

## BDA Source Description Pages

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### List of Norfolk Island Residents 1825-1855

This dataset currently contains 20,337 entries for Norfolk Island residents derived from a variety of sources from the period 1825-1855. The vast majority of individuals referred to are male convicts sent to Norfolk Island from other Australian colonies or direct from Britain and Ireland.

These years are commonly referred to as the time of the island's second settlement, following its first settlement and subsequent evacuation, 1788-1814. The 1825-1855 dataset was researched and created by Elaine Cooper, a member of the Genealogical Society of Queensland, before her death in 2016.

Fields in the dataset include name of individual, ship, year and place of arrival, details of the court proceeding which resulted in the convict being sent to the island and place of arrival and departure (for example NSW-NI means sent from New South Wales for Norfolk Island, NI-VDL means sent from Norfolk Island to Van Diemens Land (Tasmania). Ire-NSW means sent from Ireland to New South Wales [convicts in this category are usually included because they were later sent to the island from a mainland or Tasmanian penal colony.

#### Sources

Elaine Cooper did not include exact references for all her sources. The source as described by her is usually given in the original remarks field and/or the source field. The source 'Shipping Arrivals' given by Elaine Cooper usually refers to annotations on convict indent records held by State Archives New South Wales (SANSW) and other convict indexes compiled by SANSW and now available as scanned documents on Ancestry.com.au (not all of them indexed). Other Norfolk Island-related sources include various shipping arrival and departure records, convict death registers, NSW gaol and hulk registers, records of court sentences from SANSW and newspaper reports and [Colonial Secretary letters to Sheriff NSW 1828-1850](#) (a source from SANSW separately indexed on its own database currently on BDA).

More precise source references will be added to this dataset in the future, as resources allow. This dataset has been added to assist in providing interim information about a large body of convicts, many of whom moved to the mainland or returned to the United Kingdom.

#### Elaine Cooper

Elaine Cooper's sister-in-law Patricia Small has supplied the following biographical details:

Elaine Cooper was born on 13 December 1945, the youngest of the three children of truck driver James Cullen and his wife Marjorie and grew up in Carlton, a southern suburb of Sydney. In early 1965 she married Graeme J C Cooper and soon after they moved to Wagga Wagga when Graeme took up his position as a Commonwealth Meat Inspector. With their new daughter the Coopers soon moved to Queensland and in time settled in Brisbane. Elaine returned to bookkeeping and worked for a transport company and, before her retirement, for Gallagher Consulting Services which was linked to coal mining. Elaine was talented in

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needlework crafts and enthusiastic about family history and genealogy. As her family, and that of her husband, descended from convicts this became an area of particular interest for her in her research. For some time she was Treasurer for the Genealogical Society of Queensland and kept up her genealogical research until her death on 12 June 2016.

### Background

The first period of Norfolk Island settlement began in February 1788 when 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 there in 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.

Norfolk Island's second period of settlement ran from 1825-1855 when it was re-established as a penal colony. It served as a place of secondary punishment for convicts who had committed offences on the mainland and in Tasmania, and later as a receptacle for convicts sent directly from the United Kingdom, in particular after the end of transportation to New South Wales in 1840.

The third period of Norfolk Island settlement commenced in 1856 when descendants of Tahitians and the HMS Bounty mutineers arrived from the Pitcairn Islands to establish a permanent settlement on Norfolk Island.

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Source description page written by Michael Flynn, January 2020.

For other Norfolk Island datasets included in the BDA see:

<https://www.bda-online.org.au/sources/norfolk-island/>

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