

# 1826 – A Government Jail Gang, Sydney N. S. Wales

## What we see in this image

This streetscape records fourteen portrait figures, mostly convicts waiting for the day's work duty allocation, standing outside the Hyde Park Barracks, on Macquarie Street in Sydney. Opening in May 1819, the Barracks housed a diverse and motley crew of repeat offenders. Augustus Earle's finely observed view records a wide array of convict garb worn by Barracks inmates including details of the cut and construction of 'punishment' trousers worn by chain gang convicts which were made to button on the outside of each leg to enable their easy removal over leg irons, as well as the manner of wearing leg irons when walking. Some convicts used their leisure time to make cabbage tree hats (as worn by the third, fifth and eighth convicts) which were cooler on the head and gave protection from sunburn than the standard issue woollen hats (seen second from the left) which offered no sun protection, or the leather caps with semi-circular flaps (mid-foreground) which could be pulled down to give some sun protection but absorbed the heat. Convicts sent to the Hyde Park Barracks weren't always lucky enough to be issued with socks or stockings and there was also a chronic shortage of shoes as evidenced by the number of bare ankles and feet in this image.

## What we know about this image

According to evidence supplied to the Bigge Royal Commission in 1819, on landing in NSW each convict received a clothing issue comprising a coarse woollen jacket and waistcoat of yellow or grey cloth, a pair of duck (cotton) or cloth (wool) trousers, a pair of worsted stockings, a pair of shoes, two

cotton or linen shirts, a neck handkerchief and a woollen cap. In the 1820s the Board of Ordnance took over the supply of convict clothing and all items made or used by government convicts were marked or stamped with broad arrows or the letters 'PB' (Prisoners Barracks). Convicts sent to the Barracks received a further issue of two striped shirts which clearly distinguished the wearer as a repeat offenders, and convicts names and numbers were also written on their clothes to discourage theft or barter.

This work is dated from the time of Augustus Earle's stay in Australia (1825-1827). It was published in his 'Views in New South Wales and Van Diemens Land: Australian scrap book' (1830) with the accompanying text:

'Every person in England is aware that for certain offences men are transported to New South Wales but there are few, except those who have visited the colony, know how they are disposed of after they reach their places of destination. When they land they do not go to gaol but are assembled in the Prisoners Barracks Yard and there inspected by the Governor, Superintendant (sic) of Convicts and the Officers of the Ship which brought them. And it is truly astonishing to see such men, under such circumstances and after so long a voyage, look and behave so well. They are immediately assigned to such Settlers as may want them, and they accompany their new masters, in the capacity of servants; their ration and clothing is arranged by the Government, and generally speaking they are comfortably off: but for any fresh offence Government take them back, and then they are placed in gangs, and toil at the public works, where they have harder duty, less liberty, and reduced rations and for still repeated crimes, are banished to remote penal settlements. The annexed subject is one of the Government gangs being told out of the barracks for the daily work, and given in charge of a soldier who acts as overseer.'

During the first years of settlement in Australia, clear

categories of distinctive convict dress or uniform were never satisfactorily enforced due to irregularities of supply from England. As a result, convicts and free working class people in the colony all wore very similar kinds of clothing largely consisting of basic, uniformly drab, ready-made garments known as 'slops' which was the term for any type of coarse loose-fitting mass-produced clothing and the standard dress of the urban working classes at the time. A lack of distinguishing dress meant discipline was difficult to maintain in the colony and this was further exacerbated by the assignment system.

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A GOVERNMENT JAIL GANG.  
Sydney N. S. Wales.

## 1826 – A Government Jail Gang, Sydney N. S. Wales

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**Download Image**



Creator
Earle, Augustus (1793-1838)
Inscription
Imprint LLHS: 'A. Earle, 1830'
Medium
Hand-coloured [engraving]
Background
Subjects posed outside Hyde Park Barracks, Sydney.
Reference
To follow

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## 1826 – Ann Piper and her

# children

## What we see in this image

This family portrait is typical of the style of painting known as a 'conversation piece', which traditionally showed a landed gentry family informally posed in the home or on their estate. This rare, life size, colonial example shows Mary Ann (nee Shears), wife of Captain John Piper, and four of her ten children. Mrs Piper had turned 35 on 2 August 1826, and would appear to have everything that colonial Sydney could offer; wealth, social position, a charming healthy family, fashionable imported clothes and a grand house on the best site in Sydney. Although there are numerous pictures of the exterior of the Piper family home, Henrietta Villa, Augustus Earle's portrait of Mrs Piper and her children is one of the few surviving views of its interior.

For her family portrait Mrs Piper has chosen to wear a sheer, red gauze gown with short, puffed sleeves and a gathered bodice over a long-sleeved, white underdress with a wide, flat collar and tucked edges. The high waist is marked with a belt, fastened on the left hand side with a rectangular gold buckle, above a long, tubular skirt falling to her ankles, its sheeriness revealing the pin-tucked bands on her underdress extending from just below her knees. She also carries a white shawl, which may have of borders of 'broderie anglais' (white work) embroidery, and wears an elaborate indoor cap, trimmed with ribbons, silk flowers, lace and sheer gauze streamers. Mrs Piper wears several rings on each hand, pendant earrings and a gold watch, suspended from a long gold chain looped up and tucked into a small pocket concealed in the round waistband of her gown.

The interests or pastimes of each family member indicated by

their clothing and possessions. The children in this image are aged from approximately four to ten years. Thomas Piper (b. 21 September 1816), on the far left, wears a brass-buttoned, black schoolboy outfit, or 'skeleton suit', with a white neck ruff and carries an archer's bow. In the centre of the image the youngest boy, William Sloper (b. 25 August 1822), who beats a drum, is dressed in an unusually tailored, and jauntily militarised, version of the type of frock and pantaloons worn by little boys until they were breeched at about the age of five. The two girls wear identical outfits – coral necklaces with white muslin dresses, their high-waists marked by pale pink sashes – and are shown with more devotional interests; the large book on the stool closest to Eliza Anne (b. 26 July 1818) is perhaps a bible, while the pair of service books lying on the table nearest to Anne Christa Frances (b. 24 June 1820) would be carried to church on Sundays – the Pipers were devout Presbyterians.

