The landscape of handsome public works, refined domestic environments and new public open spaces had quite different meanings for convicts arriving in Sydney in the Age of Macquarie. Ankles freed of shipboard irons, they were mustered in the gaol yard and assigned to government work gangs or to settlers. Those assigned to well-off settlers and townsfolk went to live with them, and so became familiar with the grand houses, their dining rooms and drawing rooms, kitchens and gardens, the whims of their masters and mistresses. Others knew the bare huts and scrabbling lives of the small-farming emancipist settlers on the plain and the rivers. Still others found themselves in the more familiar domestic environments of the publicans and trades people of the town: the plain, solid stone houses of two or three rooms, the jumble of furniture, household goods and tools in every room, and masters and mistresses of much the same rank and cultural outlooks as themselves. They worked for their masters and mistresses, but those who were artisans often also paid them to be allowed to work on their own account.¹

Increasingly Macquarie also kept skilled tradesmen in Sydney to work on his public works programme, which expanded in tandem with the rising numbers of convicts who arrived after the end of the Napoleonic Wars in 1815.² For the first thirty years of the colony’s existence, men assigned to the work gangs on buildings, in quarries, at the brickworks, or the great hive of manufacturing activity that was the Lumber Yard, were not housed in gaols or barracks, but told to go and find their own lodgings in the town and turn up for work when the morning bells were rung. They went to the older neighbourhoods, like the Rocks, rented...
rooms together or dossed down in the kitchens and skillions of established householders. The urban conditions in which they lived were not much affected by Macquarie’s improvements: the streets here were still uneven, the pubs were everywhere. Some houses were much improved and had proper wells and privies; others were hastily put up as mean ‘rents’ with few amenities, if any.\(^3\)

Night time might be hazardous for the careless, though, as convicts were subject to a curfew and could be arrested and thrown into the watchhouses after 9pm. Macquarie revived the division of the town into districts, each patrolled at night by constables with rattles and sabres, who called out the hour. But Sydney also had a free population, so there were bound to be frictions. As convicts did not wear distinctive clothing, it was difficult for constables to tell them from free labourers or artisans, and the curfew was a constant source of irritation and indignation to non-convict townsfolk. Although the increased policing of convicts was still only partly effective, it nonetheless jarred with the free, and Sydney people resisted by refusing to be arrested. They tore down Macquarie’s first notices about new rules and regulations. Macquarie expressed his ‘astonishment’ at this and declared with characteristic drama that the culprits caught would be tried as ‘traitors’.\(^4\)

The knowledge of people’s whereabouts and movements was also fundamental to urban control, so the townsfolk were ordered to inform their local constabulary when they or their servants moved. They refused.\(^5\)

It would not have taken new arrivals long to become familiar with the lineaments and particular places of Sydney town. Strangeness gradually settled into patterns and landmarks: the stores where rations were distributed, the quarries and brickworks, and the scaffolds of the new buildings. To them, of course, Macquarie’s buildings meant work rather than aesthetic improvement, though the contrast between the fine airy rooms of the new residences and hospital and the stinking, filthy, crowded gaol where prisoners were housed could not have escaped them. There were places to be seen, like the market place, alive on Saturdays; and places to avoid being seen, like the ambivalent, often dangerous military zone, and all the guard houses and sentry boxes manned by soldiers and constables who were the authorities’ eyes in the town. These sentries stood to attention, or lounged, or dozed, at the wharves, the forts, at government house and the Domain gate, at the Main Guard and the barracks.

For the first two years or more, the newly-arrived were perhaps most conscious of the shorelines, the wharves, the Heads of Sydney Harbour and the horizon. Throughout the period of transportation to the colony, they were the most likely group to attempt escape. The sea was their link with home: harbour and the ships offered the hope of return. They must have listened eagerly for news of ships, when they sailed, which labour-starved captains might be prepared to take stowaways, which seamen might be bribed to hide them.\(^6\)

