

FAMILY AND LOCAL HISTORY NEWSLETTER

Joondalup Library, Local History
102 Boas Avenue, Joondalup, 6027

Monday – Friday 9.00am – 5.00pm
Saturday 9.30am – 12.30pm

New resource added to the Local History Collection

Do you have any ancestors who might have arrived in Australia via the Northern Territory?

Local History has recently purchased 'Northern Territory's Birth, Death and Marriage Records 1870 – 1918' on microfiche. Please ask a staff member for assistance to use the microfiche reader.



How to Photograph Family Heirlooms

1. Wash your hands thoroughly

Wash your hands thoroughly or wear white cotton gloves before touching your valuable heirloom. Support heavy items with both hands when carrying them and repositioning them.

2. Prepare your backdrop

Place heirlooms to be photographed on a white sheet or white paper backdrop to draw attention to their details and colour. If you are photographing a light-coloured item, a black backdrop will display it to maximum effect.

3. Stage your heirlooms

Photograph family heirlooms as a single object or in groups. For the best effect, group an odd number of items together.

4. Lighting

Choose an area that has good overall lighting. Additional lighting such as an overhead reading lamp can help illuminate your item. Cover any harsh or direct light sources with a cover or shade.

5. Document the object

Ensure you identify the item being photographed and include details

of who they belonged to and the era or year when they were worn or purchased.

Place the description with the staged heirloom so that it can be easily read in the photograph.

For example:

This sapphire and diamond engagement ring was given to Mary Mulvane by her fiancé Jonathan Garrett on 15 April 1811.

Mary and Jonathon were married on 23 September 1812 at All Saints Church in Upper West Swan, Swan River Colony.



Welcome to the Family and Local History Newsletter Autumn 2022

Convict Workers in Western Australia

The Swan River Colony was intended as an independent settlement free of convict labour. However, in 1850 (21 years after the colony was founded), it became apparent that more workers were needed to boost the flagging economy. Convicts were considered as a cheap and sustainable source of labour to assist in the development of the region.



A set of leg irons – Courtesy Fremantle Prison

On 1 June 1850, the convict transport ship Scindian arrived at the Swan River Colony with 75 convicts onboard. Approximately 9,720 British convicts were sent to the colony between 1850 and 1868.

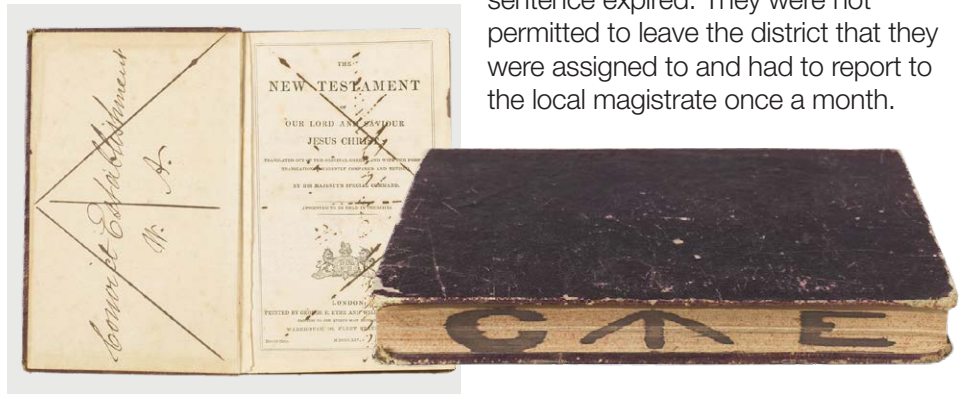
Convicts transported to the colony were better educated than those to other Australian ports and were sentenced to terms between six and 15 years according to the severity of their crimes.

'Convicts made a huge difference to the Swan River Colony. Their buildings, roads and bridges were vital to the continuing development of the state and many fine examples still survive to this day. One way to spot a building constructed by convicts is to look for a date. Most are displayed prominently and those built by convicts have a dash at each side of the date: – 1855 –.'

