



# Life courses, crime and global south migrants: Intercolonial transportation in the Australian historical context

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## ABSTRACT

Australia's settlement history is mired in the British tradition of deporting unwanted individuals for the purposes of punishment. Although initially convicts were transported to New South Wales (NSW), soon other colonies were established to accept the over 162,000 people transported from Britain and other parts of the British Empire. Overcrowded prisons meant that deportation from the British Isles was the best perceived option for crime control at the time. While abundant scholarship exists on those deported from Britain to the colonies, there has been limited research on those free migrants or colonial-born who were sentenced from the British colonies to inter-colonial transportation.

This article utilises the CON16 Indents of Convicts Locally Convicted or Transported from Other Colonies archival records as a starting point to undertake a longitudinal life course analysis of some free migrants to Australia from the Global South who were transported to Van Diemen's Land (VDL) between 1830 and 1850. We examine their lives post-transportation to VDL, the basis on which they were transported to VDL and how life course criminology questions can be answered with historical data.

## 1. Introduction

The convict history of Australia, whereby those convicted of crimes were transported from the British Isles to the Australian penal colonies from 1788 until 1868, is but one part of Australia's history of migration, transportation and dispossession. Partially to prevent French colonial expansion, and partially to dump almost 200,000 unwanted British prisoners, the British expanded their Empire onto the Australian continent by violently taking the land from the indigenous Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Deportation from the UK to New South Wales (NSW), and later Van Diemen's Land (VDL, now known as Tasmania) and Western Australia, was the chosen method to deal with convicts whilst also securing the land for the British empire. However, without free migrants the colonial project was doomed to failure. The first free settlers arrived in Australia in 1793, but their numbers would increase from the 1830s when the first assisted migration schemes were adopted. The colonies required skilled labour, and the colonists also hoped that large numbers of free settlers would help dilute the convict stock from the future population to create a European heritage majority in the colonies. Across the mid to late nineteenth century, the colonists became increasingly worried that the "dregs" of Britain were arriving as

free migrants, as well as exhibiting concern about Asian and other non-white immigration attracted by the colonies' growing economic prosperity. Constant movement of people to and around the Australian colonies – and the concerns this generated about crime and the moral character of strangers – made migration and transportation contentious political issues across the second half of the nineteenth century.

What is lesser known is the history of intra- and inter-Australian colonial transportation between 1830 and 1850 involving migrants or locally born individuals. They could themselves enter the convict system if convicted of an offence deemed serious enough for transportation to a penal colony. In this article we examine the life courses of people from the Global South who arrived to or were born in the Australian colonies during this period and who found themselves deported to VDL. We apply developmental and life course (DLC) criminological theories to historical people who are now well beyond our reach for surveying or interview. As we argue in this article, utilising historical datasets can help overcome some of the gaps in DLC literature especially as it relates to people from the Global South and adult life turning points, while simultaneously furthering our understanding of how historically individuals with no prior criminal records in the Australian colonies may have become involved with criminal offending later in their lives.

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## 2. The global south

The term 'Global South' is believed to have been coined by political theorist Carl Oglesby in 1969, when he used it to refer to formerly colonised countries that continued to be politically dominated and economically exploited by wealthier countries in the Global North (Hogan & Stewart, 2024). Colonialism and power relations have continued to play a central role in understandings of the term, with Haug et al. (2021, p. 1927) observing that: "In social science literature, 'South'-related terminology has mostly been used not simply as a reference to the strictly defined hemispheric south – landmasses and waters south of the equator – but as a general rubric for the decolonised nations located roughly, but not exclusively, south of the old colonial centres of power."

Some studies though have made distinctions between settler-colonial nation-states, and First Nations peoples living within them, including the latter's experiences in their investigations of the exploitation, marginalisation and resistance that have been dominant structural forces of the Global South (Sud & Sánchez-Ancochea, 2022). Within criminology, the disproportionately high imprisonment rates of Indigenous Australians and other First Nations peoples have led to these groups being analysed as part of Global South and Southern Criminology theoretical frameworks (Goyes & South, 2021; Warren & Ryan, 2022).

It is possible to argue for an even more expansive understanding of who might be included in a historical categorisation of the Global South. The term's invention in the late twentieth century and popularisation in the early twenty-first century means that it reflects contemporary understandings of the political and economic power relations. Nineteenth-century global relations looked somewhat different in terms of status and power between and within colonies and countries.

Some places today considered part of the Global North might meet some of the criteria for membership of the Global South when considering historical contexts. Ireland is a particularly pertinent example of this for our inquiry, given the high rate of Irish immigration to the Australian colonies. During the nineteenth century, Ireland was not only ruled as a British colony amidst much violence and economic inequality, but the Irish continued to face prejudice in the Australian colonies, including overrepresentation in local crime statistics (O'Farrell, 1993). Historian Ann McGrath observes that while the Irish themselves 'were hardly blameless' when it came to the colonisation of Australia, perceptions that the Irish and Aboriginal Australians shared common experiences of dispossession by the ruling English sometimes led to feelings of kinship between them (2010, 73). Some scholars argue that even today a relationality exists between the Global South and Northern Ireland (McElroy, 2015).

However, while, for instance, a case could be made for including nineteenth-century Ireland, on the basis of its colonial subject status, as part of a Global South paradigm, we have chosen not to do so here. While Irish convicts would have faced some forms of marginalisation, it would have been far from the same level of 'othering' as those from the Global South, whose visible ethnic differences left them subject to the racial prejudices of the time.

For the purposes of this article, we have narrowed our focus onto those individuals who came from countries that meet contemporary definitions of the Global South or who were Aboriginal Australians. Until now, the bulk of DLC research has focused on Global North populations, or in the case of previous Australian research, attention has been on children of CALD migrants to Australia with no disaggregation between those adult migrants who are from the Global North or the Global South, making this a meaningful contribution to scholarship.

## 3. Developmental and life courses

Ideas about DLC effects on an individual's onset of offending, persistence, and future desistance is a relatively recent proposition about how individual characteristics and their interaction with the

social environment, especially childhood experiences, can lead to risk or protective factors for a person when it comes to possible deviancy (Elder, 1975, 1994; Farrington, 1986; Sampson & Laub, 1990, 1993, 2003). As with other types of criminological theories, there is no one theory of DLC but rather varying attempts and methods to try and explain the causes and consequences of individual offending behaviour (Krohn, Buchanan, & Davies, 2015; Piquero, 2023).

