

# TOPIC 21

## Movement of peoples (1750–1914)

### 21.1 Overview

Numerous **videos** and **interactivities** are embedded just where you need them, at the point of learning, in your learnON title at [www.jacplus.com.au](http://www.jacplus.com.au). They will help you to learn the content and concepts covered in this topic.

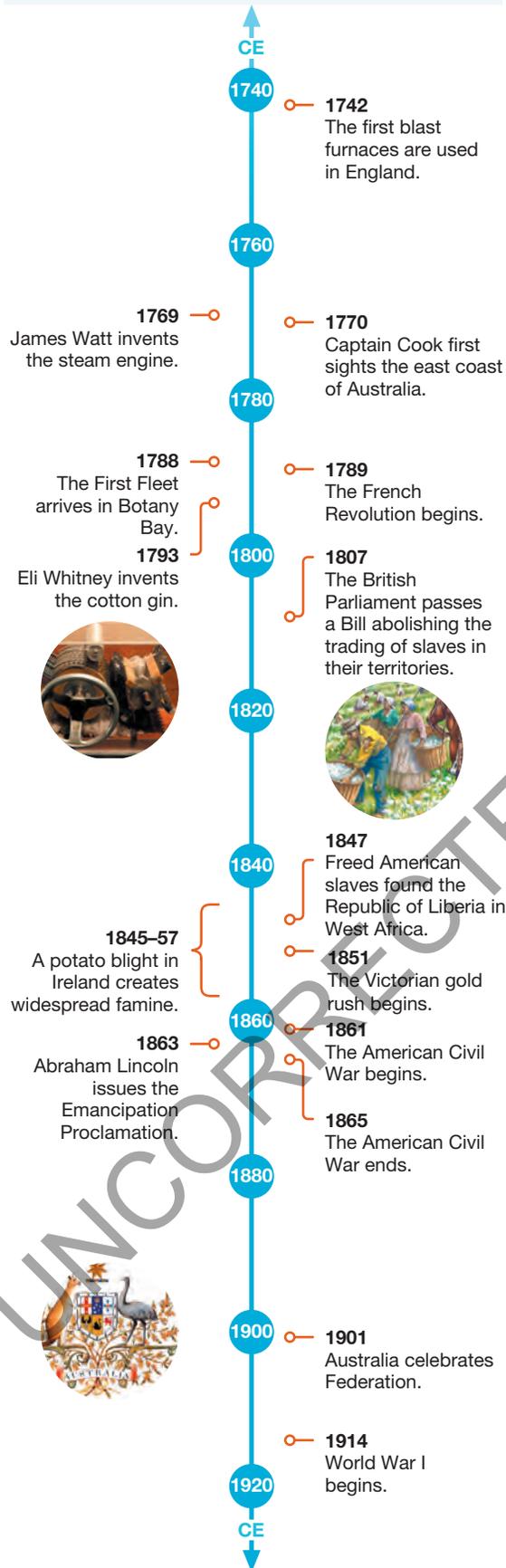
#### 21.1.1 Links with our times

These days it is not unusual for families or groups of people to migrate from one part of the world to another. It is emotionally and physically exhausting to start a new life in a different part of the world, and the situation in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries was not so very different. Political upheavals in Europe and the social and economic dislocation brought about by the Industrial Revolution changed how people lived and worked. Rapid urbanisation forced many people away from one region and towards another — sometimes voluntarily, sometimes against their will, as slaves or convicts.

Today slavery is outlawed, but it still occurs in some countries. Slavery has existed in many cultures for thousands of years, but it was during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries that it played a tragic role in the development of the modern world. In Australia, convict transportation and emigration led to many leaving their homeland to make a new life, with few ever seeing their homeland again.



A timeline of key events relating to movement of peoples, 1750–1914



## Big questions

1. What factors affected the patterns of migration from Britain to Australia in the nineteenth century?
2. What was the significance of European imperialism to slaves, convicts and migrants?
3. What conditions did slaves and convicts face when they were put to work?

## Starter questions

1. Does slavery still exist in the modern world? If so, where?
2. Why do you think slavery continues in some parts of the world?
3. What do you already know about Australia's convict past?
4. Does your family have an immigrant background? If so, do you know why your family decided to migrate to Australia?

## INQUIRY SEQUENCE

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## 21.2 Examining the evidence

### 21.2.1 How do we know about the movement of peoples?

A wide range of historical sources reveal a great deal of useful information about the years between 1750 and 1914. The Industrial Revolution changed the way many people lived and worked. Governments and employers kept records of the people who worked for them. Artists and writers recorded their own impressions of the period.

#### Historical sources

Historians have learned much about the period between 1750 and 1914 by studying a wide range of historical sources. These include written sources such as personal diaries and memoirs, official government reports and other publications. They also include visual sources such as photographs (from the 1830s onwards) and illustrations.

Information about any historical period comes from two main types of sources — primary sources and secondary sources. As you already know, a primary source is a first-hand source produced by someone who witnessed the event being studied. Secondary sources, usually produced at a later time, interpret primary sources.

It is important to bear in mind that a primary source is not necessarily more valuable than a secondary source. Both have value and limitations for historians and history students. Every source may be useful in some ways but less useful in others.

**SOURCE 1** A page from a ship's log. It indicates the ship's course and the wind strength and direction, and allows room for comments by the captain.

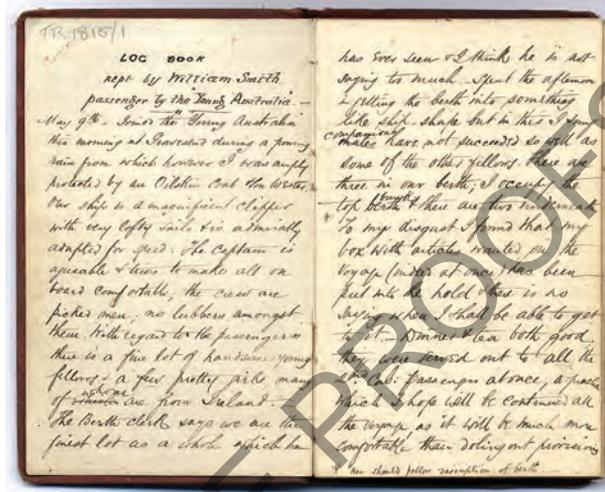
Week	Days	Winds	Course	Dist.	Lat.	Long.	Remarks
Tuesday	16	N 1/2 W	225	5	36.20	7.20	1. The ship's progress and steady temp. High for long time.
Wednesday	17	N 1/2 W	270	16	36.36	7.22	2. The ship's progress and steady temp. High for long time.
Thursday	18	N 1/2 W	270	3	36.39	7.22	3. The ship's progress and steady temp. High for long time.
Friday	19	E 1/2 E	270	8	36.32	7.19	4. The ship's progress and steady temp. High for long time.
Saturday	20	S 1/2 E	225	6	36.36	7.16	5. The ship's progress and steady temp. High for long time.
Sunday	21	S 1/2 W	111	22	36.11	6.18	6. The ship's progress and steady temp. High for long time.
Sunday	22	W					7. The ship's progress and steady temp. High for long time.

**Source 1** shows a page from a ship's logbook. The logbook provides useful information on the technical aspects of the voyage, such as wind speed and course (the direction the ship is travelling). However, there is information that it does not tell us. For example, we don't know what the ship is carrying, and we cannot discover what the passengers and crew were thinking.

**Source 2** offers very different information from **Source 1**. It gives an insight into a migrant's life and reveals one individual's personal feelings, rather than technical information.

**Source 3** provides another interesting perspective. It is an illustration that shows a slave being punished. Although this sort of punishment was certainly common, it is difficult to know whether the scene portrayed recorded an actual event or depicted an event imagined by the artist. Because of this it has both value and limitations as a historical source.

**SOURCE 2** This page from a migrant's diary is a very different type of source from **Source 1**.



**SOURCE 3** This nineteenth-century illustration shows a slave being flogged. We don't know if this specific event actually happened or whether it represents a typical slave punishment.



## 21.2 Putting it all together

### Using historical sources as evidence

- Identify whether each of the following would be a primary or a secondary source for the period studied in this subtopic.
  - A diary of a migrant coming to Australia
  - A photograph of slaves at work on an American cotton plantation
  - A newspaper report from 1863 notifying people about a shipwreck
  - A cartoon from a newspaper portraying life on board a migrant ship
  - A poster advertising an upcoming slave auction.
- In what way is the illustration in **Source 3** useful to a historian? What limitations does this image have as a source? Explain what this tells us about the importance of studying other types of sources in addition to this type.

### Determining historical significance

- Explain how the significance of a historical source can change depending on what information a historian is trying to find.
- How significant would **Source 1** be to a historian who is researching personal stories of migrants? Is there another source that you think would be more useful?

## 21.3 Overview of slavery

### 21.3.1 The origins of the slave trade

Slavery has existed for thousands of years. Many different civilisations around the world have used, and sometimes even still use, slavery in one form or another. But it was only after the arrival of Europeans in the Americas in the late fifteenth century that the slave trade became an **intercontinental** industry. Over the next four hundred years, millions of slaves were transported from Africa to support the industry and economies of America and much of Europe. Slavery helped build the wealth of America and England, but the slaves themselves saw none of that wealth.

When Christopher Columbus reached the Caribbean island of Hispaniola in 1492 he immediately saw the prospective wealth that the New World could bring to Europe. After leaving Spain he had sailed along the coast of Africa and he already had Africans working on his ship. As Spanish settlers began to follow Columbus to make their wealth in the Americas they needed workers. In the early years of the New World, when the Spanish were the most numerous Europeans there, many among the local populations of Native Americans were killed or reduced to slavery.

The slaves were used for labour in South America and to help build the empire of **New Spain** as it expanded northwards. Most were put to work in the goldmines. Facing 18-hour days, six days a week, in terrible conditions, thousands were worked to death or died of starvation or beatings. Thousands more died from introduced diseases, brought by the Europeans, against which the native population had little resistance or immunity. Replacements were needed so African slaves, who had already had contact with Europeans and had built some resistance to European diseases, were transported to New Spain.

**SOURCE 1** Emanuel Downing, a plantation owner from Massachusetts, 1645

I do not see how we can thrive until we get a stock of slaves sufficient to do all our business.

When the English began to establish plantations in the Caribbean islands and the American mainland to grow sugar, cotton and tobacco, they too imported slaves from Africa. They saw the native population as unsuitable for labour and besides, as in New Spain, they were quickly being used up through disease and overwork. African slaves soon became a vital part of the economy of the Americas.

