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ABSTRACT

The name 'Norfolk Island' has long been synonymous with its use between 1825 and 1855 as a harsh punishment station for recidivist British convicts. Much of its previous archaeological investigation has focused on the conservation and management of standing structures from that period, to the detriment of an overall understanding of the archaeology of the island. This paper reviews the several phases of post-1788 occupation of this tiny and remote outpost of the British Empire and considers the archaeological potential of each of these distinct phases of free and unfree habitation. New directions and themes for further archaeological research are considered, including broader comparison with contemporary mainland Australian free and convict settlements and a focus on processes of adaptation and re-appropriation of buildings, sites and landscape by successive colonist groups.

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Introduction

The name ‘Norfolk Island’ has long been synonymous with its use between 1825 and 1855 as a harsh punishment station for recidivist British convicts (Hughes 1988). The material remains of this system have been the focus of historical archaeological investigation on the island since the late 1970s, largely associated with the conservation and management of standing structures from that period. However, the concentration of effort on this relatively short but notorious phase, which is also encouraged by its value as a tourist drawcard, has often masked a far more complex island-wide cultural landscape which embodies evidence of several distinct periods of historic occupation from 1788 through to the present day. This paper presents a review of the archaeological landscape of this tiny and remote outpost of the British Empire and considers several of the themes which emerge as directions for future research.

Background

Norfolk Island is a volcanic remnant of approximately 35 km², located in the Pacific Ocean 1670 km east of the Australian mainland (Figure 1). The island is for the most part bounded by cliffs, rising to a flat plateau dissected by valleys, with the highest point being Mount Bates at 319 m above sea level. There is no harbor for large vessels, while the two small boat landings, at Cascade in the North and Kingston in the south, are often difficult to access due to heavy seas. From the commencement of the British settlement in 1788 until 1913, Norfolk Island was a British colony. After this it became an external territory of Australia, including a period from 1979 until June 2016 when it was self-governed.

The history of Norfolk Island is typically divided into four main phases (Hoare 1988; Nobbs 1988, 1991b, 2006).

- Polynesian Settlement—c.1200–1600 AD.
- First (English) Settlement—1788–1814: Free and convict agricultural and industrial settlement, followed by abandonment from February 1814–June 1825.
- Second (English) Settlement—June 1825–1856: Closed secondary punishment convict settlement.
- Third (Pitcairner) Settlement—8 June 1856 to present: resettlement of the descendants of the HMAS Bounty mutineers from Pitcairn to Norfolk Island.

However, in this discussion of the changing cultural landscape, two further phases should be included as distinct subsets within the Third Settlement:

- Melanesian Mission: 1866–1920
- World War Two: 1942–1946
Although these latter periods fall within the Third (Pitcairner) Settlement, they both involved significant changes to elements of the island’s physical and social landscapes, with consequences for the archaeological record.

The following section provides a timeline and context for archaeological research on Norfolk Island, followed by a more detailed examination of the archaeological record for each historic period. For the sake of brevity, the remainder of the text refers to the phases such as First (English) Settlement using the shortened form of First Settlement, etc.

**Historical and maritime archaeological research**

The significance of the Kingston and Arthur Vale Historic Area (KAVHA) on the south side of Norfolk Island has long been recognized in Australian heritage listings, being included on the (now defunct) Register of the National Estate in 1980 for a range of values including its archaeological potential and the area’s properties as a cultural landscape. In 2010 inscription of KAVHA along with 10 other convict properties as part of the Australian Convict Site World Heritage Property on UNESCO’s World Heritage List has further highlighted and enhanced the significance of the area, while also raising questions regarding new ways to explore the relationships between different convict sites. The need for further research on all the historical phases is also outlined in a new range of policies contained within the most recent Heritage Management Plan for KAVHA (GML Heritage 2016).

From the late 1970s to the early 2000s there were frequent archaeological investigations within the central KAVHA as part of the ongoing conservation project funded by the Australian Federal Government, making this one of the more intensively explored archaeological landscapes in Australasia. These surveys, excavations and associated historical studies were, however, of necessity...
oriented towards the restoration and conservation of standing structures and surface visible ruins, with some attention to avoiding disturbance to subsurface archaeological remains. The 1980 survey by Wilson and Davies (1980) forms the basic document for the area, with a subsequent series of heritage studies, surveys, excavations and monitoring projects, primarily by Varman between 1982 and 1998 (although see also Bairstow and McLaren 1993). Although evidence of First Settlement structures and sites and some aspects of Third Settlement occupation within the KAVHA area are considered in these studies, the emphasis has been on the management of the standing Second Settlement structures and broader mitigation of potential damage, rather than a research agenda. The reports of these investigations are available in the KAVHA Research Centre, with most of Varman’s reports also now available via the NSW Archaeology On-line website (Gibbs and Colley 2012). The Norfolk Island Museum also maintains comprehensively catalogued assemblages of the excavated artefacts in an admirable archaeological museum, although interpretive analysis has so far been minimal (Starr 1997, 2001).

