

## **An Imperial Presence: Queensland's Scarlet Legacy**

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On 12 September 1824, the brig *Amity* anchored off Osbourne Point, Redcliffe, in Moreton Bay, in what is now Queensland, carrying the first contingent of the 40<sup>th</sup> (2<sup>nd</sup> Somersetshire) Regiment of Foot and convicts under the command of the veteran officer Lieutenant Henry Miller.<sup>2</sup> Over the coming days, troops, convicts, supplies, and equipment were landed marking the tentative beginnings of this new convict outpost. Proximity to a useable water supply determined the location and layout of this new settlement near a stream now known as Humpybong Creek. The Redcliffe site, however, quickly revealed that it was not agriculturally productive or suitable for anything more than a temporary location. Exploration for more suitable sites along the Brisbane River led to the decision to relocate the convict post to what is now central Brisbane, and by May 1825, Redcliffe had been totally abandoned and the settlement moved upstream.

Moreton Bay's first military barracks of modest slab wood construction was erected at Redcliffe during 1824. The site is believed to have been approximately 120 metres downhill from the rise at the intersection of present-day Anzac Avenue and John Street.<sup>3</sup> When this convict settlement was removed to Brisbane in May 1825, the task of building a new barracks was commenced later that year. By March 1826, it was reported that 'two wings' of the barracks, each measuring 15' x 25' (approximately 4.6 m x 7.6 m) and fenced by a double rail fence 10' (approximately 3 m) high, had been completed. However, Moreton Bay's commandant Captain Patrick Logan later favoured the building of a more permanent stone barracks nearer Queen Street towards North Quay. This work was directed by Logan's subordinate, Lieutenant Thomas Bainbrige, who was also appointed as the settlement's Acting Engineer and Superintendent of Works. The work was completed early in 1831, under the direction of Bainbrige's successor to the post of Superintendent of Works, Lieutenant John Thomas Nagel, during Captain James Clunie's tenure as commandant following Logan's death in late 1830.

### **The role of the British Army in Moreton Bay**

Between 1787 and 1868, approximately 162,000 men, women, and children were transported as convicts to the Australian colonies. This included Moreton Bay which was then New South Wales's most northerly district. One part of the convict experience often forgotten, or little understood, is the many thousands of British soldiers who were despatched to serve in Australia. These soldiers were a major feature of early colonial life and the day-to-day operation of the convict system. The military families who accompanied the regiments in the first decades of European settlement were also some of the first free settlers.

The primary function of the British Army at Moreton Bay during the period of convict transportation 1824-1842, was to act as convict gaolers, alongside convict overseers. Within the 17-year period covering the phase of Moreton Bay's penal settlement, detachments were drawn from the 40th Regiment, 57th (West Middlesex) Regiment, Royal New South Wales Veterans' Corps, 39th (Dorsetshire) Regiment, 17th (Leicestershire) Regiment, 4th (King's Own) Regiment, 28th (North Gloucestershire) Regiment, and the 80th (Staffordshire Volunteers) Regiment. Service in Moreton Bay during the convict period was a harsh posting, with limited rations, strict discipline, and where isolation, boredom, and heavy drinking were serious issues and a common part of this garrison experience.

Beyond some minor reforms, the organisation, training, and equipment of troops posted to Moreton Bay remained much as they had been since the days of the Battle of Waterloo in 1815 at the end of the Napoleonic Wars. Enlistment was for life, that is, until released by infirmity or death. This changed in 1847 with the introduction of the *Limited Enlistment Act* which reduced military service to a minimum of seven years for infantry to attract more recruits. Approximately 1,500 British soldiers served in Moreton Bay from 1824 to 1869. Just over half (around 900 troops, or 60 per cent) served during the period of the convict establishment, with the remainder serving during the latter period of free settlement.

With the end of convict transportation in 1842, the role of the British soldier in Moreton Bay changed. No longer simply convict gaolers, soldiers now served in the mounted police and officers became local magistrates. Soldiers were also used to guard civilian prisoners on Brisbane streets and then at the newly established St Helena Penal Establishment during 1867-69. The newly raised local volunteer forces in the 1860s also relied heavily on officers and non-commissioned officers from the British Army who were detached or

seconded as instructors to drill colonial volunteers. These Imperial instructors provided experience and professionalism, and were often veterans of wars themselves, around which volunteers could be imbued with the deeds and dedication of their regular comrades in arms. By the 1860s, the small numbers of officers and men of the British Army who served in Brisbane provided a sense of imperial colour – that flash of scarlet (or the brick red of enlisted ranks' tunics) reaffirming the youthful colony of Queensland's place as part of the broader community of empire in British Australasia.



Figure 1: Viceregal and other ceremonial events in colonial Brisbane included regular soldiers and volunteers ('Laying the Foundation Stone of the Brisbane Bridge', *Illustrated London News*, 3 December 1864, p. 568).

### **Military Barracks in Brisbane**

One of the principal conditions upon which the imperial government was prepared to provide the new colony of Queensland with a detachment of troops was that adequate barracks were to be provided for their accommodation. In February 1863, the Secretary of State for Colonies, the Duke of Newcastle, informed Governor Sir George Ferguson Bowen that the imperial government agreed to "the transfer to Queensland of the present Barracks at Brisbane, and

all other Military Buildings, together with the ground they stand on, in exchange for a better site”, and for new Barracks to be erected at the expense of the Colonial Treasury.<sup>4</sup> The present barracks referred to here were the buildings then occupying the block bounded by William, George, Queen, and Elizabeth Streets which had been completed in early 1831 during the settlement’s penal operation.<sup>5</sup> The old William Street Barracks which accommodated the initial detachments of the 12<sup>th</sup> (East Suffolk) Regiment from January 1861 until October 1864, were to be only a temporary arrangement until the new barracks were completed.<sup>6</sup> This had been a brief reprieve from the old barracks’ most recent role as an immigrants’ hostel since it had been vacated by Ensign George Cameron’s detachment of the 11<sup>th</sup> Regiment back in July 1850. And once it was vacated again by the 12<sup>th</sup> Regiment in October 1864, these barracks would be divided up into offices for the various colonial government departments.<sup>7</sup>

The question as to where the new barracks would be sited was settled earlier in July 1862 when Lieutenant-Colonel Henry Meade Hamilton, commanding the 12<sup>th</sup> Regiment, visited Brisbane for that purpose.<sup>8</sup> Hamilton concurred with colonial architect Charles Tiffin as to the suitability of the area known as Green Hills on Petrie Terrace overlooking Brisbane. The Queensland government voted to approve the £5,000 construction cost, although there was almost a year’s delay before local building tenders were called in 1863.<sup>9</sup>

There were some voices raised in dissent at what was felt to be an extravagant burden forced upon the infant colony by Bowen at a time when it could ill afford such expenditure. This discord grew louder as the cost of further extensions to the new barracks increased to include a new military hospital, guardroom, and accommodation for a third officer through 1865-66. A move in Parliament to have these extensions cancelled or at least postponed was only narrowly defeated.<sup>10</sup>

The issue of expense was not the only criticism the new barracks construction encountered. In the press voices were heard, condemning the siting of these new barracks on Petrie Terrace. A letter to the editor of the *Brisbane Courier* from ‘One Interested’ listed these objections by arguing that Green Hills was prime real estate and alienating this land for public works meant that potential profit through lucrative land sales would be lost to the public exchequer. This commentator also described the inconvenience to residents in having to take a longer detour when coming from or going to the city, as well as the general impropriety of placing a barracks adjacent to a gaol.<sup>11</sup> But despite

these warnings the new barracks was completed on schedule, although slightly over budget.