Those with skills benefiting the development of the colony did well. Some of the former professions of the convicts included: shoemaker, coachmaker, saddler, boilermaker, woodturner, glassmaker, chain maker, engineer, bricklayer, cabinet maker, blacksmith, collier and stone cutter.

good behaviour. This could be converted into money when their ticket of leave was granted and enabled some to purchase land and property on their release.

Convicts were employed under a ticket of leave system, gaining skills and earning income before their sentence expired. They were not permitted to leave the district that they were assigned to and had to report to the local magistrate once a month.



A small bible used by the convicts that was published in in 1854 – Courtesy Fremantle Prison

The penal system in the colony was based on rehabilitating offenders rather than punishing them.

Convicts worked in labour groups where they could gain merit for

'Registers of men with tickets of leave were maintained by local police and courthouses, which kept track of convicts employed within a given district.'



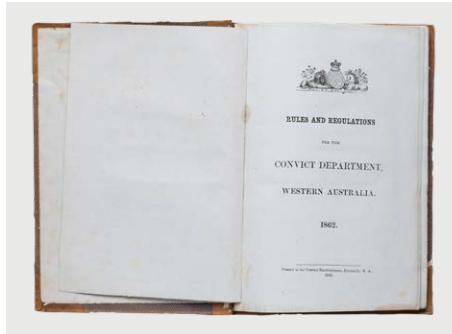
These four pieces of convict clothing belong to the Fremantle Prison Collection. These are a parti-coloured waistcoat, a parti-coloured jacket, a linen undershirt and an unbleached canvas jacket. – Images and text Courtesy of Fremantle Prison



Chubb padlock – Courtesy Fremantle Prison

Tickets of leave and related records can be used to track the work history and travels of individual convicts.

The British authorities were aware of the situation and the transportation of a convict to Western Australia was considered to be doing the convict a favour. This favour came at a price. Until 1856 no convict could gain a pardon until they had repaid the cost of their passage to Western Australia. The cost was based on the length of their sentence and varied from seven to 15 pounds.



Rules and Regulations for the Convict Department, Western Australia – Courtesy Fremantle Prison

The Local History Library holds microfiche and books related to convict ships and convicts sent to Western Australia.

References

Ancestry.com.au
ancestry.com.au/search/collections/60668

Western Australia Now and Then
wanowandthen.com/convicts.html

State Records Office
wa.gov.au/organisation/state-records-office-of-western-australia/convicts

Family History W.A.
membership.wags.org.au/convict-mainmenu-49

Fremantle Prison
fremantleprison.com.au/history-heritage/history/the-convict-era/

Dead Persons' Society
perthdps.com/convicts/index.html

1921 UK Census release

Family historians and genealogists find census records a vital resource in the search for information about their ancestors. Just over a century ago on 19 June 1921 the population of England and Wales took part in a census. The privacy of almost 38 million people who participated in the 1921 census was protected by the Census Act of 1920 for a period of 100 years.

On 6 January 2022, the 1921 UK Census was released to the public who have been waiting impatiently to access it. The records are now available online through Findmypast on a pay per view basis. The collection of more than 30,000 volumes took three years to conserve, repair, transcribe and digitise.

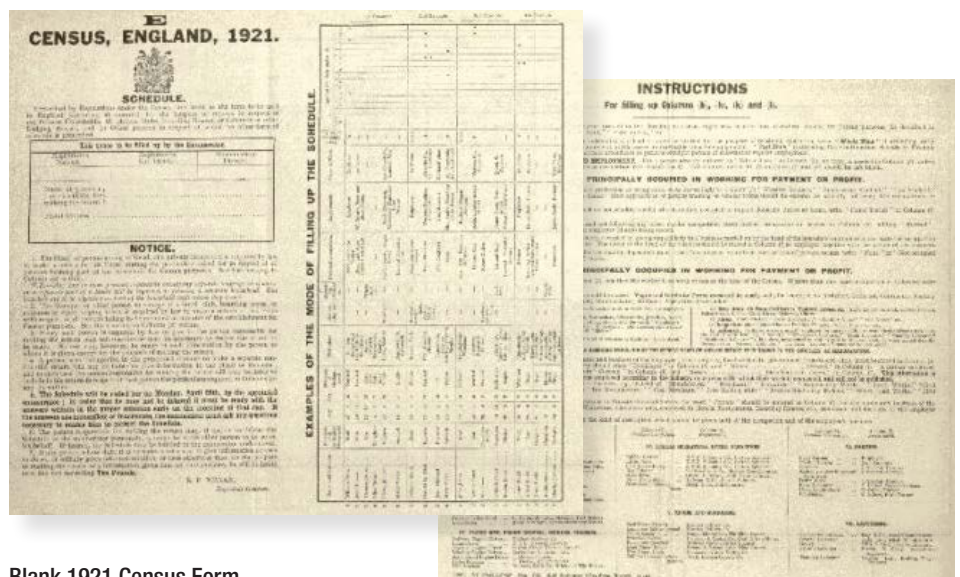
The 1921 census contains more personal information than previous censuses including: an individual's place of work, their employer and industry, and whether they were in full-time or part-time education. A marital status of 'divorced' was added for the first time. It indicates how the population lived between

