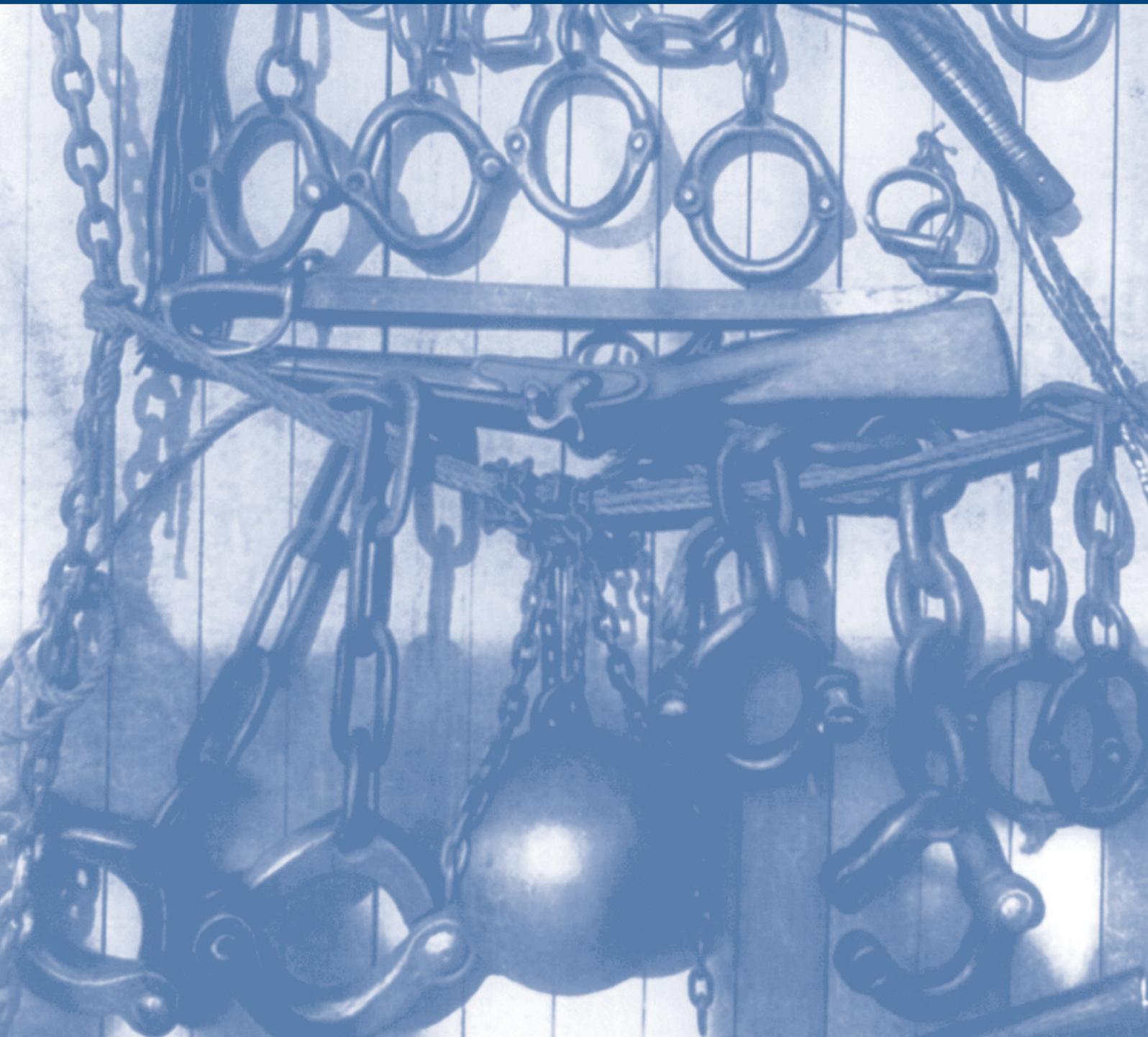


# CONVICT TRANSPORTATION AND THE METROPOLIS

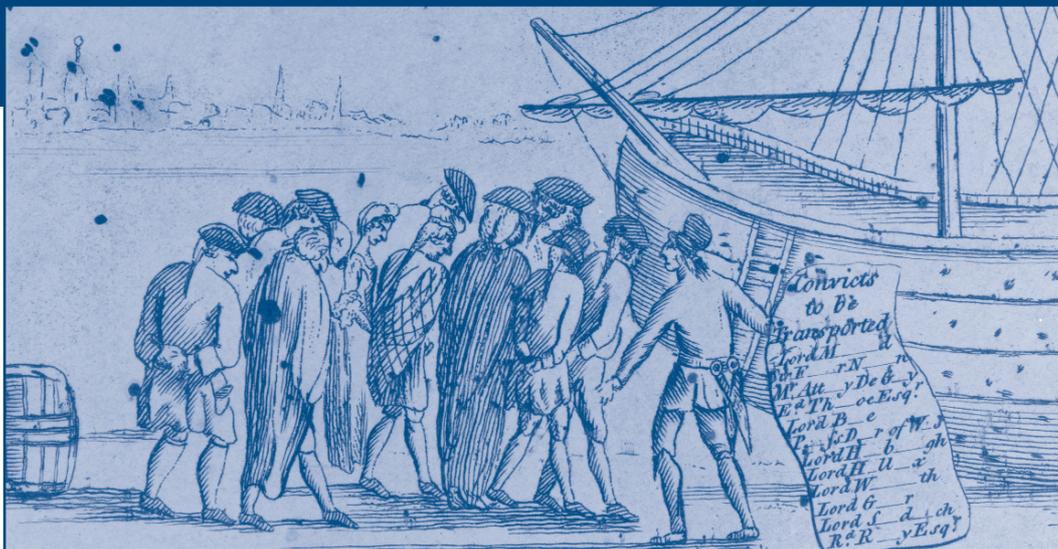
The Letterbooks and Papers of Duncan Campbell (1726-1803)  
from the State Library of New South Wales



*Adam Matthew Publications*

**“a magnificent set of six and more large volumes, in various original handwritings, well-preserved from the late eighteenth century... they are a goldmine for anyone interested in the history of convict transportation, ... also a goldmine for anyone interested in London, as a city, between 1775-1800!”**

Dan Byrnes writing in his article on 'The Duncan Campbell Letterbooks - The Blackheath Connection'.



▶ These materials cover Duncan Campbell's involvement in convict transportation to Jamaica, Virginia and Australia.

▶ There is also a strong emphasis on his web of business contacts in London (the Metropolis), social life, social conditions and trade.

▶ The documents allow scholars to understand the links between Campbell and William Bligh as well as revealing more about the slave trade and the movement for abolition.

▶ The papers include material on Jeremy Bentham's opposition to the transportation of convicts, Campbell's meeting with Thomas Jefferson, John Dixon and the embarkation of the Second Fleet to Botany Bay, and Campbell's meeting with Arthur Phillip, founder and first governor of New South Wales.

▶ This is an excellent resource for those studying maritime history, trade, the profits of London merchants, arguments about penal reform, prison hulks, the treatment of convicts and the political debate in Britain, America and Australia.

Duncan Campbell (1726-1803), the successful and influential eighteenth century West Indies merchant, is better known today for his role as the administrative lynchpin of convict transportation to Australia. As overseer of the Thames prison hulks between 1776 and 1801 he was a key figure in the founding of the British penal colony at Sydney in New South Wales. Convict Transportation and the Metropolis covers the complete set of letterbooks and papers