**Source 1** shows the importance placed on slavery by one English plantation owner. Some European labourers and convicts were put to work, but in general European servants were hard to find. Most had come to America to work for themselves, not for someone else. Soon African slaves became household servants as well as manual labourers.

### 21.3.1 Activities

To answer questions online and to receive **immediate feedback** and **sample responses** for every question, go to your learnON title at [www.jacplus.com.au](http://www.jacplus.com.au). *Note:* Question numbers may vary slightly.

#### Check your understanding

1. Why did the English prefer to use slaves from Africa rather than Native American people?
2. Why did slavery become a vital part of the American economy?

#### Using historical sources as evidence

3. Describe the attitude towards slavery of the plantation owner in **Source 1**.

### 21.3.2 Kidnapped and traded

Early European slave traders raided the African coast and kidnapped any able-bodied Africans they could capture. Sometimes they tempted their victims close to the ships with displays of brightly coloured cloth or decorated beads. Later they developed trading arrangements with African tribal chiefs who raided weaker tribes in the interior and brought the slaves they captured to the coastal depots set up by European slavers. Here slaves would be held until there were enough to fill a slave ship. Once sold, slaves were branded with a red-hot iron to indicate who had bought them. Europeans established coastal forts to protect the valuable trade.

**SOURCE 2** Gathering of slaves in Africa, before transportation, created in 1845



**SOURCE 3** This map shows the route the slave ships took in the Triangular Trade.



Source: Spatial Vision

## 21.3.2 Activities

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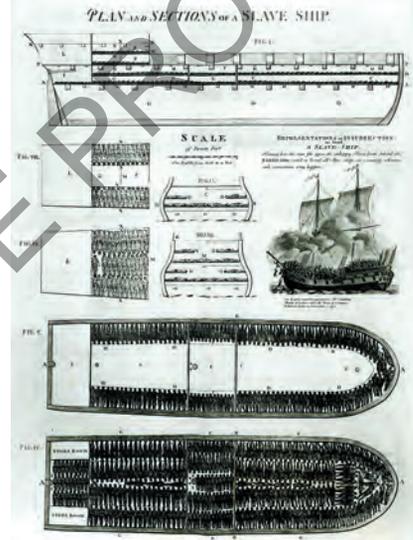
### Check your understanding

1. How did slave traders take advantage of rivalry between different African tribes?
2. Why were slaves branded after they were bought?

## 21.3.3 The Middle Passage

The route taken by slave ships across the Atlantic Ocean forms a rough triangle, hence the Atlantic slave trade is often referred to as the Triangular Trade. Ships left Europe with goods to sell in West Africa. There they sold the goods and filled their ships with slaves. The map in [Source 3](#) shows the main route of the Triangular Trade. This ‘cargo’ was packed tightly in the ship’s holds for the terrible Middle Passage, crossing the Atlantic Ocean to the Americas (see [Source 4](#)). Conditions on slave ships were appalling. Those who did not survive the journey, perhaps as many as one quarter of the total, were simply thrown overboard. For the final leg of the triangle the ships were loaded with goods and raw materials such as sugar, rum, cotton and tobacco to be sold on their return to Europe. These raw materials would be processed in Britain and then sold for profit.

**SOURCE 4** This plan of a slave ship from 1789 shows how tightly packed the slaves were.



## 21.3.3 Activities

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### Check your understanding

1. Why is the African slave trade referred to as the Triangular Trade?

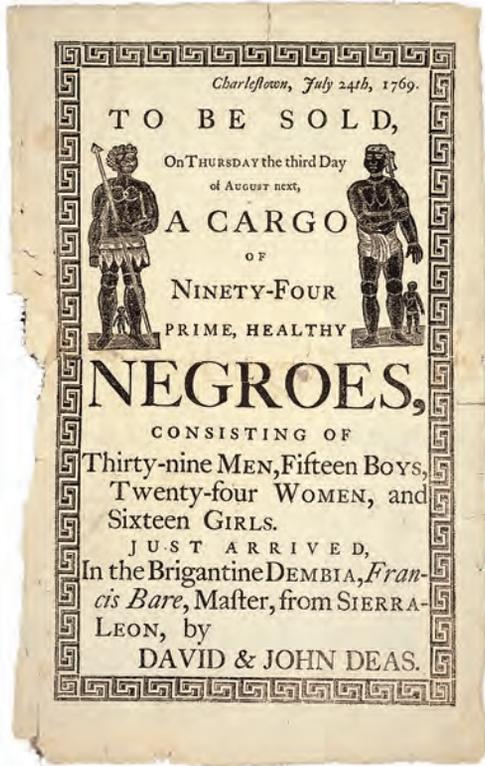
### Using historical sources as evidence

2. Sketch the map in [Source 3](#) and then add labels to identify what the ships would be carrying on each leg of the Triangular Trade.
3. Explain what [Source 4](#) suggests about the way slaves were regarded by the slave traders.

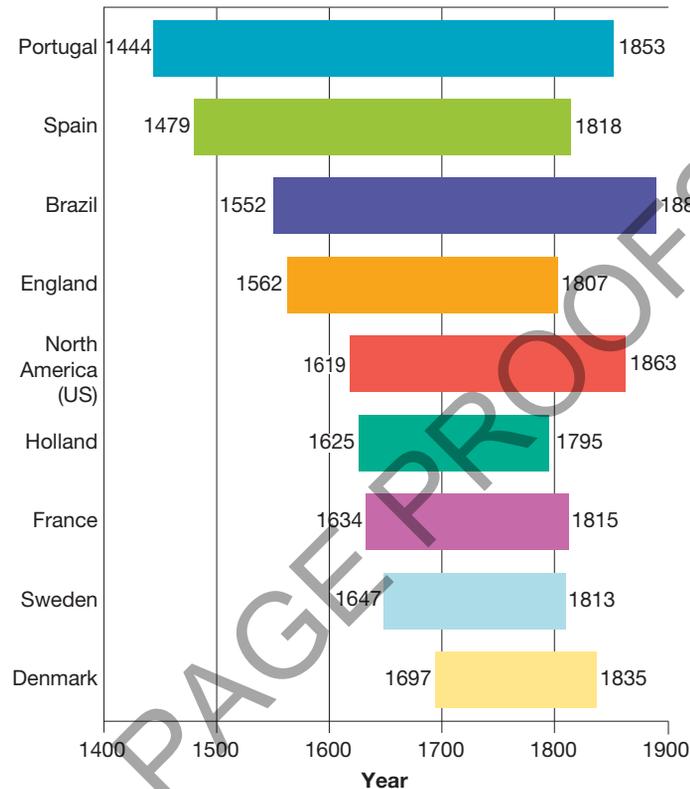
## 21.3.4 Sold

As slave ships arrived at ports in the Caribbean and along the coast of North America, plantation owners would gather to make their purchases. Posters like the one shown in [Source 5](#) advertised upcoming ship arrivals, detailing the number of slaves available and their state of health. There were generally two ways in which a slave sale would take place. The first, referred to as a ‘scramble’, must have been particularly terrifying for the slaves. Upon arrival in port the slaves were herded together either on the deck of the ship or in a nearby auction yard. Buyers paid a fixed amount before the sale and at a given signal rushed at the slaves, grabbing as many as they could. In the process families would often be separated, husbands from wives, parents from children.

**SOURCE 5** A poster advertising an upcoming slave sale



**SOURCE 6** A chart showing approximately when different countries engaged in the slave trade



The other type of sale took place at an auction at which individual slaves were sold to the highest bidder (see **Source 7**). Slaves were made to stand on a raised platform so they could be inspected by prospective owners. Their teeth would be examined to check their health. Signs of beatings could lower the price because they suggested a poor worker or potential escapee. In reality, scars were more likely to be a sign of violent abuse than of insolence. Sometimes unscrupulous doctors would buy weak or sick slaves in the hope of strengthening them and selling them on for a profit.

**SOURCE 7** This painting by German artist Friedrich Schulz illustrates what a slave auction in the southern states may have looked like.



**SOURCE 8** A slave auction house in Virginia, c. 1860. The sign reads 'Price, Birch & Co., dealers in slaves'.



During the entire ordeal the slaves themselves knew nothing of what was going to happen to them. They did not speak the language of their captors and had no knowledge of their world. They were alone, usually separated from their families. Once sold they were often given a new name and branded a second time by their new owner before being sent to work.

Precise figures are unknown, but it is believed that at least 15 million Africans were forced from their homes and sold into slavery in the Americas, the majority taken by Spanish slavers to Brazil.

### 21.3.4 Activities

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#### Check your understanding

1. Outline the two types of slave sale that took place.
2. Suggest why slaves were given new names by their owners after they were bought.
3. Explain why it is difficult to gain accurate figures of the numbers of slaves bought and sold in the Triangular Trade.

## 21.3 Putting it all together

### Using historical sources as evidence

1. Use the chart in **Source 6** to answer the following questions.
  - (a) What was the first country on this chart to engage in the slave trade?
  - (b) What country was the last to abolish the slave trade?
  - (c) Which country practised the slave trade for the longest time? Suggest a reason for this.
  - (d) For how many years did England practise the slave trade?
  - (e) What values and limitations does historical information presented in a graph have compared with the other sources in this subtopic?
2. Use **Sources 4, 5, 7 and 8** to write a summary paragraph of the experience of a slave from living in freedom to being sold at a slave market. Refer to specific aspects of the sources as you go.

## Identifying cause and effect

3. Specify and explain the causes of the Triangular Trade, indicating clearly why people from Africa were transported across the Atlantic Ocean.
4. Outline the unintended effect of using Native American people as labour.



Deepen and check your understanding of this topic with related case studies and auto-marked questions.