For others there were bright possibilities in Macquarie’s Sydney, and for the many there were the consolations and enjoyment of popular culture, much of it carried on out of doors, in public places. The streets and old squares remained places for mobs to gather and fights to break out. By the end of the decade there were pubs and drinking houses on almost every corner, with drinking, gambling, dancing and music, while illegal carts trundled around the town selling spirits too. Everyone who owned a horse, even the most broken-down old carthorse, wanted to race it and wager on the result. The streets were used for reckless horseracing, even after Hyde Park was set aside as a racecourse. Cock-fighting, dog-fighting, bare-knuckle prize-fighting and foot racing.
also attracted great crowds. The locations for extralegal meetings, usually isolated, fringe places, were passed by word of mouth among the patrons. Unruly mobs of both white and black people commonly gathered at the Kings Wharf – at the bottom of the Rocks – or in the old square outside the new Main Guard, much to the consternation of the constables and soldiers on sentry duty.\

So by the 1810s Sydney’s people had inscribed the urban landscape with cultural meanings, meanings made by common actions, repeated over time, which had become common knowledge. Other public spaces were more unsettling, marked by death or the expiation of crime. The crowded, malodorous old burial ground next to the new market was closed in 1820, but people continued to use it for illegal or covert purposes. Thieves buried stolen goods there, fathers quietly buried stillborn babies. The hideous hanging ground on the far fringe received the bodies of executed criminals. Angry townsfolk dragged the body of a young woman who had committed infanticide out here too, to lie among the hanged. Fire was sometimes used to cleanse places after gruesome murders. Near Brickfield Hill to the south, the house where poor Reverend Samuel Clode was murdered by soldiers in 1799 had been burned to the ground. The bodies of his killers were strung up on gibbets nearby: public reminders, public spectacles, places suffused with evil and stench. Sometimes private land was ill-omened by a death. Catherine Cotton complained in 1810 that she had gone to considerable expense to clear her land on the north shore, but now could not improve it further because ‘a man happen(ed) to be killed on it’. No one would work there for her. And at the place where the cart-tracks crossed in Hyde Park lay the bodies of suicides. They were excluded from consecrated ground and buried there with stakes driven through their hearts.\

For Sydney’s convicts and labouring people, the Macquarie era was also marked by walls. Walls of rubble or ashlar sandstone rose relentlessly to heights of nine, ten, twelve, fourteen feet, encircling new buildings and old, cutting off access to yards and the waterfront and common ground. At the Dockyard, the old ‘battered railing and gates’ were replaced by a ‘high stone wall, nine feet tall’. A stonewall rose around the old churchyard of St Phillips on Church Hill (now Grosvenor Street). The old hospital at the foot of the Rocks had no walls at all; in the new hospital, inmates were confined by another nine-foot wall. This was a new phenomenon in a town where, apart from the gaol wall and paling fences, the demarcation of space had been largely mental, and fluid. The walls had to do with the control of bodies and movement, with enclosure and exclusion. How did people deal with them? ...often they simply made holes in the walls, and walked through.

The Walls had to do with the control of bodies and movement, with enclosure and exclusion. How did people deal with them? ...often they simply made holes in the walls, and walked through.
How did people deal with them? In places of confinement, they sometimes scaled and jumped over them, literally risking life and limb. But more often they simply made holes in the walls, and walked through.

The Domain wall, snaking right across the neck between Sydney Cove and Woolloomooloo Bay became a flashpoint for the struggle between governor and people over the uses of urban space. People came in to cut firewood, to bathe naked in the waters, to meet or simply to walk. Couples seeking some privacy went there for sex. Thieves dumped or hid stolen goods, convicts hid there after the curfew hour, young women were clandestinely spirited away on ships from its dark shores at night. While the Macquaries considered the Domain transformed into a pleasure ground, a place of ‘rational amusement’, in the minds of the people it was still ‘the skirts’ of the town, still a place for practical and nefarious activities.

It was bound to be problematic, this double reading of space. People were in fact able to enter the Domain legally – either through the official gate, with its lodge and constable, or over a stile on Bent Street. But they defied Macquarie’s rules and surveillance by repeatedly making convenient holes in the wall from Hyde Park, or behind the hospital, and by continuing to use the ‘pleasure ground’ for what were now defined as ‘improper’ purposes. Elizabeth Macquarie’s carefully designed ‘new shrubbery and young forest trees’ were trampled and broken. Perhaps it was deliberate; or perhaps the ‘intruders’ had not really noticed them. Either way Macquarie was incensed.