## **What we know about this image**

Mary Ann Shears married Captain John Piper, military officer and public servant by special licence in 1816. It is believed they had met and formed an attachment during Piper's term of service on Norfolk Island in about 1806. This happy family picture must have been completed after the birth of John and Mary Ann's tenth child, and eighth son Frederick Octavius, on 2 June 1826 but before his death three months later in Sept 1826. Several other Piper children born before 1826 are also missing from this painting, including Hugh Hewitt Piper (b. 1813) who had been killed in a riding accident on 8 July 1825, which explains why the painting could not have been commissioned in 1825; Ann would never have worn a red dress so soon after the death of a family member.

A number contemporary accounts give clear impressions of Henrietta Villa, including that of the artist, Augustus Earle, in his 'Views of New South Wales' (1830):

The interior of the building corresponds with the taste displayed in the gardens, and the grand saloon is not only unrivalled in this Colony but would rank high as a chaste specimen of architecture in any part of the world. . . At every turn you see comfort and splendour, and one is much in doubt which most to admire – the elegance of the building as a work of art or the comfort of the house as a residence.

Joseph Lycett, published his 'Views of Australia' in London in 1824, and also described Henrietta Villa:

The interior of the Villa is filled up in a style that combines elegance and comfort. The principal apartments are a spacious Dining Room, a Banqueting Room and a Drawing Room; all furnished in the most tasteful manner.

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## 1826 – Ann Piper and her children

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**Download Image**



Creator
Earle, Augustus (1793-1838)
Inscription
Unsigned
Medium
Oil Painitng
Background
Subjects are posed in front of a [stone] chimney breast, in a domestic setting suggestive of their home, Henrietta Villa, at Point
Reference
To follow

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# 1821 – Mrs Celia Wills

## What we see in this image

This right facing  $\frac{1}{2}$  length miniature portrait shows Celia Reibey (1803 – 1823) at about 18 years of age. It is likely to have been painted in Britain during her visit there in 1820-1.

Celia is portrayed in evening dress and wears a very high-waisted, royal-blue gown [possibly of silk velvet] with short, puffed sleeves and a wide, low neckline with fine white lace edging, revealing a sheer white muslin 'tucker' which has been carefully arranged in scalloped folds to show off her youthful décolletage. Her light brown hair is centre parted and brought up into a high roll at the back, with a corsage of roses on the right, and bunches of ringlets arranged over each ear. She wears pendant pearl earrings, a long fine gold chain looped loosely several times around her neck, and carries a brightly-coloured tartan stole, possibly also of silk velvet.

## What we know about this image

Celia Wills, nee Reibey (1803 – 1823), was the eldest daughter of Thomas Reibey (1755 – 1811) and prominent female emancipist and colonial business woman Mary Reibey, nee Haydock, (1777-1855). In March 1820, Celia Reibey, and her younger sisters (Eliza and Jane) travelled to England and Scotland with their mother, returning to Sydney the following year. On 12 June 1822, Celia married Thomas Wills (1800-1872), son of her father's business partner Edward Spencer Wills (1778-1811) but she died 15 months later, in October 1823, having given birth to a daughter in March of that year, who died as an infant (aged 11 months and 5 days) on 11 April 1824.

The following death notice appeared in the Sydney Gazette, 2 Oct 1823, p. 3:

At the residence of her mother in George-street Sydney, after an indisposition of some few months, Mrs WILLS, in her 21st year. This amiable young lady was the eldest daughter of Mrs Reibey. In June 1822, she was united to Mr Thomas Wills, to whom she bequeathed a pledge of tenderest affection – a sweet little girl. Shortly prior to her confinement, about four months since, Mrs Wills caught a violent cold, which fastened on the lungs, and originated a rapid consumption. We have not much occasion to say, that the deceased is deservedly lamented; the many mental adornments, and attractive virtues, with which she was gifted, will long retain cherished in the bosom of her numerous relatives, and host of surviving friends. To delineate the grief of the astonished widower, and young father, is a task to which our pen is quite incompetent. 'HER SUN IS GONE DOWN WHILE IT WAS YET DAY'

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**1821 – Mrs Celia Wills**

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Download Image



Creator
To follow
Inscription
To follow
Medium
To follow
Background
To follow
Reference
To follow

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**1821 – ‘The entrance of Port Jackson, and part of the town of Sydney, New South Wales.’**

## **What we see in this image**

This plate is part of triptych (three-part set) of views which, when joined together form a panoramic landscape view taken from the vantage point of Observatory Hill in Sydney. This section of the panorama looks north across 'the magnificent Harbour of Port Jackson – its rocky and picturesque Shores – its numerous Islands and inlets – the Town of Sydney – the beautiful and Romantic Scenery of the Vicinity...' (Prospectus for the prints) and includes the small convict cottages of The Rocks (in the middle ground) as well as larger civic establishments like Governor Macquarie's grand new gothic mansion (on the far left) set in its private domain.

Major Taylor's panorama offers one of the more informative depictions of the city of Sydney in its early years. It presents a flattering portrait of the Australian colony showing the harbour filled with trade and military ships, with the settlers and convicts clearing and working the land. Topographical artists often included people in their work. Such figures were intended to educate the viewer about the appearance and customs of unfamiliar places. In the foreground of this image two uniformed and shakoed soldiers stand in the yard of a brick dwelling, the lady of the house is near the door wearing a narrow, white, high-waisted day dress with a ruffled neckline and shading herself from the sun with a parasol. A small child and the range of animals including chickens, a puppy and a domesticated kangaroo, lend an air of authenticity to the scene as do the numerous servants going about their assigned work and the convicts industriously employed in cutting sandstone to provide building materials for expansion of the settlement.

## **What we know about this image**

Major James Taylor (1785-1829), a topographical draughtsman attached to the 48th Regiment, arrived in Sydney in 1817. By

1820 Sydney was a town of 12,000 inhabitants, about a third of whom were convicts. In that year Taylor made three original watercolours drawings with the stated hope that prints based on his watercolours would be 'of service to the Colony' (Taylor to Alexander Berry, 28 Feb 1820). On his return to England in 1822 Taylor arranged for the engraving and printing of a three-sheet panoramic print based on his drawings.