- Movement of peoples
- Slave trade

# 21.4 Slavery and the cotton trade

## 21.4.1 'King Cotton'

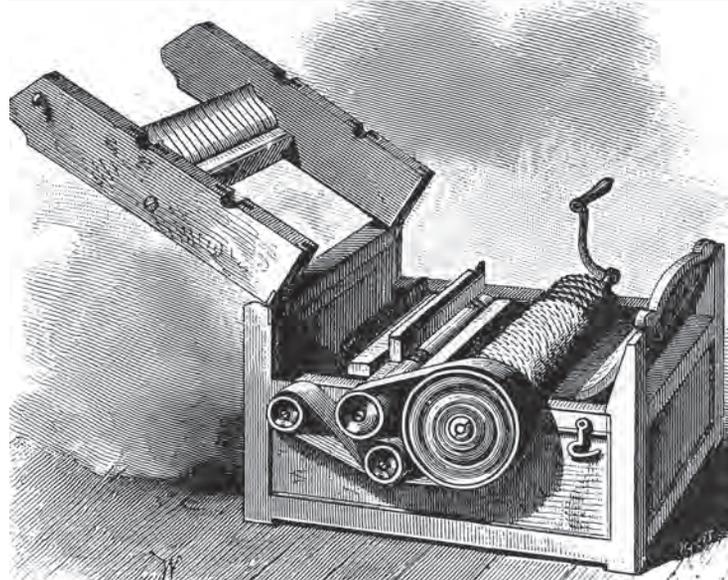
The Industrial Revolution improved the lives of millions of people around the world. Mass-produced goods became more accessible and cheaper to buy. But while life was made easier for some, for many others the changes meant only a life of back-breaking labour.

The Industrial Revolution resulted in a massive boost to the textile industry in Britain. As mechanisation increased, the need for raw materials grew. Textiles became Britain's largest export, and the textile mills demanded more and more cotton. Until the early 1800s Britain's cotton came mainly from India, but India was now unable to keep up with the demand. So Britain turned to the southern states of the United States, where cotton was a growing industry.

The long, hot summers and rich soils of the South were ideal for cotton production, but the work in the cotton fields was brutal. After the cotton was picked, slaves had to separate the seeds from the cotton fibre. This was very labour intensive: a slave working from dawn until dusk would be able to process about half a kilogram of cotton. In 1793 an inventor named Eli Whitney invented a machine that removed the seeds automatically (see **Source 1**). With the cotton engine, or 'cotton gin' as it was called, a slave could seed more than 20 kilograms of cotton in a day — about forty times as much as before the invention.

Whitney could not have foreseen the consequences of his invention as its use became widespread in the American cotton fields. It certainly made cotton processing easier for the slaves, but this massive increase in production meant the demand for slaves also increased. Cotton quickly became the backbone of the economy in the southern United States, overtaking both tobacco and sugar. The southern states produced 75 per cent of the world's cotton. The expression 'King Cotton' was used by southern politicians to illustrate its economic importance. Between 1820 and 1860 cotton production increased seventeen-fold and the number of slaves increased by 250 per cent, despite the fact that half of all babies born to slaves died in infancy. Interestingly, only around a quarter of southern farmers actually owned slaves, but slavery was so important to the economy of the South that any opposition to it was regarded almost as treason.

**SOURCE 1** Eli Whitney's cotton gin



## 21.4.1 Activities

To answer questions online and to receive **immediate feedback** and **sample responses** for every question, go to your learnON title at [www.jacplus.com.au](http://www.jacplus.com.au). *Note:* Question numbers may vary slightly.

### Check your understanding

1. Why were the southern states of the United States an ideal place to grow cotton?
2. What invention made removing seeds from cotton much faster?
3. What proportion of southern farmers owned slaves?

## 21.4.2 Life on the plantation

Of every hundred slaves taken captive in Africa, about twenty-five died before being put to work. Another third of those who survived long enough to reach a plantation died within two years. The survivors experienced the process called ‘seasoning’ during which they learned their roles and grew to fear the slave drivers. Punishment for wrongdoing was harsh. For any sign of resistance to cruel treatment or for working too slowly, slaves might expect to be lashed or made to walk a **treadwheel**. The other slaves were often forced to witness the punishments as a deterrent. **Source 2** recalls one instance of a slave being punished.

Slaves’ living quarters were very simple. Sometimes the plantation owner would provide basic quarters, but often the slaves would have to build their own. There was little furniture and beds were simply straw or rags on the ground. Slaves who worked as house servants usually had better quarters and food than those who worked in the fields.

**SOURCE 2** Description of a flogging from C. Bull, *Slavery in the United States*, 1836

I had often seen black men whipped, and had always, when the lash was applied with great severity, heard the sufferer cry out and beg for mercy — but in this case, the pain inflicted was so intense, that Billy never uttered so much as a groan. The blood flowed from the commencement, and in a few minutes lay in small puddles at the root of the tree. I saw flakes of flesh as long as my finger. When the whole five hundred lashes had been counted the half dead body was unbound and laid in the shade of the tree upon which I sat.

**SOURCE 3** A modern artist’s reconstruction of a typical cotton plantation

- A** Slaves often had to build their own small quarters.
- B** Baled cotton was transported on carts.
- C** Cotton was also transported on barges.



- D** Labour on a cotton plantation was back-breaking.
- E** Slave drivers oversaw work on the plantation.

## 21.4.2 Activities

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### Check your understanding

1. What percentage of slaves taken captive survived the 'seasoning' process?
2. Explain why it was important for slaves to fear the slave drivers.

### Using historical sources as evidence

3. What effect would the punishment described in **Source 2** have on slaves who witnessed it?
4. Identify elements in **Source 3** that illustrate the value of cotton at the time.

## 21.4 Putting it all together

### Identifying continuity and change

1. Identify the changes brought to America by the cotton industry.

### Analysing cause and effect

2. Examine the positive and negative effects on the life of a slave after the introduction of the cotton gin.

### Determining historical significance

3. How would you respond to the statement 'The invention of the cotton gin was one of the most significant events in history'? To what extent can this statement be justified?

## 21.5 The end of slavery?

### 21.5.1 Early opposition

Many of the people who supported the institution of slavery argued it was an effective way to introduce Christianity, the values of civilisation and the virtue of hard work to those under its control. This made it difficult for opponents of slavery to have their voices heard. But over time ideas and values began to change. It was through the relentless efforts of a core of committed people that the Atlantic slave trade was eventually outlawed.

Supporters of slavery in the US argued that it was essential to the economy of the southern states. Despite its being banished in most northern states from 1787, the southern states would stubbornly resist **abolition**. Reformers spoke patiently at meeting after meeting about the terrible facts of the slave trade. They presented petitions and lobbied politicians to support their cause.

**SOURCE 1** The British Parliament debates slavery.



In 1772 a test case heard in England addressed the fate of a runaway slave named James Somersett. An English reformer, Granville Sharp, argued that under English law all men are free, and the Chief Justice, Lord Mansfield, agreed with him. The Mansfield Judgement declared slavery to be illegal in England and Wales. Although there was still much to be done to eliminate slavery completely, this case is considered to be an important early step on the road to abolition.

### 21.5.1 Activities

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#### Check your understanding

1. Explain the meaning of the word 'abolition'.
2. Why did the southern states resist the abolition of slavery?

### 21.5.2 The movement gains momentum

Fifteen years after the Mansfield Judgement, the abolitionist Thomas Clarkson formed the Society for the Abolition of the Slave Trade. Its emblem, shown in **Source 2**, was a kneeling, shackled slave with the question 'Am I not a man and a brother?' around him. Many supporters of slavery, who certainly did not think of slaves as brothers, were incensed by the suggestion. They maintained that ending slavery would bring about economic ruin. This claim was challenged by a young economist, Adam Smith, who argued that it cost more to feed and house a slave than to employ a free man to do the same work.

At about the same time as the Mansfield Judgement, a young English member of Parliament named William Wilberforce began to campaign against slavery. As a close friend of the prime minister, William Pitt, Wilberforce became a pivotal force in the abolition movement. He knew that many politicians in England still did not care about the fate of African slaves overseas, so instead he focused on the terrible conditions that British sailors endured in maintaining the trade. In 1807 the British Parliament finally passed a bill abolishing the trading of slaves in British territories. This did not make it illegal to own slaves, only to buy new ones. It wasn't until 1833 that all slaves in the British Empire were freed.

**SOURCE 2** The emblem of the Society for the Abolition of the Slave Trade



### 21.5.2 Activities

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#### Check your understanding

1. What was the economic argument for abolishing slavery?
2. What important step towards abolition was made in 1807?

#### Using historical sources as evidence

3. Outline the meaning of the phrase 'Am I not a man and a brother?' in **Source 2**.

### 21.5.3 Abolition in America

Despite abolition in Britain the southern plantation states of the United States still clung to slavery. The plight of slaves was highlighted in 1852 with the publication of Harriet Beecher Stowe's novel *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. The stories of runaway slaves who escaped to the north with the help of the 'Underground Railroad' — a secret network of sympathisers — increased calls for abolition. One such escapee was Frederick Douglass, who became a famous orator and statesman who worked tirelessly for the abolition cause.

On 1 January 1863 President Abraham Lincoln signed the Emancipation Proclamation, declaring that all slaves in the United States were 'henceforth and forever free'. There is no doubt that it was a political as much as a moral decision. Lincoln knew that because the country was in the middle of a bitter civil war between northern and southern states, it would be almost impossible to enforce. However, it was an important step towards ending slavery, and two years later, at war's end, the Thirteenth Amendment to the US Constitution allowed 'neither slavery nor involuntary servitude' in the United States. All slaves were now free. But laws alone cannot change how people think, and life for many freed slaves remained harsh. Even today African Americans face much disadvantage.

#### DID YOU KNOW?

The American Civil War was fought between 1861 and 1865 over a range of issues. Among them, the issue of slavery has become the most famous. During the war more than one hundred and fifty thousand freed slaves served in the Union army against the southern states that supported slavery. The most famous unit was the 54th Massachusetts Regiment, commanded by Robert Gould Shaw. The volunteer soldiers of the regiment were recruited by white abolitionists. The story of the 54th Massachusetts Regiment was the subject of the 1989 film *Glory*.

**SOURCE 3** A quote from Frederick Douglass, 1852

What to the slave is the 4th of July?

### 21.5.3 Activities

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#### Check your understanding

1. Why would it have been almost impossible to enforce the Emancipation Proclamation?
2. What was the outcome of the Thirteenth Amendment?

#### Using historical sources as evidence

3. Look at **Source 1** and suggest why it took a long time for the British Parliament to make a decision to abolish slavery.
4. Research the significance of 4 July for the United States and explain what Frederick Douglass meant in the quote in **Source 3**.

## 21.5 Putting it all together

### Identifying cause and effect

1. Summarise the short- and long-term effects of the Mansfield Judgement on the abolition of slavery.

### Determining historical significance

2. Choose one of the following people on whom to conduct further research: Frederick Douglass, John Newton, Harriet Beecher Stowe, Nat Turner, John Brown, Harriet Tubman. Evaluate their significance to the abolitionist cause using the criteria of importance, profundity, quantity, durability, relevance.

