

**Dockyard and Commissariat and Ordnance stores
George Street North, Sydney**

Chronology

1788	Establishment of settlement at Sydney Cove. Governor Phillip's instructions forbid the construction by private individuals of vessels capable of establishing contact with established ports within the region, or of trading within the area subject to the East India Company's monopoly. Vessels arriving at Sydney Cove require the Governor's permission to land and to communicate with the inhabitants. Settlement provisioned by the Commissariat
1788-1818	Primary function of the settlement of New South Wales as a penal colony
December 1788	Work begins on government wharf on east side of cove and on boat house for construction of a launch or hoy
May 1789	Mr Reid, carpenter of the <i>Supply</i> begins work on a boat to take provisions to Parramatta
October 1789	<i>The Rose Hill Packet</i> launched from the government wharf, the first boat to be built in the Colony
November 1790	Government wharf completed: work begins on hospital wharf on west side of cove. Cargoes unloaded from ships in stream into smaller vessels. Wharves used to unload goods from small boats
By April 1791	Boats being built by private individuals limited to fourteen feet in length, to prevent attempts at escape by convicts, by order of the Governor
By 1793	Privately owned passage boats in operation to Parramatta
August 1793	Launch of the <i>Francis</i> , a sloop of 41 tons, brought out in frame
September 1795	Arrival of Daniel Paine, as Master Boat Builder. Duties include boat building and repair. Also investigates and trials native timbers for naval purposes.
1795	Paine's office probably at the government wharf
December 1795	Indiscriminate felling of timber on Crown land at the Hawkesbury prohibited. Trees suitable for building or naval purposes to be marked with the King's Mark
August 1796	Daniel Paine dismissed
September 1796	Appointment of Thomas Moore, former ship's carpenter of the <i>Britannia</i> as Master Boat Builder
1797	Establishment of the dockyard on west side of Sydney Cove. Workforce of about fourteen men repairing and refitting colonial vessels and HM's ships and building small boats for the various settlements
1797-1798	Construction of workshops, storehouse, boat sheds, sawyers' sheds, saw pits, watch house and room for clerk etc. at the dockyard.

- 1798 Construction of the *Portland* begun on the stocks in the dockyard, a brig of 160 tons (not launched until 1816)
- 1800 House for Master Builder completed to north of dockyard. Dockyard completed
- 1801 Completion of the *Cumberland* a schooner of 28 tons, built in the dockyard
- 1802 Construction of Campbell's wharf to north of dockyard
- 1803 Thomas Moore appointed Surveyor of Timber for Naval Purposes. Native timbers prepared in the dockyard and exported to England
- By 1804 Twenty-two schooners and sloops in New South Wales belonging to private individuals
- January 1804 Launch of the *Integrity* from the dockyard
- 1805 Dockyard workforce about 40 including apprentices but few trained shipwrights
- 1806-1807 Repairs and improvements at dockyard
- 1809-1810 [?] New blacksmith's shop in dockyard
- 1809 Thomas Moore retires as Master Boat Builder
- 1808-1812 Design and construction of Commissariat stores by Lieut-Colonel Foveaux and continued under Governor Macquarie
- 1810 Market place moved from vicinity of hospital wharf to George Street and served by a new wharf in Cockle Bay
- 1812 Construction of provision store, granary and office for Commissariat to west of Commissariat store on [Lower] George Street [later known as the Ordnance stores]
- 1812-1813 Removal of old hospital wharf – replaced with new wharf called the King's Wharf
- 1813 Deputy-Commissary General directly responsible to Commissary General in London and not appointed by the Governor
- 1814 Reduction in number of civilians on the stores
- 1815 Sale of goods from the government stores to private individuals disallowed
- 1815-1821 Increase in number of convicts transported to Colony – population more than doubles.
- 1818-1822 Dockyard enlarged and improved – repairing docks, wharfs, quays, sail room, workshops, boathouses and offices for Master Builder and Master Attendant.

