

**Artist unknown**

***The landing of the convicts  
at Botany Bay, c. 1789***

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Line engraving (reproduction)

*From A narrative of the expedition to Botany Bay, as performed by  
Commodore Phillip ... by an Officer of the Marines, c. 1789*

Dixson Safe 78/70

**Francis Fowkes**

***Sketch & description of the settlement  
at Sydney Cove Port Jackson in the County  
of Cumberland taken by a transported  
convict on the 16th of April, 1788, which  
was not quite 3 months after Commodore  
Phillips's landing there***

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Hand-coloured map

London: R Cribb, 1789

MB2 811.17/1788/1

Fowkes, a former navy midshipman, was transported for stealing a greatcoat and a pair of boots. His detailed map shows a burgeoning settlement, but no walls or gaol to confine the convicts. It was an 'open' prison, where convicts lived in their own tents and huts — and were employed on public works and farms — making escape into the bush relatively easy.

## ***Fatal excursion, 26 June 1803***

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Newspaper (reproduction)

The failure of the first 'Chinese Travellers' in 1791 did not deter further attempts to walk to China. Even as late as 1803, four convicts left Castle Hill for Peking. Only one survived. He was found 21 days later in a state of exhaustion on the banks of the Hawkesbury River.

From *Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser*,  
Sydney: G Howe, 1803

**Philip Gidley King (1758–1808)**

***Remarks & journal kept on the expedition  
to form a colony in his Majesty's Territory  
of New South Wales ... his Majesty's ship  
Sirius ... 24 October 1786 – 12 January  
1788, 1 February 1788***

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Manuscript

Purchased from the King family Estate, 1933

Safe 1/16, p. 89

Within a week of the First Fleet's arrival, a group of convicts evaded their marine guards and cut across country to Botany Bay, where the ships of the French explorer La Pérouse lay at anchor. However, La Pérouse refused to take them on board and they were forced to straggle back to Sydney Cove.

Monsieur De La perouse informed me that a number of ye Convicts had been to him & offered to enter but he had dismissed them with threats; & gave them a days provisions to carry them back to ye settlement.

**GW**

**Letter to John Macarthur,  
September 1800**

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Manuscript

Presented by Miss DB Walsh, 1957

ML MSS 710, p. 23

During September 1800, a general uprising was planned by Irish convicts at Toongabbie. The rebels were to assemble at Parramatta on a Sunday morning, when the soldiers would all be in church. However, before the convicts could act they were betrayed. An informant known only as 'GW' sent a note to John Macarthur, warning him of the rebels' plans. Meanwhile, one of the conspirators was captured and talked. With the uprising doomed, the rebel leaders called it off.

I can scarce hold my pen to tell you the Calamitous news that the Infatuated people have planned a general Rising Tomoorow Night & that Men from Sydney are to come up here & assemble on the hill over the Lumbar Yard & then begin the Attack ... I am all in a Tremor I can scarce write ...



**Artist unknown**

***Government agricultural establishment  
Castle Hill, c. 1806***

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Watercolour

A view of Castle Hill showing the government farm (centre right) where the 1804 insurrection began. The road leads to Parramatta, which the rebels planned to storm.

**George William Evans (1780–1852) [possibly]**

***The Green Hills from the ... Hawkesbury  
River New South Wales 1809***

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Watercolour

Purchased 1950

PXD 388-3 f. 7

## George Johnston (1764–1823)

### Letter to John Piper, 2 April 1804

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Manuscript

... at last I ask'd Cunningham what he wanted, his reply was Death or Liberty, I instantly cock'd a pistol I had stuck in my Sash, & clapping it to his head order'd him instantly to join the Detachment, (that just then appear'd in sight) else I wou'd blow his Soul to hell, The Trooper did the same by the other, & in this Manner we drove them forcibly into the Detachment, which I order'd to advance & fire & instantly charge, The firing immediately commenced on both sides & the Rebels soon fled in all directions ...

Bequest of David Scott Mitchell, 1907

A256, vol. 3, pp. 328–329

**Artist unknown**

***Major Johnston with Quartermaster Laycock  
and twenty five privates of ye New South  
Wales Corps defeats two hundred and sixty  
six armed rebels, 5th March 1804***

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Watercolour

With the kind permission of the National Library of Australia

PIC T2495 NK10162 LOC Box B13

**George William Evans (1780–1852)**

***A view of the west side of Sydney Cove,  
c. 1804***

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Watercolour

By 1804 Sydney was developing into a busy port and trading centre. This resulted in a significant increase in the number of convicts attempting to escape by sea.

Presented by Sir William Dixson, 1951

DG V1/73

## Reuben Brumley

# **Bond undertaking not to receive any persons on board the American ship *Hope* without the Governor's permission, 18 March 1807**

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Printed form with manuscript annotations

By 1800, masters of all incoming ships were required to post a bond for several hundred dollars not to carry convicts away without the governor's permission. Before departing, every ship was thoroughly searched by constables. If it was suspected that a ship might be harbouring stowaways, the vessel was smoked with brimstone in order to force them into the open. The bond on display is for £800.

Bequest of Sir William Dixson

DL DOC 159

**William Paterson**

**Government & General Orders  
of Lieutenant-Governor William Paterson,  
11 September 1795 – 31 December 1797,  
6 November 1797**

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Manuscript

Bequest of David Scott Mitchell, 1907

Safe 1/18b

Paterson warns convicts of the perils of attempting to escape by sea:

Ignorant of the dangers to which their lives are exposed upon the Ocean in a Miserable Boat; Ignorant of the Risk which attends them if taken in the attempt; Ignorant of the deep & Wicked designs of those who pretend to a greater share of Wisdom — A few Simple & ill informed People have been led into these ill Concerted Plans, in which it will but too often be found, that the Sacrifice of those few who are thought of less Consequence to the General Plan, or are less capable of rendering themselves useful when Embark'd, is a part of the main Design — If near land, they are forc'd on Shore amongst a Savage People where Death is inevitable, or if at Sea, thrown overboard to lighten their Miserable vessel, & prevent if possible her foundering — Let those who are invited to such Mad & inconsiderate undertakings reflect upon these things, & they will easily discover the Risk attending such Wicked & ill Judg'd enterprises ...



**George William Evans (1780–1852) [possibly]**

***An east view of part of Port Jackson from  
the west side of Sydney Cove, called Daws's  
Point, New South Wales, 1809***

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Watercolour

A British merchant ship prepares to sail from Sydney Cove. In 1827 Surgeon Peter Cunningham reported that:

A somewhat considerable number of convicts escape annually by concealing themselves in vessels about to sail from the colony ... Sometimes these people are concealed by the master to be useful to him on the voyage; but occasionally they slip on board, stow themselves away there, and slip on shore in like manner at the end of the voyage.