On the evening of Thursday 27 October 1864, the Brisbane detachment of the 12<sup>th</sup> Regiment marched from the old barracks for the last time to take possession of their new accommodation. A reporter from the *Brisbane Courier* provided a lengthy glowing appraisal of the the “New Barracks” that was “beautifully situated, within an easy distance of the town”:

the officers’ quarters, ... consist of a lofty-roofed one story verandah cottage containing four large rooms ... [all] very well furnished. There is a wide verandah all round the building, and numerous doors opening into the various rooms. The place altogether wears a remarkably cool aspect, and it would be hardly possible to conceive that its occupants could complain of being unpleasantly warm, even on a Queensland summer’s day. ... and attached to the dwelling ... is a kitchen, built of brick, and containing every necessary accommodation. Behind the building is what is termed the reserve tank, a large water tank capable of holding about thirty-five thousand gallons of water. It is carefully protected from the rays of the sun, being covered in, and roofed with shingles, beneath which, and covering the tank is a floor of hardwood, ... A portion of the furniture of the tank is a powerful force-pump, which will be used for filling the cisterns in the bathrooms attached to the main building. ... Behind the reserve tank ... is the guardroom, which is a substantial looking edifice fitted up in the usual manner, and containing two excellent roomy cells, built in such a manner as to preclude the possibility of any evildoer ... from escaping.<sup>12</sup>

The *Courier*’s reporter noted that the barrack square could be entered from Petrie Terrace. This gated entrance was the only one sufficiently wide enough to admit any type of horsed vehicular traffic, and to the left as you entered, was the main barrack building:

... which is built of eighteen inch brickwork, and is an oblong structure... It is about 118 feet in length, and 33 feet in width, and has a very wide balconied verandah. On the ground floor there are, at each end, two sergeant’s rooms, the dimensions of each of which are 15 feet by 12 feet and they are all 11 feet high. Between the two sets of rooms referred to, are two large barrack rooms, each capable of accommodating twenty men, being 40 x 30 feet. Attached to the barrack rooms is a large bath room, which is furnished in the most complete and ingenious manner. On the side of the room nearest the verandah, accommodation of a very superior description is

provided for performing ordinary ablutions; and on the other side of the room, adjoining the partition wall, is fixed bathing apparatus of a novel and elaborate description, combining, in a small space, all the means for indulging in the luxury of a bath of whatever kind the bather might prefer, not excepting a shower bath, the water for which is supplied from the reserve tank. The arrangements of the bath room are certainly very judicious, as affording a desideratum to the soldiers that in a warm climate is almost invaluable. The upper portion of the building, which is approached by a spacious and substantial staircase, contains precisely the same amount of accommodation as that previously specified. There are several doors opening on to the balcony, from which beautiful and extensive views can be obtained in almost every direction. ... The whole is roofed with slate ... [and a] thorough system of ventilation has been carried out in the whole of the buildings, and especial care seems to have been taken to allow the pure air from the hills free access, seeing that a large number of windows and doors have been fitted in every direction, besides which each room possesses a chimney. Beyond the barracks is a large and commodious kitchen, the fittings of which are everything that could be desired, and consist of a fine cooking stove, or range – a new invention capable of doing all the cooking required for a much larger detachment than the one at present quartered in Brisbane, and yet not occupying much room, and two large boilers much of which will contain thirty gallons. Adjacent to that is the wash house, ... furnished with everything necessary to ensure the comfort and cleanliness of the men in barracks.<sup>13</sup>

In a despatch to the Duke of Newcastle, transmitting the minutes of the Executive Council, Governor Bowen was satisfied to announce that the transfer of deeds to Major General Trevor Chute,<sup>14</sup> the officer commanding Her Majesty's forces in the Australian colonies, would formally take place on 1 November 1864.<sup>15</sup>

In late 1866, the contract for further barracks extensions was reported as costing £5,659, with these works being carried out by the contractor Mr W.E. Wright.<sup>16</sup> In February 1867, the *Brisbane Courier* summed up the progress on these extra works at the new barracks:

A new ammunition magazine is being built within the Military Barracks reserve at Petrie Terrace. Both the hospital and the officers' quarters are rapidly approaching completion, and a number of the prisoners from the Gaol are engaged in clearing and levelling the ground within the enclosure. Would it be too much to ask the Colonial Architect to have a neat inexpensive porch set up, as soon as possible, at the entrance to the Hospital. The buildings,

as a whole, are not particularly remarkable for beauty, but the slice cut out of the front of the hospital by way of forming a principle entrance is absolutely painful to look at in its present unadorned state.<sup>17</sup>

Today, this military precinct, known as Victoria Barracks, is a tangible legacy to Queensland's colonial past and of its Imperial defence heritage foundations.

### ***The British Army's Moreton Bay Lineage, 1824–69***

Many regiments of the British Army served in the Moreton Bay district of New South Wales during the period of penal settlement 1824-1842. The following regiments provided detachments for Moreton Bay during this period: 40<sup>th</sup> (2<sup>nd</sup> Somersetshire) Regiment (1824-26); Royal New South Wales Veterans' Corps (1826-27); 57<sup>th</sup> (West Middlesex) Regiment (1826-1830); 39<sup>th</sup> (Dorsetshire) Regiment (1827); 17<sup>th</sup> (Leicestershire) Regiment (1830-1835); 4<sup>th</sup> (King's Own) Regiment (1835-1837); 28<sup>th</sup> (North Gloucestershire) Regiment (1837-1839); and 80<sup>th</sup> (Staffordshire Volunteers) Regiment (1839-42).

During the period of free settlement (post-1842), the following regiments were to provide detachments through until the departure of the final detachment of the 50<sup>th</sup> Regiment in March 1869:

**99<sup>th</sup> (Lanarkshire) Regiment** (1842-48). The 99<sup>th</sup> Regiment also formed the military force at the short-lived North Australia Colony in 1847, the site of which later became Gladstone. In 1843 the Brisbane detachment, commanded by Lieutenant Patrick Johnston, was engaged in conflict with local Aboriginal people. From 1843 to 1846 a fortified military barracks was kept at Helidon at the foot of the Darling Downs to protect drays from Aboriginal 'depredations'.<sup>18</sup>

**58<sup>th</sup> (Rutlandshire) Regiment** (1844-45). The Brisbane detachment of the 58<sup>th</sup> Regiment, commanded by Lieutenant Cooper and Captain W.E. Grant, took over responsibility for 'Fort Helidon' from the 99<sup>th</sup> Regiment until they were called to another emergency due to ongoing conflict with the Māori in New Zealand in 1846.

