

Convict research: finding out even more

Info Guide 3.13

What are the next steps after locating the right convict?

Check British records

Australian Joint Copying Project: Home Office records and M Series.

Many National Archives (UK) records relevant to Australia are available on microfilm through the Australian Joint Copying Project (AJCP) including Home Office (HO) and Prison Commission (PRI COM) records. Another source is the Miscellaneous (M) Series which covers collections outside the National Archives (UK) such as those from county record offices. They are held on microfilm at the State Library, Level 3. Guidance on holdings and date range is in the *AJCP Handbooks*, one for each set of departmental records, available from the Reference Desk, Level 3. Some of the relevant records are the following:

- *Criminal Register of prisoners in English gaols 1805-1867* (HO 27) list prisoners in the various English County gaols, their offences and brief details of their trial. This may include the only reference to the offence of the early convicts. Registers are organised according to the convict's date of imprisonment.
- *Convict Transportation Registers 1787-1867* (HO11) list convict ships and their convicts, in chronological order by ship's date of departure. Find a name in the *British convict transportation registers 1787-1867 database* at the family history homepage <http://www.slq.qld.gov.au/info/fh/convicts> You can find a convict who went to any Australian colony. Request the AJCP reel nominated to view original register.
- *M Series*: The AJCP Miscellaneous Series draws on documents from British collections other than at the National Archives (UK) and includes personal narratives, diaries and county convict records. Family history staff has prepared a list of what the State Library holds but the M Series handbook has an index.
- *Index to the Australian Joint Copying Project Prison Registers AJCP P. Com. 2, reels 5971-5991* [microfiche] (MFC 929.394 1995) compiled by the Convict Historical & Research Group, W A Genealogical Society, is an alphabetical index of convicts' names showing the date and ship of arrival, destination and a reference to the AJCP reel number for the full record. It indexes convicts in British prisons and hulks, and those transported to NSW, Tasmania and Norfolk Island. It is particularly useful for locating extra information on "exiles".
- *Old Bailey Session Papers 8 December 1780-1 November 1834* [microfilm] (MFL 345.4207) are the trial records of prisoners arrested in London and Middlesex. Old Bailey records are also on the web at www.oldbaileyonline.org/

Search State Records New South Wales

Formerly known as the New South Wales State Archives, State Records NSW has released microfilm copies of colonial correspondence and official records relating to convicts in New South Wales, Van Diemen's Land and Port Phillip. Many of these records are described in the *Handbook to the Genealogical Research Kit* in the volumes on convict records and its supplement available at the Micrographics Desk, Level 3. It is also possible to search the Brief Guides and other aids at the State Records site using Archives Investigator, <http://investigator.records.nsw.gov.au/>. More convict records from the NSW State Records Office are listed individually in the State Library's One Search online catalogue which can be found on the State Library's home page or at <http://onesearch.slq.qld.gov.au/>

Convict musters

- *Musters and other papers relating to convict ships 1790-1849 includes convict assignment lists, musters, and some letters about the convicts in the colony.* [microfilm] (MFL 929.3944 1986)
- *General return of convicts in New South Wales, 1837* (FAMHIS 929.3994 1987)
- *1828 Census.* Available on microfilm (MFL 929.3944 1987), in print (FAMHIS 929.3 1980) and on CD-ROM (QCFS 929.394 2001) and includes all NSW residents, free, military and convict.
- The 1841 Census Name index online (accessible through the State Library's family history useful websites page) <http://srwww.records.nsw.gov.au/indexes/searchform.aspx?id=18> and the census itself on microfilm reels (AO/SR reels 2222, 2223, 2508, 2509). It includes free settlers and convicts but covers heads of households only.
- *General muster list of New South Wales 1823, 1824, 1825* (FAMHIS 929.394 1999)
- *Muster and Census Records. Guide to Records* (MFA 929.394 1986). This handbook, prepared by the State Records NSW, lists the muster and census records for New South Wales, Norfolk Island, and Van Diemen's Land. It lists records filmed under the AJCP as well as those held by State Records NSW. Ask for this Guide at the Desk.

Colonial Secretary's correspondence

This is a large collection of records relating to all colonial matters including convicts' applications to marry, admissions to institutions such as the Female Factory, prison entry books, registers of pardons and more. State Records NSW has indexed the *Colonial Secretary's correspondence to 1825* at <http://colsec.records.nsw.gov.au/indexes/colsec/default.htm>. The State Library holds related microform in the Micrographics Reading Room, level 3.

Joan Reese has compiled indexes 1826-1877. These are: *Colonial Secretary's Correspondence 1826-1877: Index to convicts and others* [microfiche] (MFC 929.3944 1994-) and *Colonial Secretary's Correspondence: letters sent re convicts October 6 1826- May 18, 1855* [microfiche] (MFC929.3944 1996-1997). Information found on these indexes is only available from the State Records NSW.