## 21.6 Crime and punishment

### 21.6.1 New society, old solutions

Between 1788 and 1868, around 160 000 British and Irish convicts were transported to the Australian colonies as a punishment for crime. Given the nature of many of their crimes, such as pickpocketing, petty theft and forgery, the punishment appears harsh. How had British society come to this? Why were punishments for seemingly minor crimes so severe? The answers lie partly in the nature of society at the time.

The Industrial Revolution transformed the British economic base from agriculture to industry. In a process called enclosure (see [topic 19](#)), wealthy landowners bought up small farms and fenced off common land to combine into single, large estates, in order to make production consistent and more efficient with the use of new technologies. Production was often more efficient, but the process of enclosure also resulted in poor farmers being forced from their homes and livelihoods. Similarly, in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in Scotland, thousands of country people were forced from their homes during the infamous Highland Clearances by landlords eager to improve the agricultural output of their land.

With more efficient and mechanised farming practices, fewer agricultural workers were needed. As employment opportunities in the rural areas of Britain declined, the towns filled with those seeking work. Even with the industrial boom, however, there simply were not enough jobs. Some turned to gambling or alcohol in search of escape. For the desperate, crime became a way to survive.

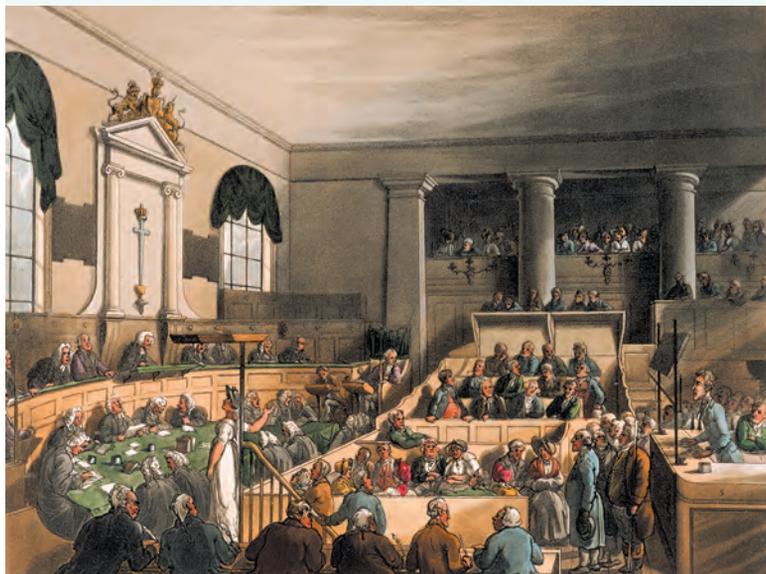
The government's response to these growing social problems was simply to make criminal punishments harsher. About two hundred different crimes drew the death penalty. Yet the threat of hanging did not have the effect the government desired. Public hangings, intended to serve as a warning, took on a carnival atmosphere (see [Source 1](#)). Thousands of people gathered to watch, even bringing their children to the spectacle. A bulletin called *The Newgate Calendar*, subtitled 'The Malefactors' Bloody Register', was published each month with the names of all those executed. It soon contained biographies and stories of criminals and became a regular bestseller.

While many crimes were punishable by hanging, others carried a sentence of **transportation**. In some cases, the death penalty might be **commuted** to transportation. This meant being

**SOURCE 1** An eighteenth-century artwork showing a public hanging at London's notorious Old Bailey prison



**SOURCE 2** This artwork from c. 1809 shows a trial in session at the Old Bailey courthouse in London.



banished from England to serve out the sentence in one of Britain's distant colonies. In the 1700s most convicts were sent to America to work on the cotton or sugar plantations, but this was not popular with plantation owners, who found slaves more manageable. At any rate, the American Revolution of the 1770s brought this option to an end. For a time convicts were dispatched to West Africa on the ships sent out to pick up their human cargo in the Triangular Trade, but disease, starvation, desertion and mutiny took their toll on convicts and military personnel alike. The plan was a disastrous failure.

### 21.6.1 Activities

To answer questions online and to receive **immediate feedback** and **sample responses** for every question, go to your learnON title at [www.jacplus.com.au](http://www.jacplus.com.au). *Note:* Question numbers may vary slightly.

#### Check your understanding

1. Why did so many people turn to crime in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries?
2. Why were punishments for crimes so harsh in eighteenth-century England?
3. Explain the plantation owners' preference for slaves rather than convicts as workers.
4. What made Africa an unsuitable place to send convicts?

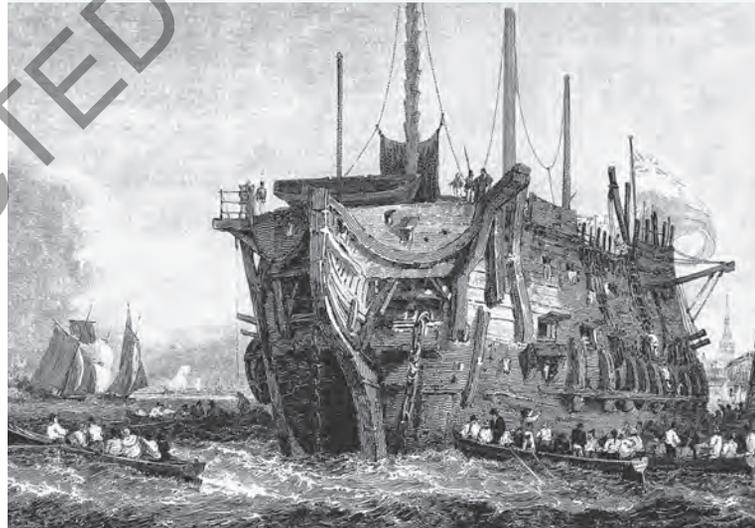
#### Using historical sources as evidence

5. Describe the scene in **Source 1**. Evaluate the effectiveness of the intention to make an example of those being hanged.

### 21.6.2 What to do?

Despite harsh punishments, the numbers of people in Britain's prisons remained a concern for the government. While convicts were not being transported, the hangman was kept busy and prisons were overflowing. In an attempt to address this problem, old decommissioned naval ships, of which there were plenty after the end of the war with America, were turned into floating prisons called **hulks**. As a short-term fix the hulks were a success, but they soon became cramped, stinking and rat-infested, and merely delayed the inevitable. Soon enough they too were impossibly overcrowded. The government urgently needed a long-term solution.

**SOURCE 3** A prison hulk moored in the Thames River, London. This artwork dates to c. 1826.



#### DID YOU KNOW?

In eighteenth-century England about two hundred crimes were punishable by the death penalty. They included:

- murder
- pickpocketing
- poaching
- highway robbery
- stealing horses or sheep
- cutting down young trees.

Children were often among those sentenced to death.

## 21.6.2 Activities

To answer questions online and to receive **immediate feedback** and **sample responses** for every question, go to your learnON title at [www.jacplus.com.au](http://www.jacplus.com.au). *Note:* Question numbers may vary slightly.

### Check your understanding

1. What were hulks and why were they necessary?

### Using historical sources as evidence

2. Using **Source 3** as a reference, make a list of reasons why the conditions on a hulk were so terrible.

## 21.6 Putting it all together

### Using historical sources as evidence

1. Organise the three sources in this spread into an order that could tell the story of an accused criminal passing through the justice system of eighteenth-century England. Annotate each source as if it were a frame in a comic strip.

### Identifying continuity and change

2. What were the main changes in the justice system that occurred in England during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries?

### Analysing cause and effect

3. Explain the short-term effects of the American Revolution on the transportation of convicts from England.

## 21.7 Transportation to Australia

### 21.7.1 A solution presents itself

In the 1770s the British government faced a major social problem. The country's prisons were overflowing, and the newly independent United States refused to take any more of Britain's unwanted convicts. The hangman's noose was not proving to be an effective deterrent.

**SOURCE 2** A portrait of Captain Arthur Phillip painted in 1786



**SOURCE 1** A handwritten 'report of convicts under sentence of transportation'

*Report of Convicts under Sentence of Transportation received from several Gaols by command of His Majesty on board the Boreas Hulk at Botolph Claydon from the 15 January to the 15 April 1787*

NAMES	Age	When they were committed	Sentence
1. John Dennis	31	16th Decr 1786	7 years
2. John Maffias	19	ditto	7
3. Samuel Biddle	19	ditto 12 Jan 1787	7
4. George Annandale	30	ditto	7
5. Charles Paul	25	ditto 5 Decr 1786	7
6. John Charles	24	ditto	7
7. John Staines	28	ditto	7
8. James Staines	28	ditto	7
9. Joseph Stone	17	ditto 19 March 1786	7
10. John Potts	25	ditto	7
11. John Matthew Cox	30	ditto	7
12. John Buffler	25	ditto	7
13. Richard Middleton	25	ditto	7
14. Thomas Still	20	ditto	7
15. Thomas Cook	25	ditto	7
16. Richard Gault	21	ditto	7
17. James Smith	18	ditto 25 March 1786	7
18. Thomas Jones	21	ditto	7
19. William Stenton	21	ditto 7 July 1786	7
20. William Lee	26	ditto	7
21. John Phipps	30	ditto	7
22. William Wright	20	ditto 15 Sept 1786	7
23. William Morgan	17	ditto	7
24. John Staley	27	London 21 April 1786	7
25. Thomas Brimman	24	ditto 20 Oct 1786	7
26. John Hall	25	ditto 21 April 1786	7
27. John Staines	30	ditto	7
28. Richard Powell	21	ditto 7 Oct 1786	7
29. Richard Smith	20	ditto	7
30. Thomas Griffiths	25	ditto 15 Sept 1786	7
31. James Stenton	25	ditto 28 Oct 1786	7
32. James Davis	25	ditto 5 Decr 1786	7
33. William Staines	27	ditto 12 Jan 1787	7
34. Thomas Cook	25	ditto 18 Jan 1787	7
35. James Staines	26	ditto 19 July 1786	7
36. William Stenton	28	London 15 August 1786	7

New prisons were considered too expensive to build, and not many people really cared enough about the problem anyway. As the situation worsened one distant possibility began to emerge as a real option.