Archaeological research beyond the KAVHA area has been far more limited, although Varman undertook various other archaeological and heritage studies across the island as part of his employment with KAVHA, as an independent consultant, and as a result of personal research interests, especially while resident on the island. Most notable is his island-wide Survey of the First, Second and Third Settlements on Norfolk Island (Varman 1984), which drew on extensive documentary and oral historical research to attempt to characterize the location and nature of a diverse range of sites across the landscape. A significant feature of this study is that it was the first attempt to consider sites and places of significance to the Third Settlement (Pitcairner) period (see also Varman 1998b).

In addition to terrestrial archaeology, since the early 1980s there has been ongoing investigation of the wreck of HMS Sirius, lost on the reefs adjacent to Kingston in 1790 as it attempted to resupply the First Settlement (Henderson and Stanbury 1988; Stanbury 1994). Since 2014 maritime archaeologists have also worked with the avocational Norfolk Island Maritime Archaeology Association in recording maritime heritage sites. In addition to research on the historical period, during the 1990s there were excavations to investigate the pre-European Polynesian occupation of Norfolk Island (Anderson and White 2001).

Since the 1990s there have been intermittent mitigation and conservation projects with an archaeological component, primarily within the KAVHA area, but virtually no pure research. The most recent phase of investigation commenced in 2014 when the authors undertook a community-based remote sensing survey program (Figure 2) to sample the archaeological potential of sites associated with the three historic occupation periods (Duncan and Gibbs 2014). In 2015 a second season continued surface recording of several major archaeological complexes, in association with Varman who was fortuitously on the island at the time undertaking biological research.

In the following sections, we explore research on each of the phases of the island’s historic occupation.

Figure 2. Working with NI community members on Kingston magnetometer survey 2014 (Photo: B. Duncan).
The phases of history and archaeology

Polynesian settlement—c.1200–1600 AD

In 1788 British settlers, including two Maori men, quickly recognized a former Polynesian occupation of the island through the presence of exotic plants such as bananas, the Polynesian rat (*Rattus exulans*), and Polynesian artefacts found scattered across various areas of the coast and inland (Anderson and White 2001; Hoare 1988; Specht 1978, 1993). An excavation in the dunes above Emily Bay (Figure 1) located structural remains and artefacts which suggest Polynesians from—or with links to—the Kermadec Islands and New Zealand, were present between 400 and 800 years ago, after which the island was abandoned (Anderson and White 2001; Anderson 2002). Although the Polynesian period is not a focus of the historic archaeological program, it is important to recognize that at the time of the 1788 British settlement Norfolk Island was already a cultural landscape. Given current community sentiment regarding their ‘Pitcairner’ Polynesian heritage, there is also growing interest in sites and places from this pre-European phase.

First (English) settlement—1788–1814

Norfolk Island was originally visited by Captain James Cook in 1774, and in 1788 was formally colonized by the British as an ancillary settlement whose occupants were initially tasked with producing food for the main colony in New South Wales. While it was also hoped to develop industries based on flax growing and production of ship spars from the endemic Norfolk Island Pine (*Araucaria heterophylla*), both almost immediately proved unsuccessful (Clarke 1988). For the next two decades the colony was primarily agricultural with a combination of free settlers and convicts, including emancipists who stayed after the end of their sentence (see Martin and Cox 1988; Nobbs 1988). Several images and plans depict the main settlement and administrative centre, originally named ‘Sydney’, situated adjacent to the southern boat landing (Figures 3 and 4). These images show an evolving settlement core including the Georgian style Government House, various administrative, service and accommodation buildings, as well as the small prison and huts of the convicts (‘Irishtown’) arrayed along the shoreline (Cox and Stacey 1971; Kerr 1984:11–15). Initially almost all buildings were of the easily sawn Norfolk Island Pine, although over time the main public buildings and houses of officials were rebuilt or replaced with stone or brick (Martin and Cox 1988:131). Other settlement features in the KAVHA included the watermill in Arthur Vale, quarries and garden areas.

Although several archaeological studies have identified the likely locations of First Settlement structures and features within KAVHA, deliberate archaeological investigation has been limited to test trenching to locate the footings of the original Government House (Varman 1992). Artefacts with First Settlement origins and ecological information relative to the historic period human occupation and modification of the area have also been recovered during other mitigation projects (Varman 1993). While historic plans have previously been scaled as overlays, as part of the 2014 project these were georeferenced as a guide to where First Settlement structures and features were formerly located. The remote sensing surveys of these target areas identified significant subsurface anomalies corresponding to early structures including the original gaol, indicating potential for archaeological investigation as well as testing the accuracy of these early depictions of the settlement’s layout (Duncan and Gibbs 2014). In addition the geo-referencing and remote sensing process also demonstrated that a large number of structures, including many of the
Figure 4. Sydney Town (First Settlement). Based on W.N. Chapman 1792, *Plan of the Town of Sydney, on the South Side of Norfolk Island*, State Library of NSW Z/M2 819.21/1792/1.