He ordered constables to hide near the wall and arrest anyone who came through. They obediently pounced on two young women, one a servant to merchant Robert Campbell and his wife Sophia, with a child in her arms. And they arrested two convicts and three skilled free men – a stonemason and caretaker named Reed, a respectable blacksmith, William Blake, who wanted to relieve himself, and a coiner named Henshall who was after some white sand for his metallurgy.

Both young women went to gaol for 48 hours without trial. In the gaol yard outside their cell, the men were summarily flogged: 30 lashes for bond and 25 for free. The flogging of convicts meant little to the free townsfolk, but the flogging of free men without trial ‘created a great degree of alarm among all classes of inhabitant’, especially those who had received pardons from Macquarie. What were the rights of free men if a governor could pardon or flog as he pleased? A petition to the British House of Commons was already in circulation: the case of the Domain victims was added to it, along with the names of many emancipists.

In insisting on new uses and the control of public space in this way, Macquarie provided ammunition for both his own enemies and the enemies of the colony. The Domain became synonymous, not with the public good and equal access for all, but with tyranny and the infringement of individual liberty. The summary punishments were not even effective as deterrents. Three months later, people were still breaking down the wall and ‘trespassing’ on the Domain. The wall was strengthened and raised still higher, and eventually they gave up.

* * *

(above)

C. Cartwright, Map of the Governor’s Desmesne 1816, an extraordinarily detailed map showing the new pathways, trees and the line of the wall reaching from Sydney Cove to ‘Woolloomooloo’.
If Lachlan and Elizabeth Macquarie’s fanciful gothic stables and classical pigeon houses were properly set among trees in picturesque harbour landscapes, the opposite was true of the sterner buildings meant to house and control convicts and labouring people – the hospital and barracks. Seriously authoritarian, they stood in the centre of bare, walled yards, with not a tree or shrub in sight. Such spaces had nowhere to hide. They were fashioned for surveillance, for mustering people, for lining them up and for flogging miscreants before their assembled fellows.

Ironically, but unsurprisingly, most paintings of these buildings do not show the people they were built for, though they often feature the odd frock-coated figure pointing at them.13

But if we could zoom in on those handsome hospital verandahs in 1816 or 1817, they would not have been stately, quiet and deserted at all. The women patients used these spaces to wash and dry their clothes: gowns and undergarments flapped between the columns. And the verandahs really came alive on the days the inmates received their meat rations. Crowds of townsfolk thronged in to barter, buy and haggle for the beef with the bandaged, the aged, the venereal, the dysenteric and the scorbutic. Those patients too sick to walk crawled on the floors amidst the hubbub. With the proceeds, patients could then buy other supplies – tea, milk, sugar, spirits.14

The alleged confluence of grand public works, the common good and the improved environment of public health were celebrated in poetry as well as painting. The Macquaries’ ‘Poet Laureate’, Michael Massey Robinson, included a panegyric to the new hospital, this time with its happy inmates, in his ‘Ode for the King’s Birthday’ in 1817:

To rear yon fabric, that with stately Boast
Shews its white Columns to the distant Coast;
Within whose Walls, pale Sickness rears its Head
Fresh, with calm Slumbers, from the cleanly Bed
Nursed with Humanity’s consoling Care,
And cheer’d with currents of salubrious Air
Til rosy Health expands its vivid Glow
And new-born Hope pervades the smiling Brow!15

Surely this poem would have been read aloud from the Gazette, perhaps in rolling, pseudo-pompous voice, in the crowded, stifling wards? The patients, bred on the humour of inversion, would have loved it. They had only moved from the old hospital a year earlier, in April 1816, and the new one was overcrowded, unhygienic and disorderly. Much of the new building had been appropriated for other purposes – two wards for courtrooms, another for a retiring room. Artist John Lewin occupied yet another floor, painting his vistas of harbour and towns. Macquarie himself came to inspect the building when it was under construction, but he rarely visited once it was occupied and seems to have taken no interest in its management.16

