentures made between the government and the contractor responsible for transporting convicts on a particular vessel to NSW. These have been labelled by the Editor as "Individual Indents" and are found at the following locations:

> State Records Authority of New South Wales: Principal Superintendent of Convicts; Indents 1791-1799, CGS 1152 & 1153 & 1154 (SRNSW Ref: 4/4000 & 4/4001 & 4/4002; SR Reel 2719)

Each of these Individual Indents records details of the convicts tried at a particular session (that is, assizes, quarter sessions, etc.) within a particular county. Those responsible for the convicts tried at that session were ordered to send the convicts to the transport and the Individual Indents often noted when a particular convict was not actually sent. They sometimes even provided a reason, eg. "not delivered to the contractor to be transported – sick".

A general reference to this source is made where applicable in the Database. In addition, within each entry a reference is made to the specific page location of the Individual Indent on which the respective convict is recorded. Detailed information is contained within these Individual Indents and researchers are advised to examine them. Researchers can obtain copies of specific Individual Indents by contacting State Records at Kingswood, NSW, and quoting the page location. A handling fee as well as a photocopying fee is charged for this service however as these microfilms are not part of the "Archives Kit", the information is not available elsewhere.

Details of the convicts listed in the Individual Indents were extracted by colonial clerks and noted in the series of lists found under the reference Musters and Papers Lists [2/….] (discussed above).

Transportation Registers [TR]

Some convict lists remained in England and are now found in The National Archives, London.
One series of records known as the Transportation Registers were microfilmed under the Australian Joint Copying Project and are available in major Australian libraries, such as the State Library in Sydney and the National Library of Australia in Canberra. State Records NSW also hold some of these microfilm reels. The Transportation Registers are located as follows:

> The National Archives, London: Home Office - Criminal; Convict Transportation Registers - Convicts Transported 1787 - 1809 (PRO ref: HO 11/1; PRO Reel 87)

> The National Archives, London: Home Office - Criminal; Convict Transportation Registers - Convicts Transported 1810-1817 (PRO ref: HO 11/2; PRO Reel 87)

The Transportation Registers covering the period 1787-1809 were apparently copied from another source or sources. The handwriting indicates that the returns for this 22 year period were all written by one clerk over a very short period of time, presumably one or two days. However the source of the information is uncertain. These returns were not copied from either the Orders in Council or from the Convict Indents as the sequence of entries is often very different. Interestingly enough the source of the information does not appear to have been standard, although the returns themselves have a standard format. This conclusion was reached by the Editor as the entries recorded in this list were sometimes extracted from an earlier and obsolete return whereas in other instances the Transportation Register provides the most up-to-date list of convicts transported on a particular vessel.

Home Office and Colonial Office Lists [HO/… & CO/…]

A number of additional convict transportation lists are found in letters and returns now held by The National Archives, London. No consistency exists between the various lists, with some proving to be more up-to-date than the lists that travelled with the respective vessels. References to these lists are included in the Database where appropriate.

Alphabetical Lists of Convicts 1788-1800 [4/4003] & Appendix [4/4003a]

These two alphabetical lists are found at the following locations:

Principal Superintendent of Convicts: Alphabetical Convict Lists (A-V) 1788-1800, CGS 12188 [SRNSW ref: 4/4003; SR Fiche 614-619, SR Reel 392]

Principal Superintendent of Convicts: Alphabetical Convict Lists (W-Z and Appendix) 1788-1800, CGS 12188 [SRNSW ref: 4/4003a; SR Reel 2662]

Approximately 7900 entries are recorded in these two sources and include the following information: name, place and date of trial, sentence, ship (irregularly) and page reference. They also include some references to tickets of leave and pardons, as well as to deaths and departures.

The entries contained in these sources were extracted from the main series of Convict Indents which travelled with the various transports, primarily those found at [SZ115] and [4/3999] (see above). The page reference noted to the right of each entry is a reference to the location of the information in these two primary sources [SZ115] and [4/3999]. For example, entry "122,6" refers to the sixth entry on page 122. Page numbers between 1 and 334 are found at [SZ115] while those between 355 and 396 are found at [4/3999]. Pages 335-354 and 397 have not survived.