Purchased 1950

PXD 388-3 f. 2

## **Account of an escape by an unknown convict, c. 1840**

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Manuscript

An unsigned and undated account in which an unnamed convict describes how he and another convict named Mahony stowed away on a ship. They sailed from Sydney and lived among cannibals on an island (possibly Fiji), where Mahony was eaten. Having travelled on a French ship to Tahiti, the convict sailed to Liverpool, Quebec and Hull. He was eventually arrested in Manchester and brought to trial.

We determined to swim to her. We reached her, climbed by a line to which some pork was hanging, into the hold and I hid myself in a water cask.

Purchased from Maggs Bros, 1991

ML MSS 5536

**George King**

**Letter to Sir George Arthur,  
Lieutenant-Governor of Van Diemen's Land,  
15 February 1829**

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Manuscript

In this letter George King, captain of the *Sarah*, complains about a shipping official who

... endeavoured to procure the escape of a prisoner named Hopwood from this colony [Hobart] by first offering my Chief Officer Mr Bateman a hundred pounds for his passage (and he was to be received on board clandestinely), and afterwards by speaking to me on the same subject and holding out the same inducement.

Bequest of Sir William Dixson, 1952

DL Add 663

## ***Piratical capture of the Venus Colonial brig, 13 July 1806***

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Newspaper (reproduction)

On the night of 16 June 1806, the brig *Venus* was forcibly seized in Port Dalrymple, Tasmania. Four of the crew took the ship, acting with four convicts, including two women — Catherine Hagerty and Charlotte Badger. They sailed the ship to New Zealand.

From *Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser*,  
Sydney: G Howe, 1806

C 952

**Artist unknown**

***Plan of a raft constructed by two convicts  
in order to escape from Point Puer, 1836***

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Watercolour (reproduction)

On 17 December 1836, Robert Birch and Francis Jones absconded from the penal establishment at Point Puer, Port Arthur. The next day this raft was found drifting towards the shore. Birch's body was observed floating not far away, but Jones's body was never recovered.

With the kind permission of the Archives Office of Tasmania

CSO 5/72/729

## ***Curious and extraordinary recital,*** **25 March 1804**

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Newspaper (reproduction)

This is an account of a convict who escaped from Norfolk Island on a door through which he had bored two holes for his legs.

From *Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser*,  
Sydney: G Howe, 1804

C 947

Artist unknown

***Saved by death. A convict escapes  
in a coffin, 19 May 1877***

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Wood engraving (reproduction)

From *The Citizen: Police News*, Melbourne: Richard Egan Lee, 1877  
La Trobe Picture Collection, State Library of Victoria

PN19/05/77/00

**Robert Batty (d. 1848)**

**The open boat with Bligh  
and his companions, c. 1831**

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Etching (reproduction)

Mary Bryant's voyage, as a feat of navigation, survival and endurance, ranks with William Bligh's voyage across the Pacific to Coupang — in a similar open boat — following the mutiny on the *Bounty* in 1789. Like Bligh, Mary and her companions had to battle violent seas and gales.

Presented by Sir William Dixson, 1951

DGSV8.1/11



**Juan Ravenet (b. c. 1766)**

***Convictos en la Nueva Olanda* [Convicts in New Holland], 1793**

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Wash drawing

No images exist of Mary Bryant, but this rare drawing of a convict couple gives us some idea of what she and her husband may have looked like.

Purchased 1961

DGD 2 f. 5

**William Bradley (c. 1758–1833)**

***Governor's House at Sydney, Port Jackson,  
1791***

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Watercolour (reproduction)

The ship whose stern can be seen at the bottom left is the Dutch snow *Waaksamheyd*, whose captain secretly supplied Mary and William Bryant with a chart, compass, quadrant, muskets and quantities of pork and rice. The *Waaksamheyd* sailed less than a day before the Bryants made their escape.

From *A voyage to New South Wales*, c. 1802

Purchased from Francis Edwards Booksellers, 1924

Safe 1/14, opp. p. 225

**James Scott (d. 1796)**

***Remarks on a passage Botnay [sic] bay  
1787, 13 May 1787 – 20 May 1792***

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Manuscript

Bequest of Sir William Dixson, 1952

DL MSQ 43, p. 62

James Scott was a Sergeant of Marines who travelled to New South Wales in the First Fleet. He was at the lookout post at South Head on the night Mary Bryant and her party escaped.

29 March 1791: A Serjt & a party, of Marines in the Long boat Came to the look Out Cove At Six OClock this Morning in persute of, Bryan (a Convict) the principal fisherman, (for Goverment) Who was to fish on the foregoing Night; but on his getting the Boat in readiness, ~~together With the boats Crue;~~ to proceed, he has thought, propper to put to Sea in order to make his escape, he has taken With him, An excellent Cutter Sailes Compleate, Seine, Cooking Utencials Bed & Beding, Wife & two Children, one Morton, A Convict Who is A Navigator; two tents Arms & Ammunition, I have not learned, the Names of the Rest, that are gon yet ...

## John Easty

***A memorandum of the transa[ ] of a voiage  
[sic] from England to Botany Bay in the  
Scarborough transport Captn Marshall  
Commander kept by me your humble  
servan[ ] John Easty marine wich [sic]  
began 1787***

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Manuscript

Bequest of Sir William Dixson, 1952

DL Sp 374, pp. 126–127

John Easty was a marine private who arrived in Sydney on the First Fleet.

... on the munday night of the 28 8 men with 1 woman and 2 Children Convicts toke a kings boat of 6 oars with a large quantity of Provisions which thay had got from time to time by work and a new Scene for fishing with a large quantity of Carpinters tools of all Sorts for Enlargeing the Boat with beds and Mathackmattick instruments and Cumpus New Sails and Masts and oars and 6 stand of Arms and Evrey thing that was nesarry for Making thare Escape which was Excuted between the hours of 9 and 12 it was Supposed that thay intended for Bativee but having no vessell in the harbour thare was no Persueing them so thayd got Clear of but its a very Desperate attempt to go in an open Boat for a run of about 16 or 17 hundred Leags and in pertucalar for a woman and 2 Small Children the oldest not above 3 years of age ...

**Antoine Cardon (1772–1813) after  
JT Barber (1774–1841)**

**David Collins, 1804**

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Engraving (reproduction)

From David Collins, *An account of the English  
colony in New South Wales ...* 1804

Presented by Sir William Dixon

DLQ 80/43

Captain David Collins, Deputy Judge-Advocate of the colony, investigated Mary Bryant's escape and had little doubt that she and her companions would reach Timor. He reported that the fugitives had been

traced from Bryant's hut to the Point [probably Bennelong Point] and in the path were found a hand-saw, a scale, and four or five pounds of rice scattered about in different places, which it was evident they had dropped in their haste ... On searching Bryant's hut, cavities under the boards were found, where he had secured the compass and other articles as required concealment.



## Two leaves of *Smilax glycyphylla*

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These leaves were among a store taken by Mary Bryant when she escaped. They were found among the papers of James Boswell. *Smilax glycyphylla* — or wild sarsaparilla — grows along the New South Wales coast and contains ascorbic acid. The early colonists drank it as a tea substitute and used it as a remedy against scurvy.