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**1821 – ‘The entrance of Port Jackson, and part of the town of Sydney, New South Wales.’**

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## Download Image



Creator
Taylor, James (1785-1829); engraved by R. Havell & Sons
Inscription
Imprint: London: Colnaghi & Co., 1823.
Medium
Hand-coloured Aquatint
Background
To follow
Reference
To follow

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**1820 – Elizabeth Heneretta  
[i.e. Henrietta] Villa  
situate about four miles Down**

# the Harbour from Sydney Cove the seat of John Piper Esqr. Naval Officer etc. etc. of Port Jackson.

## What we see in this image

This finely-rendered house portrait of Henrietta Villa, set on the waterfront at Point Piper on the eastern foreshore of Sydney Harbour, includes 18 figures:

- Five boatmen clustered near the water's edge are wearing white uniforms with short jackets and caps;
- Another man with this group stands with his hands in the pockets of his buff-coloured trousers and wears a light-coloured top hat, and a long dark blue coat over a white shirt;
- Standing higher up, as the grounds slope towards the house, is a group of three guests comprising a woman dressed in a light blue, high-waisted gown, with a cream bonnet and a small blue parasol, and two men – one in the red coat and bicorne hat of a [NSW Corps] officer and the other, a civilian, wearing a long tan-coloured coat with white trousers and a brown top hat;
- Further up, in the centre of the image, another group of men, all three civilians, wear various combinations of tail coats, long frock coats, light-coloured trousers and tall hats;
- Higher still, on the right, a man in a blue tail coat, tall

hat and white trousers stands with three women clad in high-waisted white dresses and bonnets, two carrying small blue or green parasols;

- Two boys standing on the verandah wear short blue jackets, white pants and caps;

- Another pair of guests enter the house, the woman wearing a tall-crowned bonnet and a short, blue jacket (or Spencer) over a high-waisted white dress, while the man wears the red jacket of a military uniform.

Henrietta Villa was the property of Captain Piper, and named in honour of Governor Macquarie's wife. Built between 1816 and 1822, at a cost of £10,000, the house was variously described as a naval villa and a marine pavilion. It was considered the most elegant house in Sydney at the time and became a symbol of progress in the colony. The location of Henrietta Villa was idyllic, a gracious building set on a headland jutting majestically into Sydney Harbour. When this drawing was executed the building was not yet finished – the verandas covering the long windows are absent. Although the estate was not fully occupied until May 1822, Piper entertaining lavishly even before the family took up permanent residence at Point Piper. The house was demolished in the 1850s

## **What we know about this image**

Sailing into Sydney Harbour in May 1825, visiting English artist Augustus Earle declared, 'The first pleasing object which breaks suddenly on the sight after having entered the Port, is Point Piper, so called from a worthy Gentleman of that name, choosing this spot for his residence'. Captain Piper's Henrietta Villa was a single-storey residence which terminated in two pavilions, each surmounted by a saucer-shaped cupola inset with a series of windows that lit the rooms beneath. One pavilion housed a ballroom, or banqueting hall, designed in the shape of St Andrew's cross. The gardens

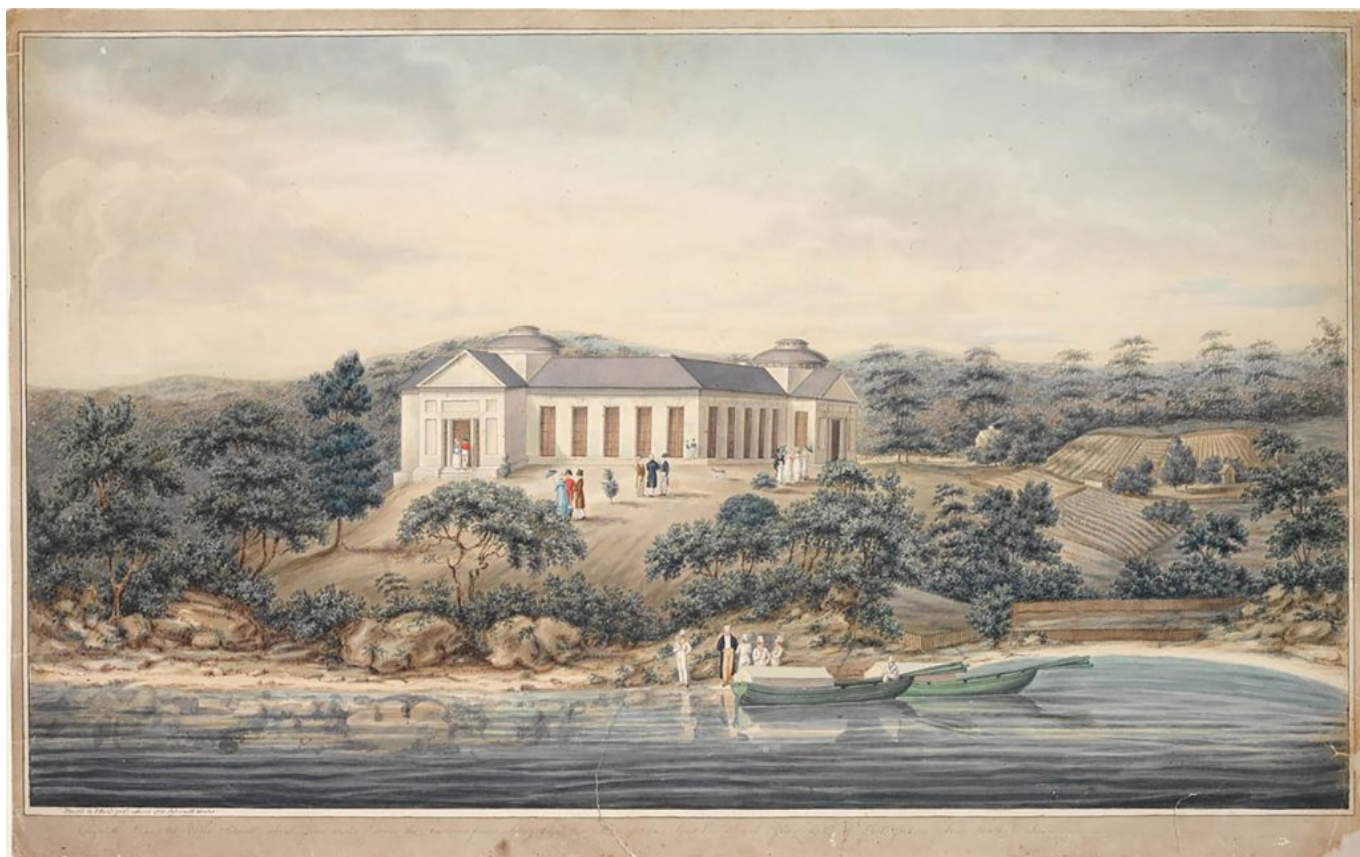
were laid out with imported English trees and a row of small brass cannon was positioned in front of the house; these were fired by Piper to salute his friends as they sailed up the harbour to attend his festivities:

