

Kennedy on Norfolk

*John Howard 1788 "a very false notion, that a man who lives upon
Bread and water, can work hard and be kept in health"*

By the time Kennedy arrived on Norfolk Island on 1st of October 1796 the population was 882. Norfolk was increasingly used as a place of punishment for offenders at Port Jackson. In May 1796 Four prisoners were tried for forging, and uttering with a forged endorsement, the note which had been passed at Mr. Hogan's Store in February, the trial had been delayed for some time as McCarthy having found means to break out of the cells and hid out remained on the run for several week[s] at the Hawkesbury, the refuge of all Sydney's rogues when in danger of being apprehended he was pardoned from the death penalty in lieu of serving seven years at Norfolk Island. Another convict was sentenced to 7 years hard labour on Norfolk Island for stealing out of the government store. James Ashford, a young lad who had been formerly drummed out of the Corps had stolen out of the store at the river and was sentenced to seven years labour at Norfolk.

Four vagabonds who had repeatedly broken out of prison, and run away from the jail-gang, were tried as incorrigible rogues, and being found guilty were sentenced in August 1796 to three years hard labour at Norfolk, these men were Joseph Dyer, Andrew McManus, George Collins and James Brown.

Two other people off store were found guilty of stealing grease from the Deputy-Surveyor and sentenced to be flogged. Another convict was found guilty of cutting and wounding a servant of the commissary received 800 hundred lashes.

In July 1796 Governor Phillip made the following orders.

[That] all person off stores, who of course did not labour for the government, were ordered forthwith to appear at Sydney, in order to their being Mustered and examined relative to their respective terms of transport; when certificates were to be given to such as were regularly discharged from the commissary's books, and the settlers were directed not to employ any but such as could produce this certificate.

These regulation being made know as publicly and generally as was possible, in order that none might plead ignorance, the Town of Sydney shortly filled with people from different settlements, who came to the judge-advocate for certificates of their having served their respective sentences. Among these were many who had run away from public labour before their time expired; some who escaped from confinement with crimes yet unpunished hanging over their heads; and some who, being for life, appeared by names different for those by which they were commonly known in the settlement. By the activity of the watchmen and a minute investigation of the necessary books and papers they were in general detected in the imposition, and were immediately sent to hard labour in the town and jail gangs.

On 20th of September 1796 Supply sailed for Norfolk Island and then the Cape of Good Hope. Then on 29th of September His Majesty's ship Reliance, Britannia and the Francis a Schooner sailed from Port Jackson. They were all to touch at Norfolk Island, before sailing on to the Cape of Good Hope. The Britannia was to call at Norfolk Island was for the purpose of taking on board Lieutenant Governor King, who from a long state of ill health and was returning to England.

October 1797 David Collins states a convict was found guilty of uttering a bill knowing it to be forged, and adjudged to suffer death; and two others, for theft, were ordered to be transported to Norfolk Island, one for the term of his life, and the other for seven years.

The continuing influx of convicts from Sydney during the following few years saw Norfolk Island become nothing more than a labour camp for Sydney's most difficult officers and least-wanted felons. The island's main purpose was to provide food for Sydney. Maize, wheat, potatoes, cabbage, timber, flax and fruit of all kinds grew well on Norfolk Island. The population peaked at more than 1,100, and about a quarter of the island was cleared.

At the main town called Sydney, later known as Kingston there were a number of significant buildings including government house, soldier's barracks, storehouse, surgeons, house, magazine, school house, jail, bake house, officer quarters and homes for officials. Other buildings made of timber included a barn, officer's quarters, three granaries, water mill and dam, women's hospital, mill house and a guardhouse.

The smaller towns also Queenborough, Superintendents house, barn, granary, and two houses for convicts. Phillipsburg had a storekeeper, assistant surgeon, flax house, store house, barracks, superintendent's house, barn, wharf and crane. Cascade had a wharf 126 feet long and crane, storehouse and barracks. There were two windmills and most settlers had log huts. A few were erecting framed houses.