1818-1820	High stone wall built around dockyard
1821	John Nicholson RN appointed Master Attendant and Harbour Master
1822-1823	Storehouse built at north end of dockyard
1823	Works by S L Harris at the George Street stores
1825-1828	Increase in dockyard workforce from about 70 to 100 men and boys
1827	Cost of convict, military and other colonial services differentiated in financial accounts of the Colony
1828	Payment of Master Attendant and other dockyard officials changed to salary with no emoluments or fees
July 1830	Work begun on extension to George Street store – necessitated removal of some buildings on south side and south-east corner of the dockyard. New boundary wall built on north side of enlarged store
November 1831	Extension completed
1831	Buildings required for convict and military purposes placed under control of Deputy Commissary General
August 1831	Dockyard establishment reduced to a minimum, about 14 – ship building and repairs out to tender - dockyard looks after small government boats only
[c. 1831-1836]	Changes in dockyard – demolition of buildings around perimeter wall and construction of two offices / residences ??
1836	Establishment of Ordnance Department in the Colony – assigned George Street building
1836	Store at north end of dockyard used by Colonial Storekeeper
1838	Work begun on Semi-Circular Quay
1841	Establishment of water police
1844	Semi-Circular Quay completed on east side and to mouth of Tank Stream
1845	Governor moves to the new Government House
1847	‘New walls’ to north of Commissariat store (within old dockyard) and on part of George Street frontage. Further reduction in area of former dockyard
1848	Room in Commissariat stores made available for stores for British Navy
1849	Reduction in the importance of Ordnance department – all establishments and lands for defence purposes handed over to the Colony
1854	Semi-Circular Quay completed to dockyard – Queen’s (formerly King’s) wharf replaced by new public wharfage

1856	Commissariat and Ordnance stores transferred to the colonial government under the Constitution Act. Condition of transfer that space be available to British government in Commissariat stores for stores for naval or military purposes. North wing of building for use of Colonial Storekeeper
1859	Establishment of Australian naval station with its own commanding officer
1859	Semi-Circular Quay completed to Cadman's Cottage
1859	Extensive repairs to Commissariat stores. Removal of wall between stores and former dockyard area
1860-1861	Repairs to Ordnance stores
Late 1850s to c. 1863-1864	Extension of Argyle Street to new Semi-Circular Quay. Docks filled in, new stores built at south-east corner of [Lower] George Street and Argyle Street. Boundary wall rebuilt. Store to north of new street extension demolished
1860s-1890s	Ordnance store continues in use for Ordnance, military and Commissariat offices and stores Commissariat store continues in use for Royal Navy stores
1860s-1870s	Additional stores built at north end of site and some other buildings constructed around Commissariat stores and in yards
1870s	Ferry services running from south side of Circular Quay
late 1870s -	Shipping companies lease permanent berths at Circular Quay
1882	Additional space required for naval stores - north wing of Commissariat stores surrendered for use by Navy
1883-1896	Development of Garden Island as naval base
1890s	Circular Quay dominated by passenger vessels and mail steamers - removal of commercial vessels to Darling Harbour
c. 1896	Transfer of naval stores to Garden Island and Commissariat stores vacated
1890s-1930s	Commissariat stores leased out to business Ordnance stores used to house government offices and laboratories
1910-1920	Addition to north end of Ordnance store [for Dept of Agriculture?]
1914	Dept of Labour & Industry moved to site
1923	Foundation stone laid for new offices for Dept of Labour & Industry at corner of George Street and Argyle Street
1936	Site for new head office for Maritime Services Board chosen on west side of Circular Quay in close proximity to Dept of Labour & Industry

- 1937 Butters Committee suggests use of Commissariat and Ordnance stores site for new Maritime Services Board head offices
- 1939 Demolition of Commissariat and Ordnance stores
- 1946-1952 Construction of MSB head offices