

Events

First Fleet

1788

Captain Arthur Phillip establishes a convict settlement at Sydney Cove.

The First Fleet was the 11 ships that departed from Portsmouth, England, on 13 May 1787 to found New South Wales, the penal colony that became the first European settlement in Australia.



Arthur Phillip settles in Sydney

1788

Arthur Phillip was a Royal Navy officer and the first Governor of New South Wales who led the British settlement and colonisation of Australia. He established a British penal colony that later became the city of Sydney, Australia.

After much experience at sea, Phillip led the First Fleet as Governor-designate in the Australian settlement of New South Wales. In January 1788, he selected its location to be Port Jackson (encompassing Sydney Harbour).

Phillip was a far-sighted governor who soon saw that New South Wales would need a civil administration and a system for emancipating the convicts. But his plan to bring skilled tradesmen on the voyage had been rejected, and he faced immense problems of labour, discipline and supply.

The arrival of the Second and Third Fleets placed new pressures on the scarce local resources, but by the time Phillip sailed home in December 1792, the colony was taking shape, with official land-grants and systematic farming and water-supply.

Phillip retired in 1805, but continued to correspond with his friends in New South Wales and to promote the colony's interests.



John Macarthur

1790

John Macarthur was a British army officer, entrepreneur, politician, architect and pioneer of settlement in Australia. Macarthur is recognised as the pioneer of the wool industry that was to boom in Australia in the early 19th century and become a trademark of the nation. He is noted as the architect of Farm House, his own residence in Parramatta, and as the man who commissioned architect John Verge to design Camden Park Estate in Camden, in New South Wales. He was instrumental in agitating for, and organising, a rebellion against the colonial government in what is often described as the Rum Rebellion.



Second Fleet

1790

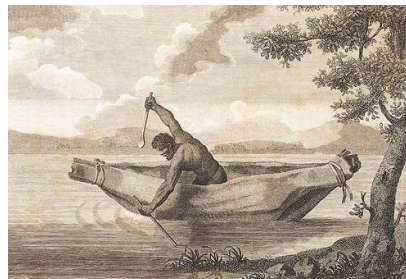
Third Fleet

1791

Pemulwuy

1792

Two years after the arrival of the First Fleet, Aboriginal warrior Pemulwuy began to resist the incursion of white settlers onto his people's traditional lands. He was shot in 1802.



First free settlers arrive

1793

The first free settlers arrived on board the sailing ship *Bellona* on 16 January 1793. They were a farmer named Thomas Rose, his wife and four children and seven others. These first settlers received free passage, agricultural tools, two years provisions, and free grants of land from the government. In addition they were also provided with convict labour free of charge. For each convict labourer provided the government also gave 2 years' worth of rations and one year's supply of free clothing.

Hawkesbury River Massacre

1794

The Hawkesbury and Nepean Wars (1794–1816) were a series of conflicts where British forces, including armed settlers and detachments of the British Army in Australia, fought against Indigenous clans inhabiting the Hawkesbury River region and the surrounding areas to the west of Sydney. The wars began in 1794, when the British started to construct farms along the river, some of which were established by soldiers.



Introduction of Merino Sheep

1797

In 1797 the first merino sheep were landed in Australia. Unlike earlier breeds, this Spanish variety was much better suited to the Australian environment and was a formidable wool producer.

The first Australian-produced fleece was sold in England in 1807 and by the late 19th century, wool had become Australia's major export.

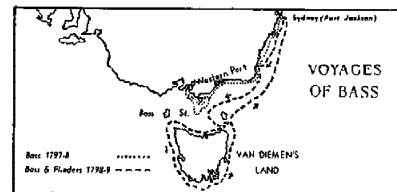
The industry has gone through cycles of extreme growth and contraction, but today Australia still produces more than half of the world's merino wool.



Bass and Flinders Circumnavigate Tasmania

1798

George Bass and Matthew Flinders sailed from Sydney and circumnavigated Tasmania, thus proving it to be an island.



George Bass

1798

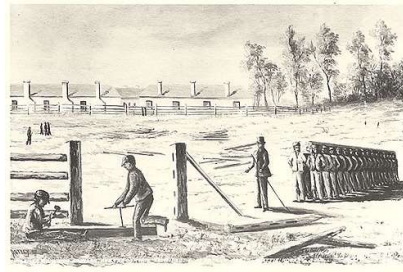
George Bass sails through Bass Strait and sighted the coast around Wilson's Promontory and Western Port Bay.



First Tasmanian penal colony

1803

The first Tasmanian jail was built at Risdon Cove in 1803, but in 1804 the prisoners were moved to Sullivans Cove – soon to be known as Hobart.



Flinders and Bungaree Circumnavigate 'New Holland'

1803

Matthew Flinders maps the continent. Bungaree, a Kuringgai man from what is now the Broken Bay area of New South Wales, was in Flinders's crew all the way, making him the first Australian to sail around his native continent.



Castle Hill convict rebellion

1804

The Castle Hill rebellion of 1804 was a rebellion by convicts against the colonial authority of the British colony of New South Wales in the Castle Hill area, in Sydney. The rebellion culminated in a battle fought between convicts and the colonial forces of Australia on 5 March 1804 at Rouse Hill, dubbed the Second Battle of Vinegar Hill after the first Battle of Vinegar Hill which had taken place in 1798 in Ireland. It was the first and only major convict uprising in Australian history suppressed under martial law.





