



# *Convict Connections*

*An Interest Group of the Genealogical Society of Queensland Inc  
Covering the Colonial era – convicts & others*

## **THE CHRONICLE**



*Brigade Major James Taylor 1785-1829  
48<sup>th</sup> Regiment of Foot  
Officer and Artist*

*June 2024*

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V. Blomer (Editor)

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## FRONT COVER

### Major James Taylor – Officer and Artist



Although Brigade Major James Taylor arrived in Sydney in 1817 with the 48<sup>th</sup> Regiment, this portrait was commissioned in Britain in 1814 after Taylor had served for six years in the Peninsular War. Although not clear in the painting, the background depicts the town of San Sebastian on the coast of Spain. This was the site of an 1813 battle in which his bravery was mentioned in dispatches by Lord Wellington.

The artist of this Taylor portrait is believed to have been the Scottish portrait painter Henry Raeburn, or one of his students who used his style of adding lighting

to the subject.

In the British Army, James Taylor was trained as a topographic artist while serving in Spain. He was born in 1785 and died at just 46 years of age in 1829. Apart from the time he served heroically in the Army, his legacy has been some very fine surviving artworks painted in the colony. When you consider how young he was when he died, and the short time he spent in New South Wales, he did not reach his full potential as an artist. His eye for detail in the scenes he painted gives glimpses of life in Sydney in Governor Macquarie's time. He is considered to be one of our earliest fine artists.

Taylor joined the 48<sup>th</sup> Regiment in 1804 as an Ensign and quickly rose through the ranks to Lieutenant in 1805, Captain in 1807, Brevet Major in 1813, Major in 1822, and Lieutenant Colonel in 1825. From 1805 to 1808, the 48<sup>th</sup> Regiment had served in Ireland before going to Portugal and Spain in 1809. Sickness forced Taylor back to England in December 1813. After recuperating, he returned to his regiment which was by then stationed back in Ireland.

It was on the convict ship *Matilda* that Brevet Major James Taylor arrived in 1817, and, as a senior officer, he became part of the inner circle of friends of the Governor and his wife. When Governor Macquarie travelled to Van Diemen's Land in May 1821, Taylor accompanied him. When the Macquaries returned to England in 1822, Taylor was on the same ship because he had been granted two years of sick leave. Reports state that he was accompanied by his son, but the boy's name and that of his mother remain unknown.

While in Sydney and in Van Diemen's Land, Taylor painted numerous watercolours. A three-sheet panoramic scene of Sydney was one of his best. It appears in an edition of his works published in London in 1823. So popular was this particular painting that it was copied and reduced to a single-sheet size to be included in a French journal. It was also the subject of lithographic reproductions in Britain by 1830. The painting was probably commissioned by Governor

Macquarie to depict his idyllic version of how he would transform Sydney, as the Sydney Powerhouse Museum suggests the three watercolours making up the panorama were painted in 1820.



From a vantage point on Observatory Hill, Taylor painted the harbour, its shores and its inlets. The idyllic view shows laundry hanging outside to dry, chickens in the yard, and a garden of exotic flowers complete with a kangaroo feeding in the garden. A man tends a vegetable garden behind a neat cottage and a lady speaks to officers. Convicts are shown quarrying sandstone which was to be used to construct new buildings. The scenes were no doubt depicted to show the progress made under Macquarie, and to make an impression upon an interested London audience.



When copies of Taylor's prints arrived in the colony from England, they were advertised for sale in the *Sydney Gazette* on 3 June 1824 - *J. Paul has just received several sets of beautifully executed coloured prints; forming a panoramic view of Sydney, from Designs by Major Taylor of the 48th, and now exhibiting in London at Barker's Panorama.*

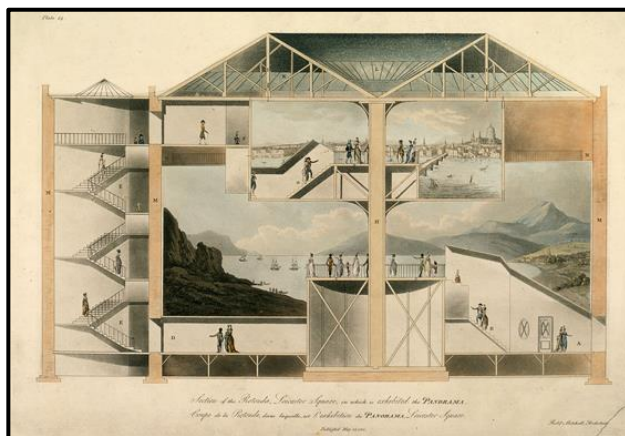
To be exhibited at the Barker and Burford's Panorama Building in Leicester Square, London, the panorama would have been presented as a 360° view. Visitors stood in the centre of a circular room with the scene depicted on the surrounding

wall. Thus, this provided a full circular view of Sydney. It is not known if Taylor made alterations to enhance the exhibit.