There were only two hospital wards for men and one for women, with around 40 patients in each, their cots lined in four rows. When it was discovered that male and female patients were having sex, bolts were placed on the ward doors and another storeroom was converted to a syphilitic ward. The other spaces were chaotic too – one kitchen was used to house the overseer and the other as a dead-house (morgue), so all the cooking was done in the wards themselves. The storerooms were so untidy and crammed that much-needed medicines were lost under piles of other stores. Convict clerks stole medicines from the Dispensary and sold them to quack-doctors and chemists in the town. There was never enough jalap, tincture, calomel and laudanum for the patients.17

In the wards themselves, fires were kept burning day and night, while the multi-paned sash windows were always locked shut to prevent inmates escaping (so much for the...
'currents of salubrious air'). Visiting surgeons were shocked, felt their stomachs heave in protest at the stench, the heat, the slabs of meat thrown down in the dust, the slovenly, untrained convict nurses, the soiled bandages kicked under the bed. Not to mention the pans full of excrement. Somehow the architects and builders had neglected to include privies in the building. Wooden commode chairs were installed at the top of the handsome stairs. The bedpans were emptied out the windows. 

Who in their right mind would enter such a hellish place? Nobody, if they could help it. Certainly not the elite, nor the middling and artisanal townsfolk; nor even labourers in regular work. The hospital was a last resort for those who had exhausted all other options: the weakest and poorest, the friendless, those with no sustaining social networks to shelter and nurse them. To enter the hospital, or indeed any institution, was feared and stigmatised. They called it the ‘Sidney Slaughterhouse’.

Besides the fact that it was a deadly environment, the hospital represented the surrender of personal independence. Despite its vast size, the new hospital had fewer patients than the old one. This was probably a result of the fact that wards had been commandeered for other purposes, but it also had to do with confinement – the forbidding nine-foot wall around the bare, dirty yard, the gate locked at six every night. The old hospital at the foot of the Rocks had no walls at all and was a sort of drop-in centre for the old and indigent, ‘a mere skulking place for Pensioners, who used to come in at night and take shelter after committing robberies’.

Now the poor preferred the chances of the streets to the horrors and restrictions of the new hospital. The freedom of the streets made people vulnerable too, though. Irregular food and sleeping rough wore down their bodies, made them susceptible to disease. While doctors rejoiced in the general absence of serious infectious diseases in Sydney, they agreed that dysentery was endemic, and a killer. People who were ‘in the habit of lying in the street’ at night were particularly susceptible to ‘bad bowels’. They weakened quickly, dying in the most abject conditions. The doctors generally opined that indulgence in drink was the cause.

Accommodation for convicts became a pressing issue when their numbers rose dramatically after the end of the Napoleonic Wars in 1815. Shipload after shipload arrived in the unprepared town, sometimes unannounced, a total of seventy-eight ships carrying 13,221 convicts. The colony’s population more than doubled in the six years between 1815 and 1821, from 12,911 to 29,783, a greater increase than in its whole history until that time.
Macquarie also wanted to make convicts work a full day rather than the customary task work arrangements which had prevailed since the foundation of the colony, and which left the convicts free to do as they pleased after 3 o’clock in the afternoon. The new barracks in Macquarie Street (now Hyde Park Barracks Museum) were built to address both problems. The foundation stone was laid on the land next to the hospital in December 1817, and the three-storey walls of soft orange bricks, set in mortar bonded with bits of shell, rose steadily to Greenway’s design. To those with pretensions to architectural taste, the barracks were an object of ‘towering grandeur … the most elegant proportions of the Greek school’. But to the convicts, they must have looked much like a workhouse, that hated place of detention and regulation.