Initial DLC studies could provide little illumination for how people experienced their lives, their agency and choices to participate in "deviant" behaviours, or motivations for desistance from crime. Originally focused on those already within the criminal justice system (Glueck & Glueck, 1950), DLC scholars moved to tracking entire birth cohorts (Farrington, 2021; Wolfgang, Figlio, & Thornberry, 1972). Interest shifted to how individuals moved through time and space and the resultant effects these may have to criminal offending propensity or desistance from this behaviour (Carlsson & Sarnecki, 2016). Importantly there are two facets to DLC theories. Developmental approaches focus on the early risk and protective factors that may push someone towards or pull someone away from delinquency and deviance, while life courses approaches examine whether transition or turning points in lives can influence offending trajectories or aid desistance from crime (Kazemian, Farrington, & Piquero, 2019). A turning point acts as 'changes in life history that separate the past from the present' (Sampson & Laub, 1993, p.304), with turning points being considered prosocial if they can pull someone towards desistance (e.g., marriage, military service, employment) or conversely push someone towards ongoing or repeated offending (e.g., divorce, unemployment, or incarceration) (Boman & Mowen, 2018).

More recently, attention has been on within-person changes and between-person differences that effect ongoing offending possibilities as a more nuanced explanation of the effects of turning points (Boman & Mowen, 2018). These transformations, termed 'cognitive transformations' (Giordano, Cernkovich, & Rudolph, 2002), are used to consider not only what happens external to an individual (e.g., employment or unemployment) but also what changes internally in attitudes, beliefs and intentions. Rather than considering individuals as passive receivers of social change done to them, turning points are seen to be what steps an individual is willing to take to transition out of crime or delinquency (Anderson & McNeill, 2019).

There are, however, limitations to DLC research; predominantly these studies have followed the lives of boys and men, as well as only the lives of those who are born in the location where the study is taking place, usually the Global North (Farrington, Piquero, & Jennings, 2013; Glueck & Glueck, 1968). This means that a migrant or Global South perspective may be missed by DLC scholars although there are some exceptions (Bui, 2012; Chouhy, 2018; Kenny & Lennings, 2007; Martinez & Valenzuela, 2005; McCann, Zhang, & Boateng, 2022; Piquero 2015; Shepherd, 2015). While the children of migrants may find themselves included in DLC studies, migration of adults precludes inclusion into any research investigating development of an individual's life course through birth cohort studies. Thus, the effects that transition and turning points may have on the experiences of migrant adults who have moved to new communities is missed from developmental explanations (Guerra & Craig, 2023). Language barriers as well as mistrust of authority figures may also act as a hurdle to examining transition and turning points in adult migrant life courses (Mellinger, Lowrey-Kinberg, & Barak, 2023; Moore, 2020). This results in the exclusion of many Global Southern peoples from DLC research.

## 4. Historical research and DLC

While in criminology there are callbacks to the historical research that underpins the development of DLC criminology scholarship (Piquero, 2023) there is a lack of historicity about research regarding migration and crime more broadly. Historians have researched the history of migration, exclusionist border policies and their effects on sub-

groups of migrants, as well as research about what constituted “good” and “bad” character in various societies and historical points (Varnava, Marmo, & Smith, 2022). There is also interest amongst historians in life course biographies of migrants who were involved with criminal justice systems, but this has mostly focused on those moving between countries in the Global North (Bashford & Strange, 2002; Breathnach, 2011; Finnane & Kaladelfos, 2017, 2019; Nygren, 2007; Strange & Bashford, 2003).

The need to expand DLC’s scope to history as well as place has been noted by Carlsson and Sarnecki (2016) and Blokland and Nieuwebeerta (2010) who highlight the value of comparisons across countries and historical periods because of how these impact upon how *all* life courses unfold. Historians who are working in criminology departments, or historians of crime who see the value of bringing DLC criminological theory to historical methods and practice, are slowly bridging this divide.

Widespread digitisation projects of 19th century government data, including court and prison records as well as newspapers, births, deaths and marriage certificates, police gazettes, and personal correspondence of historical peoples, has allowed for the re-creation of the lives of convicted peoples. Those who were transported from Britain, as well as those imprisoned in Britain, have had their recorded lives made public. Large-scale research projects such as the Digital Panopticon or Founders and Survivors have linked the data from 60 datasets to track the lives of people before, during, and after offending, covering the years from 1750 through to 1925 (Godfrey, Inwood, & Maxwell-Stewart, 2018; McCalman, Smith, Silcot, & Kippen, 2015).

Individual projects utilising some of this data have considered how juvenile justice was conceptualised in Europe and Australia (Alker & Watkins, 2018); the lives and deaths of Aboriginal and Māori people in custody (Harman, 2012; Harman & Maxwell-Stewart, 2012); the role of family formation to convict recidivism (Harman & Ray, 2023); life courses of 230 boys who were transported to VDL between 1834 and 1845 (Scott 2023); the effects of solitary confinement on the life course of prisoners (Dower, 2023; Inwood & Maxwell-Stewart, 2022); life courses of young offenders (Godfrey, Cox, Shore, & Alker, 2017); and habitual offending of a cohort between 1855 and 1940 in England (Godfrey, Cox, & Farrall, 2010). Additional LC research has also considered the intergenerational transmission of criminality (Godfrey et al., 2018), as well as questioned the motivation of criminologists and historians who study so-called “ruined” lives – that is, “ruined” by episodes of criminality and subsequent punishments – while simultaneously arguing that these should not define a person (Godfrey, 2016).

Similar to contemporary DLC research, there is often the missing element of motivation for offending captured in historical LC crime research (Alker & Watkins, 2018). Predominantly this is due to a lack of literacy amongst the historical cohort who could not write their own stories down, and because the documents created by government departments was formed for bureaucratic purposes not for reconstruction and giving voice to those who have been criminalised (Godfrey et al., 2021). However, some of the motivations, the life histories, the initial convictions, time under the surveillance of police, their experiences with incarceration, and finally desistance, alongside histories of marriage, children, business ventures and other life transition points are captured in the historical record. These forms of data can enable DLC research to extend chronologically as well as include more lives into research.

## 5. Methodology

### 5.1. Research data

Tasmania’s capital city, Hobart, is home to an extensive set of historical records that date back to when the island state was the penal colony of VDL. The significance of the Vandemonian archival records that survive from this period lies in their capacity to reveal fine-grained details about the lives of lower to middle class individuals from diverse

places of origin, at least viewed through administrative lenses, and to enable analyses of these lives as collectives. The records are of such value that they have been inscribed into UNESCO’s Heritage of the World Register.

At the centre of our current research is an understudied set of convict indents, CON16 *Indents of Convicts Locally Convicted or Transported from Other Colonies* (Tasmanian Archives and Heritage Office, 1835–1853) which ran from 1st February 1835 to 30th November 1853. Before now scholarly attention had not turned to those within the records who were detected offending within, and were subsequently arrested, tried, and sentenced in, one of the Australian colonies (including VDL) (Harman, 2017). Predominantly this is because convicts in Australian history are understood to have been arrested, charged and transported to either VDL or New South Wales from the UK. Our interest is specifically on those who were did not arrive as convicts to the Australian colonies (i.e., were not transported convicts) as well as those who were born free in the colonies (either as children of colonists, or Indigenous peoples).