William Bligh made Governor of NSW Colony

1806

William Bligh was an officer of the Royal Navy and a colonial administrator. The Mutiny on the Bounty occurred during his command of HMS Bounty in 1789; after being set adrift in Bounty's launch by the mutineers, Bligh and his loyal men all reached Timor alive, after a journey of 3,618 nautical miles (6,700 km; 4,160 mi).

Seventeen years after the Bounty mutiny, on 13 August 1806, he was appointed Governor of New South Wales in Australia, with orders to clean up the corrupt rum trade of the New South Wales Corps. His actions directed against the trade resulted in the so-called Rum Rebellion, during which Bligh was placed under arrest on 26 January 1808 by the New South Wales Corps and deposed from his command, an act which the British Foreign Office later declared to be illegal. He died in London's West End, on 7 December 1817.



Rum Rebellion

1808

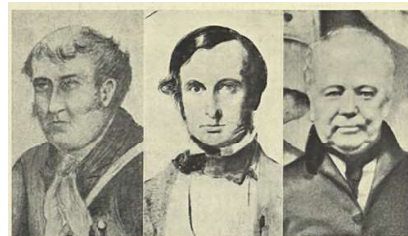
The Rum Rebellion of 1808 was a coup d'état against the lawful government of New South Wales, then a British colony, by its military force, the New South Wales Corps.



Crossing the Blue Mountains

1813

Blaxland, Lawson and Wentworth crossed the Blue Mountains. These men were given permission by Governor Lachlan Macquarie to conduct an expedition to find a way across the mountains to new pastures for sheep grazing. They set off from Blaxland's (the leader of the expedition) farm on May 11, 1813, with four pack horses, five dogs, and four other people, three of them convicts. Their supplies for a six-week journey included salted meat, tents, compasses, cutting tools and guns.



G. Blaxland, W. C. Wentworth and W. Lawson, the first white men to pass the Blue Mountains, were the first also to visit the locality of Glenroy.

Australia named

1824

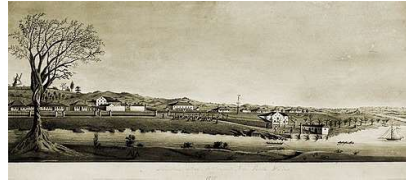
Permission was granted to change the name of the continent from "New Holland" to "Australia"

Moreton Bay and Brisbane settlements established

1825

Moreton Bay Penal Settlement was established as a place of exile and punishment for re-offending convicts.

The first Europeans to discover the Brisbane River and select the site for the town of Brisbane is credited to several people, including three ex-convicts.



Western Australian settlement

1826

New South Wales established first settlement in Western Australia at King George Sound as a convict-supported military garrison, named Frederick Town but renamed Albany in 1832

Black Line

1830

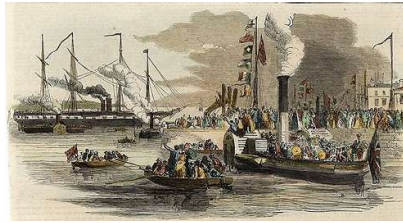
The Black War was the period of violent conflict between British colonists and Aboriginal Australians in Tasmania from the mid-1820s to 1832. The conflict, fought largely as a guerrilla war by both sides, claimed the lives of more than 200 European colonists and between 600 and 900 Aboriginal people, nearly annihilating the island's indigenous population.



Assisted Migration

1832

From 1831 the British and Australian colonial governments subsidised or paid for thousands of migrants to move to Australia.



Convict transportation peaks

1833

Between 1788 and 1868 more than 162,000 convicts were transported to Australia. Of these, about 7000 arrived in 1833 alone.

The convicts were transported as punishment for crimes committed in Britain and Ireland. In Australia their lives were hard as they helped build the young colony. When they had served their sentences, most stayed on and some became successful settlers.



Batman deed

1835

In 1835, John Batman declared that he had negotiated a “treaty” to claim the lands of the people of the Kulin Nation. However, this ‘treaty’ was not valid under European law or Kulin lore and is now recognised by many in the Victorian Aboriginal Community as an attempt to disadvantage the people of the Kulin Nation. While it is recognised as being an invalid treaty, it will be referenced as ‘Batman’s Treaty’ in this article for consistency.

Victorian settlement established

1835

John Batman and John Pascoe Fawkner established a settlement at Port Phillip, now the city of Melbourne.

South Australia established

1836

First colony established with only free settlers.

Myall Creek Massacre

1838

Early in the morning of 18 December 1838, seven men were publicly hanged at the Sydney Gaol. They were the first British subjects to be executed for massacring Aboriginal people.

The Myall Creek massacre was neither the first nor last massacre of Aboriginal people in Australia but the NSW Supreme Court trials that followed set a judicial precedent. However, attitudes towards such massacres took longer to change.



Caroline Chis olm

1838

Caroline Chisholm (30 May 1808 – 25 March 1877)^[1] was a 19th-century English humanitarian known mostly for her support of immigrant female and family welfare in Australia. She arrived in 1838.





New Zealand becomes separate colony

1841

On 1 July 1841 the islands of New Zealand were separated from the Colony of New South Wales and made a colony in their own right.

This ended more than 50 years of confusion over the relationship between the islands and the Australian colony.