**11<sup>th</sup> (North Devonshire) Regiment** (1849-50). The detachment's posting to Brisbane from November 1848 to July 1850 was uneventful but for a confused melee between these soldiers and local Aboriginal people resulting in some casualties at York's Hollow in Brisbane in November 1849.<sup>19</sup>

**Enrolled Pensioners** (also known as Chelsea Pensioners, Veterans, and as Fencibles) (1850). Arrived in Moreton Bay as the

guard aboard the convict transport *Bangalore*, and a small contingent (including some with families) elected to remain.<sup>20</sup>

**12<sup>th</sup> (East Suffolk) Regiment** (1860-66). Sergeant William Green was the first member of the 12<sup>th</sup> to serve in Queensland. He was an instrumental training figure to the first local rifle volunteer units raised shortly after separation from New South Wales in 1859, when appointed drill instructor on 24 August 1860. The commanding officer of the first Brisbane detachment of the 12<sup>th</sup> during 1861-64, Lieutenant David Thompson Seymour, became Queensland's first Commissioner of Police in 1864.

**50<sup>th</sup> (Queen's Own) Regiment** (1866-69). Although the two detachments of 50<sup>th</sup> Regiment were the last Imperial force to be stationed in Moreton Bay, individual Imperial army and navy officers would continue to see service in Queensland on secondment or as appointments over the coming decades into the 1900s.

#### *British Army Veterans in Convict Stations and Military Garrisons*

Many veterans would arrive through the 1810s and into the 1830s as part of the military garrisons for the colonies of New South Wales (which then also included the Moreton Bay district), Van Diemen's Land (later Tasmania), and Swan River (Western Australia). Regiments which arrived in Moreton Bay after the termination of the Napoleonic Wars with distinguished Peninsula Wars' service included the 57<sup>th</sup> Regiment (1824-1832). Regiments who served in the 'Hundred Days' campaign of 1815 and were present at the famous battles of Quatre Bras or Waterloo included the 40<sup>th</sup> Regiment. The 40<sup>th</sup> served in Australia during 1824-29 (its first Australian tour), and although its ranks had numbers of Waterloo veterans, many of these men also had lengthy Peninsula War service. Other veteran officers and men arrived in Australia as part of the New South Wales Veterans Companies and the Royal Staff Corps during the 1820s. And in the 1830s, one of the last regiments to arrive for Australian service and which still contained many Waterloo veterans within its ranks was the 28<sup>th</sup> Regiment, which served in these colonies during 1836-42.

Other regiments which served in Moreton Bay comprised personnel who had previously served in, or else later went on to serve in the New Zealand (or Māori) Wars during the 1840s or the 1860s. Some former Moreton Bay personnel even became casualties across the Tasman in action against the Māori such as Captain W.E. Grant of the 58<sup>th</sup>. Regiments with New Zealand veterans with Moreton Bay connections included the 58<sup>th</sup>, 99<sup>th</sup>, 12<sup>th</sup>, and 50<sup>th</sup> Regiments. Brisbane's 12<sup>th</sup> Regiment detachment also comprised some veterans of

the frontier wars in South Africa of 1850-53, and the 50<sup>th</sup> detachments also included some veterans of the Crimean War (1854-56). Other Moreton Bay soldiers were veterans of internal colonial conflict and had been used in defence of the civil order. In particular, the Brisbane detachment of the 12<sup>th</sup> Regiment comprised several soldiers who had served on the Ballarat goldfields (including the Eureka Stockade) in 1854, while others saw service during the two military expeditions to the Lambing Flat goldfields in New South Wales during the anti-Chinese disturbances in 1861-62. Brisbane's 12<sup>th</sup> Regiment detachment was itself called to arms during the threatened 'Bread Riots' in September 1866, just prior to their departure for war service in New Zealand.<sup>21</sup>

#### *Commandants of the Moreton Bay Penal Establishment, 1824-42*

During the operational span of the Moreton Bay convict establishment from 1824 to 1842, eight British Army officers from the 40<sup>th</sup>, 57<sup>th</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, 28<sup>th</sup>, and 80<sup>th</sup> Regiments, commanded this place of secondary punishment. Many of these officers were also veterans, with the first five commandants all serving during the Napoleonic Wars, while the sixth commandant commenced his service during the later stages of the Napoleonic wars but did so in that very important colonial possession of the British empire – India. Commandants at Moreton Bay were as follows:

**Lieutenant Henry Miller, 40<sup>th</sup> Regiment**, 1824-25, was the first commandant, arriving in command of the small detachment of the 40<sup>th</sup> Regiment which landed initially at Redcliffe in September 1824. Miller was a veteran of the Peninsula War, the War of 1812, and the Battle of Waterloo. He later settled in Australia and died in Hobart in 1866.

**Captain Peter Bishop, 40<sup>th</sup> Regiment**, 1825-26. Bishop was a veteran of the Peninsula War and the Battle of Waterloo.

**Captain Patrick Logan, 57<sup>th</sup> Regiment**, 1826-30. Logan was a veteran of the Peninsula War and the final stages of the War of 1812, and although he missed Waterloo, served in the army of occupation in Paris later during 1815. He was killed in October 1830 near Mount Beppo while on an expedition to explore and chart the headwaters of the Brisbane River. Local Aboriginal people are thought to have killed Logan, but others have argued it was a deed carried out by embittered convicts.

**Captain James Clunie, 17<sup>th</sup> Regiment**, 1830-35. Clunie was a veteran of the War of 1812.

**Captain Foster Fyans, 4<sup>th</sup> Regiment**, 1835-37 and had previously been

acting commandant at Norfolk Island in early 1834. Fyans was a veteran of the Peninsula War. He later settled in Australia and died in 1870.

**Major Sydney Cotton, 28<sup>th</sup> Regiment, 1837-39.** Cotton was a veteran of service in India with the 22<sup>nd</sup> Light Dragoons, 1812-22, before transferring to the 3<sup>rd</sup> Regiment, and in turn to the 28<sup>th</sup> Regiment. He later exchanged into the 22<sup>nd</sup> Regiment and saw service in the Indian Mutiny in the 1850s. Cotton had a long and distinguished army career, retiring with the rank of lieutenant general.

**Lieutenant George Gravatt, 28<sup>th</sup> Regiment, 1839.** Following Australian service, the 28<sup>th</sup> Regiment's next posting in 1842 was India, where diseases such as cholera were the biggest killer of officers, men, and their families. Lieutenant Gravatt died shortly after arrival in late December 1842, believed to be the result of disease.