Tickets-of-leave, pardons and certificates of freedom

Convicts could receive permission to work for themselves or others within a specified area. The butts of their tickets of leave provide personal information about them. There is an index to butts, *1810-1875 titled Convict pardons: tickets of leave issued in the Colony of New South Wales* [microfiche] (MFC 929.3944 1995).

Tickets of leave and certificates of freedom were issued from printed registers, which have been filmed by the State Records, NSW [microfilm] (MFL 929.3944 199-). For *Ticket of Leave Passports, 1835-1860* see AO/SR reels 966-981 and for *Certificates of Freedom 1827-1867*, AO/SR reels 604 & 982-1027. There is a name index at the beginning of each register, with a reference number for the convict's ticket of leave or certificate. There is an index to Certificates of Freedom on the website of the NSW State Records Office at <http://srwww.records.nsw.gov.au/indexes/searchform.aspx?id=65>.

Convict pardons were issued and registered by the Colonial Secretary's Office and the records have been copied by State Records, NSW [microfilm] (MFL 929.3944 199-). The pardon certificates were issued from bound volumes and there is a name index at the beginning of each volume. See *Copies of Conditional Pardons, 1826-1870* (AO/SR reels 775-796, 3037) and *Register of Convicts recommended for Conditional Pardons, 6 May 1826-30 June 1856* (AO/SR reels 797-798). The entries record the convict's date of pardon, year of arrival, native place, crime, sentence, year of birth, physical description and other general remarks. There is also an index to Convict Pardons 1791-1825, 1837-1847 at <http://srwww.records.nsw.gov.au/indexes/searchform.aspx?id=21>, on the State Records NSW website.

NOTE: Many records relating to convicts from the Colonial Secretary's Office have been individually catalogued. To locate details of these, search on the State Library's online catalogue using "Colonial Secretary?" as a search term.

Moreton Bay records

Moreton Bay was established as a place of secondary confinement until 1840. Convicts committed another offence in the colony to qualify for Moreton Bay. Track them via State Records gaol records using the catalogue. Check Sydney and Darlinghurst, Windsor, Parramatta and Campbelltown. Use the State Records handbook and the catalogue.

Also check the **Queensland State Archives** – Indexes to the Chronological Register of Prisoners 1824-1839 (<http://www.archives.qld.gov.au/research/index/ChronologicalRegisterPrisoners.asp>).

- *Letters relating to Moreton Bay and Queensland, 1822-1860* [microfilm] (Film/s 759, reels 2702-2716) cover a range of documents relating to the Moreton Bay establishment. Consult the online index <http://www.slq.qld.gov.au/info/fh/letters> or CD-Rom index held at the Reference Desk
- *Lists of men in irons from Norfolk Island & Moreton Bay 1839-40* include a range of prisoners sentenced to work in iron gangs [microfilm] (AO/SR reel 708)
- *Copies of letters sent to the Sheriff 1828-1851* [microfilm] (AO/SR reels 1062-1065, 1036, 624). Shipping lists of convicts sent to and from Moreton Bay, 1824-1827 are also included.
- *Copies of letters from the Colonial Secretary 27 August 1824 - 5 August 1853* [microfilm] (AO/SR reels 749-750) are copies of letters to the Commandant and officers of the Moreton Bay penal establishment, and later letters to the Police Magistrate, and other officials and individuals at the settlement. Moreton Bay ceased to be used as a penal station in 1839 but the correspondence continues on miscellaneous matters concerning it until August 1853.
- *Miscellaneous returns from Moreton Bay* [microfilm] (AO/SR reels 750-751) include various returns about convicts at Moreton Bay and also general correspondence relating to the colony. Covers years 1822 to 1840.
- *Hashemy convict ship - exiles: year 1849-60* [microfilm] (AO/SR reel 704) records the history of the individual convicts, "exiles" landed off the *Hashemy*, June 1849 noting tickets of leave, passports and pardons received; assignments, any later convictions, death etc. There is an index in the front of the volume.
- *Worthy of reclamation: index to probationary convicts to Sydney and Moreton Bay 1849-1850*. [microfiche] (MFC 929.3943 1993) These were the convicts who came out as "exiles" after transportation officially ceased.
- *Queensland Family History Society pre-separation population index of Moreton Bay region 1824-1859* [microfiche] (MFCB 929.3943 1990) indexes a range of land, court, newspaper reports and hospital records which track convicts. Also available on CD ROM under the title *Queensland early pioneer indexes, 1824-1859* (QCFS 929.3943 2004)

***This is a select list of material relating to convicts available at the State Library.
Check the catalogue (<http://onesearch.slq.qld.gov.au>) and State Records NSW online for more.***

Need further information?

State Library of Queensland, Queensland Cultural Centre, Stanley Place, South Bank, Reference Services t. +61 7 3840 7810, w. www.slq.qld.gov.au/enquiry
Visit http://www.slq.qld.gov.au/about/pub/info_guides/collections/fh to access all family history Info Guides.