## James Martin (b. c. 1760)

### *Memorandoms, c. 1792*

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Manuscript (reproduction)

Written by James Martin, one of Mary Bryant's companions, *Memorandoms* is the only extant first-hand account of the escape.

The Sea running Mountains high we were Under a Close reef  
Mainsail and kept so until Night and then came too under  
a droge [sea anchor] all the Night with her Head to the Sea  
thinking every moment to be the last.

James Martin, *Memorandoms*, Cambridge, 1937

With the kind permission of University College, London

Bentham papers, Bentham manuscripts

CLXIX folios 179–201

**Marie-Alexandre Duparc after  
Charles Alexandre Lesueur**

***Timor, vue de la rade de la ville et du fort  
hollandois de Coupang* [View of the harbour  
and the Dutch town and fort of Coupang,  
Timor], 1802**

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Hand-coloured engraving

Eleven separate prints of plates contained in François Péron,  
*Voyage de découvertes aux terres Australes*, 2nd edn, 1824

Bequest of Sir William Dixson, 1952

DLQ 82/41

**William Bligh (1754–1817)**

***A log of proceedings of his Majesty's ship  
Providence on a second voyage to the  
South Seas ... vol. 2, 1792–1793***

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Manuscript

Purchased 1934

A 564 vol. 2, pp. 150–151

Three years after the mutiny on the *Bounty*, Bligh returned to the Pacific on HMS *Providence*. In October 1792 he visited Coupang — just one year after the Bryants' departure. There he was shown William Bryant's journal by the Dutch governor. Bligh copied a few passages into his own logbook, as well as a brief summary of the whole. Unfortunately, Bryant's journal has since disappeared.

The latitude and distances run are not regularly kept up so as to ascertain the different places the[y] stopt, but the Journal in other respects is clear and distinct, and shows the writer must have been a determined and enterprising man.

**William Bradley (c. 1758–1833)**

***Batavia and Onrest in Batavia Bay, 1791***

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Watercolour

In the disease-ridden port of Batavia, en route for England, William and Emanuel Bryant died of fever just before Christmas. Mary Bryant's distress was compounded when her daughter, Charlotte, died at sea four months later.

From *A voyage to New South Wales*, c. 1802

Purchased from Francis Edwards Booksellers, 1924

Safe 1/14, opp. p. 292

## Pardon granted to Mary Bryant, 1793

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Manuscript (reproduction)

After receiving her pardon, Mary returned to her family in Cornwall with the promise of an annuity of £10 (about \$2200 in today's currency) from Boswell 'as long as she behaved well'. From that moment she fades from history.

With the kind permission of the National Archives, London

HO 13/9

**Artist unknown**

**Port Arthur, 1833**

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Oil (reproduction of detail)

Purchased from Gordon Williamson

ML 185



## Tasmania. Convict Department

### **Appropriation list for *Georgiana*, 1829**

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Manuscript

The *Georgiana*'s appropriation list shows that after being landed in Hobart, Swallow was assigned to the government boat crew.

Bequest of David Scott Mitchell, 1907

TAS 24

## Bill of Sale for the *Cyprus*, 1824

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Manuscript and printed

The *Cyprus* was built in Swallow's hometown of Sunderland in 1816. She was purchased in 1824 by Captain John Briggs, who took her to Van Diemen's Land. One year later the colonial government bought the *Cyprus* for £1700 in order to replace the unseaworthy brig *Duke of York* on the Macquarie Harbour run. According to Briggs, the *Cyprus* possessed every necessary quality for the coasting trade — she sailed well, could carry a large cargo, and her hull had been sheathed in copper as a protection against marine growths and worms.

Bequest of Sir William Dixon, 1952

DL DOC 41

**Augustus Earle (1793–1838)**

**Folio from *Panorama of Hobart, 1825***

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Watercolour and pencil

A key to a copy of the panorama published in *Description of a view of Hobart Town ... and surrounding Country ...* by Robert Burford, 1831, identifies the two-masted vessel in the centre — moored in front of the Commissariat — as the *Cyprus*.

Presented by Sir William Dixson, 1951

DGD 14 f. 3

## Descriptions of the convicts who seized the *Cyprus*, 13 March 1830

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Newspaper (reproduction)

Descriptions of the convicts who seized the *Cyprus* were forwarded to England from Hobart. They were published in successive editions of the *Hue and Cry*, a police publication containing descriptions of crimes and suspected criminals, including escaped convicts from Australia.

From *Police Gazette; Or, Hue and Cry*, London: Mills, Jowett, and Mills, 1830

MDQ 352.205/2

## William Buelow Gould (1803–1853)

### ***The making of the coracle,* 12 September 1829**

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Woodcut (reproduction)

Two weeks after the castaways were rescued from Recherche Bay, a woodcut depicting the building of the coracle appeared in the *Hobart Town Courier*. One of the earliest illustrations to be published in an Australian newspaper, it shows Lieutenant Carew, the commandant of the military guard, seated on a rock — his head buried despondently in his hands — while Pobjoy and Morgan are hard at work on the coracle. Mrs Carew watches them with a baby in her arms. The probable artist was William Buelow Gould, one of the convicts who refused to join Swallow.

From *Hobart Town Courier*, Hobart Town: James Ross, 1829

X079.9461/1

**Artist unknown**

***Gateway of Newgate Prison with  
preparations for an execution, c. 1820***

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Sepia sketch

After their arrest the convicts were incarcerated in Newgate Prison to await their trial.

## **William Swallow (1790–1834)**

### **Petition to Sir Robert Peel, 10 November 1830**

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Manuscript (reproduction)

Despite his improbable acquittal, Swallow was not set free. Having wriggled clear of the piracy allegation, he now faced the additional charge of returning from transportation before the period of his sentence had elapsed — another hanging offence. In this petition to the Home Secretary, Sir Robert Peel, seeking clemency, Swallow claims he was forced to join the other convicts against his will.

With the kind permission of the National Archives, London

HO 17/59 Kp. 18

## Tasmania. Supreme Court

# Death warrant for the execution of James Camm, 1832

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Manuscript

Three years after leaving the *Cyprus* at Tonga with six other convicts, James Camm was captured on Tahiti. He was returned to Hobart, where he was convicted of piracy and hanged.

Bequest of David Scott Mitchell, 1907

C 203



**Artist unknown**

## **Port Arthur, 1833**

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Oil

Painted by a soldier stationed there, this painting shows Port Arthur as it was when Swallow arrived there in 1833. Since its establishment in late 1830 on the rugged tip of the Tasman Peninsula, the penal settlement had grown rapidly — well over 400 convicts were in residence and numerous buildings had been erected, although many had a temporary look about them. The penitentiary, for instance, consisted of bark huts enclosed by a high stockade.