'...no expense has been spared I am told to ornament this fairy palace;... he does the thing properly, for he sends carriages and four, and boats for those who like the water, and returns his guests to their houses in the same manner. He keeps a band of music, and they have quadrilles every evening under the spacious verandahs (sic). At the table there is a vast profusion of every luxury that the 4 quarters of the globe can supply...'

On 2 December 1819, a 'fete champetre' was held, which was reported by the Sydney Gazette. Among the guests officers of the 48th Regiment, officers of the French ship L 'Uranie; and many of the more important members of the colony: 'About 100 Ladies and Gentlemen sat down to dinner; after which the merry dance' commenced, which was kept up with great spirit; and on the party leaving Henrietta Villa, they were saluted by a discharge of fifteen guns.' Piper hosted opulent parties at Henrietta Villa for the leading members of Sydney society, dispensing an unrestrained hospitality unrivalled in Australia for decades afterwards.

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**1820 – Elizabeth Heneretta [i.e. Henrietta] Villa  
situate about four miles Down the Harbour from  
Sydney Cove the seat of John Piper Esqr. Naval  
Offcier etc. etc. of Port Jackson.**

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**Download Image**



Creator
Read, Richard Jnr (1796-1862)
Inscription

LLHS in pencil (probably in the artist's hand) below the image as above; and on back: 'Painted by R. Read junr. March 1820 Sydney N.S. Wales.'
<b>Medium</b>
Watercolour Drawing
<b>Background</b>
To follow
<b>Reference</b>
To follow

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# 1817 – The Costume of the Australasians

## What we see in this image

This scene depicts colonial men of various types as seen by the artist on the streets of Sydney in about 1817. It shows the different strata of colonial Sydney society – civil and military officers, free settlers, soldiers, emancipists and serving convicts – in an apparent easy co-existence.

The ten figures, from left to right, include:

1. a government official wearing a large bicorne hat, trimmed with a black ribbon rosette, and a three-piece suit of dark cloth comprising a tail coat and waistcoat, buttoned over a white linen shirt with a pleated front, his trousers tucked into knee high, tasselled hessian boots. This could be Governor Macquarie's secretary, John Thomas Campbell, in civilian dress;

2. an emancipist or 'ticket-of-leave' man in a loose-fitting, grey 'slop' suit worn with a frill-fronted shirt, low crowned hat and brown leather shoes;

3. an 'exclusive' or free settler carrying a large green umbrella and wearing a wide-brimmed hat (perhaps made locally of cabbage tree palm) with a long, brown 'duster' coat over a buff-coloured waistcoat with a stand collar, and a white linen shirt with a pleated, frilled front and a pointed collar, above wide-legged white [moleskin] trousers with buff-coloured, deep, side-buttoning cuffs and brown shoes buckled over the instep. NB: Large green umbrellas, probably imported from India, were regularly listed in the sales advertisements of Sydney retailers at this time.

4. a saluting bandsman in a tall shako with looped rows of white plaited cords (caplines) across the front and tassels hanging down one side, wearing a blue woollen uniform of short, braided jacket with a yellow lining, stand collar and cuffs, and matching trousers tucked into tall hessian boots;

5. a soldier wearing the uniform of the 48th regiment with its distinctive 'shako' with badge and gold braiding, and a red woollen jacket with white collar, cuffs and facings, over a linen shirt with stand collar, pleated, frilled front and a black neckcloth, his white trousers with side braid, marked at the waist with a red sash with looped corded and tasselled trim (perhaps attached to a message pouch). He also carries a 'shillelagh' (typically made from a stout knotty stick with a large knob at the top) perhaps displaying an association with



Ireland;

6. a government convict (perhaps privately assigned) carrying a large burden on his head and wearing the standard issue leather cap with a brown 'slop' suit, brown leather shoes and no stockings.

7. another free settler wearing a fine [imported] straw hat, and a short blue jacket with white cuffs and rolled back edges (perhaps sheepskin lined) forming a collar, over a white waistcoat with a turn-back collar and a linen shirt with frilled front and stand collar, and white trousers. He also carries a riding crop or swagger stick and wears brown leather boots fitted with silver spurs;

8. a government convict carrying a log across his shoulders wears a three-piece woollen suit in the yellow 'canary' wool (Parramatta cloth) of the repeat offender, with a standard issue folding leather convict cap, brown leather shoes and no stockings;

9. another soldier, his hand raised in greeting, wears a blue cap with a black peak, trimmed with a white pop-pom and a gold cap band, with a double-breasted, braided, long-tailed red wool coat and white trousers.

10. a convict clerk wears an ill-fitting blue 'slop' suit with his standard issue leather convict cap and brown leather shoes, also worn without stocking

## **What we know about this image**

This drawing is a primary source for the history of clothing in Australia. Distinctive in its social inclusiveness, and its tone of amiable satire, it includes rare images of convicts and provides a splendid record of how class and status in a penal colony were instantly recognisable by dress.