Figure 5. Norfolk Island First Settlement Settlers Blocks, 1796. Based on National Library of Australia Map G9262.N6G46.
‘Irishtown’ convict huts, have been lost to foreshore erosion (Figure 4), supporting earlier analyses by Varman (1988:152; 1993).

During the First Settlement phase much of Norfolk Island (excepting the area around Mt Bates) was divided into freehold lots for farms (Figure 5). Two small settlements were also established, one in the north-east originally named Charlotte’s Field (or Charlotte Field) but renamed Queenborough (or Queenboro’), and another to the west originally called Cascade but renamed Phillipburgh (or Phillipsburgh) (Kerr 1984:12; Wright 1988). Both settlements had a single road with a variety of domestic and public buildings including guard houses, military barracks, storehouses and barns, and a small gaol (King 1796:159; Martin and Cox 1988). Initially the buildings of these settlements were constructed of logs, but over time these were replaced with timber frames and weatherboards, with brick or stone chimneys (Kerr 1984:12; Martin and Cox 1988). This is shown in the c.1804 paintings of these two villages by artist John Eyre (Figure 6), based on sketches by convict artist William Neate Chapman (reproduced in Cox and Stacey 1971:16). There are allusions to other smaller clusters of housing, such as at Arthur Vale, Ball Bay, and the proposed Buckingham town to the northeast of Sydney town (Wright 1988:113–114). It is assumed that at least some settlers also lived on their own lots, dispersed across the island.

In May 1990 the bulldozing of a roadway through the probable location of Phillipsburgh saw several dozen late 18th/early 19th century ceramic sherds exposed. Although Varman was able to recover these artefacts, excavation within the impact zone was not possible before the road surface was sealed. Varman was later able to undertake surface survey throughout the area to identify possible historic features and areas of archaeological potential in advance of revegetation activities (Varman 1998a). No subsequent subsurface investigation has taken place, although surface survey in 2015 identified several stone alignments and further sherds which may be associated with the early settlement. The adjacent valley and watercourse to the immediate northwest which was also part of the village, as well as the site of the failed attempt at flax production, is now heavily disturbed and silted, although as they are within a reserve area there has been no further development. A probable site for Queenborough was identified during the 2015 survey through comparison of landscape features in the 1804 painting with current topography. However, heavy rains, dense surface vegetation, cattle damage and significant erosion fill into the valley surface prevented the possibility of confirming this through discovery of appropriately dated surface structures or artefacts.

There are a number of other probable First Settlement features which have been identified on the wider Norfolk Island landscape including a (heavily modified) stone bridge close to

Figure 6. A view of Queenborough on Norfolk Island, by J. Eyre, 1804 (with inset showing detail of houses). Dixson Library, State Library of New South Wales DL Pd 397.
Phillipsburgh and remains of a brick clamp (NIHS 1994; Robert Varman pers. comm. 2016). Varman’s *Three Settlements* survey also identified a number of possible First Settlement sites, sometimes identifiable through surface scatter of dateable ceramics (e.g. Varman 1984:50, 108, 112, 147, 166). However, as much of the island is private property, many of the valleys which might have contained remains of this period were not accessible to the 1984 survey. As part of the 2014 survey, ground penetrating radar was used to relocate graves associated with the original First Settlement cemetery which was located in the dunes above Emily Bay (Duncan and Gibbs 2014). Survey was also made of a site on a hill above the Cascade Pier (close to Phillipsburgh) where in the early 1970s human remains had been unearthed (see Varman 1984:292). However, this failed to provide conclusive evidence of a possible First Settlement graveyard.

The population of Norfolk Island reached 1100 or more persons, both free and convict, between 1791 and 1805, but thereafter diminished (Nobbs 1988:5). The British government soon after made the decision that as Norfolk Island was too remote from NSW and too expensive to operate, the residents would be forced to relocate to Tasmania. In February 1814 the remaining buildings on the island were deliberately destroyed by fire to hinder any foreign attempts to claim or colonize the island. This event appears in the archaeological record as a distinctive charcoal layer and in charring on some building foundations (Varman 1988:158). Although still nominally a British territory, the island then remained unoccupied until June 1825.

**Second (English) settlement—1825–1855**

Shifts in the ideology of convict management and a perceived need to increase the efficacy of transportation as a deterrent for criminals and recidivists led to the re-occupation of Norfolk Island as a closed all-male ‘secondary’ punishment settlement. The island quickly gained and has subsequently retained notoriety for the brutality of its punishment regime. Despite its reputation, recent re-analysis by Causer (2011) suggests that many aspects of this regime have been overstated, highlighting a need for a significant re-evaluation of the complexities of the island’s operation.

