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Norfolk Island Residents 1788-1814

Raymond Nobbs was the editor and compiler of the book *Norfolk Island and its first settlement 1788-1814* (Library of Australian History, Sydney, 1988), with his permission. This was the first volume of a trilogy by Ray Nobbs, the second and third being *Norfolk Island and its second settlement 1825-1855* (LAH 1991) and *Norfolk Island and its third settlement: the Pitcairn era 1856-1956* (LAH 2006).

The 1788-1814 book (pp 186-209) includes as an appendix a biographical index of Norfolk Islanders in this period compiled by Reg Wright, author of the book *The Forgotten Generation of Norfolk Island and Van Diemen's Land* (LAH 1986). This dataset is adapted from Reg Wright's appendix. It lists all persons known to have lived on Norfolk Island during the first settlement period 1788-1814 when the fertile island became an important source of food, helping the early mainland colony survive.

First settled in February 1788 with a party of just 23 people, led by naval officer and future Governor Philip Gidley King, a significant number of early convicts of both sexes were settled therein the decade following 1790, including a large contingent of convicts from the First, Second and Third Fleets. Many of them were granted land and raised families. A contingent of the New South Wales Corps (some with families) was continuously stationed on the island from 1790.

The overall population of Norfolk Island peaked at just under 1000 by 1801. A decision was made to phase out settlement on the remote outpost. The lack of a harbour made landing dangerous and caused a significant loss of life and shipping when people and goods were moved between ship and shore in difficult weather conditions. Between 1806 and 1814 the whole population was transferred to the mainland and to the new colony of Van Diemen's Land (Tasmania), where many settlers were given compensatory land grants. Norfolk Island's population fell to 255 by 1808 and it was completely evacuated by 1814.

Reg Wright's appendix included his estimate of the date of departure of many Norfolk Islanders, especially those who went to Van Diemen's Land, compiled mainly from victualing records (checked against known shipping movements listed in Wright's Appendix 3 *Norfolk Island and its first settlement 1788-1814* pp 210-224).

Wright's work does not include the separate analysis of departures in Irene Schaffer's *Norfolk Island embarkations to Van Diemen's Land, 1807-1813* (West Pymble, NSW 1986) and Irene Schaffer and Thelma McKay's *Exiled! three times*

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over: Profiles of Norfolk Islanders exiled in Van Diemen's Land, 1807-13 (Hobart: St. David's Park, 1992).

The analysis by Wright, Schaffer and McKay was built upon by Garry Wilson in his Tasmanian database 1803-1827 (already incorporated within BDA) and will be adapted and corrected in future through the BDA linking process.

This dataset contains 2,773 entries and with BDA adding in aliases and cross referencing of connected individuals mentioned, the listing has a total of 3,187 entries.

The principal sources used by Reg Wright to compile the database were island's victualing and muster records. These include:

Norfolk Island Victualing Books:

1792-1796 ML A1957, reel 3467

1802 TNA CO201/28/210, reel 14

1803 TNA CO201/30/85, reel 15

1804 Jan-Jun TNA CO201/30/210, reel 15

1804 Jul-Dec SRNSW 4/1167A reel 762 p 147

1805 Jan-Jun SRNSW 4/1167A reel 762 p 299

1805 Jul-Dec SRNSW 4/1167A reel 762 p 419

1806 Jan-Jun SRNSW 4/1167B reel 762 p 17

1806 Jul-Dec SRNSW 4/1167A reel 762 p 293

1807 Jan-Jun SRNSW 4/1168A reel 762 p 285

1807 Jul-Dec SRNSW 4/1168A reel 762 p 431

1808 Jan-Jun SRNSW 4/1168A reel 762 p 24

1808 Jul-Dec SRNSW 4/1168A reel 762 p 200

1809 Jan-Jun SRNSW 4/1168A reel 762 p 256

1809 Jul-Dec SRNSW 4/1168A reel 762 p 326

1810 Jan-Jun SRNSW 4/1168A reel 762 p 18

1810 Dec SRNSW 4/1168A reel 762 p 187

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Norfolk Island musters and lists:

1792 May: Convicts off the store TNA CO201/9/126, reel 5

1794 May: Settlers off the store TNA CO201/10/197, reel 5

1794 Jul: Settlers off the store TNA CO201/10/197, reel 5

1805 Feb: General muster Norfolk Island SRNSW 4/1167A

1810 Mar General Muster Norfolk Island SRNSW 4/1168B

1810 Dec General Muster Norfolk Island SRNSW 4/1168B

1812 Aug Crane's General muster Norfolk Island SRNSW 4/1169

Information Page written by Michael Flynn.

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