Within the CON16 dataset, 624 men, women, and children were identified as being either free migrants, colonially born or Indigenous peoples and for whom, until their colonial trials, there is no credible evidence of past offending. Their information is therefore part of our research project. Their records were transcribed by research assistants with knowledge of Australian nineteenth-century colonial history and reviewed by the project’s Research Associate. Although the transcribed dataset is currently not publicly available, it will be a public resource at the completion of this project in 2026.

Administrative data as recorded in CON16 was used to determine if someone met criteria for inclusion into the research specific to this article. Utilising the contemporary definition of ‘global south’, individuals who met the criteria of being from the global south were extracted from the dataset. The bulk of administrative details collected in CON16 was done to reveal each person’s potential as a forced labourer. Prior occupations and employers, literacy levels, religious affiliations, marital status and familial relationships, age, and injuries to bodies were recorded. However, details about the place of birth, prior transportation status, offence, the place of prosecution and sentencing, length of sentence, other remarks about their offending or sentence would also be collected by registrars.

The transcription of the CON16 records provides the foundation for further triangulation of data which is crucial to historical DLC research (Godfrey et al., 2017). Taking individuals’ CON16 entries as our starting point, it is possible to work both backwards and forwards to carefully link numerous other government and non-government records held across Australia that, when taken together, reveal often deep insights into these people’s life courses during but also after incarceration, and on occasion prior to their arrests. Records that have been accessed to develop these life courses include colonial newspapers sourced from National Library of Australia’s Trove database; family history information via the search engine [Ancestry.com](https://www.ancestry.com); online criminal justice databases, such as the Old Bailey Online, Prosecution Project and the Australasian Legal Information Institute (AUSTLI) for further information about conviction histories; and “conduct records” (CON31 and CON40 Conduct Records of Male and Female Convicts Arriving Under the ‘Assignment’ System, TAHO) were also linked to an individual’s transcribed record. The accessed records where existing only in physical form have been photographed to create a digital artefact.

Conduct records can reveal much about the individual’s experiences while under sentence such as time sentenced to solitary confinement or corporal punishments. For some convicts, letters or personal papers concerning the individual have survived. Papers such as diaries kept by colonists have come to light within which a convict from our dataset happens to be mentioned. All of these can aid in recreating a picture of a person’s past. Understandably, this is not possible for all 624 people in our dataset due to the destruction, loss or deterioration of physical records from over 150 years ago.

Taken together, these records shed considerable light on the life

courses of individuals whose histories, had they not encountered the legal system, may have gone largely unrecorded. And viewed *en masse*, they enable us to engage in quantitative and qualitative analysis that helps inform a scholarly understanding of the collective experience of those who arrived or were born free in the Australian colonies and transported from one colony to another, including a cohort of those from the Global South whose experiences have tended to be particularly invisible in historical records.

## 6. Results

Out of the 624 individuals in this dataset of free settler and colonially born transportees to VDL, only 17 (or 2.7 %) were identified as members of the Global South (Table 1). This included five individuals born in India, four Indigenous Australians, two born in Africa, and one in each from Batavia, Ceylon, East Indies, Jamaica, Singapore and South America. Of the remainder of the dataset, 430 (68.9 %) were born in the British Isles, 115 (18.4 %) in the Australian colonies, 17 (2.7 %) from other countries in the Global North, and 45 (7.2 %) did not have their birthplace recorded.

Although the number of individuals from the Global South appears small, in the 1830s to 1840s period that covers much of the dataset, the Australian colonies consisted mostly of a small but growing number of British migrants and their colonially born children, and the Aboriginal Australians, whose population numbers were inversely decreasing because of the violence, disease and resource competition wrought by colonisation.

It was only with the advent of the gold rushes in the early 1850s that large-scale migration from around the world started to produce a somewhat more diverse population, although those of British heritage remained dominant. The homogenous nature of the population during this period is clear from the 1851 census for NSW, then the most populous colony (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2024). Of the 187,243 residents recorded in that year (a figure that did not include Aboriginal Australians who were excluded from the census count until 1967), 54 % were British migrants, and 43 % were born in the Australasian colonies of today's Australia and New Zealand. Only 1955 individuals (or 1 % of the total) came from other British colonies, and 2651 (around 1.5 %) came from other foreign countries. This last figure was not broken down in the census further into specific countries of origin but it is likely that the majority of individuals from said foreign countries hailed from the Global North of Europe and North America. Therefore, the 17 people from the Global South who were free migrants or Indigenous people transported to VDL are likely an over-representation for this period. All 17 of the individuals in the dataset from the Global South were males, compared to the 88.3 % that males comprised of the remaining individuals in the dataset.

Irrespective of where they originally came from, all the individuals in the dataset had ended up in one of the Australian colonies by the time they were put on trial for the offence that earned them a transportation sentence. Although the low number of individuals from the Global South makes it impossible to point to definitive trends, in respect to trial place a suggestive pattern does emerge. The Global South cohort seems to

**Table 1**  
Background of Free Settler and Colonially Born.

Background	Number	Per cent
British-born free settlers	430	68.9
Australian colonial-born (excluding Aboriginal Australians)	115	18.4
Free settlers from elsewhere in Global North	17	2.7
<i>Above categories hereafter categorised as the Global North cohort</i>		
Free settlers from Global South	13	2.1
Aboriginal Australians	4	0.6
<i>Above categories hereafter categorised as the Global South cohort</i>		
Unknown	45	7.2
<i>Individuals of unknown background hereafter excluded from analysis</i>		

**Table 2**  
Location of trial.

Location of trial	Global South	Global North
NSW	7 (41.2 %)	261 (46.4 %)
VDL (Tasmania)	3 (17.6 %)	212 (37.7 %)
South Australia	2 (11.8 %)	43 (7.7 %)
Victoria	4 (23.5 %)	20 (3.6 %)
Western Australia	1 (5.9 %)	18 (3.2 %)
Unknown	0 (0 %)	8 (1.4 %)
Total	17 (100 %)	562 (100 %)

have been less likely than others to be tried in the oldest and most populous colonies of NSW and VDL that produced the most transportees in the dataset.<sup>1</sup> They were more likely to be sentenced from the newer and less settled colonies of Western Australia (established as the Swan River Colony in 1829), South Australia (established 1836) and Victoria (established as the Port Phillip District of NSW in 1836, achieving independence as a colony in 1851) (Table 2). At a time when colonies were communicating being open to receiving migrants to build the fortunes of their colony, this did not translate to being open to rehabilitating non-white people from the Global South.