In 1770 Captain James Cook had sighted and charted much of the eastern coastline of Australia. But Britain, at war with France and distracted by the increasingly rebellious American colonies, was already under financial strain and did not follow up Cook's expedition. With the loss of the American colonies, however, the possibility of transportation to New South Wales began to gain support. Joseph Banks, a botanist who had sailed with Cook in 1770, enthusiastically agreed and thought that Botany Bay would be an ideal place for a settlement.

It was soon recognised that a British colony in New South Wales would serve several useful purposes. It would go some way towards compensating for the loss of the American colonies. It would provide Britain with an important military and imperial presence in the southern Pacific region. It would also be a dumping ground for convicts, whose labour could be used to help build the colony. In August 1786 the British government made the decision to establish a convict settlement in New South Wales.

Once the decision was made, the fleet had to be assembled. Captain Arthur Phillip, an experienced naval officer, was chosen to lead the fleet. It was his job to prepare the 11 ships for the 20 000-kilometre voyage. It took six months to complete the preparations and, by May 1787, the fleet had assembled at Portsmouth on the south coast of England.

The convicts walked through the town to the docks, to the dismay of many townspeople, and were rowed out to the waiting ships in small boats. The fleet left with little fanfare at three o'clock on the morning of 13 May 1787.

Nearly 1500 men, women and children were on board when the fleet weighed anchor. Among the officials were Captain Phillip, a judge, a doctor, a surveyor and a chaplain. The ships' crews numbered about 450. Just over two hundred marines sailed with the fleet, their purpose to protect the fleet in the event of attack and to control the convicts. Twenty-seven dependants of the marines — wives and children — were also on board. Finally there were the convicts themselves. Numbering 759, they accounted for half the complement of the fleet. There were roughly three male convicts for every female.

### 21.7.1 Activities

To answer questions online and to receive **immediate feedback** and **sample responses** for every question, go to your learnON title at [www.jacplus.com.au](http://www.jacplus.com.au). *Note:* Question numbers may vary slightly.

#### Check your understanding

1. Identify two reasons why New South Wales was a favourable choice for transportation of convicts.
2. How far was the voyage from Portsmouth to New South Wales?

### 21.7.2 Bound for Botany Bay

Today's cruise liners can sail around the world without needing to put into port, but in the eighteenth century it was a very different story. The ships of the First Fleet were small and needed to regularly resupply (see Source 4). The fleet made three stops on the voyage to take on food and water and tend to repairs. On their final port of call, the Cape of Good Hope on the southern tip of Africa, they also secured a range of plant seeds for food crops in the new settlement.

Captain Phillip knew that the long voyage across the Indian Ocean could be the most treacherous of all. It would also be the most frightening for both crew and convicts because they were sailing into largely unknown waters. Phillip decided to split the fleet so the better sailers would not have to wait for the slower ships. For nine weeks the ships were battered by the winds of the **Roaring Forties**. Livestock were thrown about and injured, and even some of the most experienced seamen were seasick. Conditions for the convicts below deck were most likely terrible. Remarkably, none of the eleven ships were lost.

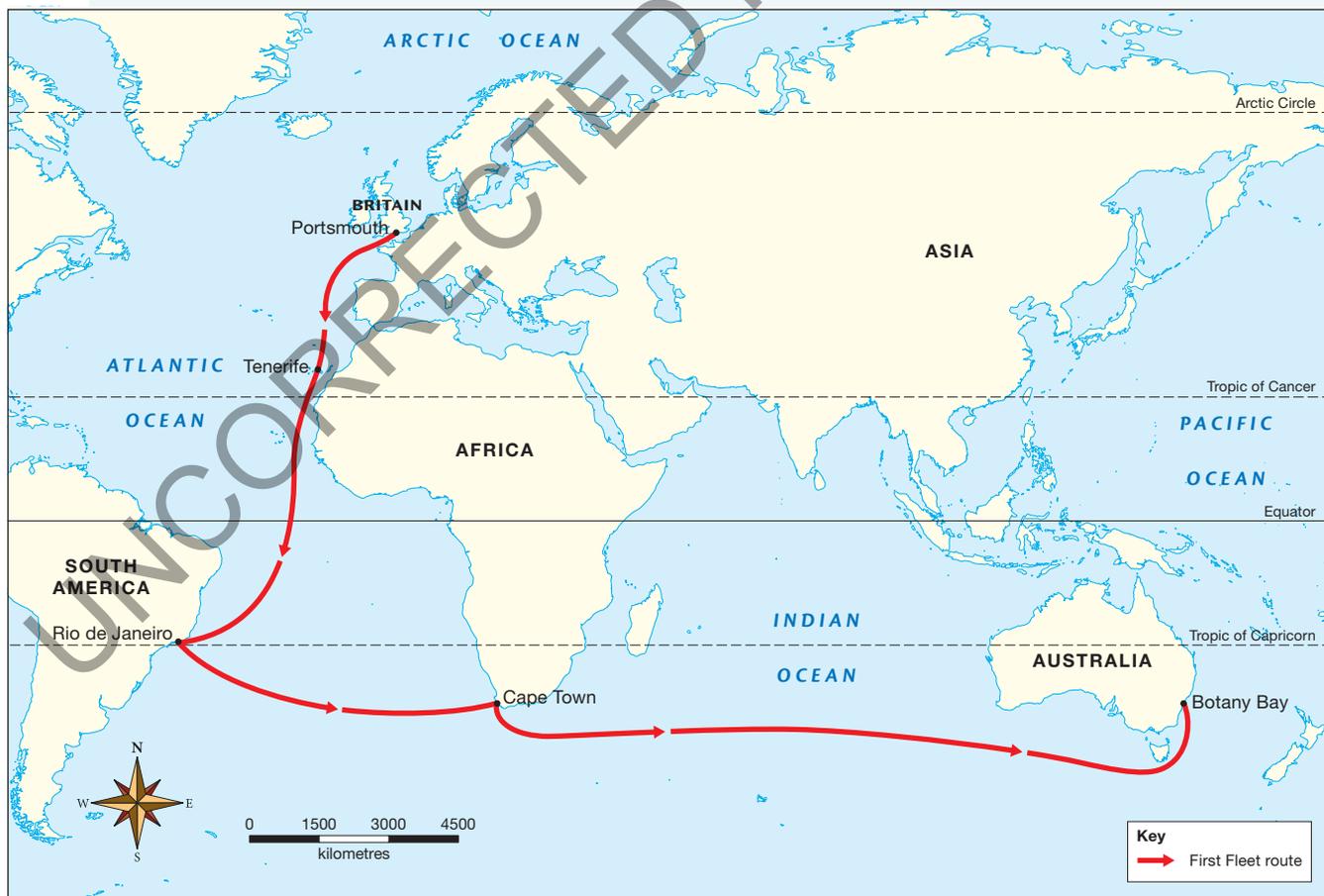
With what must have been great relief the fleet sailed into Botany Bay on 18 January 1788, but neither the bay nor the land surrounding it met their expectations. The bay was shallow and offered little protection from storms; the soil was sandy; and there was no good, easily accessible supply of freshwater. For a moment Captain Phillip must have thought that the entire voyage might end in disaster.

All was not lost, however. In 1770 Captain Cook had sailed past another bay a few kilometres to the north and had named it Port Jackson. He did not explore it but recorded that it appeared to be a good harbour. Phillip left the fleet at Botany Bay to survey Port Jackson for himself, finding it ‘the finest harbour in the world’. The rest of the fleet soon transferred to Port Jackson, anchoring in the cove within it that Phillip named after Lord Sydney, Britain’s Home Secretary and the man who had appointed him. The water at Sydney Cove was deep enough for ships to anchor close to the shore, and there was a good supply of freshwater. The new colony was officially proclaimed on 26 January 1788.

**SOURCE 3** Captain Arthur Phillip raising the British Union Jack at Sydney Cove. This artwork was painted in 1937.



**SOURCE 4** A map tracing the First Fleet’s voyage



Source: Spatial Vision

## 21.7.2 Activities

To answer questions online and to receive **immediate feedback** and **sample responses** for every question, go to your learnON title at [www.jacplus.com.au](http://www.jacplus.com.au). *Note:* Question numbers may vary slightly.

### Check your understanding

1. How many years after Captain Cook's voyage did the First Fleet arrive in Botany Bay?
2. How long did the voyage of the First Fleet take?
3. Outline the advantages that Port Jackson had over Botany Bay.



Deepen and check your understanding of this topic with related case studies and auto-marked questions.

- Movement of peoples
- Convict transportation to Australia

## 21.7.3 Trials and challenges

It was an uncertain beginning for the settlement, however, for despite its obvious other advantages, the soil around Port Jackson proved as unsuitable for planting as that of Botany Bay, and the first crops withered and died. In the first two years the settlers at Sydney Cove grew desperately short of food. Rations were reduced to stretch food supplies, and a supply ship that was sent from England failed to arrive. For Captain Phillip, now the governor of New South Wales, failure, once again, seemed a real threat. Some measure of relief came in mid 1790 with the arrival of the Second Fleet. With it came fresh supplies, but more than a quarter of the convicts on board had died on the terrible journey and most of the survivors were too weak to work.

At last fertile soil was found and cultivated at Parramatta on the edge of the settlement, and the crops successfully grown there finally guaranteed the long-term survival of the colony. In 1792 poor health forced Governor Phillip to resign and return to England. He took with him kangaroos, dingoes, native plants and two Aboriginal men to show to the king. Phillip's firm but fair command of the colony had ensured its survival. When food was scarce he made sure that rations were distributed equitably, with no privileges for rank, thereby alleviating resentment and potential convict revolt. By the time he left in December 1792 the colony was securely established and growing. However, this is not to say that there were no challenges. Relations with the

Indigenous population became strained at times and as the colony grew and spread the likelihood of conflict with the Aboriginal population increased. This is explored further in [topic 4](#).

**SOURCE 5** A painting by an unknown artist depicting the final battle of the uprising at Vinegar Hill



Twelve years later in 1804 the authorities in New South Wales faced the first serious challenge to their rule. Tensions that Governor Phillip had managed to avoid boiled over when a group of convicts, mainly from Ireland, began a large-scale rebellion against the British authorities in Australia. Two convicts, Phillip Cunningham and William Johnston, had an ambitious plan to lead a band of convicts against the British and create their own empire, with Cunningham as its leader. The plan was for the initial two hundred convicts from Castle Hill to meet with others at another convict settlement at Hawkesbury, bringing the group to more than one thousand. From there they would march to Parramatta and finally on to Sydney.