**Lieutenant Owen Gorman, 80<sup>th</sup> Regiment, 1839-42.** Gorman was the last commandant at Moreton Bay and was the only Moreton Bay commandant to have risen from the ranks, having enlisted as a private in the 58<sup>th</sup> Regiment in 1817. He rose in rank to sergeant major, before being commissioned Quartermaster in 1827, then lieutenant in 1833. After Moreton Bay, Lieutenant Gorman served at Towrang Stockade near Goulburn in New South Wales in 1843. He later retired from the army by sale of his commission in 1847.

#### ***Officers Commanding Brisbane Detachments, 1842-69***

The officers commanding Brisbane detachments during the colonial period after the dissolution of the Moreton Bay penal settlement in 1842 were as follows:

**Lieutenant Patrick Johnston (also as Johnson), 99<sup>th</sup> Regiment, 1842-43.** Johnston was appointed ensign in 1838, lieutenant in 1841, and later captain in 1851. He was despatched to New Zealand for active service against the Māori in the Bay of Islands and was slightly wounded in action at the disastrous engagement at Ohaeawai on 1 July 1845; he also participated in the siege and capture of Ruapekpeka in December 1845 - January 1846.

**Captain William Edward Grant, 58<sup>th</sup> Regiment, 1844.** Grant was appointed ensign in 1831, lieutenant in 1836, and then captain in 1839. Despatched to New Zealand for active service against the Māori in the Bay of Islands, Captain Grant was killed in action at the disastrous engagement at Ohaeawai on 1 July 1845. Grant, along with two other officers killed, Lieutenant Edward Beattie, 99<sup>th</sup> Regiment, and Lieutenant George Philpotts, R.N. (HMS *Hazard*), were buried together on consecrated ground at Waimate. A memorial to Captain Grant was raised in St John's Anglican Cathedral, Parramatta, New

South Wales, and is believed to date from late 1845 or 1846, one of only four contemporary memorials erected in memory of individual officers killed during the New Zealand Wars of 1845-46. The grave of Captain Grant and these other two officers can be found in the Saint John the Baptist Church Cemetery (also known as Waimate North Cemetery), Northland, New Zealand.

**Lieutenant William Hobart Seymour, 99<sup>th</sup> Regiment, 1845-46.** Seymour was appointed ensign in 1839, lieutenant in 1841, and later retired from the army and settled in New South Wales in late 1847. He died at Enfield, near Sydney, in March 1857.

**Lieutenant Charles Blamire, 99<sup>th</sup> Regiment, 1846-47.** Blamire was appointed ensign in 1837 and later captain in 1850.

**Lieutenant George Jean De Winton, 99<sup>th</sup> Regiment, 1847-48,** also served in the abortive North Australia Colony (later Gladstone) during 1847. While serving in Brisbane, Lieutenant De Winton married Fanny Winder in November 1847; their only child was born in 1849 on Norfolk Island, where this child died while his father was still stationed at this posting. De Winton was appointed a magistrate for Moreton Bay during 1847. De Winton is also remembered for his 1898 published book, *Soldiering Fifty Years Ago: Australia in the Forties*, extolling the memory of the 99<sup>th</sup> Regiment and reminiscing about service in the Australian colonies during the 1840s and early 1850s.

**Ensign George John Arnold Mackenzie Cameron, 11th Regiment, 1849-50.** Cameron was appointed ensign in 1844, and after a short period of service left the army and became a settler in Brisbane where he married in 1858. He was also briefly involved in the first volunteer movement when, in December 1860, he was appointed lieutenant in the Brisbane Companies, Queensland Volunteer Rifle Brigade.

**Lieutenant David Thompson Seymour, 12<sup>th</sup> Regiment, 1861-64.** Seymour obtained his lieutenantcy in 1858. Shortly after arrival in Brisbane he was appointed acting private secretary and *aide-de-camp* to Governor Bowen in May 1861. He appears to have carried out these duties until the arrival of Captain H.D. Pitt RA to become *aide-de-camp* to Bowen in August 1862. Seymour saw colonial opportunities rather than continued army service as his career path, and in January 1864 was appointed Acting Commissioner of Police in Queensland; in July 1864 he became Commissioner.

**Lieutenant (later Captain) William Crosbie Siddons Mair, 12<sup>th</sup> Regiment, 1865-66.** Mair obtained his lieutenantcy in 1859,

and a captaincy in 1865. He saw active service in the New Zealand Wars of 1860-61 and 1863-64, before arrival in Brisbane.

**Captain Charles Augustine Fitzgerald Creagh, 50th Regiment**, 1866-68. Creagh and his wife Mary Ann and one child arrived in Brisbane in October 1866. Creagh gained his ensigncy in 1854, and then his lieutenantcy in 1855. He served in the Crimea (1855-56) and was later promoted captain in 1863. He then went to New Zealand and served in the Waikato and West Coast campaigns during 1863-66. Soon after arrival in Brisbane with the first 50<sup>th</sup> Regiment detachment he was appointed *aide-de-camp* to Governor Bowen and served in this capacity from January 1867 to July 1868. He then went on to half-pay in February 1869, before obtaining a commission with the 80<sup>th</sup> Regiment in 1871. With this later regiment he became brevet-major in 1877, major in 1879, lieutenant colonel in 1881, before retiring in 1887 with the brevet (honorary) rank of major general.

**Captain Thomas Millard Benton Eden, 50<sup>th</sup> Regiment**, 1868-69. Eden attained his ensigncy in 1855 and then a lieutenantcy in 1856. He served in the New Zealand West Coast campaign from March 1865 to September 1866. While still serving in New Zealand he obtained his captaincy in 1866. He then arrived in command of the second 50<sup>th</sup> Regiment detachment to Brisbane in February 1868. This company of the 50<sup>th</sup> was the last imperial garrison force to serve in Queensland.

### ***Former Army Officers and Men in Colonial Queensland***

The role of individuals with prior service in the British Army (or Royal Navy) and Honourable East India Company was certainly significant to the growth of the Volunteer movement, while others made contributions in other ways to the social and economic development of colonial Queensland. This included men such as Captain William Irving (28<sup>th</sup> Regiment), who was one of the few Waterloo veterans to settle in the Moreton Bay district. Irving is rarely mentioned as a settler in the district although he did gain some attention as an expert witness in the trial of some soldiers of the 11<sup>th</sup> Regiment at Brisbane who had been charged with manslaughter in the 1849 "affray" at Yorks Hollow.

Another such man was Francis Robert Chester Master, who had commanded the detachment of the 58<sup>th</sup> Regiment stationed at Brisbane briefly between November 1844 and January 1845 before serving in the 1840s New Zealand wars. Master sold his commission upon his return from New Zealand and bought 'Mangoola' at Warwick in 1854.