Linked to the above trend, the Global South cohort were slightly more likely to be tried from the 1840s onwards than the rest of the dataset (Table 3). By the 1840s, the Australian colonies were encouraging more free migrants to provide the labour force needed due to the slowing transportation of convicts from Britain (Richards, 1993); this perhaps increased the flow of people from the Global South, and with it increasing the likelihood of their becoming involved with the colonial criminal justice systems.

In respect to offence type, of the 17 individuals in the Global South cohort, 14 were transported for theft offences (2 each for fraud and horse-stealing, 1 each for embezzlement, robbery and sheep-stealing, and 7 for other forms of larceny), and 3 for violent offences (2 for aggravated assault; 1 for murder) (Table 4). While this sees the Global South cohort slightly over-represented on violent offences, the numbers are not strong enough to point to a definitive trend.

Almost all the 17 individuals in the Global South cohort were given transportation sentences of 7 years or more, suggesting they may have been slightly more subject to lengthy sentences than others (Table 5). This tendency remains in place even when controlling for broad offence type. It suggests that when a person from the Global South was transported to VDL, the sentencing colony wished to ensure that they would remain unable to return for an extended period of time.

The ages entered for prisoners need to be understood as general estimates (Table 6). In the early nineteenth century, many people (especially in the working classes) only had a general sense of their own age or the year they were born. This information was not as relevant to people in an era when there was no compulsory schooling requirements and few employment limits around age. The information about age would have been based on prisoners' own information, or often on visual assessments by officials. The impact of this is evident in the high numbers of offenders into similar age groupings (20, 25, 30, 35 etc.). In line with contemporary criminological studies, age was highly correlated with criminal activity, with younger people more likely to be subject to criminal justice processes (Farrington, 1986). The Global South cohort seems to have been slightly more likely than others to be aged in their 20s or younger, although this may also be due to greater difficulties

<sup>1</sup> VDL could be the location of the trial and the place someone could be "transported" to. As punishment was either assigned work (i.e., labour) or being sent to a punishment station in an isolated location (i.e., Macquarie Harbour, Maria Island or Port Arthur), the individual would be moved around the colony well away from their place of habitation at a time when travel and transport within the colony was expensive, difficult to organise, could sever familial ties permanently, and time intensive. Thus, even at the time when the CON16 records were created, the authorities saw this as transportation and not merely as local punishment.

**Table 3**

Date of Trial.

Date of Trial	Global South	Global North
1835–1839	6 (35.3 %)	287 (51.1 %)
1840–1845	7 (41.2 %)	187 (33.3 %)
1846–1850	2 (11.8 %)	61 (10.9 %)
1851–1853	1 (5.9 %)	20 (3.6 %)
Unknown	1 (5.9 %)	7 (1.2 %)
Total	17 (100 %)	562 (100 %)

**Table 4**

Offence Types.

Offence Type	Global South	Global North
Theft offences	14 (82.4 %)	483 (85.9 %)
Violent offences	3 (17.6 %)	47 (8.4 %)
Other offences	0 (0 %)	32 (5.7 %)
Total	17 (100 %)	562 (100 %)

**Table 5**

Sentence Length.

Sentence Length	Global South	Global North
Under 1 year	0 (0 %)	14 (2.5 %)
1 year-under 2 years	0 (0 %)	21 (3.7 %)
2 years-under 7 years	1 (5.9 %)	57 (10.1 %)
7 years-under 10 years	9 (52.9 %)	223 (39.7 %)
10 years-under 15 years	3 (17.6 %)	100 (17.8 %)
15 years or more	1 (5.9 %)	40 (7.1 %)
Life	2 (11.8 %)	95 (16.9 %)
Unknown	1 (5.9 %)	12 (2.1 %)
Total	17 (100 %)	562 (100 %)

**Table 6**

Age at Sentencing.

Age	Global South	Global North
Under 20 years	3 (17.6 %)	54 (9.6 %)
20–29 years	11 (64.7 %)	304 (54.1 %)
30–39 years	2 (11.8 %)	131 (23.3 %)
40–49 years	0 (0 %)	38 (6.8 %)
50–59 years	0 (0 %)	19 (3.4 %)
60–69 years	1 (5.9 %)	6 (1.1 %)
70–79 years	0 (0 %)	1 (0.2 %)
Unknown	0 (0 %)	9 (1.6 %)
Total	17 (100 %)	562 (100 %)

officials experienced in estimating the ages of persons from other cultures.

Almost all the Global South cohort were recorded as having occupations that put them in the working classes. There were four labourers, and three who made their living on the water as a sailor, a ship's steward and a waterman (someone who ferried people in a small boat on the river – counted as a skilled trade in table below). Nine more were engaged in some form of domestic service, speaking to the racialised as well as classed nature of this occupation. This may explain their reason for being in the Australian colonies, having accompanied white employers out. There were different types of servants amongst the nine, including 1 general servant, 1 house servant, 2 grooms, and 5 cooks (one of whom was also noted as acting as a steward, another had the distinction of being a pastry cook, and another a 'bread and biscuit' baker). Only one, Henry Hall from the East Indies, belonged to the middle classes as a clerk.

One unmistakable trend is in respect to literacy. The Global South cohort were significantly more likely to be illiterate than others in the dataset. However, it is not clear if this related only to literacy in English, or in other languages (Table 7).

The majority of the Global South cohort, like the majority of the dataset more generally, were unmarried at the time of their transportation (64.7 % for the Global South cohort to the 68.3 % of the Global North cohort who were single).

Migrants from the Global South and Aboriginal Australians were all included as non-native English speakers as part of our analysis due to the large skew of illiteracy to this cohort making it unclear from the records whether it was due to a lack of English literacy skills or genuine illiteracy in their native language as well. They are only five other individuals in the dataset who appear to be non-English speakers (based on place of birth data), these all hailing from the Global North.

Unlike the Global South cohort who appear dotted across later records and offer us an ability to trace a life course (as we present with case studies below), the non-English speaking Global North cohort identified in the CON16 records by and large vanish. This suggests that there was an increased likelihood that the Global South cohort would continue to either interact with the criminal justice system following their release (as demonstrated below) or the possibility that their ethnic and racial distinctiveness in a majority white, British colony led to official and non-official curiosity and/or surveillance of their ongoing actions.