Macquarie now had a problem: while 130 men had moved into the unfinished building in May (probably the most desperately homeless and hungry), how could the majority of convicts be lured into his handsome new barracks? How could they be persuaded to exchange their private lodgings, the freedom of the streets, for longer hours of work, routines, surveillance and confinement? A suite of inducements was offered: barracks men would have their rations increased by half, and they would still have free time to work or enjoy the pleasures of the town on the weekends. Macquarie added a final, and characteristic, incentive: a spectacular welcome feast on the King’s Birthday. So on 4 June 1819, 598 convict men sat down in the mess hall to mountains of beef and plum pudding and half a pint of rum punch each, eaten and drunk from tin platters and pots. (One thinks of the logistics: cooking, carrying and serving beef and plum pudding for nearly six hundred hungry men; and the incredible roar in the room, the eating, drinking, talking, shouting, singing, the fug of bodies, the aromas of food and the smoke from six hundred clay pipes). Lachlan and Elizabeth and their young son Lachlan, together with all the important officers and judges of the colony, called in on the feast. Like the landowners at Harvest Home feasts back in England, Macquarie toasted the assembled convicts’ health and happiness. He noted in his diary later that the men ‘all appeared very happy and Contented, and gave us three cheers on us going away’.

But after the feast was over, the doors were shut and they became barracks men. Their trunks and possessions were taken away and put into storage, they were assigned hammocks slung over rails on the upper floors, much like the hammocks for sailors on ships. They were to rise, muster and march to their places of work, labour a full day, mess together and retire to their hammocks. The constables were to put out the oil lamps at 8.30 at night.

An impressive façade and a bevy of rules: but appearance belies the reality of life in the barracks, the measure of looseness that still allowed convicts some action and movement. Their time was certainly more regulated, and the working day longer. Their space was patrolled and men who committed offences were brutally flogged in the yard. Yet these were barracks, not a prison. The overseers and constables were themselves ‘well-behaved’ convicts and ex-convicts, little more accustomed to precise regimentation than their charges, and they often ignored the rules. On Sunday the barracks men were marched across the bridge and up to St Phillips for Divine Service. After that, those who hadn’t skived off already could amuse themselves in the town as they pleased. “They run immediately to the

Edward Close’s picture of the Sydney Barracks shows the pompous brick façades and the Grecian-style well in the parade ground, but also includes a washerwoman at work and a soldier chasing some ducks.
Rocks’ as one disgusted officer later reported ‘where every species of Debauchery and villainy is practised’. As the punishment books show, convicts continued to commit crimes, though the numbers of robberies in the town fell, during the weekdays at least. The downside, according to the Government Architect, Francis Greenway, was that the overfed and regulated barracks men made poor, unmotivated workers. When the government wanted a job done quickly, they reverted to the old taskwork system.27

At night the overcrowded wards were not silent and orderly, but rang with conversation and arguments, singing and oaths, the men probably playing cards and drinking. In later years they made cabbage tree hats to sell, walking about the town with them stacked four- or five-high on their heads.28 One Sunday night in 1820 after the days’ carousing, the hubbub of talk was so loud that the groaning and crying of a desperately ill man leaning on the hammock rail was not even noticed; such raving usually simply meant a man was drunk. Eventually a fellow prisoner sent for the clerk, and Matthew Hyard, a quiet man who worked at the lumberyard, was carried down to the courtroom and placed in a chair by the fire. He was in such pain he begged them not to touch him, he frothed at the mouth. Asked what was wrong, he gasped about a lump in his stomach, and that he had been sent away from the dispensary as an ‘impostor’ and was ‘afraid to go in to the hospital lest he should not be properly treated’.29 He died in agony a few hours later.

Matthew Hyard probably had no choice but to go into the barracks. While men ‘who could get a living by their work were discontented’ there, it was a refuge for ‘those who could not pay for their lodging’. The more acquiescent were glad of the food and shelter. The restless and ‘dissolute’ wanted to be among the favoured ranks of around 300-400 ‘best behaved men and men married legally’ who were still allowed to ‘sleep out in the town’. Some of these ran shops and trades as well. Skills, capital, intelligence, a wife, and willingness to work for the authorities were still factors which decided where and how convict men would live in Sydney after 1819, not their convict status. Confident demeanour, physical height and initiative helped too.30