Purchased from Gordon Williamson

ML 185

**Francis MacNamara (b. 1811)**

***Seizure of the 'Cyprus brig'  
in Recherche Bay Aug. 1829***

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Manuscript

Transcribed by Thomas Whitley, c. 1891

Bequest of David Scott Mitchell, 1907

ML MSS 7266

## William Buelow Gould (1803–1853)

### *Sarah Island, Macquarie Harbour, 1833*

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Watercolour (reproduction of detail)

The penal settlement at Macquarie Harbour was established in 1821 as a place of pitiless discipline for convicts who had reoffended since arriving in the colony. Flogging was a regular occurrence, and most of the convicts toiled six days a week at the backbreaking work of timber-getting. A few of the more fortunate ones worked in the shipbuilding yards, where ships were built from the Huon pines cut by their comrades. The main settlement was on Sarah Island (also known as Settlement Island or Headquarters Island), about 30 kilometres from the entrance.

Purchased from the estate of the son of George Augustus Robinson through Maggs Bros Ltd, 1939

**Artist unknown**

***SW view of Macquarie Harbour, c. 1832***

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Watercolour

Purchased from the estate of the son of George Augustus Robinson  
through Maggs Bros Ltd, 1939

V6B/MAC H/3b

**Geoffrey C Ingleton (1908–1998)**

***The brig Frederick departs from  
Sarah's Island, Macquarie Harbour, VDL,  
12 January 1834, c. 1952***

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Etching (Artist's proof 'A')

Presented by GC Ingleton, 1955

DGA 2, part 3

**Thomas James Lempriere (1796–1852)**

***Wellington Head, Macquarie Harbour,  
1837–1841***

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Watercolour

While waiting for the wind to change, the *Frederick* anchored in the lee of Wellington Head, about five kilometres from the harbour entrance. It was there that the brig was seized.

**James Porter**

**Autobiography, between 1839–1843**

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Manuscript

Bequest of Sir William Dixson, 1952

DL MSQ 604

Porter wrote his autobiography while a prisoner on Norfolk Island. In this passage he describes the capture of the *Frederick*:

The signal was given on deck by stamping with the foot — when a Pistol was presented at the soldier in the forecastle who was quiet directly — me, and Shires rushed on deck, I put the hatch on the forescuttle dragging a small kedge anchor to put on it for security when Leslie came with the other Soldier, and Shires with the mate, I lifted off the hatch and let the rest of our companions up, and ordered the mate and Soldier to go below, putting the hatch on and leaving them in charge of Riley, we then crept slowly aft (all the foregoing was done without noise) and sneaked down the aft deck got the whole of the arms and ammunition belonging to the Military.



**Charles Taw**

**Information of Charles Taw concerning the seizure of the *Frederick*, 1 February 1834**

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Manuscript

Bequest of Sir William Dixson, 1952

DL Add 160

In this statement, Charles Taw, the captain of the *Frederick*, gives his version of the capture of his ship:

On the 13 of Jan.y I was laying off Wellington head with a crew consisting chiefly of convicts. About 8.30 pm two men rushed into the Cabin armed with Pistols & a Tomahawk — one man Shires presented a pistol at Mr Hoy the Builder and a man named Leslie following him presented a Pistol at me & desired me to stand — I rushed towards him & caught hold of the pistol and a scuffle ensued and a third man came down the ladder — by this time I had dragged Leslie towards the ladder where we got jammed together — Shires then returned from Mr Hoy & struck me with a pistol at the same time I rec'd a severe cut from a Tomahawk on the Head from Leslie also a blow from a Musquet ...

***Description of ten convicts ... who  
succeeded in overpowering the guard,  
and in making their escape with the vessel,  
17 September 1834***

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Newspaper (reproduction)

Porter and his fellow escapees were well settled in Chile by the time their descriptions were published in London.

From *Police Gazette; Or, Hue and Cry*, London: Mills, Jowett, and Mills, 1834

MDQ 352.205/2

## Artist unknown

### *Settlement Norfolk Island, 1838*

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Ink and wash

On Norfolk Island Porter was placed in the boat crew. In May 1841 his sentence was reduced to 14 years for his role in the rescue of some officers whose boat had capsized. The following year he was rewarded — with a further reduction of his sentence — for taking the boat out in heavy seas to supply water to a brig in distress 20 kilometres off the island.

Acquired from the King family, 1933

SV8/Norf I/5

# Marcus Clarke

## *His natural life*

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Printed

Marcus Clarke based an episode in his novel [*For the term of his natural life*] on James Porter's account of the seizure of the *Frederick*. Curiously, Clarke retained the real names of the convicts but renamed the brig the *Osprey*.

Presented by Sir William Dixon

London: R Bentley, c. 1875

DL 87/2

**Artist unknown**

## **John Mitchel makes his escape**

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Printed (reproduction of detail)

From John Mitchel, *Jail journal; or five years in British prisons ...*  
Glasgow: Cameron & Ferguson, c. 1876

Bequest of David Scott Mitchell, 1907

DSM/A923.2415/M680/4B1

**Artist unknown**

***John Mitchel, c. 1850***

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Lithograph (reproduction)

From a daguerreotype by Professor Gluckman

P2/M

**Author unknown**

## ***The State Prosecutions, 1848***

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Printed

An illustrated account of Mitchel's trial in Dublin on a charge of publishing seditious articles in the *United Irishman*, his weekly newspaper.

From *The Illustrated London News*, London: William Little,  
27 May 1848

F050/129



**Edward Hayes**

***PJ Smyth 'Nicaragua', 1854***

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Watercolour (reproduction)

From a photoprint in John Mitchel, *Jail journal*,  
Dublin: MH Gill & Sons Ltd, 1913

A923.2415/M680/4C1

**Artist unknown**

## **John Mitchel makes his escape**

---

Printed

From John Mitchel, *Jail journal; or five years in British prisons ...*

Glasgow: Cameron & Ferguson, c. 1876

Bequest of David Scott Mitchell, 1907

DSM/A923.2415/M680/4B1

Mitchel's account of his experiences was first published in *The Citizen* — his New York newspaper — from 4 January to 19 August 1854. The illustration on the cover of this edition shows Mitchel and Smyth riding out of Bothwell after Mitchel had surrendered his ticket-of-leave and parole.

Grinning residents of Bothwell on the pathway, who knew the meaning of the performance in a moment, and who, being commanded to stop us in the Queen's name, aggravated the grin into a laugh; some small boys at a corner, staring at our horses as they galloped by, and offering 'Three to one on the white'un'.

John Mitchel, *Jail journal*, 9 June 1853

## John Mitchel (1815–1875)

### Letter to G Baker, July 1853

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Manuscript

Mitchel wrote this letter a week before his escape.

I am here all safe & secret, living in a house two miles down the Sandy bay road, & can see as I write the brig '*Emma*' that is to carry me off next Saturday night. What is especially amusing, my wife & children are coming down this week to sail by the same *Emma*, so we shall land in Sydney together, & together sail for San Francisco or Panama — No difficulty is anticipated in getting me on board here — if the enemy only continue to be mystified for six days longer ...