The original Sydney settlement area (renamed Kingston) adjacent to the landing was immediately re-occupied, since despite the deliberate destruction of 1814, roadways, chimneys and some ruined walls were still visible and could be reused (Martin and Cox 1991:100; Nobbs 1991b:3). Figure 7 shows an 1839 plan of the area near the wharf, although in the twenty years that followed the site evolved even further with, for instance, the final form of the new goal buildings taking a different configuration. The georeferenced overlays of historic plans for this core area near the wharf also show that the Second Settlement cadastral boundaries corresponded with

![Figure 7](image-url)

*Figure 7. Kingston (Second Settlement). Based on H.W. Lugard 1839, Plan of the Settlement. Norfolk Island. Tasmanian Archives, Plan PWD 266/1/1940.*
the positions of First Settlement features such as buildings and roads (Duncan and Gibbs 2014). Surviving elements of First Settlement structures, were incorporated into Second Settlement buildings include the Boat Shed near the main wharf, which show distinct differences in its lower courses of stonework consistent with First Settlement archaeological remains. Similarly, the adjacent Pier Store foundation shows evidence of the 1814 fire (Varman 1993), while the Civil (convict) Hospital, Guardhouse and Surgeon’s Quarters and privy are also suspected of having a mid to late First Settlement origin (Robert Varman pers. comm. 2017).

The stern Georgian architecture of the KAVHA Second Settlement and the operations of the convict system during that period have been the focus of much of the historical, architectural and archaeological literature of the island (e.g. Causer 2011; Martin and Cox 1991; Nobbs 1991a; Wilson and Davies 1980). ‘The Settlement’, as Kingston was known, was a complex structured landscape of different styles of housing and barracks for soldiers, overseers, convicts and administrators of various ranks, administrative buildings, hospitals, storehouses, industrial structures and areas, a gaol and eventually a panopticon style prison (Figure 8; Kerr 1984:115). Roadways, stone walls, wooden fences, vegetable gardens and even a formal water garden for the Governor also marked the area into zones, separating free from convict and emphasizing formal and informal hierarchies.

Almost all of the buildings within Kingston which were directly associated with the accommodation, industry and punishment of the convicts were demolished during the Third Settlement, although significant archaeological remains survive and are available for future study (Wilson and Davies 1980). While most writers do acknowledge that there was change over time, there has still been a tendency to represent the landscape and structures of Kingston as relatively static, despite an obvious evolution over the 30 years of occupation. Georeferencing of historic plans, analysis of images and remote sensing all indicate successive changes in the footprint of the settlement responding to shifts in ideology and successive administrators. The 2014 remote sensing survey showed that many demolished KAVHA structures and features, such as the Coxswain’s House, Commissariat Officer’s Quarters, Bakehouse, and the original Second Settlement Goal survive as subsurface remains (Duncan and Gibbs 2014).

Archaeological excavation within KAVHA has so far been constrained to addressing the conservation needs of standing (non-convict) structures rather than research-oriented questions. However, these assemblages can provide the basis for future comparative research. The only research-based artefact analysis has been of materials excavated in 1987 from the Civil Hospital privy, used c.1845–55 (Bairstow and McLaren 1993; Starr 1997, 2001). This assemblage contains a fascinating insight into medical treatment for convicts, especially given the isolation of the settlement. A descriptive catalogue of some of the ceramics in the Norfolk Island Museum is also available for comparative research (Erskine 2003).

Second Settlement convict activity spread across almost the whole of Norfolk Island, with a series of
outposts, farms and industrial camps (Figure 9). On the basis of documentary, oral and archaeological evidence, Varman identified a range of Second Settlement sites in his 1984 *Three Settlements* report, which has now been converted into a GIS as a guide for future survey (Varman 1984). The two largest nodes beyond Kingston were the agricultural sub-settlements at Longridge and Cascade, both of which were substantial in size and could house several hundred convicts, guards and administrators and included a range of administrative and industrial buildings (Martin and Cox 1991). These sub-settlements contained different classes and cohorts of prisoners from the main population at Kingston (Myers 1991). Longridge was also the focus of penal reformer Alexander Maconochie’s experiments in prisoner classification, with the lower portion of his revolutionary 1840 oubliette style prison surviving under (by being incorporated into) the structure of the standing ‘Branka’ House (Kerr 1984:126–127).

Unlike Kingston the documentary record for these sub-settlements is relatively poor (there being no contemporary plan of Cascade at all) and mapping of both became a focus for the 2014–15 surveys (Duncan and Gibbs 2014). These and many of the other sites beyond Kingston are in private ownership, with varying levels of access available.

With the end of transportation to NSW in the 1840s the Norfolk Island population was progressively reduced. The remainder of the convicts was removed to Tasmania by mid-1856, other than a small group who remained several weeks later as a clean-up crew prior to the arrival of the next groups of settlers, with an overlap of a fortnight in which they familiarized the newcomers with the landscape, buildings and resources.