There were 149 men and sixty three women with expired sentences who 'support themselves by hiring ground from settlers, working for individuals, or at their different callings'. The number of this class with their children is about 230. A 'few are employed as overseers, and working for the public, for which they are clothed and fed from the stores and further recompensed according to their merit'.

There were one hundred and thirty male convicts of which five are assigned to settlers on the condition they maintain them

Island industry included farming both public and private, domestic servants and farm laborers, boat's crew, watchmen, constable, carpenters, sawyers, boat builders, stonemasons, quarrymen, laborers blacksmiths, tool helper, charcoal burners, shingle makers, glazier, painter, grooms, salt makers, barbers, bakers, shoemakers, tailors, hospital worker, Millar, butcher, jailer, rope maker, school master, clerks, Flax manufactory (9 woman and 13 invalid men) stock care, granary and barn, gardeners, washerwomen, care of young children, making slips and nursing,

Most workers such as carpenters, sawyers and blacksmiths worked from sunrise to sunset with three hrs of breaks in between and worked a five day week Sunday to Thursday. On Friday and Saturday they worked for themselves using government tools and materials.

People involved in cultivation for the public work from sunrise to 1 o'clock. The industrious can use the rest of the day in labouring for others or cultivating their own rented ground. Settlers and part of the women support themselves by their own labour altogether 331 persons.

Pay

A convict taken off stores is paid six to eight pounds per annum

A free man about 10 to 12 pounds per annum victualled and clothed

A days work for a labor is 3 s with food 5s without.

Cutting down and burning an acre of wood 2 pound or weeds 1 pound 10s

In general there are no set standards for pay and depend on agreements and the state of produce at the time. To prevent disputes all agreements are listed in a book.

Total males 533 women and children 354 total in settlement 887.

During 1793 and 1794 3400 bushels of grain had been produced but as sentences expired the inhabitants began to work for themselves thus reducing the amount of crops. Only 1/3 of government ground and 1/5 of private ground was in cultivation. This allowed weeds to grow and numerous rats hid in the weeds causing a problem with rat infestation.

King describes the inhabitants as industrious but unrewarded. They had placed 11,476 bushels of maize in the government store for export in January 1794 but due to a lack of orders and no payment and the fact that plenty of pig meat was still being purchased they shifted their attention to producing swine instead of maize.

Grow maize, wheat, potatoes and all kinds of garden vegetables. King cautions that wheat is not a good crop on the island. Maize crop is much easier to grow and can produce two crops a year.

Maize crops have produced very well from May 1795 - October 1796 individuals have produced 11,500 bushels and government 1,803. Sugar is growing well so are Bananas, lemons and guavas and pig raising is also going well.

King has purchased a large amount (236,292 pounds at 5d and 6p a pound) of the swine meat from settlers for the public store.

King requests more cattle and sheep. Goats are prolific, poultry 900 dozen has been exported. Fowls and turkeys have escaped and run wild in the woods but they are killing the grubs off which is one of the main destroyers of crop.

The islanders are being charged exorbitant prices for articles 200-300% above the price at Port Jackson and 1000% above the price in Europe or India. Amount for articles brought in from Port Jackson. King requests that the government set up licensing to an exclusive merchant or that the government purchases and send articles to be retailed in the island store.

Until this time all people victualled from the store received clothing and provisions for free King had had to take precautions to prevent people exchanging their clothes for spirits. 1 gallon of spirits cost 4 pound until the government purchased spirits at 8s 6d p gallon and supplied it to the settlers at 10s for wine and 12s for spirits.

Kennedy arrived on Norfolk in 1796 the month after Phillip King left Norfolk. The new commandant was Captain John Townson who had been appointed by Grose. Under Townson, drinking and the creation of stills flourished. Townson was granted sick leave and replaced by Captain Thomas Rowley who remained on the island for a short time.