Edward Close (1790-1866), soldier, engineer, settler,

magistrate and member of the Legislative Council, arrived in New South Wales in 1817. Following colonial service as engineer at Newcastle, NSW, Close resigned his commission and was granted land at Morpeth on the Hunter River. Close would have recieved some training in topographical rendering during his training as a military officer; his coastal and landscape watercolours are the most convincing of his drawings. Lacking academic training, he was naturally less successful with anatomy which explains the naiveté of the figure compositions in this image, but this is more than made up for by his careful observation of the social and clothing codes in operation around him on his arrival in the colony.

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## 1817 – The Costume of the Australasians

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**Download Image**



Creator
Edward Charles Close (1790-1866) attrib.
Inscription
In ink along lower edge: 'The Costume of the Australasians'
Medium

Watercolour
<b>Background</b>
To follow
<b>Reference</b>
To follow

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# 1811 – Thomas Laycock, wearing the uniform of the 98th Regiment

## What we see in this image

This right facing,  $\frac{3}{4}$  profile portrait is one of a pair of miniatures of Thomas Laycock and his wife Isabella (nee Bunker) which are believed to have been painted in England in about 1811. It shows the newly-promoted Thomas Laycock in the uniform of the 98th Regiment a foot; Laycock had received his promotion to the rank of captain on 27 September 1811.

Laycock is clean shaven, his dark brown hair stylishly is coiffed, left longer and curled on top, and brushed forward over the temples.

At this time all British infantry wore red woollen jackets.

Officers' jackets (as shown in this portrait) were made of a bright scarlet cloth, well-tailored and close fitting, often padded to exaggerate the outline. The uniform jacket of the 98th Regiment a foot was brass-buttoned and double-breasted, with button-back lapels, white facings and stand collar; the practice of distinguishing regiments by different coloured facings had been in general use since the early 18th century. The jacket is worn with a black neckcloth, a tasselled gold epaulette at the shoulder denoting the rank of captain is fastened over a white cross belt with the regimental insignia (98) clearly displayed on the cross-plate.

## **What we know about this image**

Thomas Laycock (1786?-1823), soldier and explorer, was the son of Thomas Laycock (1756?-1809), Quartermaster with the NSW Corps, and his wife Hannah (1758-1831). He came to Sydney with his mother on the Gorgon in 1791. He entered the New South Wales Corps, was commissioned as an ensign in December 1795, and promoted lieutenant in 1802.

After serving at Sydney and Norfolk Island, he was made Quartermaster at Port Dalrymple in 1806, under Captain Anthony Fenn Kemp. Laycock later returned to Sydney where he became the only casualty in the January 1808 Rum Rebellion; while searching Government House Laycock fell through a manhole onto his 'principal joint'.

On 1 June 1809, Laycock married Isabella Bunker, daughter of Eber Bunker. Following Governor Macquarie's arrival six months later, the newly married Laycocks departed for England, sailing aboard HMS Dromedary on 18 March 1810. After serving in the American war of 1812, Laycock sold his commission, sailing for Sydney with his wife and two sons aboard the Fame. Leaving on 8 March 1817, Isabella took ill during the journey and died suddenly at sea on 12 May 1817. Left with two young children to raise, Laycock was quickly remarried to Margaret (née Connell) on 8 July 1817, at St. Philips Church, Sydney,

with whom he had a further two children.

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**1811 – Thomas Laycock, wearing the uniform of the  
98th Regiment**

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Download Image



Creator
To follow
Inscription
To follow
Medium
Watercolour on Ivory
Background
To follow
Reference
To follow

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## 1811 – Isabella Laycock

### What we see in this image

This right facing,  $\frac{3}{4}$  profile,  $\frac{1}{2}$  length miniature portrait shows Isabella Laycock (1787-1817) at 24 years of age, dressed in the close-fitting, vertical or columnar 'Neo-Classical'

style of the early nineteenth century. This style sought to emulate the sophisticated figure-revealing, classical silhouette of the Roman Empire; white was the preferred colour during this era, with fine white muslin the favoured fabric

Isabella wears a simple evening dress of very fine white muslin, the sheerness of which can be seen through the short, puffed sleeves revealing the slim shapeliness of her upper arms. The wide, low square neckline shows off her youthful shoulders and is trimmed with bands of white work embroidery and fine lace above the finely tucked, or shirred, bodice which has a very high waistline, marked just below the bust with a softly gathered sash or ribbon tied in a small bow at centre front above a tubular skirt. She wears no jewellery and her long, naturally curly brown hair has been simply arranged with a centre parting, a high bun at the back and side curls framing her face.

## **What we know about this image**

This miniature portrait of Isabella Laycock is one of a pair believed to have been painted in England in about 1811, created two years after her marriage to Thomas Laycock (1786?-1823) on 1 June 1809, between the birth of her two sons John (1810) and Thomas Jnr (1815), Isabella's sudden death at sea on 12 May 1817.

Isabella Laycock was the daughter of the whaler Eber Bunker (1760-1836), who brought his wife and family of five children to the colony in August 1806, setting up home at a place known as Bunker's Hill in the Rocks overlooking the Harbour. Following the death of Isabella's mother in March 1808, Eber Bunker married Margaret Macfarlane. After Governor Macquarie's arrival in Sydney in late 1809, the newly married Laycocks departed for England, sailing aboard HMS Dromedary on 18 March 1810. In England, on 27 September 1811, Laycock was promoted

to the rank of captain in the 98th Regiment a foot. After serving in the American war of 1812, Laycock sold his commission and sailed for Sydney with his wife & two children aboard the Fame. Leaving on 8 March 1817, Isabella took ill during the journey and died suddenly at sea on 12 May 1817. Left with two young children to look raise, Laycock quickly married Margaret (née Connell), on 8 July 1817, with whom he had a further two children.

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**1811 – Isabella Laycock**

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Download Image



Creator
To follow
Inscription
To follow
Medium
To follow
Background
To follow
Reference
To follow

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# 1808 – The arrest of Governor Bligh

## What we see in this image

This caricature records the culmination of events which began at around 6pm on 26 January 1808, when 4000 soldiers of the NSW Corps, under the command of Col. George Johnston, marched from their Barracks, along Bridge Street, to Government House, Sydney, with the intention of arresting Governor William

Bligh. It took an hour and a half to find Bligh who had concealed himself, in full-dress naval uniform, upstairs in a servant's room, where he destroyed documents he did not want to fall into the hands of the mutineers. According to his enemies he was found hiding under a bed.