On the evening of 4 March 1804 the rebellion began. With cries of ‘Liberty or death!’, the rebels overpowered the small garrison that guarded them. They began recruiting more convicts from surrounding farms, eventually gathering a force of around 600.

However, word of the uprising had spread to Parramatta and Sydney, and a force of British soldiers marched through the night to intercept the rebels. Forced into retreat, Cunningham struggled to maintain control over the unruly, and often drunk, convicts. The British force soon caught up with them, and at a place called Vinegar Hill the British attacked. Despite being armed, the rebels offered almost no resistance to the professional soldiers. The battle was over within a matter of minutes. In the aftermath nine rebels were executed and many others flogged or sent to places of secondary punishment.

The whole rebellion had lasted only three days. It was, nonetheless, the largest convict rebellion in Australian history.

#### DID YOU KNOW?

Of the 759 convicts on board the First Fleet, 23 died during the voyage, which for a fleet of this size would have been an acceptable loss. In addition, six children were born during the voyage, although two of these died before reaching New South Wales. Compared with the Second Fleet, the survival rate of convicts on the First Fleet was very impressive.

### 21.7.3 Activities

To answer questions online and to receive **immediate feedback** and **sample responses** for every question, go to your learnON title at [www.jacplus.com.au](http://www.jacplus.com.au). *Note:* Question numbers may vary slightly.

#### Check your understanding

1. Identify the challenges facing the early years of the settlement.
2. How long did Arthur Phillip serve as governor of New South Wales?

#### Using historical sources as evidence

3. Identify the following in **Source 5**: convict rebels; British soldiers; execution of rebels. Suggest how accurate this source might be in presenting the events of the battle at Vinegar Hill.

## 21.7 Putting it all together

### Using historical sources as evidence

1. Examine **Source 1** carefully and answer the following questions.
  - (a) What is the approximate average age of the convicts on this page?
  - (b) According to the document, where have they been moved from and where are they now being held?
  - (c) What is the most common length of their sentence, and where was it to be served?
  - (d) Explain why Thomas Freeman’s surname might have proven to be appropriate.
  - (e) What other sources would be useful to gain a broader understanding of what happened to the convicts listed?
  - (f) Identify the limitations of this source that might be revealed by your answer to the previous question.
2. Is it possible to determine if **Sources 3 and 5** are primary or secondary sources? If you are unsure, what other information could help you decide?

# 21.8 Convict life

## 21.8.1 Convicts turned good

The penal settlement at Sydney Cove was isolated from other European settlements and, as a result, made a unique open-air prison. Surrounded by a seemingly endless, alien and menacing wilderness, chains and walls were scarcely needed. Nonetheless, the convicts were under no illusions that they were prisoners in this new settlement.

Convicts who had skills such as carpentry were put to use building the new town and others that were growing around it. Many convict-built buildings still stand in Sydney today. Building projects, such as the Great North Road that runs between Sydney and Newcastle, were also built using convict labour. Working conditions for most convicts were brutal, not least because the climate of New South Wales was so much hotter and drier than England.

Few convicts returned to England after their sentence was completed. The government was unlikely to help them financially because the whole point of transportation was to be rid of them in the first place. The cost of the return journey would have been too great so the vast majority of freed convicts remained in Australia. Some convicts made a good life for themselves in New South Wales. Mary Reibey, for example, was transported for seven years for stealing a horse. She worked as a maid in New South Wales and was allowed to marry. After she had served out her sentence she became a respected businesswoman and one of the wealthiest people in Sydney. Today she is featured on the Australian \$20 note.

Another example of a successful convict was the architect Francis Greenway. Transported for forgery, in the colony he used his creative talents to design government buildings. Some of these buildings can still be seen today, among them the graceful Hyde Park Barracks (see Source 2).

**SOURCE 1** Mary Reibey, an ex-convict, now appears on the Australian \$20 note.



**SOURCE 2** Hyde Park Barracks in Sydney. This building was designed by the convict architect Francis Greenway.



**SOURCE 3** Pinchgut Island in Sydney Harbour was one of the earliest sites of secondary punishment.



## 21.8.1 Activities

To answer questions online and to receive **immediate feedback** and **sample responses** for every question, go to your learnON title at [www.jacplus.com.au](http://www.jacplus.com.au). *Note:* Question numbers may vary slightly.

### Check your understanding

1. Make a list of the sort of skills that would have been useful in the new European settlement in New South Wales.
2. Discuss the suggestion that for some convicts, being transported was 'the best thing that could have happened to them'. Use at least one specific example to support or challenge the statement.

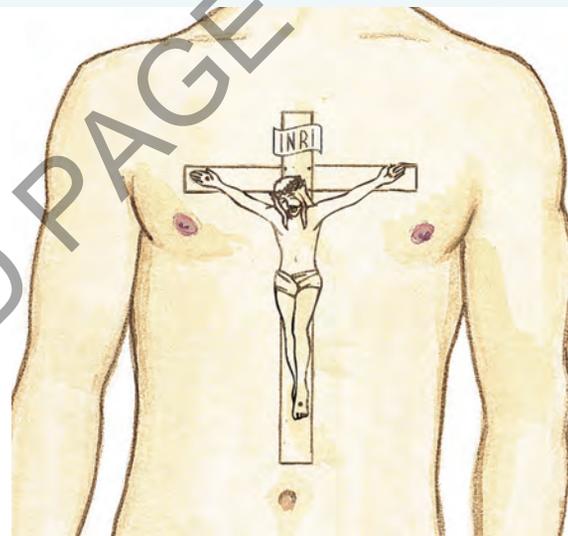
## 21.8.2 Secondary punishment

Unfortunately, for every Mary Reibey or Francis Greenway there were many others for whom the convict life was a living hell. Those judged to be unmanageable or defiant might be sent to even more isolated places of secondary punishment. The most notorious of these were on Norfolk Island and at Port Arthur in Van Diemen's Land (Tasmania).

Norfolk Island was characterised by brutal physical punishment. Lying 1700 kilometres off the coast of New South Wales, escape from this small, isolated island was practically impossible. Floggings and beatings were common and convicts were worked beyond the point of exhaustion. There was no effort to reform prisoners sent to Norfolk Island — this was a place of punishment, not rehabilitation. Following a mutiny in 1834 a clergyman was sent to comfort those convicts sentenced to death. In an illustration of how terrible Norfolk Island was, the minister recorded that 'each man who heard his reprieve wept bitterly, and each man who heard of his condemnation to death went down on his knees and thanked God'. Eventually the penal settlement on Norfolk Island was closed down, partly due to the notoriety of the conditions.

Port Arthur, on the other hand, was a new type of prison. Established as a penal settlement in 1833, here psychological punishment took precedence over physical brutality. Like Norfolk Island, this was a place to send convicts who reoffended while serving their sentence. Convicts spent long periods in

**SOURCE 4** Many convicts marked themselves with intricate or detailed tattoos, possibly in an effort to regain some degree of individuality after having been reduced to a number. Ironically, one convict who managed to escape was recaptured when a constable recognised him, not by his face, but by his distinctive tattoo.



**SOURCE 5** The chapel at Port Arthur prison. Even here the convicts would not be able to see each other from their individual booths.



isolation at Port Arthur. When in the company of others they wore hoods so they could not recognise anyone and they in turn could not be recognised. Even the chapel building was designed so that the convicts could not see each other when they removed their hoods for worship (see **Source 5**). The aim was to enforce anonymity and take away any sense of individuality. At the time this was thought to be a more effective rehabilitation technique than purely physical punishment.

Over the 80 years from 1788 until the last convicts arrived in 1868, approximately 160 000 convicts were transported to the Australian colonies.

**SOURCE 6** Prisoners in the exercise yard wearing hoods for anonymity. This was a depiction of Pentonville Prison in London, a prison run with the same philosophy as Port Arthur. The illustration was published in 1862.



#### DID YOU KNOW?

In 1828 a census was taken in New South Wales to record all inhabitants of the colony, both convict and free (the Aboriginal population was not included). It found that half the population were convicts and that former convicts made up nearly half of the free population. In 1828, then, about 75 per cent of the population of New South Wales either were, or had been, convicts!

### 21.8.2 Activities

To answer questions online and to receive **immediate feedback** and **sample responses** for every question, go to your learnON title at [www.jacplus.com.au](http://www.jacplus.com.au). *Note:* Question numbers may vary slightly.

#### Check your understanding

1. What was the key difference between the Norfolk Island and Port Arthur prisons?
2. Why was the Norfolk Island prison closed down?

#### Using historical sources as evidence

3. Describe the scene in **Source 6**. What do you think is the purpose of the hoods the prisoners are wearing?

## 21.8 Putting it all together

### Using historical sources as evidence

1. Given the image presented in **Source 6**, how reasonable is it to suggest that tattoos such as the one in **Source 4** were worn to maintain some individuality? Explain your thoughts.

### Identifying continuity and change

2. Describe the changes in types of secondary punishment in New South Wales over the course of the nineteenth century.

### Determining historical significance

3. Evaluate the role and significance of Mary Reibey in the establishment of the settlement in Sydney. Decide for yourself whether her image should appear on the \$20 note.

## 21.9 Emigration to Australia

### 21.9.1 Push and pull factors

Convicts were unwilling migrants. They were sent to Australia against their will as punishment for criminal convictions. As the colonies grew, they attracted free settlers — people who made a conscious decision to start a new life in Australia. In the eighteenth century these settlers came mainly from Europe, and they came for a range of different reasons.

The decisions of migrants to travel thousands of kilometres from their homelands in Europe to Australia were based on a variety of factors. There were often good reasons for them to leave home (push factors), and there were reasons to choose Australia as a destination (pull factors). Both of these forces tended to operate at the same time.

Europe in the first half of the nineteenth century was an uncertain place. Wars and revolutions had left many people in desperate straits. In Britain the Industrial Revolution had made life unbearable for some. Unemployment, rising rents and taxes, and grim conditions in factories and in overcrowded cities led many to dream of a better life across the sea. In Scotland the notorious Highland Clearances had forced many people from their land, leaving them with few options for feeding their families (see **Source 2**). In Ireland in the 1840s the failure of the potato crop led to widespread starvation and despair.