## 7. Discussion

Overall, what does analysing the CON-16 records tell us about Global South people transported to VDL from a DLC perspective? And can historical criminal records expand methodological possibilities for DLC criminologists? Much of what is noted in the DLC literature about protective factors (either for individually from a psychological or social perspective) for non-offending behaviours or turning points in life are seen in our historic cohort). As our data from CON16 indicates, married, older, literate people from a non-working-class background were unlikely to be transported from one colony to another after sentencing. This was as much the case for the Global South cohort as the Global North one. Some historical life course research has found that the turning point of marriage, which is shown today to have an impact in lowering offending in later life (Laub et al., 2018), was not as evident in the 19th century (Godfrey, Cox, & Farrall, 2007). There is the important point that not all marriages are equal; it has been noted that it is a mutually satisfying relationship that acts as an imperative for desistance not merely getting married (Godfrey et al., 2007, p.77). Regardless of marital happiness, for the purposes of transportation in this dataset, unmarried people would find themselves transported more frequently than married ones. The role of family in helping someone turn away from crime was not unknown to the justices of the nineteenth century; being married and having children could act as a mitigating factor in sentencing, particularly if the individual had no prior history of offending ("Supreme Court, 1845; "Supreme Court—Criminal Side, 1842; "Supreme court-criminal side, 1849). Partially this was due to a worry that removing the primary breadwinner from a wife and children could result in additional financial and social burden for the colony in the long-term when dependents themselves turned to crime.

Amongst all convicts who ever served a sentence in the penal colonies around Australia (not just our sample from CON-16) there has been evidence to suggest that those who were younger and from an urban environment (e.g. London) when first imprisoned and transported were more likely to be recidivists throughout their lives (Watkins,

**Table 7**

Literacy.

Literacy	Global South	Global North
Illiterate	12 (70.6 %)	143 (25.4 %)
Read only	1 (5.9 %)	54 (9.6 %)
Read and write	2 (11.8 %)	347 (61.7 %)
Unknown	2 (11.8 %)	18 (3.2 %)
Total	17 (100 %)	562 (100 %)

2021). Research indicates this was because they were less likely to be skilled workers and were considered chronic recidivists by the time they were 14 years old, thereby making any future attempts at rehabilitation futile in a colony requiring skilled, prosocial settlers. But this level of detail into the child and adolescent experiences of the Global South cohort is missing from the CON16 records. The little that can be learned about the lives of the Global South men pre-conviction and possible choices that led to their offending can only be found in other sources such as newspaper reports or petitions for clemency from their employers. But this too indicates that contemporary life course criminology theories about the “push” to or “pull” away from criminality that turning points can have on an individual’s propensity to offend (Sampson & Laub, 1993; Sampson, Laub and Wimer 2006; Warr 1998) were evident amongst historical offenders.

The Global South cohort were all men, more likely to come from itinerant backgrounds, having worked as sailors or in other occupations that also saw movement in employment such as servants and labourers. Their younger age, lower literacy levels (at least according to the English-speaking clerks), and unwed marital status can perhaps explain the onset of offending in the Australian colonies and/or why these individuals were the ones finding themselves transported to VDL. That is to say, the risk factors for offending substantially outweighed any possible protective factors as understood by DLC researchers especially when considering key risk factors like mobility, employment and literacy (Kirk, 2018). To the colonial justices who sentenced them, they were likely seen as a liability to the future economic and social growth of the relevant colony and a threat to the safety and wellbeing of other settlers. This is even though they had arrived to or lived in Australia not as convicts and without any prior criminal sanctions. The over-representation of people from the Global South in this cohort in comparison to the broader Australian colonial population at the time also highlights the long legacy of criminal justice policies that either inadvertently or purposefully harm non-white, or non-European peoples at a higher rate (Marmo, Smith, & Varnava, 2023).

Transportation to VDL would undoubtedly have acted as a critical life event that had ramifications on their identities, behaviour, and mental and physical wellbeing. Such removal would have acted upon usual transition points in youth and adults being missed or pushed out to later in life, and their life trajectories would have been impacted well beyond what they could have ever imagined. Below we have two examples of men from the Global South who are part of our sample. One of the men, Dola, had a relatively stable life in VDL following his initial time as a prisoner, while the other, Scipio Africanus, had a less successful life story. Utilising additional sources beyond CON16 we can retrospectively build a life course narrative that even 150 years or more later is surprisingly prescient about criminal careers and highlights how life transitions or turning points that intersect with the criminal justice system can have lifelong ramifications.

## 8. Mutiny at Sea: The Case of Dola

In a column published on 31 December 1850 in the *South Australian Register*, the newspaper reported how, while *en route* from Singapore to Adelaide, the *Hawk’s* voyage had been severely disrupted when men described as ‘the Malay crew’ had tried to seize the vessel. The altercation took place about three weeks into the voyage and began half an hour prior to midnight on 14 November. A man named Dola allegedly called the officer of the watch, second officer James White, to the bow on false pretences. His fellow sailors, Hadjee (sometime recorded as Hadjee) and Dummah, then attacked White with an axe and tried to throw him overboard. White managed to alert the captain and first mate, and the attempted mutiny was foiled. Following a fortnight’s care on-board, White was able to return to his duties. Upon the *Hawk’s* arrival at Adelaide, the mutinous men were gaol pending legal proceedings (Miscellaneous Shipping, 1850; Police Court – Port Adelaide, 1851, 4 January).

When Dola, Hadjee, and Dummah appeared before the Police Court in Adelaide on 2 January 1851 all three men were described as Malays, with Dola singled out by the *South Australian Register* as being ‘the most ill-looking fellow we have ever beheld’ (Police Court – Port Adelaide, 1851a). This assessment was likely based on his physical appearance and bearing, but also the criminal activity (against a white man) in which he had allegedly been involved. Dola and his fellow sailors required an interpreter to facilitate their participation in the proceedings. Accordingly, they were provided with the services of Spottiswoode Montgomerie, a South Australian colonist and former trooper (Eyre Peninsula in the ‘Sixties: Pioneer Pastoralists Recalled, 1931; Spottiswoode Montgomerie, 2013). In response to the charge that they had assaulted on the high seas with intent to murder James White, the three (through their interpreter) pleaded not guilty. The evidence provided was ample to convince the Bench to commit the men to trial at the criminal sessions (Police Court – Port Adelaide, 1851b).