The page references to specific ships are as follows:

Convict Indents [SZ115]
Pages
1-40   First Fleet 1788
41-41   Lady Juliana 1790

42-53	Surprize 1790
54-66	Scarborough 1790
67-84	Neptune 1790
85-90	Mary Ann 1791
91-98	Matilda 1791
99-105	Atlantic 1791
106-110	Salamander 1791
111-116	William & Ann 1791
117-124	Albemarle 1791
125-130	Active 1791
131-135	Britannia 1791
136-145	Admiral Barrington 1791
146-146	Gorgon 1791
147-203	Third Fleet 1791 ("Orders in Council")
204-217	Queen 1791
218-239	Pitt 1792
240-250	Royal Admiral 1792
251-254	Kitty 1792
255-255	Bellona 1793
256-259	Boddingtons 1793
269-265	Sugar Cane 1793
266-269	Surprize 1794
270-278	Marquis Cornwallis 1796
279-282	Indispensable 1796
283-290	Britannia 1797
291-300	Ganges 1797
301-315	Barwell 1798
316-323	Britannia 1798
324-334	Hillsborough 1799

Source Missing

335-345	Hillsborough 1799
346-354	Friendship 1800

Convict Indents [4/3999]

355-372	Minerva 1800
373-375	Speedy 1800
376-384	Royal Admiral 1800
385-385	Porpoise 1800
386-396	Royal Admiral 1800

Source Missing

397   Anne 1801   [For further information see notes for "Anne 1801"]

The entries contained in these lists do not serve as a guide to convicts transported to New South Wales between 1788 and 1800. They merely act as an index to the above records [SZ115] and [4/3999]. As the entries were extracted from "Orders in Council" as well as from official convict indents, the Alphabetical Lists include numerous entries for convicts who were not in fact transported. They also include

entries for convicts who were noted on the indents as having died at sea, or even prior to the voyage.

In editing the Database each entry recorded in the Alphabetical Lists was linked with its corresponding entry in the Database, with the source reference identified for the location of the entry – either the main list [4/4003] or the appendix [4/4003a]. Linking the different entries together occasionally proved difficult due to errors recorded in the Alphabetical Lists. In copying the entries from the above sources [SZ115] and [4/3999], the clerks made numerous errors and repeated numerous entries. Errors resulted from misreading the entries (eg. "Maidstone" to "Middlesex"), from accidentally recording some information from a previous or following entry making the entry almost unrecognisable, and so on. Duplications occurred when two lists arrived with a transport and differences between the lists created difficulties in marrying entries together, when the clerks were cross-referencing the alphabetical list with the main indents and could not locate entries due to transcription errors so produced a new entry, and so on.

Variations in the spelling of convicts' names recorded in the Alphabetical Lists have been included as "alternative" names in the Database to assist with the location of specific entries. Nevertheless it is important to note that these Alphabetical Lists were not always recorded in strict alphabetical order and some lateral thinking might be required if specific entries cannot be located. If an entry is proving difficult to locate, the Descendants of Convicts' Group *Convict Index*, which includes page references for entries recorded in the above sources, may provide some assistance.

Variations in trial place and date recorded in the Alphabetical Lists have not been noted in the database as the entries in this source include such a large number of errors, a repetition of these errors being unnecessary and unproductive. However additional information such as references to deaths and departures, conditional and absolute pardons and so on, has been included in the database.

As the Alphabetical Lists were produced from information extracted from other sources and contain numerous errors and duplications, they must be used with great caution by researchers! Do not assume that references to deaths and departures relate to the entry in which they are recorded. Errors were also made in attributing this information to the correct entry.

Bibliography of General Sources

Bateson, Charles *The Convict Ships 1787-1868*, Library of Australian History, Sydney, 1983. [Available on CD-ROM see BDA Shop http://www.bda-online.org.au/shop].

Collins, David *An Account of the English Colony in New South Wales*, A.H. & A.W. Reed, Sydney, 1975

Convict Transports 1801 – 1812

Introduction

From 1801 onwards, a greater uniformity exists in the nature of the convict lists although distinctive differences between England and Irish transports still existed.

General information concerning transports

English Transports

A number of different lists provide details of English convicts. These are found in the Convict Indents, Musters and Papers Lists, Transportation Registers and occasionally Colonial and Home Office Lists, which are discussed below. Multiple lists have generally survived for English transports.

Irish Transports

Between 1801 and 1812 the following transports carried convicts from Ireland: *Anne* 1801, *Hercules* (1802), *Atlas* 1 & 2 (1802), *Rolla* (1803), *Tellicherry* (1806), *Experiment* (1809), *Boyd* (1809) and *Providence* (1811).

For the Irish transports arriving in Australia around the year 1800, no trial details were provided making it difficult for the authorities to determine when the convicts' sentences expired. Later indents included more detailed information, often with ages. Two lists have generally survived for the Irish convicts, the list that travelled with the transport found in the Musters and Papers Lists and the colonial copy recorded in the Convict Indents [4/4004] (discussed below).

Indian Transports

From 1807 onwards a number of cargo ships travelled from India to Australia carrying a handful of convicts, mostly from within the ranks of the military. These were as follows: *Duchess of York* (1807), *Hunter* (1810), *Eagle* (1811), *Frederick and Maria* (1811), *Ruby* (1811), *Mangalore* (1811) and *Campbell Macquarie* (1812). Musters and Papers Lists have survived for most of these vessels. (See also "Convicts from India" below.)