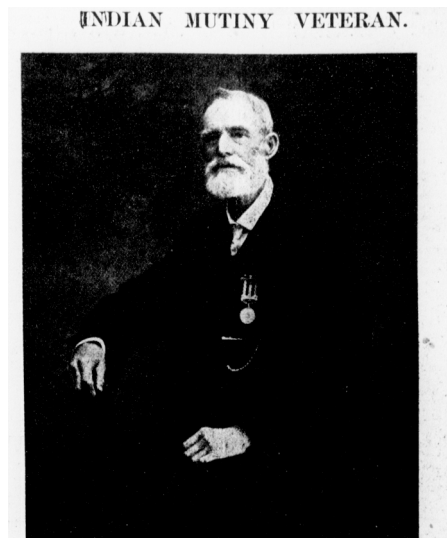
His hospitality was remarked upon in Oscar de Satgé's *Pages from the Journal of a Queensland Squatter* (1901) and he became a noted local celebrity.<sup>22</sup> Indeed, with the initial raising of the Queensland Volunteer Rifles, Master offered his services as an officer. He also went on to contribute to the formation of the Queensland Rifle Association, including framing its rules and regulations.

Other veterans did not prosper, such as George Winfield of the 64<sup>th</sup> Regiment and the Royal Waggon Train, who claimed to have lost his left hand at Waterloo. Service records, however, make no mention of Waterloo and notes only that he had lost "his left hand whilst leaning carelessly on the muzzle of his weapon while on sentry duty at Gibraltar in August 1818". Considering that he had attempted to desert the year before it is possible this incident may not have been the careless accident it seemed. Many examples exist of soldiers resorting to self-harm to escape their military service. In 1874, Winfield, aged 88, was arrested in Brisbane yet again for drunkenness and was sent to the Dunwich Benevolent Asylum where he would die in 1883.<sup>23</sup>

Another comrade-in-arms, and fellow Dunwich resident, was James Farr, who had served in Wellington's army during the Peninsula Wars as well as four and a half years' service in India. In 1868, he petitioned Governor Blackall for a small increase in his military pension and for the Peninsular War Medal (officially known as the Military General Service medal) which he claimed he never received. Sadly, in forwarding the petition to London, Farr's regiment was recorded as the 45<sup>th</sup> instead of 48<sup>th</sup>, with the result that his service record could not be found and his request for both medal and additional allowance were denied. Farr died at Dunwich Benevolent Asylum in March 1875.<sup>24</sup>

While Governor George Bowen had been directed by the Colonial Office to raise Queensland's Volunteer Forces, efforts to create such a body predate his arrival. John Kent, a resident of Ipswich had in July 1839 replaced George Thorn as deputy assistant commissary general at Brisbane, and by August 1859 proposed the formation of a North Australian Rifle Club to "act as light troops for defence".<sup>25</sup> Although this request met with no immediate response, it was not long before Queensland's first volunteer corps was formed with Kent appointed as its first lieutenant in May 1860. Kent's predecessor, George Thorn, had himself been a sergeant in the 4<sup>th</sup> Regiment when it was despatched for convict guard duties to New South Wales in 1835. Thorn, a Peninsular War and Waterloo veteran, was instrumental in the formation of the Ipswich Volunteers as a member of the recruiting committee.

Figure 2: Thomas James Collins proudly wearing his India Mutiny Medal (1857-59). He had served in India with the Bombay Horse Artillery before settling in Toowoomba in 1863, where he died in July 1919, aged 85 (*Darling Downs Gazette*, 3 February 1917, p.4; 11 July 1919, p. 4).



MR. T. J. COLLINS.  
Mr. T. J. COLLINS, of West street, Toowoomba, one of the city's oldest residents, is one of the few remaining veterans of the Indian mutiny. He is wearing the medal issued for service during that strenuous period, together with the slide indicating service right through the mutiny and in all the principle centres of Central India. Mr. Collins is 82 years of age and settled in Toowoomba in 1863. He has three nephews at the front in France.

### **Former British Army Personnel and their Contributions to Queensland**

Many soldiers who had served with their regimental detachments at Brisbane evidently enjoyed their posting and returned to settle upon their discharge, especially through the 1860s and early 1870s. Apart from sergeants Brady and Pike of the 50<sup>th</sup> Regiment, other soldiers such as privates Joseph Tristram, William Kilner, and Thomas Walker of the 12<sup>th</sup> Regiment nominated Brisbane as their place of residence. Former army officers, non-commissioned officers, men, and their families made valuable economic and social contributions as new settlers.

Former Imperial soldiers not only contributed to colonial society as part of the Queensland Volunteer movement but were prevalent within the ranks of the Queensland Police, as well as other civil services, such as the Post and Telegraph, Prisons, or Customs. Most units of the volunteer movement throughout Australia and New Zealand had a small cadre of serving, retired, or discharged army personnel who provided the experience, enthusiasm, and military structure around which colonial units were formed, trained, and operated from the 1860s. Queensland was no exception, with even the police similarly benefitting from a

former 94<sup>th</sup> Regiment corporal, Samuel Grimes, who served as drill instructor at the Police depot at Petrie Terrace during the 1870s and 1880s. Former 12<sup>th</sup> Regiment soldiers Patrick Clancy (see below) and Daniel Cahill joined the Police Force immediately after their return to Brisbane following their 1867 discharge in New Zealand. Cahill shortly after left the police, and then had lengthy employment at the Brisbane Post Office, where another former Brisbane 12<sup>th</sup> soldier, Robert Craft, was similarly employed. Thomas Allen, another 12<sup>th</sup> soldier who was discharged in New Zealand and returned to Brisbane, appears to have served with customs, before ending up running hotels on the Darling Downs.

Figure 3: Indian Mutiny veteran and former Brisbane 12<sup>th</sup> Regiment detachment soldier Patrick Kearns, wearing service medals (*The Queenslander*, 30 November 1895, p. 1029).



Another example is Patrick Kearns, who served with the 53<sup>rd</sup> Regiment during the Indian Mutiny in 1857-58, after which he transferred to the 6<sup>th</sup> Bengal European Fusiliers (March 1860) and then to the 101<sup>st</sup> Foot (February 1861), before taking his discharge in June 1862 to settle with his family in Australia. In July 1863 he re-enlisted in the Army joining the 12<sup>th</sup> Regiment in Sydney. He initially saw service with the Brisbane detachment of the 12<sup>th</sup> during 1863-66, before seeing active service in New Zealand in the late campaigns of 1866-67. Kearns discharged after 21 years of service in November 1868 at Devonport, England. Two weeks later he was granted an Imperial military pension of 1s. 4d. *per diem*.

Sometime after his discharge, Kearns returned to his old 12<sup>th</sup> Regiment posting at Brisbane and first appears in the *Brisbane Post Office Directory* as a hall porter at Parliament House in the early 1880s. It was here that this old be-medalled veteran soldier became a



well-known identity among the political power brokers of Queensland. Kearns died in 1908 and is buried in Toowong Cemetery, Brisbane.