The Age of Macquarie is often seen as a period of harmony, order and tranquillity after the early wretched, starving days. Yet the economic and social realities of Macquarie’s decade were tumultuous. The retail market collapsed in 1811-12, followed by a major economic depression that ruined many of the early Sydney traders. Floods, drought and caterpillar plagues jeopardised food supplies, destroyed grazing land and threatened the tenuous hold the rural settlers had established on the farms. A severe labour shortage was followed by a tremendous glut as the colony was swamped by those thousands of newly arrived convicts. Macquarie’s own enlightened policy of accepting emancipists – or the wealthy ones at least – back into society and to his own table, and even elevating them to positions of high office, was utterly rejected by both the military and civil officers and free arrivals. They undermined and betrayed him by sending outraged complaints to influential people in England. The Age of Macquarie was also a period of war and massacre: the war waged by Aboriginal people on the Cumberland Plain settlers intensified until 1816, when Macquarie ordered a retributive raid which resulted in the massacre of at least fourteen men, women and children at Appin.31

In the town of Sydney, beauty, taste and appearance largely took precedence over pragmatic needs and humane concerns. The conditions in the gaol and hospital were
appalling and filthy, and the gaol was insecure, while the public wharves were in a state of ruin. Macquarie’s elaborate public works, which diverted funds and attention from more basic necessities, also provided powerful ammunition for his enemies. They portrayed him as an extravagant, self-indulgent martinet and watched his every move.32

Nevertheless, Macquarie remained in power for twelve years and evidently won the affection and loyalty of many Sydney people. When he returned from a brief visit to Hobart Town in July 1821, the entire town was lit up in ‘one continued blaze of light’ to welcome him back.33 Despite all the rules and regulations, the temperamental outbursts and his insistence on subordinate behaviour, Macquarie exerted a charismatic personal influence upon the people: there was a relationship between them. He was a negotiator, often imaginative and flamboyant. He made verbal promises, face-to-face with people of humble standing. He understood the nature of public ritual and performance. He insisted on being present at the musters ‘to see and be seen by the people’. They saw him travel the colony from one end to the other over the years, inspecting, naming, instructing, proclaiming. There were agendas of deference and obligation on both sides of course: this was no unanimously grateful and cowed population. But nobody could have missed Macquarie’s profound interest in the colony and the town, whatever they thought of his improvements and buildings. To emancipists, who made up the largest section of the population, his unwavering support of the wealthy men among them had great moral and symbolic power. And despite the continuance of floggings, convicts must have known that Macquarie was the first governor to reduce the savage floggings of the naval governors, limiting the number of lashes to fifty (although magistrates still ordered 100).34

If Sydney itself was an artefact of the Macquaries’ artistic and authoritarian visions, it had nevertheless remained a space for negotiation over urban life and forms too, as well as a vehicle for the expression of popular feeling: celebration, enjoyment, rage, mourning. After he left the colony, Macquarie grew rosier in memory, especially with the arrival of far less engaging, more impersonal and bureaucratic governors. Petitioners often wrote nostalgically of his benevolence. ‘Declining life few consolations bring’ wrote his aging, crippled town crier John Pendergrass in 1825, ‘for when I lost Macquarie I lost a friend’.35

John Thomas Bigge, lawyer and himself a former governor, was sent out by the British Government in 1819 to investigate Macquarie’s administration and the state of the colony.16 It was clear to Bigge that the British Government’s original purpose and plan in founding the colony had been well and truly perverted. Instead of a place of dread that would deter crime, the colony had a certain degree of laxity and liberty, most obviously seen in the pleasures and freedoms of the town. Some convicts were writing back and encouraging relatives to join them – Sydney had become familiar rather than strange, a place of opportunity rather than terror. A great many other convicts, unmoved by good weather or colonial possibilities, escaped on the rising numbers of visiting ships, despite the great, cumbersome edifice of port regulations. The Macquaries’ improvements had ironic outcomes too – intended to transform and gentrify the urban fabric, they kept convicts in the town, which the convicts themselves preferred. Sydney pulsed with their movements, familiar networks and popular culture, its pleasures a constant beacon for those assigned to the inland settlements.37
Commissioner Bigge had also been commissioned to find out whether New South Wales could be an ‘object of real terror’ which would deter criminals, and whether a system of ‘general discipline, constant work and vigilant superintendence’ could be established. He thought both were possible – but only if Sydney was excised from convict experience, and they from it. The urban environment, the real bustling streets and wharves of Sydney, the anonymity and social networks it offered, were incompatible with discipline and punishment.  