the First and Second World War and how they dealt with the impact of the Spanish Flu pandemic of 1918/1919.

The UK has retained original census records since 1841 and made the images available to the public through local history societies, repositories and online genealogical companies. There is no other UK census available now until after 2051

when the 1951 census is due to be released. The 1931 census for England and Wales was destroyed in a fire in 1942 and a register of the population was taken in 1939 which replaced the 1941 census.

Census records are invaluable to people researching their family history and can help solve research brick walls by providing information not found in other records.



Blank 1921 Census Form

Wanneroo in the 1921 census

On 4 April 1921, Australia held its second national census. The First World War was still fresh in everyone's mind and the country was in the process of rebuilding the economy. Information collected in that census paints a picture of the living conditions, education, and occupations of the population in each city and town across the nation on that day.



P03111 Wanneroo Road Board Office ca. 1922

In 1921 the region now shared by Wanneroo and Joondalup had been colonised for less than 90 years. Prior to this the region had been occupied by Noongar people for at least 40,000 years. European development of the region was gradual and the townsite of Wanneroo [sic] was only gazetted in 1907.

Statistics from the 1921 census reveal that Wanneroo covered an area of 195 square miles and had a population of 312 people: 194 males and 118 females. Half the population were under 70 years and the rest were under 21 years.

Most of the population of Wanneroo were born in Australasia and the British Isles. The remainder were born in Italy and other European countries. Of the local men born overseas, only one had lived in Australia for more than 55 years and most had arrived in the past decade. Only one woman had lived in Australia for over 60 years, and most had been here for less than fourteen years.

Wanneroo was a long trip from Perth in 1921 but the population was skilled and resourceful and led a simple but productive lifestyle. At the time of the 1921 census there were 71 dwellings in the area. Twenty-six of them had walls constructed from wood and 17 were made of stone. Others were made of brick, iron, sun dried bricks and calico, canvas, or hessian.

More than 60 dwellings had iron roofs with the remaining made from thatch, bark and brush, or calico, canvas and hessian. Statistics show that 16 dwellings had only one occupant but 11 had over seven occupants. The average weekly rent was 12s 10d and most houses were occupied by their owners.

Market gardening, viticulture and dairying have been the primary use of land in Wanneroo from the time of colonisation. In 1921 over 60 percent of the male population of Wanneroo worked in agriculture or pastoral occupations. Others worked in the manufacturing industry or the construction of homes, buildings and roads.



P00663 Spiers family Brockway trucks 1920

Pioneers living in the area during this census include the Gibbs, Perry, Hocking, Duffy, Ashby, Crisafulli, Hastings, Chitty, Connolly, Spiers, Cockman, Luisini and Parin families.

In 1921, the population of Wanneroo, was still recovering from the loss of nine local men who served Australia in the First World War. Most women were occupied raising children, doing domestic duties and working on the land with their husbands and children. The 1921 statistics show that five females were referred to as 'total breadwinners' which may be a sign of tough times or the emergence of the independent woman of the roaring 20s.

The Australian census does not provide personal information about individuals who contributed to it but it is a valuable resource for studying the social history of our ancestors.



P00758.02 Parin family 1927



P00604 Antonio and Santo Crisafulli picking and packing lemons ca. 1920s



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