This image shows these events taking place in a bedroom and witnessed by three soldiers wearing the uniform of the NSW Corps; during the trial in London, Lieutenant William Minchin recalled that on entering the room there were already two or three soldiers there (Sergeant John Sutherland, Corporal Michael Marlborough and Private William Wilford) but that the Governor was standing up.

The soldier leaning down to drag Bligh out from under the bed can be ranked as a corporal by the pair of chevrons, point downwards (since 1802), on the upper arm of his red woollen jacket. The standing figure (far right) is clearly portrayed with a single epaulette on his right shoulder denoting the rank of Lieutenant. This is, therefore, most probably Lieut. William Minchin (1774?-1821). He also wears the top hat of an officer with black trousers tucked into tasselled 'hessian' boots, and carries a sword at his side.

The two soldiers wear tall, black cylindrical 'stovepipe' shakos with peaked visor and a brass regimental badge attached to the front. This type of shako was worn by British Army infantrymen from around 1799 until the end of the Peninsular War (1808-1814). The red and white side plume, or cockade, worn on the left side of the shako behind a black cloth rosette, enabled commanders to distinguish who was who on a battlefield; white at the top of the plume indicated 'Infantry' and red at the base 'English'. The men also wear white cross belts over their red woollen jackets, above grey trousers and low cut, flat black shoes, or pumps.

## What we know about this image

The 'Arrest of Governor Bligh' is an image of propaganda. Despite its being the only surviving visual account of these event, its content must be treated with some scepticism. The watercolour first came into the possession of the NSW Government in 1888, from the descendants of Lieutenant Colonel George Johnston, and was transferred to the Mitchell Library in 1934.

It is likely that this caricature is the one commissioned from an unknown artist by Sergeant Major Thomas Whittle (c.1764-1822), a NSW Corps soldier known to have participated in the Bligh's arrest on 26 January 1808, with Lieut. William Minchin (1774?-1821), who appears as the standing figure on the far RHS of this image. Sergeant Whittle is believed to have displayed this image in his house, enshrined between two candlesticks, a couple of days after the rebellion.

The genesis of the watercolour of Bligh's arrest appears to have been a dispute that blew up between Bligh and Whittle. According to contemporary newspapers accounts of the incident, it seems that Bligh had asked Whittle to remove his house because it stood in the way of town improvements. Whittle protested and Bligh angrily abused him. Possibly in the spirit of revenge, Whittle, who later gave evidence at the trial in London as having seen the Governor just after his arrest, commissioned this drawing of Bligh being pulled by soldiers from under the bed.

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## 1808 – The arrest of Governor Bligh

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**Download Image**



Creator
To follow
Inscription
On back: 'Sketch of Bligh's / arrest by / Lieut. Minchin'; 'Govn Bligh' ; and 'Govn. Bligh under the Bed'
Medium
Watercolour
Background

Shows interior view of Government House, Sydney.
<b>Reference</b>
To follow

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## 1800 – View near Woolwich in Kent shewing [sic] the employment of the convicts from the hulks

### What we see in this image

This print shows two prison hulks moored on the River Thames at Woolwich, near Kent, to the south east London. The hulks were usually anchored near dockyards, or garrisons, in order to utilise the prisoners as a ready-made work force. Prisoners were routinely put to work for up to 10 to 12 hours per day. This scene shows a series of small boats at work on the river and, in the foreground, more convicts are engaged in hard labour on shore – shifting coal in wheelbarrows and pile driving (far right) – under the direction of overseers.

Despite being fitted with leg irons, the prisoners seem to wear ordinary clothing items (short jackets, waistcoats,

breeches, shoes, stockings and tricorne hats) rather than standard issues of 'convict apparel' (grey jacket, waistcoat, knee-breeches, long stockings, striped shirt, checked handkerchief, thick shoes, and sheep-skin cap), though any actual uniformity in dress could be masked by the hand-colouring of this print.

There are also several better-dressed figures in this scene including several men who wear long-tailed coats, and it is interesting to note the presence of two women on the far left. Both females wear a fashionable style of garment known as a 'polonaise' which was popular from the third quarter of the 18th century (ca.1770). It was a type of over gown with tapes sewn inside to enable the skirt to be drawn up at the back, over an underskirt, creating an attractive, bunched-up effect. This picturesque style was often worn, as shown in this print, with a forward-tilted, shallow-crowned, flat straw 'bergère'-style (French for shepherdess) hat.

## **What we know about this image**

Between 1776 and 1802 decommissioned ships, or hulks, were fitted out as temporary floating prisons to house male prisoners awaiting transportation to overseas penal settlements following cessation of British convict transportation to the American Colonies. All English prison hulks were operated by private ship owners under contract to the British government. After sentencing, prisoners were dispatched to a 'receiving' hulk, where they were inspected and cleansed before going on to a convict hulks. There they were assigned to a mess (food ration) group and allocated to a work gang while they waited transportation. Some convicts could pass their entire sentence (up to seven years) in the hulks waiting for a ship to transport them overseas.

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Hover on image to zoom in



1800 – View near Woolwich in Kent shewing [sic] the employment of the convicts from the hulks

[Open in State Library of NSW catalogue](#)

Download Image



Creator
Bowles & Carver
Inscription
LRHS: 'London: Printed for Bowles & Carver' LLHS: 'No. 69 St Paul's Church Yard'

Medium
Hand-coloured Engraving
Background
View of ship yard
Reference
To follow

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# 1799 – Philip Gidley and Anna Josepha King, and their children Elizabeth, Anna Maria and Phillip Parker

## What we see in this image

This group portrait shows members of the King family in a relaxed domestic setting, seated companionably around a table and posed to reinforce traditional gender roles- the elder daughter assists her mother with the care of a younger child while the father imparts knowledge to his son.