The following month, Dola and Dummah appeared before Mr. Bonney at a coronial inquest into the death of their erstwhile companion and cellmate, Hadjee. Early in the morning of 13 February 1851, the gaol keepers had heard a disturbance. They found Dummah hitting Hadjee over the head with a tin bucket. Hadjee died in hospital around 67 hours later. Dummah, on being asked by the coroner whether he wanted to question the witness, replied through the interpreter ‘If you wish to kill me, kill me – if you wish to let me live, let me live – If I can, I wish to live’. Attention then turned to Dola and whether he could take an oath. It turned out that this ‘Malay’ man was in fact Chinese. He told the court that he was taken from China in childhood and had since lived in Java. Dola had never taken an oath but ‘believed that the proper way was to cut off a cock’s head’. The coroner was perplexed by Dola’s admission that he adhered to no particular religion and had no knowledge of an afterlife, saying that following death ‘he should be buried, and would be done for’. Dola eventually claimed to have had a god in China, ‘Chin Chin Joss’ (Killing of a Malay by his Comrade in Gaol, 1851).<sup>2</sup> He also thought that another form of oath could be ‘to have his flesh cut and suck the blood’. Dola explained how he ‘must tell the truth a little, if he did that; for if he told a falsehood, his god would throw him off the masthead when he next went on board any ship’. Once his beliefs had been ascertained, a doctor made a small incision, and Dola sucked a little of his own blood. He then gave evidence implicating Dummah in the death of Hadjee, the latter being claimed by his cellmates as the principal offender in the matter against White for which they were being held pending trial. As medical evidence was being given, Dummah began banging his head against the wall and had to be restrained. Ultimately, the jury convicted him of manslaughter (Killing of a Malay by his Comrade in Gaol, 1851).

On 17 May, Dummah and Dola were arraigned at the Supreme Court for the felonious assault on James White, and Dummah for the murder of Hadjee. The *Adelaide Times* reported how ‘the appearance of Dummah excited a universal feeling of pity, there being scarcely a doubt from the expression of the poor fellow’s countenance, that he had fallen into an irreclaimable idiocy’. The day after his assault on Hadjee, Dummah reportedly tried to force his head through the iron bars of the prison infirmary gate, following which the Governor of the Gaol had ordered that he be put into a ‘strait waistcoat’. The jury found him to be of unsound mind (Supreme Court – Criminal Sitings, 1851).

On 19 May, the last of the three, Dola, appeared before the Supreme Court indicted with assisting in the assault on White. An account of what transpired was proffered to the court, but the motive for the act was not clearly established from Dola’s evidence (GRG24/6/1564 Dola). The jury returned a guilty verdict, following which Dola was sentenced to death recorded. This sentence was a formality that meant the death sentence was imposed but with the expectation that it would be

<sup>2</sup> ‘Joss’ derived from the Portuguese word ‘deus’, meaning ‘God’, with ‘Chin Chin Joss’ being a Pidgin term used in China to refer to religious worship.

commuted by the executive arm of government ([Law and Police Courts: Supreme Court – Criminal Sittings, 1851](#)). Dola's sentence was commuted by the executive to ten years transportation ([Dola – Criminal Record Book, 2025](#)). He embarked on the *Union* along with seven white men who had likewise been sentenced to transportation for crimes ranging from rape to forgery, cattle stealing, and larceny. The *South Australian Register* reported on their transportation under the telling headline 'A Good Riddance' ([A Good Riddance, 1851](#)).

When Dola arrived at Hobart, he was entered into the CON16 Indent register as 'a Malay' who was just 4 ft and six inches tall and 20 years old (likely an approximation). His marital status was 'married' with his wife, Lie, being 'at native place', the latter recorded as 'Singapore'. There is no suggestion in any of the surviving records that the two were ever reunited. Dola's occupation was 'sailor', and his indent recorded that he 'cannot speak English' (Dola – Indent). His most distinguishing feature was a tattoo on his right arm depicting a lion and an anchor (Dola – Conduct Record).

Dola disembarked the *Union* in Van Diemen's Land on 18 June 1851, which was during the probation period. This meant that rather than being immediately assigned into private service or to labour on public works, he was required to serve the first part of his sentence at a probation station. He was allocated to Cascades, a male probation station on the Tasman Peninsula, where he arrived on 11 July 1851. Less than six months later, on 15 January 1852, he absconded. His escape was gazetted on 27 January 1852 with a £1 reward offered for his capture, and just two days later Dola was in custody being sentenced to eighteen months hard labour following which he was sent to Port Arthur, also located on the Tasman Peninsula. While at Port Arthur, Dola underwent four months' separate treatment (i.e. solitary confinement) commencing from 6 February 1852 ([Dola – Conduct Record, 2025](#)).

The following year saw Dola employed along with 31 other male convicts by colonist William Lawrence at Brune (now Bruny) Island, a smaller island off the south-east coast off VDL to the south of Hobart. Dola was contracted to Lawrence for a 12-month period with the rate of his wages set at £12, a similar rate as that paid for other convicts in the period ([Dola – Employment Register, 2025](#)).

Dola was issued with a ticket-of-leave on 7 November 1854 having achieved a 109-day reduction to his sentence through completing task work. This allowed him to arrange to labour for his own gain but within set geographical boundaries. A ticket-of-leave was in essence an early form of parole for good conduct. Similar to modern parole, Dola had to be employed, live at an address that was supplied to police, report to his nearest police station once a month and if charged and convicted with another crime or behavioral misconduct then the ticket-of-leave would be forfeit. Dola receiving this ticket-of-leave indicates that after his initial effort to escape imprisonment and his time in separate treatment, he was a compliant prisoner. His conditional pardon followed on 23 November 1856, then a certificate of freedom on 30 July 1861. With his certificate of freedom granted, Dola could have left the Australian colonies and returned either to his previous occupation or his wife. However, it appears that he stayed on in Hobart, where he had served the bulk of his sentence.

This was not quite the end of Dola's interactions with the legal system. On 29 October 1867 he was sentenced to imprisonment for a month for 'feloniously receiving a barrow wheel' ([Dola – Conduct Record, 2025](#)). By 1867, Dola had clearly remained and integrated into Tasmanian society. Just as the island's name had been changed from VDL to Tasmania, Dola's name too had changed, and he was by then known as 'James Dolan'. The newspaper records give no indication of a translator being used in the courtroom, so it appears that Dola had sufficient English to give his evidence unassisted. Dola claimed to have bought the barrow wheel legally for half a crown, but other testimony proved that a convict named George Reed had stolen the barrow wheel, 'the property of Her Majesty the Queen', and passed it over the fence of the public works yard to Dola. Reed confirmed that he did not tell Dola that it was stolen. Two upstanding citizens provided character references for Dola.

John Symons of Fitzroy Place deposing that the defendant was both his tenant and employee and had a 'strictly honest' character. Detective Constable William Morley likewise said that for the eight years over which he had known Dola 'he bore an excellent character for honesty ... had never been charged with any larceny ... [and] he had heard gentlemen on the wharf who had employed him speak of him very highly'. These excellent references resulted in Dola's sentence being the lightest possible under the circumstances ([Law – Police Court, 1867](#)).