***The Changing Role of the British Army in Frontier Conflict, Internal Order and Colonial Defence***

The units of the British Army and Royal Navy which served in Australia and New Zealand during the nineteenth century represented the moral and physical presence of the British empire situated in the distant south-west Pacific region. The presence of 'redcoats', as the day-to-day Imperial representatives, provided a sense of security and strength often beyond their actual numbers found in garrison. Imperial soldiers were constant reminders for the public of each colony's inclusion within a greater coalition of colonies and territories that made up the powerful British empire. Elements of the 12<sup>th</sup> Regiment (1860-66) followed by the 50<sup>th</sup> Regiment (1866-69), but also including the Royal Navy's small detachment of Royal Marines at Somerset in Cape York (1864-67)<sup>26</sup> would all provide that sense of empire and place in the new colony of Queensland during the 1860s.

The issue of whether British soldiers actively participated in the alienation of Aboriginal land is too vast a subject to be adequately explored here. However, there can be no doubt that conflict at times existed between British soldiers and Aboriginal people from first settlement at Redcliffe in 1824, and through into the 1840s on the Moreton Bay pastoral frontier.<sup>27</sup> British soldiers defended the dray routes through the Darling Downs to the Moreton Bay District, and they were used for punitive expeditions in defence of the civil order in and around Brisbane and the Moreton Bay district. But by the 1850s and 1860s, policing the frontier had become the domain of the police and mounted police forces – which often comprised many former imperial military men or soldiers on secondment from regiments in garrison.

The role of British soldiers in the newly formed colony of Queensland during the 1860s was quite unlike their former service in the penal station of Moreton Bay. Not only had convict transportation to the eastern Australian colonies ceased, and Moreton Bay become a free settlement, but the post-Crimean British Army itself had evolved into a more professional and humane organisation. By the 1860s the once despised red-coated gaolers were becoming the honoured representatives of empire and an integral aspect of colonial society.

***The Redcoat Legacy***

Many soldiers of the British Army settled in colonies such as Queensland after they were discharged, some of these men having served there as part of the garrison detachments, while others arrived because of colonial opportunities and seeking new beginnings. In doing so, these former imperial soldiers would play important roles as settlers and family-men, businessmen and property owners, and through various levels of engagement and responsibilities in the civil service or other areas of employment. One notable source of military settlers in the early 1860s was India, as ex-Honourable East India Company officers, disgruntled by the poor pay and pensions offered by the imperial government, took their retirement in climatically similar Queensland. This point was emphasised by Governor Bowen in 1861 who promoted Queensland as an ideal sanatorium for invalid officers leaving India.

One important legacy of these former British soldiers are the many descendants who now live and work throughout Queensland and elsewhere. It is also the wives and children of these original serving or former soldiers, who should be remembered for their contributions firstly as military families, then later new settlers in places such as Moreton Bay. Substantial evidence of the presence of ex-British military personnel in Queensland colonial society can also be found in the voluminous ledgers of the Imperial Pensions Registers. Long after the last of the regiments left the Australian colonies in 1870, the economic legacy of having so many military out-pensioners certainly made significant contributions to the colonial treasuries of which Queensland was no exception. Between 1872 and 1899 there were no less than 722 persons residing in Queensland receiving an imperial pension and although mostly ex-soldiers, they also included ex-marines, sailors, and soldier's widows and children, as well as many former East India Company veterans. This figure for Queensland recipients of pensions, though, is a deceptive statistic, since the majority of ex-military personnel never received pensions but had rather obtained their discharge by means of purchase or they had received land grants in lieu of a pension.

***A Victoria Barracks veteran: Patrick Clancy***

Patrick Clancy was born in Ireland in 1837, and enlisted in the 1st Battalion, 12<sup>th</sup> Regiment, in 1856, arriving in Australia later this same year. He served briefly in Hobart, before being posted to Launceston, where he met and married Mary Marinan in December 1857. During 1858-62, Clancy served in New South Wales, but in 1862 arrived in

Brisbane as part of a small detachment of the 12<sup>th</sup>.<sup>28</sup>

Clancy served with Brisbane's 12<sup>th</sup> Regiment detachment until October 1866, when the remaining personnel of this detachment were ordered to re-join the main body of the regiment in New Zealand and arrived in Auckland in November 1866. In the Bay of Plenty region, the 12<sup>th</sup> would play an active role in the Tauranga Bush Campaign during late 1866 into early 1867. This would be the last active field service of any regiment of the British Army in the New Zealand campaigns. In March 1867, while still in New Zealand, Clancy took his discharge and promptly returned to Brisbane and applied in writing to his former commanding officer of the Brisbane 12<sup>th</sup> detachment, D.T. Seymour, now Queensland's first police commissioner, offering himself as a candidate for the police. He was formally sworn into the force on 4 May 1867, and as it turned out would be posted back to the Green Hills Barracks now as member of the police.

In 1882 Clancy applied to Commissioner Seymour for consideration for promotion to the rank of senior constable. He emphasised his fifteen years of service with the force, and that he also possessed knowledge of cavalry movements and exercises. Clancy's promotion to senior constable became effective from 1 June 1882. In 1886, Clancy again sought further advancement to the rank of sergeant, but this time he was not successful. During the latter part of his police career his health declined, and he reported sick in October 1886. His health worsened, and a subsequent medical examination led to him being pensioned from the force, effective from March 1888.

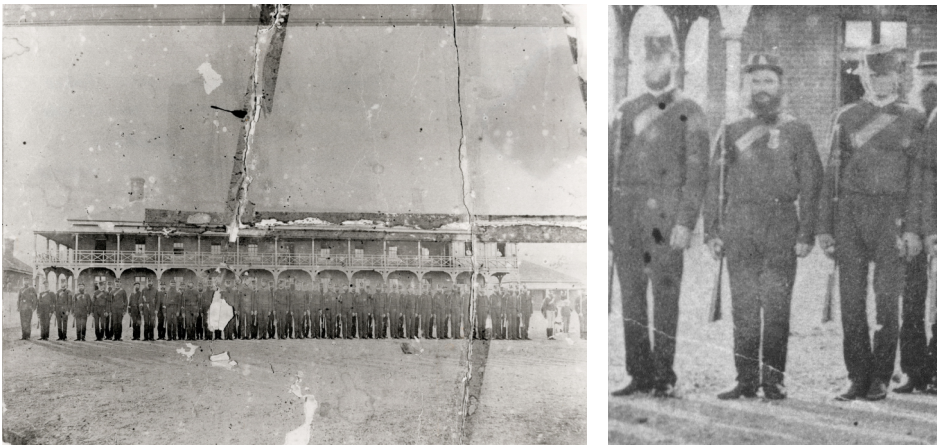


Figure 4: Patrick Clancy, New Zealand War veteran and Brisbane 12<sup>th</sup> Regiment detachment soldier, later Queensland Police officer. Photographed on parade wearing NZ War medal with fellow police officers (see detail), c. 1870-71 (Queensland Police Museum, PM156).