Captain King (far right) wears a British Royal Naval uniform

(pattern 1795-1812) comprised of a blue wool double-breasted, brass buttoned dress frock coat for a captain (under three years seniority) edged in gold lace with a stand collar, button-back lapels and epaulettes at the shoulder, the sleeves with 'mariners' cuffs trimmed with a single row of gold lace to denote rank, worn with a single-breasted waistcoat, over a linen shirt with a high collar, frilled cuffs and a white cravat, and knee breeches in white wool with ribbed stockings. His white hair is possibly powdered and tied-back.

Mrs King (far left) wears a full-skirted, long-sleeved white muslin morning dress with a wrap over front, edged with a narrow flounce, forming a V-shaped neckline and tied at the waist over a high-necked white muslin 'chemisette', or undershirt. Her bandeau headdress is tied around her natural curls and she wears fingerless mittens.

Anna (aged 6) and Elizabeth (aged 2) wear day dresses of white muslin with low necklines, high waists and short, puffed sleeves; the younger daughter also wears a [straw] cap trimmed with a red sash. Phillip Parker King (aged 8) wears a brass-buttoned, blue wool jacket over a white double-breasted vest and a linen shirt with a wide flat collar trimmed with a narrow flounce.

## **What we know about this image**

Philip Gidley King (1758-1808), his wife Anna Josepha (1765-1844) and daughter Elizabeth (1797-1856), then their youngest child, left England for NSW in 1799. Captain P.G. King had received his post-captain's commission on 5/12/1798, and was appointed third Governor of NSW (1800-1806). The King family were not reunited with their two elder children, Anna Maria (1793-1852) and Phillip Parker (1791-1856), until 1807. It seems to have been common practice for officers departing for overseas service to have a portrait made, though family portraits like this one are less common. Robert Dighton (c.1752-1814) was an English portrait painter, printmaker and



caricaturist who was regularly commissioned to paint portraits for military families.

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**1799 – Philip Gidley and Anna Josepha King, and  
their children Elizabeth, Anna Maria and Phillip  
Parker**

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**Download Image**



<b>Creator</b>
To follow
<b>Inscription</b>
To follow
<b>Medium</b>
To follow
<b>Background</b>
To follow
<b>Reference</b>
To follow

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# 1799 – Colonel William Paterson

## What we see in this image

This left facing,  $\frac{3}{4}$  profile portrait shows William Paterson in the uniform of a Lieutenant Colonel in the New South Wales Corps. At this time all British infantry wore red woollen jackets, and the practice of distinguishing regiments by different coloured facings had been in general use since the early 18th century.



Officers' jackets, as shown in this  $\frac{1}{2}$  length portrait, were made of a bright scarlet cloth, well-tailored and close fitting, often padded to exaggerate the outline. The jacket of the New South Wales Corps uniform was brass-buttoned and double-breasted, with button-back lapels, dark mustard yellow facings and stand collar, the tasselled silver epaulettes at the shoulder denoting rank, worn with a white cross belt with the regimental insignia on the cross-plate, over a white linen shirt and black neckcloth.

## **What we know about this image**

Captain William Paterson (1755-1810) arrived in Sydney with his wife Elizabeth (1770-1839) in October 1791. From 1793, the couple lived in England for three years, where Paterson was promoted to Lieutenant Colonel in 1789. Just prior to their return to New South Wales in 1799, the Patersons sat of their portraits by William Owen (1769-1825), one of Britain's most eminent painters and known for his portraits of society figures.

On 1 January 1809, after the deposition of Governor William Bligh in the 'Rum Rebellion' (26 January 1809), the New South Wales Corps selected Paterson to act as interim Governor of New South until the arrival of Governor Lachlan Macquarie in late 1809. Paterson left Sydney for England on 12 May 1810, but died at sea a few weeks later on board HMS Dromedary off Cape Horn.

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**1799 – Colonel William Paterson**

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## Download Image



Creator
Owen, William (1769-1825)
Inscription
No signature visible
Medium
Oil Painting
Background
Subject is posed in military uniform with curtain drapery on RHS
Reference
To follow

# 1793 – Convicts in New Holland

## What we see in this image

The female convict in this double portrait wears a light-coloured, loose-fitting, informal garment known as a 'Bed gown', or wrapping jacket, with elbow-length sleeves paired with a dark skirt, or petticoat. The Bed gown typically reached mid-thigh with pleated or shaped fullness at the hip and a

short skirt cut in one with the bodice as shown in this image. It was usually only held in place at the neck, its V-neckline filled-in with a neckerchief or 'fichu' draped, pinned or tied over the breasts. The convict woman's short petticoat reveals her ankles above buckled and heeled leather shoes and she wears a tall, high-crowned hat with a wide contrasting band of ribbon around its base, trimmed with a ribbon rosette, placed at a jaunty angle over her muslin cap and natural curly hair. Fancier versions of the bed gown could be worn in very informal circumstances by the higher classes (e.g., in one's boudoir), but it was primarily a garment of working women and the lower classes throughout Europe at this time, who wore it as ordinary daily clothing. Toward the end of the 18th century, the bed gown and petticoat was gradually superseded by the one-piece, 'round' gown.

The male convict in this double portrait wears a practical type of short jacket, with a stand collar, cuffed sleeves and slit pockets, made with a minimum of cloth in a dark, serviceable colour (perhaps brown or blue). He wears a short, light-coloured straight cut waistcoat, half-fastened (14 buttons) over a light-coloured shirt with a neckcloth wrapped around the neck. His loose fitting, light-coloured trousers end above the ankle, revealing buckled leather shoes. His tall crowned hat sits at a rakish angle above his tousled hair which may also be tied back.

## **What we know about this image**

In the first years of settlement, both convicts and free working-class people wore very similar kinds of clothing consisting largely of basic, ready-made 'slops' – the commonly used term for any type of coarse loose-fitting readymade clothing. Uniformly similar in appearance, 'slop' garments probably resembled the drab clothes worn in English prisons but were also standard dress for much of the urban working classes at the time. Convict men were issued with short jackets, check frocks, trousers, check shirts and tall crowned

hats; women were issued with jackets, petticoats (skirts), kerchiefs, caps and hats. Clear categories of distinctive convict dress or uniform were never satisfactorily enforced in the colony, due to irregularities of supply and further exacerbated by non-standard types clothing issued to convicts on assignment, making discipline difficult to maintain.