It is at this point that we lose Dola in the records. His change of name means that he could become one of a few individuals known as James Dolan or a close variant who appear in historical records from that point. There was a James Dolan admitted as a pauper to an invalid depot in Launceston, Tasmania on 24 June 1875 and discharged at his own request on 6 December 1875, but with no age or other identifying data to provide a conclusive positive identification ([Tasmanian Reports of Crime, 1875](#)). While it is possible that Dola at some stage returned to his homelands, his presence in Tasmania six years after the end of his sentence suggests its likely he continued with the life he had started following his initial release and that his disappearance from the records points to a lack of further serious criminal incidents.

## 9. Fowl larceny: Scipio Africanus

The name Scipio Africanus is better known as the name of the general and statesman who played a central role in the Roman decisive victory over Hannibal's Carthaginian army. However, amongst the inhabitants of colonial NSW and later VDL, Scipio Africanus was from the nomadic Khoikhoi people (known as Khoisan) in the Cape Colony (now South Africa). Although there were convicts of African descent amongst the First Fleet of convicts to NSW in 1788 ([Chingaipe, 2024](#)) and approximately thirty-four Khoisan prisoners were transported to the Australian penal colonies during the 1800s ([Harman, 2012](#)), Scipio Africanus arrived as a free migrant to NSW in 1837 aged 19 years old. He worked as a labourer on his father's farm on the Cape of Good Hope prior to boarding a schooner, the *John*, and heading to the Australian colonies. He worked on his passage over and landed a role as a groom with a Mr. Stewart in Sydney.

Soon after his arrival he was caught in the act of stealing chickens from Mrs. Savage. Scipio had killed two fowl and was in the process of attempting to end the life of a third, a Bantam rooster and the favoured pet of Mrs. Savage, when several servants in the company of their mistress apprehended him. Refusing to answer their questions he was handed over to the police and soon after appeared in court (*The Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser*, 9 Sept. 1837, p.2). Newspaper reporting of Scipio's case was very limited, with barely 100 words printed in total. Attention was more on his race and his 'sponsorial appellation' (i.e. his name) than either the crime or motive for it (*The Sydney Herald*, 11 Sept. 1837, p.2). It is in the Conduct Records once he arrived in VDL on the 30th October 1837 to serve his seven-year sentence that a fuller picture of Scipio Africanus is presented.

Within three months of arrival Scipio's conduct record begins to fill with his absconding attempts (CON35/1/1/799). His 7-year sentence was extended by an additional twelve months on three occasions (in 1838, 1842 and 1847) and an additional eighteen months in 1845. His first attempt to escape his convict assignment resulted in his sentence being extended, but upon his second attempt a mere five weeks later in March 1838, the sentencing judge decided that 25 lashes and being locked in solitary confinement for 10 days with nothing but bread and water would act as the appropriate measures to break Scipio of his new habit. Following this punishment he did not make another attempt for freedom again until the end of the year, the punishment for which was 9 months hard labour, 6 of which were in chains. In the following 11 years he attempted to abscond, refused to work, had food in his possession that he was not supposed to have, or failed to follow a directive at least 23 more times. The punishments ranged from more occasions doing hard labour, in chains, in solitary confinement, in the police cells,

transportation out to the isolated penal stations Norfolk Island and later Port Arthur, and directives that after serving his sentence he was never to reside in Hobart Town. Solitary confinement was his punishment on no less than 3 occasions, the longest being 30 days. The authorities were clearly throwing everything they could think of at Scipio to try and control him but to no avail.

Scipio received his ticket of leave in 1848. While enjoying his freedom away from penal stations, in September 1848 Scipio was found in the company of an old Black man by the name of Nolas Yankees and both were charged with being on the premises of Reverend Palmer for 'some improper purpose'. Although Nolas was the one who quarrelled with the inhabitants of the premises, the harsher sentence fell on Scipio who was sentenced to 3 months imprisonment with hard labour. On receiving his sentence, Scipio 'very coolly' observed that he had no intention of serving the full sentence (*Colonial Times*, 1848, p. 3). He was true to his word as he again attempted to abscond in November. By August 1850 Scipio was finally freed, having served his full extended sentence, and was not in front of a court again until 1851. In July 1851 he was charged and convicted of assault and robbery for stealing a clothesline in the company of a man by the name of Arnold Gaucus, and after having served his sentence of six months hard labour, was then arrested and convicted of horse theft in April 1852. This last offence resulted in a sentence for life, with a labour gang probation period of 6 years, to be served at Port Arthur.

Knowledge of Scipio's origins from the Cape Colony was common in Port Arthur, as was his history as someone who had spent a considerable amount of time in the penal station and working in the surrounding bush. As a Khoisan, Scipio's 'African bushman' skills in moving through a hostile environment and building a canoe were highly valued by three other convicts. Peter Smith, George King and William Adams had devised a plan to escape but lacked the requisite skills to undertake it (Rieusset, 2021). Escaping on December 30th 1852, the four men went into the bush and started working on canoes to make their way up the coast of VDL and get as far away from Port Arthur as they could. Search parties were sent out after them but Scipio's skills in guiding the other three as well as building the canoes worked in the absconders' favour and they were able to get their canoes out onto the water and away from the penal station. However, as the conditions on the water deteriorated, the rafts could not hold up to the crashing waves and the canoe soon took on water before sinking. Smith and King were able to make their way to the land but Adams and Scipio both drowned. Although Scipio was 'the best swimmer of the lot' (Rieusset 2021) he had his waistcoat and jacket on and his attempts to get to shore were hampered by his clothing and the rough weather. When questioned about the veracity of his account of Scipio's final moments, Smith replied 'We never would have left one of our number behind especially our guide'. The magistrate examining the survivors suggested in his correspondence to the Hobart authorities that 'Nothing can be made more probable than that a dark man from the Cape of Good Hope should be cold on the sea in the evening and then he should button up his clothes' thus concluding that this is what led to his inability to effectively swim to safety (Rieusset 2021). With that, the authorities closed Scipio Africanus' record.

## 10. Applied DLC to the Global South cases

The deportation of Dola and Scipio to VDL with long sentences attached would undoubtedly act as critical life events that transitioned them away from the lives they had known up to that point. Their life stories as pieced together from multiple sources can inform us of experiences of people from the Global South in colonial Australia, which is missing from prior research into this period, as well as how DLC theories can be applied to historical criminal offending data (quantitative and qualitatively). While we are not expressly testing DLC theories as applied to historical records in this article, our research findings demonstrate that DLC theories as applied to explain contemporary offending, can be also be successfully utilised on historic data. This can

both expand the amount but also the types of data used by DLC researchers as well as expanding populations under analysis, namely those from the Global South.