Until 1850 most emigrants from Europe still travelled to the United States or Canada. These countries were more settled and the voyage cost only a fraction of a ticket to Australia. For this reason, those who came to Australia often did so with government help. ‘Assisted migration’ to Australia was encouraged to help the colonies grow because the British government

**SOURCE 1** ‘Here and there; or, emigration a remedy’, a cartoon from the English magazine *Punch* in 1848



encouraged those with skills that would be useful in the new colonies to make the journey. Skills such as carpentry and masonry were important to help build the towns and cities. However, assisted migrants would have less say about their place or type of employment. They had to go where they were told. ‘Unassisted migrants’, who paid their own way, made up about one-third of migrants to Australia in the first half of the nineteenth century. Some of them were tradespeople who were keen to establish a business in one of the new towns. Others were from wealthy families who believed their money would go further in Australia than in Britain. Many were encouraged by the promise of government land grants and convict labour.

**SOURCE 2** This painting from 1865 depicts the expulsion of a family during the Highland Clearances in Scotland.



The level of government assistance for migration followed economic cycles. For example, during the 1830s the government decided to sell land rather than give it away to migrants free of charge. The money earned by the government was used to help fund further migration. In contrast, 1841 was a depression year for New South Wales. The price of wool had fallen and unemployment rose. Migrants were not encouraged in the 1840s. In the 1850s, however, the gold rushes resulted in massive immigration. Another depression in the 1890s brought immigration to an abrupt halt.

### 21.9.1 Activities

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#### Check your understanding

1. Who were the free settlers?
2. Explain the difference between ‘push’ and ‘pull’ factors.
3. What sort of people did the British government encourage to migrate? Suggest why this was the case.
4. Outline why the level of government assistance for migrants varied over the decades of the nineteenth century.
5. Summarise the advantages and disadvantages of assisted migration over unassisted migration.

#### Using historical sources as evidence

6. Explain how realistic you think the ‘here’ and ‘there’ scenes in **Source 1** are. You may need to refer back to your work on the Industrial Revolution.
7. Comment on the reliability of **Source 1** as a historical source.

### 21.9.2 The voyage

For migrants travelling from England to Australia, the voyage was faster, if only slightly more comfortable, than those of the convicts. Those who could afford it paid for a private cabin, but 90 per cent of migrants had to endure steerage class. This was the cheapest passenger accommodation, typically at the stern of the ship. It was usually confined, foul-smelling and crowded, offering no privacy. Meals were simple, based around oatmeal, rice and the occasional meat stew, but migrants had to supply their own plates and

cutlery. The tedious voyage could take up to four and a half months — plenty of time for migrants to wonder whether they had made the right decision!

Although steerage lacked privacy and comfort, it did create a new sense of belonging for many migrants. With nothing but time on their hands, people from many different backgrounds mingled. A blacksmith from Liverpool might find himself talking to a businessman from Edinburgh or a small farmer from Kent. For many migrants this was the first time they had travelled

more than a few miles from their own village. Of course, the absence of privacy in the long weeks at sea could also leave tempers frayed, and tensions sometimes boiled over.

Safe arrival in Australia did not mean the end of the migrants' worries. If they did not have jobs organised before leaving England they would have to find work, which was more of a challenge if they had arrived with their families. Employers did not want to support children who did not work. As the coastal towns grew and became crowded, migrants were sent inland to work on farms. Others moved from place to place in search of work. The Henty family, for example, emigrated to Australia in 1829 to breed sheep. They arrived first at the Swan River colony, now Perth. Finding the land poor they decided to try Van Diemen's Land, but they missed out on free land grants that the government was offering there, so they moved again to the south coast of the Port Phillip District and established a settlement at Portland. In doing so they became the first permanent European settlers in what would become the state of Victoria in 1851.

**SOURCE 3** *Emigrants at dinner*, a scene from a migrant ship of the nineteenth century



**SOURCE 4** From a letter written by James Henty, quoted in R. Broome, *The Colonial Experience*, 2009

I have almost come to the conclusion that New South Wales will do more for our family than England ever will. What can we do with ten thousand pounds among all of us? It would be idle to suppose we can live many years longer on less than two hundred pounds a year, unless indeed we chose to descend many steps in the scale of Society, having at the same time an opportunity of doing as well and perhaps considerably better in New South Wales, under British Dominion and a fine climate. Immediately we get there we shall be placed in the first Rank in Society, a circumstance which must not be overlooked.

## 21.9.2 Activities

To answer questions online and to receive **immediate feedback** and **sample responses** for every question, go to your learnON title at [www.jacplus.com.au](http://www.jacplus.com.au). *Note:* Question numbers may vary slightly.

### Check your understanding

1. Describe the conditions on board a migrant ship for the average passenger.
2. Annotate a timeline showing the places the Henty family settled and the reasons they left.

### Using historical sources as evidence

3. Evaluate the accuracy of the image in **Source 3**. Does it fit the written description? If so, in what ways? If not, why not?
4. Use **Source 4** to identify the push and pull factors for the Henty family.

### 21.9.3 Tyranny of distance

With family members so far away, those back in England looked forward to any news of how their loved ones were faring in the Australian colonies. Unlike today's world in which emails from around the world are received almost instantly, letters took months to reach the other side of the world. To send a letter and receive a reply could take a whole year.

During the mid-eighteenth century a range of different British publications encouraged, or at times discouraged, migration to Australia. Books promoted emigration, highlighting the potential of the colonies as a migrant destination. Despite periodic negative news of economic depression and the shadow of transportation hanging over the colonies, many in England saw the colonies as sources of opportunity, wealth and power. A less than perfect image of the colonies would certainly not dissuade many of those with family already in Australia from wanting to make the journey themselves.

The vast majority of migrants who came to Australia in the 1800s were from the British Isles. They brought with them what historian Richard Broome calls their 'cultural baggage', including ideas about society, religion, class and gender. As a result, British institutions and clubs were firmly established in colonial Australia. At the same time, this cultural heritage was being influenced and reshaped by the new world. That new world was being populated more and more by people born in Australia, rather than those born overseas and, while they still considered themselves British, many increasingly associated themselves with the land in which they were born.

**SOURCE 5** George Baxter's painting from the mid-nineteenth century *News from Australia* depicts a family in England receiving news from a loved one in the colonies.



### 21.9.3 Activities

To answer questions online and to receive **immediate feedback** and **sample responses** for every question, go to your learnON title at [www.jacplus.com.au](http://www.jacplus.com.au). *Note:* Question numbers may vary slightly.

#### Check your understanding

1. How long might it have taken to receive a reply to a letter in the Australian colonies?
2. What is your understanding of the term 'cultural baggage'?
3. Outline in what ways the migrants of the 1800s brought the old world into the new.

#### Using historical sources as evidence

4. Consider the intention of the artist when painting the image in **Source 5**. It was painted in the mid-nineteenth century by an English artist. Does that affect its reliability?

## 21.9 Putting it all together

### Using historical sources as evidence

1. Choose one of the migrants in **Source 3**. Write a diary entry for part of your journey describing your interaction with some of the other migrants.

### Analysing cause and effect

2. Choose one of either the Highland Clearances or the Irish famine and analyse its causes, as well as its short- and long-term effects on the people of the particular country and on Australia. You may choose to present your answer in a graphic organiser or a short written response.



Deepen and check your understanding of this topic with related case studies and auto-marked questions.

- Movement of peoples
- European migration to Australia

## 21.10 Migration to the goldfields

### 21.10.1 The beginnings of a rush

In 1851 English gold prospector Edward Hargraves returned to Australia after searching for gold in California. He noticed that in parts of Australia the land was similar to areas where gold was discovered in California, and he was convinced that gold could be found in those areas too. That same year he was proved right. His discovery marked a turning point in Australia's history.

Hargraves discovered gold in New South Wales in April 1851, but because news then took some months to travel overseas, for the first year or so the diggings were worked exclusively by local diggers or those from other Australian colonies. As news of the discovery spread around the colonies, people seemed to go crazy with excitement. In an attempt to stem the flow of people rushing to New South Wales, the Victorian government offered a reward for the discovery of gold close to Melbourne. Within a few months the reward was claimed and the hysteria only grew. Husbands left their families, shepherds their flocks. Ships were stranded in port when their crews deserted en masse for the diggings. Teachers, labourers, lawyers, even government officials and policemen, made a dash for the goldfields.

From the start, the early goldfields were characterised by a sense of **egalitarianism**. The class system that dominated England had no place there. It was clear from the beginning that on the goldfields luck played a more important role than money or social position. Everyone had an equal chance of success if they worked hard. This levelling effect challenged the traditional social structure from which the diggers had sprung. Some people were alarmed, fearing social collapse with the lower classes challenging the traditional hierarchy. Many historians trace the Australian idea of the 'fair go' back to the goldfields. One miner from Poland, Seweryn Korzelinski, describes the multicultural scene in **Source 1**.

**SOURCE 1** Polish miner Seweryn Korzelinski describes the egalitarianism on the goldfields.

This society comprises men from all parts of the world, all countries and religions — all mixed into one society, all dressed similarly, all forced to forget their previous habits, learnings, customs, manners and occupations. Their outward appearance does not signify their previous importance, worth or mental attainments. A colonel pulls up the earth for a sailor, a lawyer wields not a pen but a spade; a priest lends a match to a Negro's pipe; a doctor rests on the same heap of earth with a Chinaman; a man of letters carries a bag of earth. Many a one would not, a short while before, bother to look at a fellow with whom he now works. Here we are all joined by a common designation: digger. Only various shades of skin colour and speech denote nationality and origin, but it is impossible to guess previous station in life or background.

Yet while the diggers may have abandoned some of their customs and cultures, their prejudices often remained. As one example, **Source 2** describes what happened when Korzelinski inquired about a fellow digger's test mineshaft.

**SOURCE 2** Korzelinski describes an encounter with an English miner.

The report I received was very encouraging so I went on digging. During a break a compatriot of mine passing by stopped for a chat. My English neighbour was listening in and came up to me later asking in what language I was conversing. 'My native Polish' I replied. My neighbour explained with a great deal of embarrassment that his test hadn't shown any trace of gold and that he had misled me because he thought I was a German.

### 21.10.1 Activities

To answer questions online and to receive **immediate feedback** and **sample responses** for every question, go to your learnON title at [www.jacplus.com.au](http://www.jacplus.com.au). *Note:* Question numbers may vary slightly.