Bigge’s vision for the future colony sketched an elegant fusion of capitalism, colonial expansion, punishment and reform. Rather than growing food for themselves as originally envisioned, convicts would be sent out to the estates of large landowners, providing unpaid labour for agriculture and pastoralism. The skilled artisans would be taken off the government projects and sent to private masters too. Their masters, in turn, would come from the ranks of free immigrants with capital, lured by promises of free land. Convicts who reoffended, who were recalcitrant and hardened, were to be banished too, sent to ‘distant parties’ for hard labour in irons, building a network of Great Roads, radiating from Sydney to the inland. Boundless lands, considered to be unoccupied, twinned with the existence of Sydney, would underpin colonial expansion, the rising severity of the convict system, and the continued dispossession of Aboriginal people over the next two decades.  

*  This is an edited extract from *The Colony: A History of Early Sydney* (Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 2009), winner of the 2010 Prime Minister’s Prize for Non-Fiction and available from bookshops or online at www.allenandunwin.com

2. For a detailed account see Dyster, ‘Bungling a Courthouse’.
10. Evidence of Mr Murray, in Bigge, Report, Appendix, BT Box 1, 629; evidence of D’Arcy Wentworth, 1819, BT Box 2, 601; papers re abduction of Emma Crook, Colonial Secretary’s Papers, ML, 4/1743, 31ff.


13. For example Joseph Lycett, ‘Convict Barracks Sydney N.S. Wales’, c1820, ML, though compare with series of 1836 lithographs by J G Austin & Co (held in National Gallery of Australia and Mitchell Library) which depict working people in the streets outside.


15. SG 8 June 1817.

16. SG 6 April 1816; evidence of James Bean (carpenter) c1819, in Bigge, Report, Appendix, BT Box 6, 2527.

17. Women caught having sex were sent to the Factory or to Newcastle and men were flogged in the hospital yard and put in solitary cells. Evidence of Henry Cowper and William Johnstone c1819, in Bigge, Report, Appendix, BT Box 6, 2322-71, 2417-21.


20. Evidence of Henry Cowper 16 Nov 1819, in Bigge, Report, Appendix, BT Box 6, 2371.

21. Evidence of Henry Cowper, D’Arcy Wentworth and Mr Bowman, 1821, in Bigge, Report, Appendix, BT Box 6, 2454-5, 2525, 2646; Karskens, ‘Death Was in His Face’.


26. Evidence of Major Druitt, in Bigge, Report, Appendix, BT Box 1, 17.

27. Dyster, ‘Bungling a Courthouse’, p. 6; Evidence of Major Druitt and William Hutchinson, 1819, in Bigge, Report, Appendix, BT Box 1, 26, 93, 151; evidence of Christopher Tattersall, 5 Aug 1820, BT Box 6, 2451-2; Greenway to Druitt 14 Aug 1819, BT Box 19, 2875-8.


32. Magistrate’s Report on the State of the Gaol, 7 July 1821, Colonial Secretary’s Papers, ML, 4/1748; Bigge, Report, pp. 50-1, 71; Data on condition and size of the gaol, in Bigge, Report, Appendix, BT Box 27, 6502; evidence of George Panton, c1819, BT Box 9.


34. Fletcher, p. 133; Hirst, pp. 63, 87, 111.

35. John Pendergrass, Memorial, 18 January 1825, 35.

36. Fletcher, pp. 166-8; 187; Hirst, pp. 87-8; Bigge, Report on the Judicial Establishments, pp. 76-7.

37. Karskens, ‘Spirit of Emigration’, Bigge, Report, Section III, pp. 21-52; Broadbent, Francis Greenway, p. 44.

38. Bigge to Macquarie, 6 June 1820, in Bigge, Report, Appendix, Box 24, 4970; Hirst, p. 87.