Presented by CL Willes, 1948

Am 141/2

**Frederick Garling (1833–1910)**

***The Sydney Hobart Town packet 'Emma'*  
1847**

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Watercolour

On the night of 18 July 1853, Mitchel disguised himself and was rowed by a sympathiser six kilometres downriver to the waiting *Emma*, which had left Hobart at dusk. Throughout the voyage to Sydney, he retained his incognito even to his own children.

Presented by Sir William Dixson, 1951

DG V\*/Ships/12

**Thomas Francis O'Meagher (1823–1897)**

**Letter to Thomas Mason, Police Magistrate  
of Campbell Town, 3 January 1852**

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Manuscript

Meagher wrote this letter to withdraw his parole prior to his escape.

Bequest of Sir William Dixon, 1952

DL Add 289

**William Smith O'Brien (1803–1864)**

**Letter to Sir William Denison,  
4 October 1852**

---

Manuscript

Smith renews his parole.

I hereby engage not to attempt to escape from this colony during the interval intermediate between the 5th Novr. 1852 and the 5th May 1853.

Bequest of Sir William Dixon, 1952

DL Add 289

# Police description of William Smith O'Brien, c. 1850

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Manuscript and printed

Bequest of Sir William Dixson, 1952

DL Add 289



**Tasmania. Police Department, Port Dalrymple**

**Account for reward paid to John Thomson  
for apprehending runaway convicts,  
31 March 1826**

---

Manuscript

Presented by Fred Wymark, 1942

At2/2/11

**Samuel Thomas Gill**

***Police escorting prisoners for trial from  
country districts to Metropolitan gaol, 1855***

---

Pencil

In 1825 a mounted police force was formed whose principal duties were to capture escaped convicts and bushrangers, and to protect travellers and settlers from their depredations.

Knox Collection

SV\*/SP. COLL./Gill/3

**Artist unknown**

**View of the heads of Macquarie Harbour  
[Hell's Gates] with the pilots residence,  
c. 1832**

---

Watercolour (reproduction of detail)

Purchased from the estate of the son of George Augustus Robinson  
through Maggs Bros Ltd, 1939

V6B/Mac H/3a

## George William Evans (1780–1852)

### ***Hobart-Town, 1822***

---

Line engraving

Pearce arrived in Hobart on the *Castle Forbes* in February 1820. Since its foundation in 1804, Hobart had developed from a rough campsite at Sullivan's Cove on the River Derwent into a compact, well-planned town. Its population had grown from 262 to about 3000, over half of whom were convicts.

From *Geographical, historical, and topographical description of Van Diemen's Land*, London: John Souter, 1822

Bequest of David Scott Mitchell, 1907

DSM/986/22A3

**George William Evans (1780–1852)**

***Macquarie Harbour by GW Evans Deputy  
Surveyor, 1822***

---

Etching

Hydrographic Office of the Admiralty, 1845, corrections 1862

M Charts G 886.01/1 (1866)

**Alexander Pearce**

**Confession of murder and cannibalism, 1824**

Manuscript

Purchased 1917

A1326

Pearce made this confession at Macquarie Harbour, probably before the commandant, Lieutenant Cuthbertson — it was transcribed by a clerk. In the following passage, Pearce describes the killing and butchering of fellow escapee Alexander Dalton.

About 3 oClock in the morning Dalton was asleep. Greenhill got up, took an Axe and struck him on the Head with it, which Killed him as he never spoke afterwards. Travers took a knife, Cut his Throat with it, and bled him, we then dragged the body to a distance, Cut off his clothes, Tore his inside out, and Cut off his head, them Mather, Travers and Greenhill put his Heart and Liver on the Fire to Broil, but took them off and eat them before they were right Hot, they asked the rest would they have any, but we would not eat any that Night. Next Morning the Body was Cut up and divided into equal parts which we took and proceeded on our journey a little after Sun rise.

**John Watt Beattie (1859–1930)**

***The Frenchman Range from Mt Arrowsmith,  
c. 1890***

---

Albumen photoprint

On the seventh day of the escape, Pearce wrote that he and his companions passed over ‘the Summits of a Teir of Mountains near to that one called Frenchman’s Cap’.

The Tasmanian wilderness has changed very little since Pearce’s escape. These photographs show the extremely difficult nature of the country he had to cross — mountain range after mountain range covered with dense bush cut by steep valleys and wild rivers.



**John Watt Beattie (1859–1930)**

***Gordon River at Marble Cliffs, c. 1890***

---

Albumen photoprint

PXA 609/154

**Thomas Bock (c. 1793–1855)**

***Alexander Pearce executed for murder,  
July 19 1824***

---

Pencil

These portraits were made after Pearce's execution. His body was then delivered to the surgeons for dissection as a further mark of society's displeasure at his crimes.

Presented by Sir William Dixon, 1951

DG P2/21

***Alphabetical return of prisoners, who have absconded from Macquarie Harbour, since the formation of that settlement, 3 January 1822 to 20 June 1832***

---

Manuscript

The return lists Pearce's companions — Thomas Bodenham, Alexander Dalton, Robert Greenhill, John Mather and Matthew Travers (all of whom were eaten) — but inexplicably omits his name altogether.

Papers of Sir George Arthur

Purchased from WH Robinson, 1936

A 2189, p. 7

## Port Jackson Painter

# Untitled scene, with Aborigines attacking a rushcutter, c. 1790

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Watercolour (reproduction)

Besides more than a dozen convicts who have unaccountably disappeared, we know that two, who were employed as rushcutters up the harbour, were (from what cause we are yet ignorant) most dreadfully mangled and butchered.

Captain Watkin Tench, 30 May 1788

With the kind permission of the Natural History Museum, London

First Fleet Artwork Collection, Port Jackson Drawing No. 44

## ***Fatal escape, 10 June 1804***

---

Newspaper (reproduction)

This is an account of the convict John Field, who was attacked by Aboriginal people after escaping from the penal settlement at Newcastle.

From *Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser*,  
Sydney: G Howe, 1804

C 947

## Joseph Platt

### ***The horrors of transportation as related by Joseph Platt who was transported for fourteen years ... 1862***

---

Printed

In this memoir Platt describes how he was saved from perishing by 'a tribe of blacks' after he had escaped and become lost in the bush. He was adopted by the 'king and chief', and lived under his protection for four and a half years before returning to civilisation.

London: 1862

Bequest of David Scott Mitchell

DSM/365/P

**Charles D Richardson**

***An attack by Aborigines, undated***

---

Woodcut

**Frederick Woodhouse (1820–1909)**

***The settlers first meeting with Buckley, 1861***

Photolithograph (reproduction of detail)

Presented by Sir William Dixson, 1951

DGV2B/3



**Frederick Grosse (1828–1894)**

***William Buckley, the wild white man, 1857***

---

Woodcut

From *The Newsletter of Australasia*, Melbourne, George Slater, 1857

With the kind permission of the National Library of Australia

NLA PIC S2572 LOC2757

**Frederick Woodhouse (1820–1909)**

***The settlers first meeting with Buckley, 1861***

---

Photolithograph

In July 1835 Buckley surrendered to a group of settlers at Indented Head in Port Phillip.