#### Check your understanding

1. Why were goldfields initially only populated by local diggers?

#### Using historical sources as evidence

2. Using quotes from **Source 1**, describe the sense of egalitarianism on the goldfields.

### 21.10.2 Word spreads

Soon after news of the gold rushes reached England, in January 1852, the towns of Ballarat and Bendigo became better known than Melbourne or Adelaide. A new rush of migration followed as Britons of all classes decided to try their luck. The result was a population explosion in Australia that the colonies were unable to cope with. In the two years following the discovery of gold more people arrived in Australia than all the convicts that had been transported in the previous 64 years. In just one week of October 1852 Melbourne received nearly 8000 new arrivals. In four months during 1853, at a time when the population of the city was only 23 000, 50 000 migrants landed at Melbourne's docks.

**SOURCE 3** Population growth of New South Wales and Victoria at the height of the gold rushes

Year	New South Wales	Victoria
1840	110 000	10 291
1850	189 341	76 162
1860	348 546	538 234

**Source:** From R. Broome, *The Colonial Experience*, 2009

Melbourne was unable to absorb the sea of new arrivals and a massive city of tents called 'Canvastown' was set up on the banks of the Yarra River to try to accommodate them. It was a smelly, dirty place where outbreaks of disease were common. The extracts in **Source 4** give an impression of Melbourne during the height of the migration rush. As more people arrived in Victoria the crime rate increased, a problem made worse by the fact that 80 per cent of Melbourne's police had themselves taken off to the goldfields.

**SOURCE 4** Two extracts from letters written to newspapers in 1852

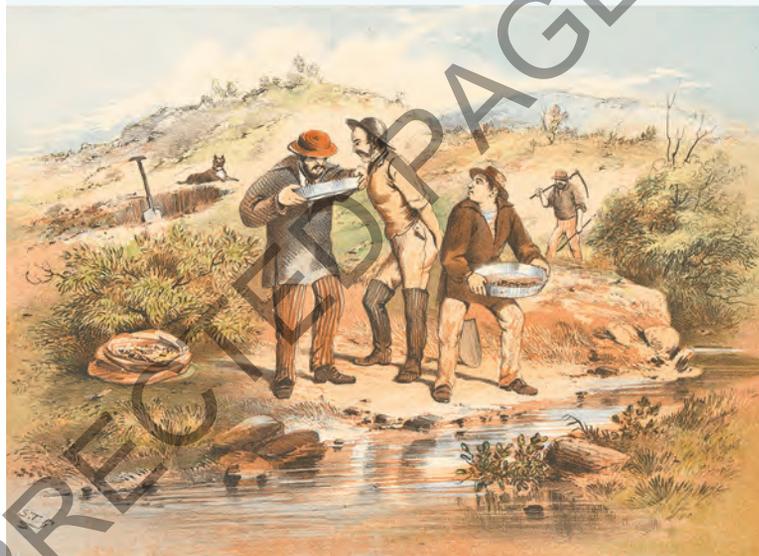
**Extract A**

One of the most striking peculiarities here to a new arrival is the immense encampments that surround Melbourne. The vast number of tents that stud the open ground in every direction conveys a clear idea of that enormous emigration to Victoria, which requires the erection of canvas suburbs, where the hordes of adventurers may find a temporary shelter on landing, . . . before starting to the great storehouses of Mount Alexander and Ballarat.

**Extract B**

People are flocking in from all countries now, and there is not accommodation for a tenth of them. Some have to sleep in sheds who never knew anything but a feather-bed in England. We have had very heavy rains lately; several people have been drowned on their way to and from the diggings in attempting to swim the creeks, as the Government does not think of putting any bridges where required; indeed, the people are beginning to murmur against the abominable way in which our government is carried out.

**SOURCE 5** *Prospecting*, a sketch by S. T. Gill (England 1818—Australia 1880) in 1839, lithograph, printed in colour, from multiple stones, from *The Australian Sketchbook*, Melbourne: Hamel & Ferguson, 1865.



### 21.10.2 Activities

To answer questions online and to receive **immediate feedback** and **sample responses** for every question, go to your learnON title at [www.jacplus.com.au](http://www.jacplus.com.au). *Note:* Question numbers may vary slightly.

#### Check your understanding

1. What was 'Canvastown'?
2. What proportion of Melbourne's police had left for the goldfields?

#### Using historical sources as evidence

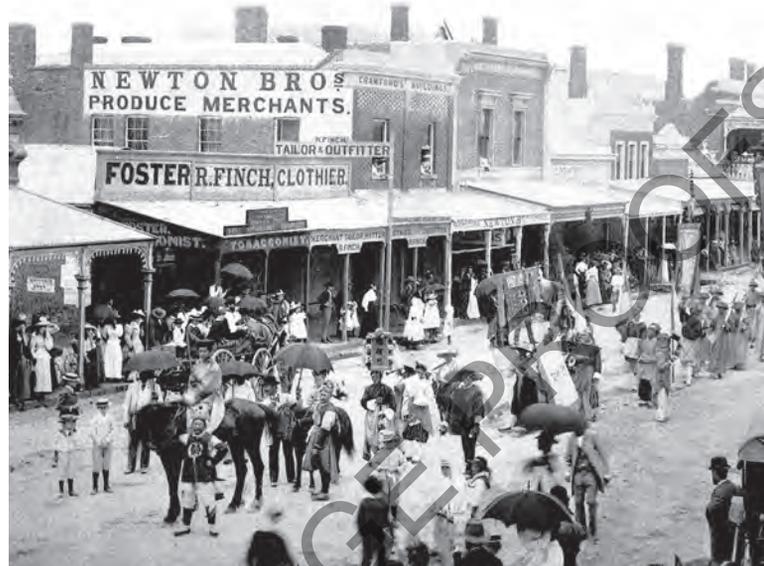
3. Plot the information in **Source 3** in a graph and describe the population growth in Victoria and New South Wales.
4. Use quotes from the extracts in **Source 4** to describe what was happening to the city of Melbourne.
5. To what extent does the image in **Source 5** support the idea of the goldfields as egalitarian?

### 21.10.3 New Gold Mountain

In 1853 large numbers of Chinese men arrived on the goldfields. They would eventually account for one in every five miners. Those who came straight from the Californian gold rushes referred to the Victorian goldfields as 'New Gold Mountain'. Others came directly from China, fleeing war and famine, and seeking a chance to strike it rich, like all the other diggers. Culturally they stood out on the goldfields and as a result were subject to racial violence. The Australian and British diggers resented the Chinese both for their difference and because they generally worked harder than other miners. They worked claims that had been abandoned yet still managed to extract enough gold to make a living. The Chinese on the goldfields were almost exclusively men, and the other miners chose to believe they would 'steal' their women. Tensions boiled over into violence on a number of occasions, firstly in Bendigo in 1854 but most infamously at Lambing Flat in New South Wales, where a series of anti-Chinese riots in 1860–61 saw thousands of miners drive the Chinese from the diggings. To control Chinese immigration, the Victorian government introduced a ten-pound arrival tax to be paid by all Chinese migrants at their Victorian port of entry. To avoid this tax, the Chinese arrived at Adelaide or Sydney and travelled overland to the diggings. In New South Wales, the *Chinese Immigration Restriction and Regulation Act* was passed in 1861 and the numbers of Chinese in the colony were closely controlled. Both Queensland and Western Australia introduced similar legislation within a decade.

What became the White Australia Policy (the immigration policy that restricted the arrival of non-white migrants in the first half of the twentieth century) had its beginnings on the goldfields. It is an interesting contradiction to consider. The goldfields on the one hand saw the origins of Australia's multicultural population. The opportunity that was offered to people from other countries was recognised then as it is now, and people arrived to make a better life. However, also just like today, some of those people struggled in the face of intolerance and racism.

**SOURCE 6** Chinese migrants in Beechworth, Victoria, during the gold rushes



**SOURCE 7** 'The Mongolian Octopus': a famous propaganda image published in the Sydney-based *The Bulletin Magazine* on 21 August 1886



### 21.10.3 Activities

To answer questions online and to receive **immediate feedback** and **sample responses** for every question, go to your learnON title at [www.jacplus.com.au](http://www.jacplus.com.au). *Note:* Question numbers may vary slightly.

#### Check your understanding

1. Why were the Chinese the target of racial abuse?
2. Why did some Chinese migrants disembark at Adelaide and walk from there to the goldfields?

#### Using historical sources as evidence

3. How reliable is **Source 7** as a historical source? When thinking about your response you should consider the following.
  - (a) When was the source created, and by whom? This will help give you a sense of the context and think about what was happening at the time.
  - (b) Why was the image created? What was its purpose? Was it to inform, persuade, or perhaps intimidate?
  - (c) Does it appear accurate as a representation? If not, explain how it could still be useful to a historian.

### 21.10 Putting it all together

#### Using historical sources as evidence

1. Using quotes from each source, compare and contrast the sense of egalitarianism in **Sources 1 and 2**.
2. **Sources 1 and 2** both originate from the same person. Given their similarities and differences, analyse if this affects their reliability.
3. Using the sources in this subtopic:
  - (a) find evidence that supports the statement that the goldfields were 'a place of egalitarianism'
  - (b) find evidence that supports the statement that the goldfields were 'a place of racial intolerance'
  - (c) explain how this illustrates the importance of using a variety of sources when looking for evidence to support a claim.

#### Identifying continuity and change

4. Describe the changes that occurred in the city of Melbourne due to the gold rushes.
5. Conduct research into when the following places were built or founded: the University of Melbourne; Old Treasury Building; Grand Hotel. What impact do you think the gold rushes had on the creation of these buildings and institutions?

## 21.11 SkillBuilder: Analysing cause and effect

online only

### ANALYSING CAUSE AND EFFECT IN EMIGRATION TO AUSTRALIA

Specific events make up only a small part of the study of history. To really begin to understand any event, it is vital to be able to analyse the factors that led to it, and the way in which the event might bring about change afterwards. These are the causes and effects.

#### Go to your learnON course to access:

- An explanation of the skill (Tell me)
- A step-by-step process to develop the skill, with an example (Show me)
- An activity to allow you to practise the skill (Let me do it)
- Questions to test your application of the skill (Applying skills)



## 21.12 Review

online only

This final subtopic provides a range of opportunities for you to review and respond through:

- (i) revising and checking your historical knowledge
- (ii) demonstrating your ability to apply historical concepts and skills.

**Go to your learnON course to access:**

- A key chronology of events relevant to the topic
- A summary of the key knowledge presented in the topic
- A 'Big Questions' activity
- A multiple choice topic test
- Short answer or extended writing responses



**learn on** RESOURCES — ONLINE ONLY

- **Try out this interactivity:** Movement of peoples timeline Use this interactivity to create a visual timeline of key movements of people between 1750 and 1914 (int-2964)