of Duncan Campbell held at the Mitchell Library at the State Library of New South Wales.

The collection contains information concerning the lives of politicians and merchants, the movement of ships, and the profits taken by Londoners. Key figures and events include:

- ▶ Jeremy Bentham, legal theorist and penal reformer, who opposed the transportation of convicts.
- ▶ Campbell's meeting with Thomas Jefferson in April 1787 in order to lobby for repayment of debts owed by Americans to English and Scottish merchants post- American Revolution, and amounting to £2.5 million - Campbell was the chairman on this body.
- ▶ Campbell's meeting with Arthur Phillip, founder and first governor of New South Wales in January 1787. Phillip was later to use Campbell's methods of working convicts on the Thames as a model for convict employment in the penal colony at Sydney.
- ▶ Stewart Erskine, Campbell's deputy on the Thames, wrote about the

treatment and work conditions of convicts held on the hulks.

- ▶ William Eden (under secretary to Lord North, Prime Minister) was assisted by Campbell in shaping the details and application of the 1776 Act. The Act outlined the potential usefulness of convict labour, and created the post of overseer of the hulks.
- ▶ John Dixon concerning the embarkation of the Second Fleet to Botany Bay.
- ▶ Stephenson, Randolph and Cheston - Bristol convict contractors
- ▶ Camden, Calvert and King - shipping contractors
- ▶ James Boyick, Chief Clerk to Stewart Erskine
- ▶ Shelton, Clerk of Arraign at the Old Bailey.
- ▶ Campbell's personal life is also recorded. Entries include the traumatic disarray of his personal life following the death of his first wife, Rebecca, leaving him with the care of his young children.

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