In 1798, Hunter reports that the settlers of the island have developed into an association and called themselves the Fraternal Society of Norfolk Island. The settlers, main concern is that their swine is not being bought by the public stores. Hunter declares that grievances are to be brought to the attention of the administration by one or two settlers and not a body of people.

In 1800 a plan for a convict uprising instigated by the Irish is discovered. Henry Gready informed to Fauveaux. Fauveaux had the ringleaders Peter McClean and John Wolloughhan summarily executed and proceeded to flog others involved. Foveaux was later considered a murderer by the convicts on Norfolk and turned Government House into a fortress.

May 1800 Major Joseph Foveaux was appointed as the new commandant. In December 1800 two informers told Foveaux of a plan for an Irish revolt. There were two incidents that related to plots by Irish convicts to mutiny and take control of the island both late in 1800. Foveaux hung both ringleaders on the beach at Sydney Bay. 9th of September 1804 he returned to England.

Kennedy and Ann must have been in a relationship by at least mid-to late 1798 possibly much sooner, as Ann and Kennedy baptize their children on 18th of April 1802. Kennedy Murray Junior was born on 4th of August 1799 Elizabeth Murray born on 20th of March 1802. They were baptized by the Rev Henry Fulton.

Henry Fulton was a Protestant clergyman sent by Hunter to Norfolk. He had been implicated in the Irish rebellions of 1798 and transported for life. He arrived on the island on 26th of July 1800. When he arrived there was a shortage of all commodities and a major problem with alcohol. Henry Fulton was on Norfolk from 1801 to 1806 he was transported without trial. He had a conditional pardon to

practice his calling. He lived with his wife and a visitor to the island commented "...a settled dejection appears on both their countenances, and his heart is so much affected at times, that I think there is little probability of his continuing long in this world."

In the 1802 Muster CA239 Kennedy is listed as a Freeman sentence expired on 1st of January 1802 and as off stores on 23rd of April 1802 he had be Virtualized one hundred and thirteen days.

Arrived as a convict lived as a married person on the island.

So Ann must have been with Richard from late 1803. In December 1804 Ann White and Richard Sides baptize their daughter Mary born on 30th of October 1804 at Norfolk Island.

Foveaux's successor in 1804 was John Piper he left in 1810. Elizabeth Nichols the child of a convict would bear his child named Piper Norfolk. She would later marry Gibson and found Evandale in Tasmania. Piper also had a child with another convict woman in Port Jackson. Piper started a relationship with fourteen yr old Mar Ann Shears when he arrived at Norfolk they would have at least eleven children. Elizabeth Nichols did not depart Norfolk until 1813. Elizabeth held significant land holdings by the end of the settlement. Piper's last job was to oversee the destruction of the buildings on Norfolk in 1814. Piper left and later settled at Bathurst. Piper's family had migrated to Ayrshire in Scotland from Germany.

In 1805 Kennedy Murray returned to Sydney Cove as a freeman on the ship *Harrington* The *Harrington* had captured a Spanish naval Vessel named *Estremina* and Macquarie detained the Commander of the *Harrington* and some others to answer the event. [\[Find More details\]](#)In the Government Gazette of 15th of April 1805, permission is given to "the Kennedy Murray's" to sail to Van Diemen's Land on the "Governor Hunter". Whether he sailed or not is unknown

Kennedy had been on Norfolk Island for five years and four months as a convict and three years three months as freeman.

On 14th April 1805 Sunday *Sydney Gazette*, an announcement is made that the Schooner Governor Hunter will leave Sydney Cove on the 22nd and lists Kennedy Murray's as one of the persons with his Excellencies permission to proceed to the Southard. This is likely to just be a spelling mistake [Check virtualising records to see if Kennedy Jnr is around on Norfolk.](#)

Murray's is probably a spelling error Kennedy Murray Junior appears in the 1805 muster with his mother and two sisters as off stores.

One can't help noting that on the day Kennedy is noted as leaving, the next column of the newspaper has a notice for a lost silver fruit knife!