Presented by Sir William Dixson, 1951

DGV2B/3

Artist unknown

## ***Discovery of Buckley***

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Lithograph

From *James Bonwick, The wild white man and the blacks of Victoria*,  
Melbourne: Fergusson & Moore, 1863

572.992/1B

Artist unknown

## ***Buckley, the wild white man, 1889***

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Lithograph (reproduction)

From *Savage life in Australia: The story of William Buckley the runaway convict who lived thirty-two years among the blacks of Australia*, edited by WT Pyke, Melbourne: EW Cole, 1889

Bequest of David Scott Mitchell, 1907

DSM/572.992/P

**Charles Henry Theodore Constantini (1803–1860)**

***William Buckley, 1837***

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Lithograph

From *Supplement to the Cornwall Chronicle*, 16 September 1837

Presented by Sir William Dixon

DL Pe 256

# ***Mrs Fraser's escape from the savages, 1841***

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Line engraving (reproduction of detail)

From John Curtis, *Shipwreck of the Stirling Castle ...*  
London: George Virtue, 1841

Bequest of David Scott Mitchell, 1907

DSM/910.41/4B1

## Artist unknown

### *Moreton Bay 1832*

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Pencil

At Moreton Bay Graham came under the rule of Captain Patrick Logan, whose reputation for brutality became legendary. In 1828 alone, 123 convicts took to the bush to escape the incessant floggings and other arbitrary punishments. Over half of them were captured or returned voluntarily, exhausted and starving. The remainder were presumed to have died or been killed by Aboriginal people.

**Artist unknown**

## ***Flogging a convict at Moreton Bay, 1836***

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Hand-coloured etching and aquatint

The author of this volume was a convict at Moreton Bay at the same time as John Graham. He wrote: 'I have known them to begin flogging from sunrise and not finished till past sunset in the evening, having given 3000 lashes.'

From William Ross, *The fell tyrant or the suffering convict ...* London: 1836

365/R



**Joseph Cross**

***Moreton Bay and Brisbane River 1825, 1829***

Engraving (reproduction)

Inset in *Chart of part of New South Wales, with plans of the harbours,*  
*Mar. 18th 1827 corrected to 1829*, London: J Cross, 1829

981.01/C

**Artist unknown**

***Mrs Fraser's escape from the savages, 1841***

Line engraving

From John Curtis, *Shipwreck of the Stirling Castle ...*

London: George Virtue, 1841

Bequest of David Scott Mitchell, 1907

DSM/910.41/4B1

## Artist unknown

### Foster Fyans, c. 1851

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Daguerreotype

Following the rescue of Mrs Fraser, the Commandant at Moreton Bay, Captain Foster Fyans, wrote to the Colonial Secretary that 'to [Graham] alone are we indebted for the recovery of Mrs Fraser'. On Fyans' recommendation, Graham was returned to Sydney, where he unsuccessfully petitioned the governor for his freedom.

**John Graham (b. c. 1800)**

**Petition to Sir Richard Bourke,  
29 December 1836**

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Manuscript

Bequest of Sir William Dixson, 1952

DL SP 196

In this petition Graham requests 'such relief as your Excellency shall deem meet' for his role in the rescue of Mrs Fraser and her fellow survivors.

That on the Vessel called the *Sterling Castle* being wrecked your Petitioner was appointed by Captain Fyans the then and present Commandant (who gave your Petitioner the most solemn promises if he succeeded) to take a party with a Boat and attempt to rescue those who survived of the crew (as it was then known many of the Crew had suffered by the Blacks) — Your Petitioner ... after great toil and difficulties he penetrated the camps of the Hostile Tribes where he found the wife of Captn. Fraser ...

## John Hunter (1737–1821)

### Letter to Sir Joseph Banks, 20 August 1796

---

Manuscript

In this letter, Governor Hunter reports on the problems posed by convict-bushrangers.

... the depredations constantly committing by Worthless Characters who have absconded from their labor & live as a Banditti — We have had three of these Villians lately Shott in the Act of robbing the Houses of some of the Settlers, two of whom died on the Spott, the other is recoverd, & has again I am just informed taken to the same life — Even those Serious examples are insufficient for preventing such Robberys.

Bequest of David Scott Mitchell, 1907

Banks papers Series 38.03

**Joseph Lycett**

***View upon the Napean River at the Cow  
Pastures New South Wales, 1824***

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Hand-coloured aquatint

In his accompanying text, Lycett wrote:

The group of Figures introduced on the right, is a party of Bush-rangers, a sort of banditti, who live in the woods, and have assumed the desperate character and habits of outlaws. Their bands are composed of the most depraved and daring of the Convicts ...

From Joseph Lycett, *Views in Australia, or, New South Wales & Van Diemen's Land*, London: J. Souter, 1824

Bequest of David Scott Mitchell, 1907

C 989

**George Lacy (c. 1817–1878)**

***'Hands up', 1850s***

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Watercolour



**Colonial Secretary's Office. Hobart Town**

**Government Notice No. 97 approving  
distribution of rewards for the capture of  
James Regan and his gang of bushrangers,  
31 March 1826**

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Printed

Bequest of Sir William Dixson, 1952

DL Add 105

**Author unknown**

***The bush ranger, c. 1830***

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Broadside

This ballad, published in London, tells the cautionary tale of a convict — transported to Sydney for burglary — who escapes from an iron gang and takes up bushranging, only to be captured and condemned to death.

Spitalfields: H Paul, printer, c. 1830

Bequest of Sir William Dixson, 1952

DL Drawer item 291

## **Pepperbox revolver used by Wingfield, a Tasmanian bushranger, c. 1836–1860**

---

Iron and wood

Wingfield was captured near Bothwell by Constable McIvor. On being taken by surprise, 'Wingy' — as he was called — snatched up his revolver. The constable was already covering him with his rifle, and the bushranger was obliged to throw the revolver down and surrender.

Bequest of Sir William Dixson, 1952

DR 127

## **Cut down Brown Bess Flintlock Musket, c. 1820–1830**

---

Metal and wood

During the 1820s and 1830s, large numbers of cut down muskets were distributed to settlers and their ticket-of-leave men living at the outer limits of settlement. The idea was that they could be used as protection from bushrangers and runaway convicts. In fact quite the opposite occurred; they became a source of arms for convicts-turned-bushrangers.

Kindly lent by Neville Locker

## Sir Thomas Mitchell (1792–1855)

### ***Donohue, 1830***

---

Pencil

This portrait was drawn after Donohoe's death. The almost illegible inscription is a quotation from *Mazeppa* by Lord Byron: 'No matter; I have bared my brow/Full in Death's face — before — and now.'