**Third (Pitcairner) settlement—8 June 1856 to present**

The Third Settlement brought a very different form of community to Norfolk Island. On 8th June 1856, 194 descendants of the HMAS *Bounty* mutineers were moved with assistance from the British Crown 6,300 km west from their original tiny home on Pitcairn Island to Norfolk Island. The question of whether Norfolk was presented to the Pitcairners as a gift or was provided simply for their use while
removing the property of the Crown remains a hotly contested issue and is one of the root problems with current relations with the Australian government (Nobbs 2006:32, 52). There are several accounts of the first weeks of the encounter with the Norfolk Island landscape by the small migrant population with its unique British–Tahitian cultural admixture and limited experience of the world beyond Pitcairn. These reports emphasize not only their reactions to what to their eyes was an enormous land area, but also to unfamiliar resources, the existing cultural landscape including the massive stone buildings of several stories, and the alien nature of horses, cattle and bullock-pulled ploughs (Nobbs 2006:18–20). Nobbs (2006) has appositely discussed this encounter and the following years in terms of a process of adaptation. The recently abandoned convict buildings were re-occupied and the island subdivided between families. The convict transition party assisted with the first fortnight and undoubtedly mixed their practical advice with creative recounting of the nature of the cultural landscape that the Pitcairners now found themselves in.

For the first century after their arrival the Pitcairners made Kingston the administrative hub of the island, with the former military and administrative buildings being used for government, school and church purposes while others were occupied as houses or re-used in various ways. A number of significant buildings including the large convict prison, barracks and industrial structures were progressively demolished and materials distributed across the island, a process continuing into the 1960s. Across the wider island landscape the Pitcairners re-used elements of the Second Settlement infrastructure and landscape, including the various outstations and farms. They primarily engaged with agricultural pursuits including fruit orcharding, although other industries were pursued including timber milling, boat building, fishing, growing kentia palm (Howea forsteriana) and both traditional open boat and then modern powered steamship whaling. However, many of these industries have now diminished or vanished with the shifting local and international economy. Over time a distinctive vernacular timber architecture with relationships to earlier forms on Pitcairn Island was also developed (Cox and Stacey 1971; Erskine 2003; Nobbs 2006:21). Varman’s (1984) report on the three settlements remains the only archaeological study which has attempted to locate significant sites associated with the Third Settlement Pitcairner use of Norfolk and provides an important baseline as it also includes oral information from now deceased islanders. This included his recording the floor plans of several of the oldest (1860s) homes and their associated outbuildings such as external kitchens, comparing these to earlier Second Settlement housing forms (Varman 1984:7–8). More recently, Nash’s linguistic study of the island’s toponymy and cultural landscape has generated a substantial body of additional data on significant sites and places which can be targeted for physical investigation (Nash 2013, 2016).

**Melanesian mission (1866–1920)**

In 1866 a parallel community was created when the Anglican sponsored Melanesian Mission decided to base itself on Norfolk Island. Purchasing a substantial area of land on the west side of the island (Figure 10), the mission housed mainly Solomon Islander men and women undergoing religious, educational and industrial skills training. The original complex of buildings included housing for the mission staff, barracks for the trainees, school rooms, a printer for missionary literature and materials, hospital, a church (St Barnabas’) and agricultural infrastructure for their associated farming operations (Figure 11). The Solomon Islander men also constructed traditional style leaf huts (lodges) on the fringes of the mission area. Nobbs (2006) has documented aspects of the mission’s relationship with the wider island community, although the two groups were surprisingly separate. In 1920 the mission moved from Norfolk to the Solomon Islands, which included dismantling and transporting some of the buildings to the new base at Kohimarama on Guadalcanal. Varman’s (1994) historical and archaeological study of the mission site focused on extant St Barnabas’ Church, although he also indicates the archaeological potential for other areas.

An unfortunate aspect of the Melanesian Mission is that many dozens of men and women died on Norfolk Island of illness and injury, with their bodies interred in a small cemetery located 300 m north of the church and settlement on the opposite slope of the valley. In the 1960s the remaining headstones were relocated closer to the church after cattle had begun to damage the site, although the burials themselves were not removed. Concrete posts mark the original corners of the graveyard, together with a memorial including the names of those known to have been buried there, although the ground surface is now overgrown. The 2014 GPR and magnetometer survey detected a number of the original burial plots, although a more extensive clearance of surface vegetation would undoubtedly provide a better result (Duncan and Gibbs 2014).

**World War Two**

In 1902 Norfolk Island became a critical junction point for the trans-Pacific telegraph cable connecting Australia, New Zealand, Fiji, Canada and Great
Britain, with a station developed where the cables emerged at Anson Bay. The strategic significance of this facility saw a detachment of soldiers sent to the island at the outbreak of WWII. By 1942 the decision was made to develop an airstrip so that the island could be used as a staging depot for aircraft en-route to the SW Pacific battlefields, as a naval supply depot, and as a communications and surveillance hub (Hitch 1992). There were several bases developed on the island, changes to the wharf, new and improved roads, development of a radar installation atop Mount Bates, and most importantly the construction of the airstrip itself (Hitch 1992). There has been limited investigation of the archaeology of WWII on the island other than an initial survey within the National Park around Mt Bates (NIHS 1994). The 2015 survey also recorded a small gun position at the base of the cliffs at Anson Bay, near to where the telegraph cable emerged from the sea.