While a member of Brisbane's 12<sup>th</sup> Regiment detachment, Patrick Clancy served at both the William Street (1862-64), and the Green Hills (Petrie Terrace) military barracks (1864-66), with one child born at each site. Later, as a member of the Queensland Police, he appears to have spent much of this lengthy service again at the barracks and stables situated on Petrie Terrace. The span of Clancy's army and police service in Brisbane would also appear to be unique, connecting the imperial and then colonial Queensland government occupancy of the site now known as Victoria Barracks from first use in 1864 through into the late 1880s. He died in the family home in Mountjoy Street, Petrie Terrace, in January 1899, and was buried the following day in Toowong Cemetery.

### Conclusion

With the 12<sup>th</sup> Regiment's Brisbane detachment replaced by a much larger company-sized force from the 50<sup>th</sup> (Queen's Own) Regiment in 1866, the new barracks and facilities were at last put to the capacity usage for which they were originally intended. While this occupancy was only until March 1869 when the 50<sup>th</sup> Regiment – the last Imperial line regiment to serve in Queensland – departed, Brisbane was left with the barracks as an architectural legacy. These barracks would serve the Queensland Police Force, the Volunteers, and Queensland Defence Force admirably until Federation in 1901, and the new Australian nation's federated defence forces after that time in what is now known as Victoria Barracks, Brisbane.<sup>29</sup>

### Notes

<sup>1</sup> Jeff Hopkins-Weise and Rod Pratt are historians who together shared a passion and research interest in the role, service, and experiences of the British Army in colonial Australasia. This article is the final collaborative history which Rod and Jeff worked on during 2021, and is a testament to Rod's contributions to our knowledge of the early British Army in Moreton Bay, Queensland (note by Jeff Hopkins-Weise).

<sup>2</sup> While this article is primarily focussed on the detachments of the British Army which were posted to serve in Moreton Bay or Brisbane, it must not be forgotten that a small detachment of the 3<sup>rd</sup> (The Buffs) Regiment of Foot, commanded by Lieutenant Robert Mackie Stirling, accompanied New South Wales Surveyor-General John Oxley on his voyage of exploration to Port Curtis and Moreton Bay in His Majesty's Cutter *Mermaid* during October-December 1823. Lieutenant Stirling's military surveying and mapping skills greatly contributed to Oxley's final report produced in January 1824, which

favourably recommended Moreton Bay as a site suitable for a penal settlement. Barron Field, ed., *Geographical Memoirs on New South Wales* (London: John Murray, 1825), see especially pp. 1-86; J.G. Steele, *The Explorers of the Moreton Bay District 1770-1830* (St Lucia: University of Queensland Press, 1972), pp. 86-125; Darryl Low Choy, 'Mapping the way: Military surveyors of the Queensland colonial era and earlier', *Queensland History Journal*, 25, 2, (August 2022), pp. 104-8; Darryl Low Choy, 'Out of the Shadows: Three Unknown Military Surveyors of Early Queensland', *Queensland Journal of Military History*, 1, (2022), pp. 7-9.

<sup>3</sup> J.G. Steele, 'Redcliffe in 1824', *Queensland Heritage*, 2 (May 1972), pp. 20-25.

<sup>4</sup> The National Archives [TNA], London: CO 234/9: Colonial Secretary's correspondence, Earl Grey to Under Secretary of State, Colonial Office, 20 April 1863.

<sup>5</sup> A good description of the old barracks and its location is given in the *Brisbane Courier*, 15 October 1866.

<sup>6</sup> The *Brisbane Courier* reported on 29 October 1864 that the William Street Barracks had been finally vacated by the detachment of the 12th Regiment.

<sup>7</sup> Ian Cameron, *125 Years of State Public Works in Queensland, 1859-1984* (Brisbane: Boolarong Press, 1989), p. 74.

<sup>8</sup> Lieutenant-Colonel Hamilton arrived in Brisbane on 9 July, and departed again for Sydney, on 15 July 1862. *Brisbane Courier*, 10, 12 and 16 July 1862; *Sydney Morning Herald*, 8 July and 18 July 1862. Hamilton was a Crimean War veteran, and shortly after in 1863 departed New South Wales to participate in the campaigns of the wars in New Zealand during 1863-66.

<sup>9</sup> *Brisbane Courier*, 12 October 1863.

<sup>10</sup> *Brisbane Courier*, 15 October 1866, and 21 February 1867.

<sup>11</sup> *Brisbane Courier*, 15 January 1864.

<sup>12</sup> *Brisbane Courier*, 29 October 1864.

<sup>13</sup> *Brisbane Courier*, 29 October 1864.

<sup>14</sup> Major-General Trevor Chute was commander of Imperial forces in Australia and New Zealand, following the departure of General Cameron in August 1865, and served in this senior role until 1870. Chute had originally arrived in New Zealand in command of the 70<sup>th</sup> Regiment in 1861, but in March 1863 was appointed brigadier in command in Australia. He returned to Australia in 1867 and resumed his command of the Australian garrison. P. Mennell, *The Dictionary of Australasian Biography* (London: Hutchinson, 1892), p. 92; I. McGibbon, ed., *The Oxford Companion to New Zealand Military History* (Auckland: Oxford University Press, 2000), pp. 87-8.

<sup>15</sup> TNA: CO 234/11: Governor Bowen to the Duke of Newcastle, 21 October 1864.

<sup>16</sup> *Brisbane Courier*, 12 October 1866.

<sup>17</sup> *Brisbane Courier*, 21 February 1867.

<sup>18</sup> Both authors have carried out a preliminary examination of the significant place of the 99<sup>th</sup> Regiment as part of the shared history of Australia and New Zealand through the 1840s and 1850s, including its role in frontier conflict

with Aboriginal peoples in Queensland and Māori peoples in New Zealand. This comparison explores the role and experiences of detachments of the British Army's 99<sup>th</sup> Regiment on three different colonial frontiers during the 1840s transitional period: the end of convict transportation and the opening of free settlement in Moreton Bay in 1842-48, the short-lived North Australia colony (later Gladstone) in 1847, and New Zealand's North Island in 1845-47. See Rod Pratt and Jeff Hopkins-Weise, 'Redcoats in the 1840s Moreton Bay and New Zealand frontier wars', *Queensland Review*, 26 (2019), pp. 32-52.

<sup>19</sup> Rod Pratt, 'The Affray at York's Hollow, November 1849', *Journal of the Royal Historical Society of Queensland*, 18 (2004), pp. 384-96.

<sup>20</sup> Jeff Hopkins-Weise and Rod Pratt, 'Enrolled Pensioners or "Fencibles" in Australasia, 1840s-50s: a forgotten Imperial military force', *The Volunteers: The Journal of the New Zealand Military Historical Society*, 45 (2019), pp. 6-35; Rod Pratt, 'The Enrolled Pensioners of the Bangalore, 1850', *Queensland History Journal*, 24 (2019), pp. 230-8.

<sup>21</sup> Also refer to both authors' recent article exploring the numerous and diverse array of Imperial veterans found in colonial Queensland: Rod Pratt and Jeff Hopkins-Weise, 'Queensland's "Sons of Empire" – veterans of forgotten wars', *Queensland History Journal*, 24 (2020), pp. 642-54.