Specifically, in the case of Dola, we can identify a couple of key transition points in his life right from childhood. Dola had been taken from China to live on Java as a child, but had ended up later in life in Singapore, married, and working as a sailor before at some point in 1850 becoming involved in a plot to take the vessel he was working on. The motivation for the incident remains unknown, although the event raises questions as to whether the collaboration between the crewmates of colour may have been a response to unfavourable conditions they encountered onboard as a result of their race – be it harassment or exploitative labour conditions. Of the three men charged with the mutiny Dola was the only one to be convicted, after the others died or were declared insane, so he was transported to VDL alone. All this by about the age of 20. Once living in VDL serving his sentence, he had absconded from his place of punishment, the consequence of which was solitary confinement. The negative effects of solitary confinement on mental and physical health were as known by then as they are now (Dower, 2023). Despite several adverse experiences - instability in his youth, trial in a foreign court in an unknown language, transportation to VDL and severe punishment – Dola was paroled and abided by the conditions of his parole, including being fully employed and in regular contact with the police. He had made an active effort to learn the language of his captors and anglicised his name. Following release, Dola had integrated to the local community to such an extent that neither his past history as a convict nor his ethnicity were raised when he was charged with possession of stolen goods. Instead, the sentencing judge noted that he had to punish Dola although he did not wish to.

We cannot know what led to his choice to remain in an Australian colony and not return to his wife in Singapore, or what decisions he made while imprisoned that meant that he desisted from offending. These are the key limitations of historic records. Although Dola would have been visibly easy to "other" in mid-19th century Hobart at a time when non-white migration was low, concerns over a criminal social element in the colony were centred on convicts, those who had been transported directly from the UK and Ireland, and the perceived impact this would have on ongoing crime rates in the Australian colonies (McCalman, 2021; Smith, 2008). At the same time, the high volume of convicts in the population meant a criminal past of any sort was not stigmatising, and criminal associates as potential peer influences were also not as indicative of life-course persistence as they may be considered by DLC researchers today (Sullivan, Childs, & Gann, 2018). Former convicts were providing much-needed labour at a time when migration was being strongly encouraged to cope with a workforce shortfall. Ironically, had Dola arrived to the colonies post-1851, after the discovery of gold on the Victorian goldfields brought increased migration including from Asia, leading in turn to growing anti-Asian sentiments and migration policies, there would have been a considerably higher chance that he would not have had the same opportunities post-release.

In contrast to Dola, we have Scipio Africanus who was roughly the same age as Dola, sentenced for a non-violent crime for a shorter period yet had regular contact with the authorities for ongoing offending and died trying to escape from Port Arthur. Scipio had arrived a free migrant from the Cape Colony and was employed when arrested. Although numerous Khoisan people had been transported as convicts to NSW (Harman, 2012), Scipio was not one of them. His initial offence, stealing two chickens, was likely linked to sustenance or subsistence, demonstrating the hardships he was enduring as a young man in a new location with no friends or family to turn to for support.

Life in the Australian colonies could be incredibly successful for some migrants, including those from the Global South. But it was not a given. Why Scipio decided to embark on the voyage in the first place is lost to us. Likely it was for the same reason that other migrants do today – for a chance to make his fortune elsewhere, perhaps build enough capital to be able to return to the Cape Colony and support his family or pave the

way for their journey across to the new colonies. With the use of Khoisan slave labour in the Cape Colony by the British, and previously the Dutch, Scipio's life, and that of his family's, would have been under constant threat and hardship. Getting away from the Cape Colony made sense. Such a move for a 19-year-old, on his own, with no trade, is a significant life choice and one that would qualify as a life transition or turning point. However, what he found in NSW was not a society that was likely welcoming or caring towards a young Khoisan man, one of the many young men, free and convicted, in the colony at the time.

Although not the only Khoisan, nor the only non-white man in the Australian colonies, all the archival and newspaper descriptions refer frequently to his race, sometimes in terms that are today recognised as outright racist. Certainly, this would be a fractional representation of what he was likely experiencing daily from other inhabitants of NSW and VDL. This would also have been a continuation of what he likely experienced in the Cape Colony. His initial offence and then arrival to VDL led to 16 years of harsh physical punishment with only short periods of freedom, amounting to about a year. Working in chains, on penal stations and in locations with other convicts ensured ongoing socialisation with criminal peers. Time in solitary confinement, airless and often lightless cells a fraction of the size of today's solitary confinement cells, further exacerbated the physical and mental harms. His knowledge of slavery in the Cape Colony, where lashing, hard labour and chains were the norm for the enslaved, likely would have also figured in his choices to attempt escapes and prevent his own enslavement. Each judicial response to Scipio's behaviour acted as a further push away from any chance of positive re-entry into the Australian colonies as a free man. Based on the information available, even though these hardships were endured, Scipio's offending did not materially escalate; his two offences post-sentence in 1850 were also larceny offences committed without the use of violence. What did change was that, as time wore on, he did co-offend and this was often with non-white men until his final escape attempt. Unlike other convicts of the time, there is no notice of his requesting permission to marry or having any children. Thus, it appears there was never any transition path planned or in motion out of his time under sentence.

## 11. Conclusion

While Cassidy (2012) has claimed that longitudinal historical research is limited in what it can contribute to contemporary policy, the value of historical research is in what it can offer DLC criminologists to track and compare cohorts across place and time. It should not be considered as being lesser in value because it is researching those who are long dead or its value judged merely on what it can offer here-and-now to the administration of criminology, criminal justice systems, and policy makers. Rather, it aids understanding the legacies of colonialism on domestic crime in places like Australia on perceptions of non-white, Global Southern male criminality and changing state surveillance and treatment of offenders. It also illuminates the role of individual transition points, life events and life course trajectories, and intersections of micro and macro socio-cultural changes. Importantly, historical criminological research can highlight how cruel and inhuman treatments have persisted due to social amnesia of criminal justice policies and the impacts these during the most vulnerable times on the lives of convicted peoples.

This research also underlines how migrant people from non-English speaking backgrounds can be studied as part of DLC scholarship to inform contemporary understanding of how migration can impact upon the LC of an individual, especially if prior to their migration there appears to have been no interaction with any criminal justice authorities. Rather than being an ongoing gap in the DLC scholarship, especially for better understanding the lives and experiences of people from the Global South interacting with European or North American criminal justice systems, these historical records that are increasingly being digitised worldwide can help with uncovering and tracing people's lives pre- and

post-conviction. Supporting the digitisation of archival records in Global South nations could better aid in the triangulation and comparative aims of DLC scholarship especially for those people who migrate to other countries within the Global North and South.

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**Victoria M. Nagy:** Writing – review & editing, Writing – original draft, Supervision, Resources, Project administration, Methodology, Investigation, Funding acquisition, Formal analysis, Data curation, Conceptualization. **Alana Piper:** Writing – review & editing, Writing – original draft, Project administration, Data curation. **Kristyn Harman:** Writing – original draft, Supervision, Resources, Project administration, Investigation, Funding acquisition, Data curation, Conceptualization.

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