Presented by GF Mann

A 295/2 p. 541

**Thomas Bock (c. 1793–1855)**

***Charles Routley, 1830***

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Pencil (reproduction)

Sketches of Tasmanian bushrangers, c. 1823–1843

Bequest of Sir William Dixson, 1952

DL PX 5 f. 6

## Tasmania. Police Department

### **Warrant to apprehend Charles Routley, 7 November 1828**

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Manuscript

This warrant is addressed to Thomas Capon, Chief Constable of Van Diemen's Land, and to all other constables. It authorises them to apprehend Routley on a charge of assaulting one John Hunt and stealing five Spanish dollars from him. It is signed by Josiah Spode, Assistant Police Magistrate for Hobart.

Bequest of Sir William Dixson, 1952

DL Add 565

## **Brown Bess military musket with triangular bayonet, 1762**

---

Metal and wood

This musket was the arm of the Royal Marines who guarded the convicts on the First Fleet and during the early years of the colony. It was used in later years by the New South Wales Corps.

Calibre 0.75 inch smoothbore. Overall length 58 inches. Barrel length 42 inches. Lock marked with 'Crown GR' and 'Grice 1762'.

Kindly lent by Neville Locker



## **British military flintlock blunderbuss, 1820–1850**

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Metal and wood

A limited number of these blunderbusses — possibly as few as four — were issued as a trial for use in the Tasmanian Gaol system from 1820 to 1850 as a deterrent to mass breakouts.

Lock marked 'Crown / VR'. Bell mouth 23.5 inch barrel. Hinged 14 inch triangular bayonet with lock. Overall length 39.5 inches, full stock with brass furniture. Top of the butt plate marked '2'.

Kindly lent by Neville Locker

**Joseph Lycett (c. 1775–1828)**

***Mount Dromedary, Van Diemen's Land, 1825***

Watercolour (reproduction)

... we returned to our fortress at Dromedary Park ... It was situated at the top of the Dromedary and consisted of three logs in the shape of a triangle, from the inside of which it would be no easy matter to dislodge us, and we also had a good view of the surrounding country and were therefore not likely to be surprised.

Martin Cash, *The adventures of Martin Cash*, 1870

Presented by Sir William Dixon

DGD 1 f. 8

## John Skinner Prout (1805–1876)

### ***Port Arthur, 1845***

---

Watercolour and pencil

By the time Cash arrived, Port Arthur had grown into a substantial settlement with over 1000 convicts in residence. It had a number of impressive stone and brick buildings, including a church, barracks and hospital.

C Price

***Chart of Forestier & Tasmans peninsulas***  
***VDL, 1842***

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Watercolour (reproduction)

## C Hutchins after Charles Staniforth Hext (1815–1855)

### ***North view of Eaglehawk Neck, 1845***

---

Lithograph

Tasman Peninsula was joined to Forestier Peninsula and the mainland by a narrow land bridge (only 140 metres wide) called Eagle Hawk Neck. This was the gateway to the penal settlement at Port Arthur and, as such, was closely guarded. From one side to the other, a line of ferocious dogs was chained — anyone attempting to get past them would be mauled and the guards alerted. At night a row of oil lamps flooded the area with pale light. Regular patrols and a network of semaphore stations completed the security system.

From *Views in Australia and Tasmania*, 1845

Q980.1/H

**Tasmania. Convict Department**

**Code books of signals used on Tasman's  
Peninsula, 1844 and 1860**

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Manuscript and watercolour

Bequest of David Scott Mitchell, 1907

B 39, B40

The network of semaphore stations set up on Tasman Peninsula meant that information about an escape, or any other important occurrence, could be quickly relayed to headquarters. Thus, when a convict absconded, his absence was immediately known throughout the peninsula, and the guards were placed on alert. Each station consisted of three lines of moveable arms attached to a mast, which could be extended at different angles to send numerically coded messages. These messages were deciphered with the use of a code book containing a list of words and phrases which were each allocated a number.

## **Percussion single barrel trip gun, c. 1840**

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Metal

This gun is one of a number said to have been used at Eagle Hawk Neck. Hidden in long grass, it would be activated by an unsuspecting runaway convict tripping over one of three trip wires radiating from the ring below the muzzle.

Barrel 12.5 inches long, 1 inch slight bell mouth bore. Three screw 4 inch high swivel stand, fixed for elevation. Under barrel firing lever with single ring end.

Kindly lent by Neville Locker



## Francis Russell Nixon (1803–1879)

### Eaglehawk Neck

---

Watercolour

This view shows Eagle Hawk Bay looking towards Eagle Hawk Neck.

We followed each other silently into the water. It was then blowing fresh, and the night being very dark I lost sight of my mates; on getting to the centre the waves broke clean over me, at the same time carrying away my clothes, which I had fastened in a bundle on my head ... By-and-bye I touched bottom ... I had not remained more than five minutes, however, when I could distinctly hear them conversing.

Martin Cash, *The adventures of Martin Cash*, 1870

Purchased 1922

PXD 91 f. 6

Francis Russell Nixon (1803–1879)

***Chain of dogs on Eagle Hawk Neck,  
22 October 1846***

---

Pencil

Purchased 1922

PXD 92 f. 16

## Tasmania. Police Department

# Letter to the magistrate at Bothwell, 15 August 1843

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Manuscript

Cash and Jones have robbed the mail cart near the rise of Spring Hill, and I have a great idea that they will return to your District immediately. You had better therefore keep all your parties in readiness to act upon the first certain information of their movements ...

## Tasmania. Police Department

### ***Reward!: Fifty sovereigns, and a conditional pardon ... 19 January 1843***

---

Broadside

Copies of this reward notice were posted in police stations throughout Tasmania.

Hobart: James Barnard, Government Printer, [1843]

Bequest of Sir William Dixson, 1952

DL Drawer 444

***Now ready. Price one shilling. Martin Cash,  
the bushranger of Van Diemen's Land  
in 1843, 1870***

---

Lithograph

This advertising poster promotes Cash's autobiography, *The adventures of Martin Cash*. Edited — and also probably written — by James Lester Burke, it was published in Hobart by *The Mercury* in 1870. The first edition contains *The ballad of Martin Cash*, attributed to Francis MacNamara (Frank the Poet).

Printed by J Walch & Sons

D 356-7/11

## Artist unknown

### ***Joseph Platt receives 100 lashes for running away***

---

Woodcut

In 1834, at the age of 18, Joseph Platt arrived in Sydney. After three years, he absconded from his master. He managed to secure a passage on a departing ship, but was betrayed by a fellow convict. Taken before a magistrate, he was sentenced to 100 lashes and three years in heavy irons.

From Joseph Platt, *The horrors of transportation as related by Joseph Platt who was transported for fourteen years ...* Birmingham: c. 1849

## Artist unknown

### **Sir George Arthur, undated**

---

Miniature on ivory

Sir George Arthur was Lieutenant-Governor of Tasmania from 1824 to 1836. Within a few years of arriving in Hobart, he had tightened up convict administration by establishing a strictly controlled system based on reward and punishment. The apprehension and punishment of absconders was central to his system. In 1827 he ordered all officials to inform the convicts under their charge that anyone found at large within the colony before the expiration of his sentence — without lawful cause — on being convicted, ‘shall suffer death’.