<sup>22</sup> Oscar de Satgé, *Pages from the journal of a Queensland squatter* (London: Hurst & Blackett, 1901), p. 34.

<sup>23</sup> George Winfield/Wingfield (1785-1883). Discharge pension papers for a George Winfield detail that he served in the Royal Waggon train, May 1815 – 1816, and the 64<sup>th</sup> Regiment of Foot, November 1816 – December 1818, and was discharged aged 20. There is no mention of Waterloo service on this soldier's discharge papers, however there is a description of him losing his left hand whilst carelessly leaning on the muzzle of his weapon while on sentry duty in Gibraltar in August 1818. TNA: WO 97/781/81. Winfield then came to Sydney as a convict guard in 1819, and was later described as a pensioner guard, so may have served in the Royal New South Wales Veterans Corps. Queensland State Archives [QSA]: Item 9518, Register of personal details relating to persons admitted to Dunwich Benevolent Asylum, p. 92; *Brisbane Courier*, 4 October 1872; 5 July 1873, 6 January 1874, 17 November 1877, 6 December 1877, 26 and 29 June 1878, 9 and 10 June 1881.

<sup>24</sup> There is some confusion found in records detailing Farr's military service, and although believed to have served with the 48th Regiment, the Dunwich Benevolent Asylum register for example, records his regiment as the 87th. TNA: WO 97/623/97, James Farr, born Roydon, Hertfordshire, served in 48th Regiment, 1807-28, discharged aged 44 years; QSA: Item 9519, Register of personal details relating to persons admitted to Dunwich Benevolent Asylum 1 January 1859 – 26 January 1875, p. 13; and TNA: CO 234/20, Governor Blackall to Duke of Buckingham, 25 November 1868; CO 234/20, Duke of Buckingham to War Office, 9 February 1869; CO 234/23, Secretary of State for War to Under Secretary of State Colonial Office, 25

February 1869; and CO 234/23, War Office to Governor Blackall, 2 March 1869.

<sup>25</sup> *Moreton Bay Courier*, 7 September 1859.

<sup>26</sup> Both authors had planned a history of the Royal Marines detachment which served at Somerset during 1864-67, especially as it is the largely forgotten imperial force in the colony of Queensland during the 1860s. It is the intention of Jeff Hopkins-Weise that this will indeed be compiled as a future article to better document all the imperial forces which served in Queensland during the nineteenth century.

<sup>27</sup> See Pratt and Hopkins-Weise, 'Redcoats in the 1840s Moreton Bay and New Zealand frontier wars', pp. 32-52.

<sup>28</sup> Patrick Clancy's case study is derived from both authors' earlier research and publication, Rod Pratt and Jeff Hopkins-Weise, *Brisbane's 1st Battalion: 12th (East Suffolk) Regiment Detachments, 1860-66* (Brisbane, 2005), pp. 22-23, 41-43, 51-60, 71, and 119-29.

<sup>29</sup> This article is based on the collective research of both authors, which apart from sources already cited elsewhere in this article include: Rod Pratt "'A brace of pistols in my pocket ... and a cutlass in my hand": Corporal Archibald Campbell's military service in Australia, 1832-1837', *Journal of the Royal Historical Society of Queensland*, 16 (1997), pp. 343-52; Jeff Hopkins-Weise and Rod Pratt, 'The Scarlet Legacy: The British Army's forgotten presence in Moreton Bay, 1860-69', *Sabretache: The Journal and Proceedings of the Military Historical Society of Australia*, 42 (2001), pp. 3-38, and editor's Correction, 42 (2001), p. 1; Jeff Hopkins-Weise and Rod Pratt, 'The 50th (Queen's Own) Regiment Military Guard at the St Helena Penal Establishment, Moreton Bay, 1867-69', *Journal of the Royal Historical Society of Queensland*, 18 (2002), pp. 97-114; Jeff Hopkins-Weise and Rod Pratt, 'New Directions in Australian Colonial Historiography: A Call for the Timely Reintegration of the British Army, Frontier Conflict, and Involvement in Wars of Empire', in C. Dixon and L. Auton, eds., *War, Society, and Culture: Approaches and Issues: Selected Papers from the November 2001 Symposium organised by the Research Group for War, Society, and Culture* (Callaghan, New South Wales, Research Group for War, Society, and Culture (School of Liberal Arts), The University of Newcastle, 2002), pp. 105-116; Jeff Hopkins-Weise, 'Queensland and the New Zealand Wars of the 1860s', *Journal of the Royal Historical Society of Queensland*, 18 (2003), pp. 209-31; Jeff Hopkins-Weise and Rod Pratt, *Brisbane's 50th (Queen's Own) Regiment Detachments, 1866-69: & the Saint Helena Penal Establishment Military Guard* (Brisbane, 2004); Jeff Hopkins-Weise, *Blood Brothers: The Anzac Genesis* (Rosedale, North Shore: Penguin Books, 2009); and Rod Pratt, 'The Military at Moreton Bay, 1825-1842', *Queensland History Journal*, 21 (2015), pp. 819-26.

## **“To Rid of Their Regiment”: Soldiers as Convicts at Moreton Bay Penal Settlement, 1826-1830**

JENNIFER HARRISON

Between 8 and 9 o'clock on the evening of 20 September 1826, Joseph Sudds and Patrick Thompson robbed a York Street shop in Sydney, New South Wales of twelve yards of calico shirting. The two offenders were quickly apprehended and identified as private soldiers of the 57<sup>th</sup> Regiment who had acted quite deliberately having a “fixed determination to commit some species of theft with which they would be transported, *to rid of their regiment*”.<sup>1</sup> According to Lieutenant-General Ralph Darling, Governor of New South Wales, “Several men of the 57<sup>th</sup> Regiment (seven in number) having committed robberies and maimed themselves with the avowed intent of obtaining their discharge from the service, I judged it necessary to take such steps as might have the effect of deterring others from any similar attempt.”<sup>2</sup> Wishing to act decisively when facing this first crisis of his governorship, Darling could not anticipate that his resolution to exceed the defined boundaries of his commission would generate such consequences, censure and criticism.<sup>3</sup>

This paper investigates examples of two categories of soldiers under punishment as convicts at Moreton Bay. Like Private Patrick Thompson, the first group comprises some who came free as military guards on male convict carriers, broke colonial law (sometimes quite intentionally), then after facing trials in Sydney courts were condemned to the penal settlement where fellow enlisted men from their own regiment were supervising. The second set samples others condemned to this station where they personally already had served with their regimental detachment in an administrative capacity.<sup>4</sup>

Martial law imposed on personnel within British army regiments ensured subservience and enforced respect for long established traditions. Offending or striking a senior officer, mutiny or desertion, absence without leave, intoxication and breaches of regional civil law constituted the main crimes for which miscreants were sentenced by courts martial. A General Court Martial was confined to hearing cases against commissioned officers. A General Regimental Court tried non-commissioned officers and other ranks, but could not order sentences