

Not Just Ned: A true history of the Irish in Australia
An exhibition developed and presented by the
National Museum of Australia

OBJECT BIOGRAPHY

A Gentleman Bushranger

There are many unique objects in the upcoming exhibition *Not Just Ned: A true history of the Irish in Australia* such as a theatrical wig, a giant land map, a small golden probe and the antlers of an ancient Irish elk. Among these is a long slender ivory walking cane gun which once belonged to the bushranger Martin Cash.

Martin Cash was one of Tasmania's most notorious bushrangers. Born in County Wexford, Ireland; Martin was convicted in March 1827 of housebreaking. However his own account of the crime was that he shot at a man who was embracing his lover.

Transported for seven years, Cash arrived in Sydney onboard the *Marquis of Huntley*. In 1837 Cash sailed for Van Diemen's Land and within two years was convicted of larceny and was sent to Port Arthur. One of the few men to have succeeded in escaping from Port Arthur, Cash along with two other convicts Lawrence Kavenagh and George Jones eluded guards by swimming around Eaglehawk Neck.

The three pursued a bushranging career, robbing inns and the houses of well-to-do settlers without the use of unnecessary violence, thus earning them the reputation of 'gentlemen bushrangers'. Cash's walking stick gun may have been used during this period as it was designed as a concealed weapon. The walking stick gun would have played to his 'gentlemanly' character.

After spending several months at large all were re-captured. Cash and Kavanagh were transported to Norfolk Island 'for life' for murder whilst Jones was hanged in May 1844. After 10 years on Norfolk Island, Cash returned to Van Diemen's Land a more subdued man. Towards the end of life, at his property in Glenorchy, Tasmania, his Irish charm and cheerfulness made him a popular scoundrel known to all.



The story of Martin Cash is represented in *Not Just Ned: A true history of the Irish in Australia*, an exhibition at the National Museum of Australia in Canberra. Image: Martin Cash about 1823-43 by Thomas Bock, State Library of New South Wales.

Not Just Ned: A true history of the Irish in Australia is on show at the National Museum of Australia, Canberra from 17 March-31 July 2011. Admission charges apply.

For more information about the exhibition visit www.nma.gov.au/exhibitions/irish_in_australia

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