

BDA Source Description Pages

<http://www.bda-online.org.au>**Convicts & Employers NSW 1828-1844**

Pastkeys (www.pastkeys.com.au) has kindly given us permission to put their index into the BDA Database.

Their original introduction follows at the end of which is an explanation of our editing.

Convicts & Employers - 1828, 1832-1833, Jan 1838-Jan 1844

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This index of 22,574 records has been compiled primarily from lists published in the NSW Government Gazette in 1832 and 1833 of assignments (male and female), absconders, (runaways) apprehended and a small list of those with their Ticket of Leave cancelled. However, also included are records of assignments of convicts to assist with harvesting and surveying (*State Records NSW: Surveyor of Roads and Bridges; CGS 13960, Warrants to discharge prisoners to assist in harvesting, 1828 [2/1727/5; COD 227 pp.1-18]* and *SRNSW: Surveyor General; CGS 13949, List of prisoners assigned to Surveyors and the Surveyor General's Department 1838-44; [2/1626.4; Reel 592, COD227]*) from these State Records NSW sources.

By including numerous fields of information, good identifying detail such as location is provided in the index enabling researchers to more easily eliminate non-relevant entries and pin-point those which warrant pursuing.

When an entry of interest is found in the index relating to the gazette, the page reference provides easy access, where in most cases a full description of the convict's distinguishing marks such as tattoos or scars, with ship and arrival year enables a cross-check against the convict's records if necessary. We have carried out several random checks and find that the descriptions appear to be identical to those on the convict ship muster and, in the absence of most Colonial Office records of assignments, valuable additional information as to location and employer can add much-needed biographical detail for those researching convict ancestors. The various Road Parties, Bridge Parties etc have not been cross-indexed.

Researchers should note that, although a relatively limited period of the gazette has been included in the index, the ship of arrival year is in many cases long before 1832.

As in other BDA indexes, the Remarks column often includes quite comprehensive detail and personal comments on the convict from the original record.

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The cross-indexing by employers for those researching from the employer's viewpoint has not been done before and this index now gives valuable leads for insights into the lives of the immigrant or other non-convict ancestors who employed convicts.

We have attempted to maintain the spelling in the original record. This has resulted in the names of the same person, ship etc being spelt in various ways and it is sometimes quite evident in the index when the names appear near each other. However, the misspelling has sometimes resulted in these names being quite far apart. We do urge everyone to think of spelling variations when searching any index.

BDA Editing

In order to comply with BDA editing criteria a number of changes have been made including changing ship and place names to their correct spelling to allow for advanced searching. Other details such as a military regiment have been placed in their respective field also allowing for searching.

Because the database is structured differently to that of Pastkeys, we had to manipulate a lot of data.

Some entries have been deleted as they were duplicates with different source references which have been combined. This has resulted in a final tally of 21,005 entries.

Information Pages written by Malcom Sainty

Historical resources available from the BDA Shop

<http://www.bda-online.org.au/shop>

For other Convict records included in the BDA see

<http://www.bda-online.org.au/sources/convict-records/>

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