This image is believed to originate from an album of drawings belonging to Felipe Bauza (1764-1834) who sailed to New South Wales in 1793, as part of the Spanish Scientific Expedition (1789-94) to Australia and the Pacific, under the command of Alessandro Malaspina. The Spanish navy arrived in Sydney on 12 March 1793, to observe the British settlement, and departed a month later on 13 April. Bauza made several sketches during the expedition but these images could also be the work of José Cardero, a young, self-taught artist, who joined the expedition in 1791. In 1962 Bauza personal collection (gathered unofficially and perhaps secretly during the voyage) was offered for sale, and a few of the drawings relating to Australia were purchased by the SLNSW for the Dixson Galleries (Sydney Morning Herald, 7 April 1962, p.14). Among the works acquired were these two drawings, described at the time of their purchase as 'Australia's first fashion pictures'.

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no 84

84



convictos en la Nueva Olanda

## 1793 – Convicts in New Holland

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Creator
To follow
Inscription
To follow
Medium
To follow
Background
To follow
Reference
To follow

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# 1793 – English in New Holland

## What we see in this image

The woman in this double portrait wears a tall-crowned, narrow-brimmed, ribbed straw hat with a dark-coloured ribbon, wrapped diagonally around its high sides and forming a band at its base, a towering ostrich plume fixed to the left hand side, and additional small feather or floral trimmings. Her fair hair is left naturally curly and unpowdered. She wears a 'round' gown or one-piece 'chemise' dress made of plain coloured cloth with a wide neckline' trimmed with a flat ruffled or flounced collar, and filled-in with a starched 'buffon' neckerchief, or 'fichu' which has been bunched up, over the bust, and swathed high around the neck, covering the shoulders to create an elegant 'pigeon-breasted' silhouette, with both ends tucked into the gathered bodice. The gown has elbow-length, cuffed sleeves and a wide sash defining the waistline, and falls in soft folds to the ground just revealing the tips of a pair of pointed shoes. The woman also carries a large shawl, wrapped closely around her torso below the waist, perhaps to conceal pregnancy. Gathered gowns were easily adapted to changes in body shape resulting from pregnancy and nursing. Originally popularised in white muslin, coloured 'chemise' gowns like this also appear in European fashion plates between the years 1784-86.

The man in this double portrait wears the military uniform of a Lieutenant in the New South Wales Corps, denoted by the single epaulette on his right shoulder, and comprising a long-tailed [red] coat with light-coloured [yellow] button-back facings and sleeve cuffs (this style was replaced by a short jacket after 1796) worn over a matching waistcoat and white, frilled-front shirt with a black neckcloth, and long white/grey pantaloons which may be a type of undress uniform.



His black top hat, with a white-tipped [red] feather plume fixed to the left hand side, was the forerunner of the 'shako' (introduced in about 1800). He wears low cut flat shoes, or pumps, rather than boots and carries a sword on his left hip – the hilt and curved blade are just visible – suspended from a single white shoulder belt worn across the body.

## **What we know about this image**

This image is believed to originate from an album of drawings belonging to Felipe Bauza (1764-1834) who sailed to New South Wales in 1793, as part of the Spanish Scientific Expedition (1789-94) to Australia and the Pacific, under the command of Alessandro Malaspina. The Spanish navy arrived in Sydney on 12 March 1793, to observe the British settlement, and departed a month later on 13 April. Bauza made several sketches during the expedition but these images could also be the work of José Cardero, a young, self-taught artist, who joined the expedition in 1791. In 1962 Bauza personal collection (gathered unofficially and perhaps secretly during the voyage) was offered for sale, and a few of the drawings relating to Australia were purchased by the SLNSW for the Dixson Galleries (Sydney Morning Herald, 7 April 1962, p.14). Among the works acquired were these two drawings, described at the time of their purchase as 'Australia's first fashion pictures'.

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*no 82*

82



*Ingleses en la Nueva Olanda*

## 1793 – English in New Holland

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Download Image



Creator
To follow
Inscription
To follow
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## 1788 – A Fleet of Transports Under Convoy

## **What we see in this image**

This caricature print shows a male guard (far left) leading a group of prisoners past the façade of London's Newgate prison.

The guard carries a 'cudgel' (ie. a short stick used as a weapon) in his right hand. He wears a round hat, or cap, with a very narrow, upturned brim which sits above his natural hair, cut with a short fringe and contrasting side curls which suggest he is wearing a cheap, and ill-fitting wig. He also wears a long-skirted, single-breasted jacket (or frock coat) fitted with a wide, turn back collar, and cuffs above a long-skirted, cut-away, single-breasted, flap-pocketed waistcoat, with a spotted neckerchief tied over his white shirt, hiding any sign of a collar, knee breeches buttoned over striped stockings and leather shoes with large, square metal buckles at the instep.

The motley crew of 10 felons has been tied together with a rope. At the forefront of the group are two bearded men of generalised (ie. caricatured) Jewish appearance, followed by a knock-kneed, debauched youth taking a pinch of snuff, and a man gnawing on a large bone. The prisoners wear an array of well-worn, rumpled (and some ragged) garments; several seem also to have sold or pawned their shoe buckles.

## **What we know about this image**

By the time this image was printed (c.1788) transportation of British convicts to the American Colonies had ceased, owing to the War of Independence (1775-83), which necessitated the use of decommissioned ships, or hulks, as temporary floating prisons anchored in the Thames River and at other locations around the British coastline. Apart from any private possessions convicts may have had, once imprisoned or transported they were forced to rely on government provisioning, which operated outside traditional patterns of

clothes marketing that provided access to a complex network of shops selling new, made-to-measure and ready-made 'slop' clothing, and pawnbrokers and market stalls selling second-hand, stolen and cast-off garments.

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A FLEET of TRANSPORTS under CONVOY.

# 1788 – A Fleet of Transports Under Convoy

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**Download Image**



Creator
Bowles, Carrington
Inscription
Below image: 'Printed for and sold by Carrington Bowles at his Map & Print warehouse, N.69 in St. Pauls Church Yard London. Published as the Act directs.'
Medium
mezzotint
Background
To follow
Reference
To follow