Transports to Tasmania

This Database includes details of convicts from two transports who were disembarked in Van Diemen's Land. The *Calcutta* sailed in 1803 as part of an expedition to establish a settlement at Port Phillip, however the location was not deemed suitable and the convicts were relocated to the Derwent River. The *Indefatigable* (1812) also landed her convicts at Hobart. As these lists are stored

within NSW records and as Van Diemen's Land was part of New South Wales at that time, these lists have been included in this database.

Non-arrivals

In addition to recording details of convicts on board transports that reached Australia, the Database includes details of the convicts who sailed on board the *Emu* (1812) which was captured by an American privateer. Although these convicts did not reach Australia, their fate would still be of interest to descendants of their remaining families. Naturally as these vessels did not reach Australia, their convict lists have survived in material held by The National Archives, London.

Extant Records

Different series of records have survived recording convicts transported to Australia during this period as follows:

Convict Indents [4/4004]

The lists found at the following location are generally considered to be the official convict indents for the respective transports and are found at the following location:

> State Records Authority of New South Wales: Principal Superintendent of Convicts; Bound Manuscript Indents, 1801-1814 CGS 12188 (SRNSW ref: 4/4004; SR Reels 392 & 393).

This conclusion however is not accurate. The consistency in handwriting indicates that these lists were extracted from other sources at some later date; presumably they were copied by a clerk employed by the Principal Superintendent of Convicts in Sydney from convict indentures or lists that travelled with the transports. The latter lists are now part of the document series known as Musters and Papers Lists (see below).

A consistent format was used in producing these lists, the following information being recorded: name, place of conviction, date of conviction and sentence. Some of the original lists contained information which was not transferred to this copy; for example, age and crime.

Musters and Papers List [2/82..]

The lists found in this source for transports arriving between 1801 and 1812 are the original convict indentures or lists that travelled with the various transports. They are located as follows:

> State Records Authority of New South Wales: Principal Superintendent of Convicts; Musters and other papers relating to convict ships, 1790-1849, CGS 1155 (SRNSW ref: 2/8240-83; SR Reel 2417-28 & 593)

The information from these lists was copied into a ledger to produce the standardised Convict Indents (discussed above), however some of these original lists have not survived. In a number of cases, these lists include additional information that was not transferred to the Convict Indents, for example ages and crimes.

Transportation Registers [tr]

Some convict lists remained in England and are now found in The National Archives, London. One series of records known as the Transportation Registers are located as follows:

> The National Archives, London: Home Office - Criminal; Convict Transportation Registers - Convicts Transported 1787 - 1809 (PRO ref: HO 11/1; PRO Reel 87)

The Transportation Registers covering the period 1787-1809 were apparently copied from another source or sources. The handwriting indicates that the returns for this 22 year period were all written by one clerk over a very short period of time, presumably one or two days. However the source of the information is uncertain.

The returns for the period 1810 to 1817 are found at the following source:

> The National Archives, London: Home Office - Criminal; Convict Transportation Registers - Convicts Transported 1810 - 1817 (PRO ref: HO 11/2; PRO Reel 87)

The handwriting and headings for these lists were different suggesting that they were produced around the time that the various transports sailed. It therefore seems likely that the series of lists covering the period 1788-1809 were produced around 1809/1810 in order to have such a source available, with new lists being produced as required from then on.

Convicts from India [4/4003a]

Convicts tried in India were not generally transported on vessels contracted for that purpose. They were instead sent on cargo ships that were plying their trade between India and New South Wales. As a result, details of these convicts are not included in the main series of convict lists that have survived. Most of these convicts details of their sentence were sent with the vessel and are found in the Musters and Papers Lists (discussed above). At some later stage a list of the "Indian" convicts arriving from 1807 onwards was extracted from the Musters and Papers Lists and is found at the following location:

> State Records New South Wales: Principal Superintendent of Convicts; Bound Manuscript Indents – Convicts from India, CGS 12188 (SRNSW ref: 4/4003a p104; SR Reel 2662).

The information recorded in this list is similar to that found in the main series of Convict Indents [4/4004]. References to Tickets of Leave and so on were also included in the list.

Information above has been extracted from the Introduction to the CD-ROM *Convicts to NSW 1788-1812* published by the Society of Australian Genealogists in 2002. The Introduction was compiled by the Editor Carol J Baxter, and the data was captured by the Australian Biographical and Genealogical Record.

Acknowledgements are recorded on the CD-ROM.

Historical resources available from the BDA Shop
http://www.bda-online.org.au/shop

For other Convict Indents included in the BDA see
http://www.bda-online.org.au/sources/convict_indents/