The creation of the WWII airstrip required the forced resumption of a large number of properties, the destruction of buildings of the Second and Third Settlement, and major earthworks to create sufficient level ground. It also saw the removal of the iconic Pine Avenue, planted during the Second Settlement and by the 1940s a majestic thoroughfare across the top of the island. This process of relocation and the loss of homes still resonates within the community. However, the improved access to the island also saw the post-war emergence of a tourist industry, largely based around the convict ruins. Hotels, guest houses and other tourism and hospitality operations emerged, creating what is now the main industry of the island. It could also be argued that the history of the island includes other sub-phases that affected the cultural landscape of the island, especially the emergence and decline of industries such as whaling, lemon juice and peel, bananas, kentia palm seeds, or fishing, although these were in some cases short lived and did not have the impact of the mission or WWII periods (Nobbs 2006).

Another consequence of the emergence of tourism and the first wave of Australian heritage listings...
was the decision in the 1970s by the Australian Commonwealth to acquire properties within KAVHA. Consistent with heritage management for the time, they removed residents and in some instances demolished post-convict structures and instituted restoration programs as a mechanism for enhancing the significance of the surviving convict era fabric.

Discussion

The nearly 40 years of archaeological investigation of Norfolk Island have largely been driven by the needs of heritage management and consequently limited in focus to particular periods, specific sites and localized areas. Consequently there has been little acknowledgement either of how individual sites operated within a wider system of occupation or with respect to the insular landscape. The distinctive nature of Norfolk Island’s multiple occupations presents a range of opportunities for different trajectories of research. Many of the potential themes are familiar to those studying island landscapes and communities: colonization and adaptation, environmental impact, cultural and economic isolation, island as Utopia and/or dystopia, island as laboratory, island as place of exile and control, insiders and outsiders, etc. (e.g. Anderson 2006; Rainbird 2007). Added to this is the way in which the successive groups encountered the landscape, colonized, appropriated and re-contextualised the cultural and natural legacies of their predecessors.

Norfolk Island was a sub-colony of New South Wales and an exact contemporary of the earliest settlements both there and in the other sub-colony of Van Diemen’s Land (Tasmania). Given this relationship there should have been some degree of uniformity between the different colonies in terms of the cultural backgrounds of colonists, expectations, preparedness, etc. (Birmingham and Jeans 1983). Consequently there would be value in a closer comparison of the strategies, decisions and actions of the respective colonization processes (see Gibbs 2016). One potential difference between the Norfolk Island settlers and the Australian groups might be the lack of interaction with an indigenous population. However, the 1788 landscape of Norfolk was neither natural nor ‘naïve’. The Polynesian occupation, although several centuries earlier, had left a modified environment and resources which were knowingly or unknowingly discovered and exploited by the new European colonists.

In structure and operation it might be expected that Norfolk’s Sydney settlement would have resonance with the early NSW convict administrative
hubs of Sydney or Parramatta. Queenborough andPhillipsburgh might be compared to contemporary convict assisted agricultural settlements such asToongabbie (NSW) or Yorktown (Tasmania). Also of interest is evidence for environmental adaptation, such as in farming practices, or technological and innovation in the design of the wind and water mills or in industrial processes such as brickmaking (Varman 1993). Martin and Cox (1988:135) have already tentatively identified variations in the development of architectural forms between Australia and Norfolk, based on environmental differences and interpretations of colonial policy. The social relationships within and between the different free and unfree groups of the First Settlement (settlers, military, administration, emancipists, convict) were complex and can be explored in spatial organization, buildings and material culture. The existing assemblages from Phillipsburgh and Sydney (Kingston) can be compared to the wealth of contemporary assemblages now available from New South Wales and Tasmania (Lawrence and Davies 2011). This should also further illuminate the economic relationships between Norfolk Island and the other Australian colonies, Britain, Asia and other parts of the wider global trade system, especially since Norfolk might best be seen as a periphery of a periphery in the World System.

Norfolk’s isolated and bounded nature enabled the high levels of control of a total institution, strict limitations on access and virtually no potential for escape. Although the design and structure of Kingston is considered in various historical, architectural, and archaeological studies, there has been surprisingly little comparative analysis against the physical and operational aspects of contemporary penal establishments (Kerr 1984). The 2010 Australian Convict Site World Heritage listing identified this need for comparative study of convict experiences within Australian convict sites (especially with the other secondary punishment settlements such as Sarah Island, Port Arthur, Moreton Bay, Newcastle and Port Macquarie), as well as with British convict institutions further afield (such as Bermuda, Gibraltar, Andaman Islands or Mauritius) (Pearson 1999, 2000). These sites were all subjected to similar ideological shifts in the balances between punishment and reform, in addition to often sharing administrators and convicts as they moved through the system, taking ideas and processes with them. The organisation and utilization of landscape, architectural forms, mechanisms for surveillance and control, and the nature of convict provisioning are obvious starting points for comparative research. Similarities with convict systems employed by other nations, some of which based themselves on the British system and are also on island or remote landscapes, might also be the subjects for consideration (Casella 2007; Pearson 1999, 2000; Smith and Buckley 2007; Vaidik 2009).