Presented by Sir William Dixson

**Artist unknown**

## **Convict stockade at Cox's River Crossing near Hartley, c. 1831**

---

Watercolour and pencil

By day, members of a chain gang were supervised by a military guard, assisted by brutalised convict overseers. They were locked up at night in small wooden huts behind stockades.

Purchased at Sotheby's Australian Paintings Sale, 23 August 1992

XV/1



**Artist unknown**

**Sketch of a portable wooden house,  
to contain twenty iron'd ganged convicts,  
pre-1849**

---

Ink and wash

Where there was no stockade, chain gang convicts were shackled together at night in small moveable wooden caravans that were towed to the work site.

**Charles Bruce (1807–1851)**

***Hobart Town chain gang, c. 1831***

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Copper engraving

From 1826, chain gangs were a common punishment for more serious offences such as repeated attempts to escape.

**Ludwig Becker (1808–1861)**

**Convict in black & yellow garb, 1851**

---

Watercolour and pen (reproduction)

From *Letters, 1850–51, to Dr Kaup*

Purchased from Tregaskis, 1937

ML MSS 999, p. 61

**Artist unknown**

***Convicts working on an iron gang, 1848***

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Line engraving (reproduction)

From M Eugene Delessert, *Voyages dans les deux océans  
Atlantique et Pacifique 1844 to 1847*, 1848

Bequest of David Scott Mitchell, 1907

DSM/Q980/D

## Thomas James Lempriere

### ***Gentlemen convicts – The centipede***

---

Pencil

Convicts who escaped from Port Arthur were invariably sentenced, on recapture, to a flogging and a term of hard labour, such as working on a timber-getting gang. Nicknamed 'centipedes', each gang was composed of up to 50 convicts – with a large log on their shoulders they resembled a giant centipede as they moved through the bush to the clanking of their leg irons and the cracking of the overseer's whip.

Presented by Sir William Dixon

DLPXX 39 f. 5

# Van Diemen's Land. Police Department

## **Prisoners Remove Warrant, 23 April 1845**

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Printed form with manuscript annotations

In 1845 the convict Thomas Hefford was convicted of escaping. He was sentenced to be transferred to Port Arthur for one year's hard labour at the coal mines.

Presented by Sir William Dixon

DLPXX 64

## **Cat-o'-nine-tails, date unknown**

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Leather, canvas, cord

The basis of convict discipline was the cat-o'-nine-tails. The standard floggings were between 25 and 100 lashes, depending on the seriousness of the offence. However, floggings of 150 lashes or more were not unknown. Even 25 lashes (known as a 'tester' or 'Botany Bay dozen') were enough to strip the skin from a man's back. One hundred lashes would leave his back a bloody pulp. The cat-o'-nine-tails on display is regulation issue. The handle is 20 inches long and is numbered '18' at each end. The cord tails are 31 inches long, each having three knots with sewn ends.

Kindly lent by Neville Locker

## **Hammer head and rock working chisel, date unknown**

---

Metal

This was the type of heavy hammer used by chain gang convicts in road and quarry work. It is approximately 10 lb in weight, with the Government broad arrow mark on two faces. The chisel has no known convict connections, but together with the hammer indicates the heavy tools used by convicts .

Kindly lent by Neville Locker



## **Regulation rivet leg irons, date unknown**

---

Metal

Leg irons, worn on both ankles, were joined by a chain about two feet long, which was lifted from the ground by a cord attached to the waist. Leg irons varied in weight according to the severity of the crime. These leg irons, of the standard round shape, are marked with the BO and government's broad arrow stamp. The BO stands for Board of Ordnance, which organised the supply of convict clothing from the 1820s to 1855. They bear the marks of a cold chisel, indicating that the rivets have been cut off and removed by the blacksmith — evidence the leg irons have been used.

Kindly lent by Neville Locker

## **Oval rivet leg irons, date unknown**

---

Metal

A convict intending to escape used a hammer of the type on display to bash the originally round leg irons into an oval shape. Although the rivets were still in place, the irons could then be slipped over his heels and removed.

Kindly lent by Neville Locker

## **Section of rolling wall spikes, date unknown**

---

Cast iron

It is believed that these spikes, which revolved when grabbed, are from the wall of the old Hobart Town Gaol. They acted as a deterrent to convicts who attempted to escape by climbing over the wall.

Kindly lent by Neville Locker

***General prison regulations for the gaols  
situate within the police district of Hobart,  
1859***

---

Printed

Hobart Town: James Barnard, Government Printer, 1859

Kindly lent by Neville Locker

## **Convict jacket, c. 1840**

---

Wool

During the early years of the colony, convicts were issued with coarse, loose-fitting clothes known as 'slops'. In 1814 Governor Macquarie introduced 'party coloured dress half black and half white' (later black and yellow) for convicts who had committed further crimes. The intention was to humiliate them, as well as make them easily identifiable and thus prevent escape attempts.

Presented by Sir William Dixon

DR 114

## Convict cap, c. 1839–1849

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Leather

When the First Fleet arrived, each male convict was issued with a tall crowned hat. By Macquarie's time, leather caps with semi-circular flaps were the standard issue. These could be stored flat with the flaps tied together by ribbons. When the ribbons were undone, the flaps formed two brims — back and front — to provide protection from the sun.

Presented by Sir William Dixon

DR 56

## **Convict waistcoat, c. 1830**

---

Cotton and wool

This is probably the oldest item of New South Wales convict clothing in existence. The original numbers indicate that it was worn by three different individual convicts at Bathurst, possibly each one wearing it for a twelve-month period. The final patch, with the Berrima stamp and the over stamp with the number 2, would seem to indicate that the wearer was one of the small group of convicts brought from Bathurst to assist with building Berrima Gaol in 1837.

Kindly lent by Neville Locker

## **Conditional pardon granted to Thomas Gorman alias Fitzgerald, 15 June 1815**

---

Manuscript and printed

Thomas Gorman was sentenced to transportation for life at Cork City in April 1792. He received his conditional pardon for 'laborious and Persevering Exertions in Constructing the New Road over the Western Mountains to Bathurst Plains'. In 1817 he was granted an absolute pardon for his services as storekeeper at Bathurst, but he committed suicide shortly after.

Purchased from Viscountess Strathallan, 1914

ML MSS 4199X



# **Absolute pardon granted to Hannah Dodd alias Forster, 10 July 1827**

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Manuscript and printed

Hannah Dodd was sentenced to transportation for 14 years.  
She arrived in Sydney in 1817.

## **Certificate of freedom issued to Thomas Siderson, 25 July 1832**

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Manuscript and printed

Thomas Siderson was born in Kent, England, in 1762. In 1818 he was sentenced to 14 years transportation. He arrived in Sydney on the *Globe* in 1819, and received a ticket-of-leave in 1822. He received his certificate of freedom after serving the full term of his sentence.

Presented by HC Allen, 1944

Ac 44-1/13