The Second Settlement was extremely hierarchical for both free and unfree occupants. As with the First Settlement there were marked differences within and between the classes of convicts, guards, military and administrators on Norfolk Island, expressed in spatial, architectural and material terms including food supplies. Similarly, convicts were subject to formal and informal hierarchies. Progression through the system was dependent upon their initial sentencing as well as their subsequent behaviour and performance, including the value of their industrial skills, formalized at different times through classification or grading systems. Gradings resulted in placement in particular stations and work situations, with material consequences including access to different kinds of accommodation, material goods and food, as well as reduced oversight and ameliorated work conditions (Dyster 1996; Kerr 1984, 1988; Nicholas 1988). The convict system on Norfolk Island as with any penal establishment also hosted an informal hierarchy among the prisoners that influenced the distribution of people and goods (Stuart 1979). Exploration of these sorts of differences, as well as the grey economies of prison life, and various indulgences unofficially allowed prisoners to ensure peace if not compliance, remains for future studies. The isolation of Norfolk Island was an obvious factor in the nature of its provisioning. Comparative archaeological assemblages from a range of convict sites have increasingly become available (e.g. Casey and Lowe 2006; D’Gluyas et al. 2015; Mein 2012) which would illuminate issues of supply and treatment in different convict contexts including Norfolk Island.

One trajectory for research on the Norfolk Island landscape is to take a more holistic view of the relationships between sites within it. Although studies of secondary punishment convict stations have traditionally focused on the institutional and penal aspects of their operation, industrial performance was an integral part of the convict reform process and in most instances men and women spent their days in a range of industrial and service activities within and beyond the settlements, rather than in prison (Lichtenstein 1996; Nicholas 1988; Robbins 2000; Roberts 2011; Tuffin 2013). Convict settlements were encouraged if not required to achieve at
least some degree of internal self-sufficiency and if possible move to profit-making surplus production. One of the emergent themes in current historical and archaeological research on convict settlements is an exploration of the industrial operations of these establishments across the wider associated landscape (Gibbs 2012; Tuffin 2013). This reconsideration focuses on the industrial nature of the convict experience and the relationships between the full range of major and minor stations and workplaces, including resource extraction sites, processing sites, transport and communication networks and the public works which also represent the output of the system. Given the extreme isolation and supply issues for Norfolk Island the need for effective agricultural production was paramount. Kingston, the agricultural settlements of Longridge and Cascade, and the outstation farms and work camps spread across the island operated as a single industrial system and a linked economic unit.

The Landscapes of Production and Punishment ARC project (DP170103642) currently being undertaken by Martin Gibbs (UNE), David Roberts (UNE) and Hamish Maxwell-Stewart (UTas), is developing methods to explore the comparable convict industrial landscape of Port Arthur. One of the core principles is to parallel the industrial flow of processes and products between and within sites of the Tasman Peninsula to the biographical flow of convicts through the system (i.e. viewing the convicts as ‘products’ of the labour and reform processes) (Figure 12). Analysis of convict records can be used to explore a range of factors directly related to the various industrial settings, including skill sets, deployment into particular industries, productivity, health status, offending and absconding, and so on. This draws on well-established methods of data collection and analysis used in the Founders and Survivors project (Maxwell-Stewart 2016), which is one of the key collaborations in the ARC. Both products and people moved in various physical ways across the closed settlement area of the Tasman Peninsula, thus linking biography to landscapes, specific sites and particular industries and creating opportunities for geospatial analysis (cf. Robertson 2016). It is intended that Norfolk Island be analysed in a similar fashion as a direct comparison with the Port Arthur experience.

Another largely unexplored feature of the Second Settlement landscape is the defensive aspect of the convict establishment. There was clearly a tactical positioning of structures, defensible enclosures around administrative buildings and military barracks, as well as high walls around the convict prison and barracks. A system of blockhouses and stockade guard posts, as well many minor walls and landscape features such as earthworks are noted on many plans. Although some of these features are evident in the landscapes of other secondary punishment stations such as Port Arthur, on Norfolk Island there seems to be a heightened concern, presumably as a product of there being no immediate relief in the event of a convict uprising.

The Third or Pitcairner Settlement, the longest period of occupation of Norfolk Island, represented a dramatic shift from the formerly institutional environment into a free settlement. The re-occupation of Second Settlement structures provided the foundation for their colonization, but the particular circumstances and cultural dynamics of the Pitcairner settlers, including their lack of familiarity with conventional British or Australian systems of

Figure 12. Norfolk island: The convict system 1847. National Library of Australia PIC Drawer 3843 #S9883.
settlement and agriculture, initially resulted in a distinctive pattern of occupation. The processes of the Pitcairners’ progressive adaptation to the environmental, social and economic circumstances of their new home, as well as their changing engagement with the outside world, has yet to be fully explored, including from an archaeological perspective (Nobbs 2006). Study of this period should also see these developments relative to the social and economic organisation of life on Pitcairn Island prior to the resettlement on Norfolk (see Erskine 2004; Gibbs and Roe 2017).

While the Melanesian Mission only occupied a portion of the western side of Norfolk Island and arguably had limited physical impact on the wider landscape, the operation of this parallel community across nearly 55 years certainly requires further consideration. There remain many questions to be addressed regarding the nature of proselytization and the treatment of the Islander converts which might be addressed in the light of wider Melanesian mission studies (see Flexner 2016), as well as their use of the Norfolk Island landscape and relations with the Pitcairner communities (see also Nash’s 2012 work on the linguistic and toponymic heritage of the mission on the island). University of Sydney PhD student Tom Sapienza has recently begun research on the operation of the Melanesian Mission on Norfolk. The WWII occupation of the island and the major social dislocation, landscape changes and material consequences have also yet to be properly evaluated, as have the various post-WWII industries including tourism.

It is noteworthy that despite the Pitcairner occupation and use of Kingston extending for well over a century longer than the convict phase and continuing in various forms through to today, this aspect of the island’s heritage currently has limited recognition or visibility in the interpretation of the history or archaeology of the KAVHA area. Despite Norfolk Islanders long being employed as part of the site management structure and continuing to access the site and facilities for recreation and their own commercial tourism ventures, there is a strong sense of alienation. In this respect there are strong similarities to the circumstances and consequences of the 1960 s–70 s removal of the Carnarvon community from the Port Arthur site in Tasmania, also now part of the convict World Heritage listing. This has been exacerbated by the 2016 return of Norfolk Island to full Australian administrative control, with much of the protest activity focused on Kingston as the Australian administration is housed within the former military barracks, with the Australian Commonwealth Administrator occupying the former Governors’ House (Grimm 2016). However, the significance of KAVHA as a past and continuing focus for community use is well recognized within the values identified in the 2007 Australian National Heritage List Inscription, with the current KAVHA Heritage Management Plan identifying the Third Settlement occupation as a significant area for future archaeological and anthropological research and interpretation (GML Heritage 2016:41–42, 51–53, 94–95).

Beyond the tightly managed KAVHA area, an additional consequence of the recent political shift on Norfolk is a requirement by the Australian Government for open migration and property sales, formerly tightly regulated by the Norfolk Island government. This has seen a rush by islanders to sell land in anticipation of the introduction of the Australian taxation system. This dramatic shift in land ownership and development means that many of the traditional and multi-generational links to land, as well as the knowledge of landscape and sites that goes with it (Nash 2013), is likely to be lost as properties are sold to non-islanders. As with many rural communities, young Norfolk Islanders are increasingly leaving to take up opportunities elsewhere, creating concern for generational continuity of knowledge about the island and its culture. As a consequence there is increasing interest in the community for documentation of oral history and place heritage as a way of recording and defining relationships with the island.

Conclusions

Since the First Settlement in 1788, Norfolk Island has seen a fascinating cycle of different occupations. Each phase saw subtly different processes of colonization, adaptation and engagement with the isolated environment, depending in part upon the mixture of free, unfree and institutional objectives. This cycle often included periods of complete abandonment, allowing subsequent re-appropriation of landscapes, buildings and sites in ways that are distinct from preceding uses. The aim of this paper has been to bring attention to the historical circumstances of the island and the potential to address a range of new questions about its post-1788 occupation. Although the KAVHA area has been the subject of sustained archaeological management since the 1980s, there has not been an explicit research agenda developed that considers the site, or the island as a whole, in light of changing approaches to the archaeologies of colonization, convict management, or missionisation.

The current Heritage Management Plan for KAVHA sets out the need for further archaeological research across all the periods of occupation, highlighting the potential offered by relatively undisturbed archaeological deposits, existing artefact assemblages and the rich resource of documentary and anthropological materials (GML Heritage 2016).
The opportunity exists for fleshing out the policy directions of the Heritage Management Plan with a well-considered and more holistic research design that seeks to explicitly address questions. This sort of relationship should also be seen as a pathway towards generating good management, interpretive and community outcomes for the KAVHA area and Norfolk Island as a whole. Alignment with current research on other convict landscapes, such as the Landscapes of Production and Punishment project at Port Arthur, should prove to be a particularly useful vehicle for advancing a comparative research agenda. It is hoped that continuing research on the island will address some of these shifts and bring a new appreciation of the complexities of this small but fascinating archaeological and cultural landscape.

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