In May 1825, he sailed from England to India to rejoin his regiment. Within days of arriving, the regiment's Colonel died, and Taylor assumed command of the 48<sup>th</sup> until his death on 10 August 1829.

The *Hobart Town Crier*, on 3 July 1830 reported that Lieutenant-Colonel Taylor of the 48<sup>th</sup> Regiment had died at Bellary, 400 miles north-west of Madras. He was succeeded by Lieutenant Colonel Bell who had previously been a Civil Engineer in Hobart.

A 1905 list of tombs and inscriptions in the Bellary Cantonment Cemetery shows that Lieut-Colonel James Taylor of the 48<sup>th</sup> Regiment was buried in the Church of England section. Prominent in the cemetery is a row of memorial obelisks dedicated to Lieutenant-Colonel Taylor (died 1829); Captain Browne (1827); Paymaster Raye (1826) and Colonel Edward Snow (1831).



*A section of Barker's Panorama, Leicester Square.*

*From Robert Mitchell's Plans and Views in Perspective of Buildings Erected in England and Scotland, 1801.*

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<https://barry-lewis.com/research/cemeteries/bellary/>

<https://www.panoramaonview.org/history>

# COLONIAL & CONVICT CONNECTIONS NEWS

I have two items that may be of interest –

- **An Invitation from Griffith University and The Harry Gentle Resource Centre: 11 & 12 September 2024**

The members of our Colonial and Convict connections group have received an invitation to attend an event entitled “*Representations of Meanjin and Moreton Bay 1824-2024: a Bicentennial Symposium*”.

This two day event will take place at the Ship Inn Function Room, on the corner of Stanley and Sidon Streets, South Brisbane. There are some awesome speakers to enthral and inspire us. It will be held on Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> and Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> September, from 9am – 5pm.

On the evening of Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> September, the symposium will conclude with a social function at the Commissariat Store in William Street, Brisbane.

If you have Brisbane convicts, or you call Brisbane ‘home’, you won’t want to miss this event. I hope to see you there!

More about the symposium can be found through a link on the Griffith University site – <https://harrygentle.griffith.edu.au/news/>

- **Brisbane Congress 2025: 21-23 March 2025**

The 17<sup>th</sup> Australasian Congress on Genealogy and Heraldry & 5<sup>th</sup> Queensland History State Conference will be a special event to celebrate Brisbane’s Bicentenary. It will be held at the Brisbane Technology Park Conference and Exhibition Centre at 1 Clunies Ross Court, Eight Mile Plains.

The Conference will be held over three days - from Friday 21<sup>st</sup> March to Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2025. With 48 presentations, you won’t want to miss it. There will be three themes – *Diaspora – Migration in all its forms; Looking ahead – what are the opportunities;* and *Local History and its impact on our research.*

On Monday 24<sup>th</sup> there are several Brisbane heritage tour options on offer as well, all leaving from and returning to the venue.

Please check the website for details and to register. Early bird rates are still available. The link is as follows: <https://www.connections2025.org.au/>

Our Colonial and Convict Connections group will be manning a table at the Conference on Friday, 21<sup>st</sup> March 2025. All offers of help will be much appreciated.

Beverley Murray,  
Convenor of Colonial and Convict Connections.



## BENEATH THE ANGLESEA BARRACKS, HOBART.

In early 2003 an archaeological dig uncovered such items as old leather boots and pieces of clothing underneath the floor of the officers' mess in Hobart's Anglesea Barracks which housed British soldiers and convicts.



In all, about 1,800 artefacts were found. There were leather shoes and boots; clothing remnants; and ceramic, metal, bone and wooden items - all significant discoveries. The section of the barracks in question was built in 1827. The *Hobart Town Gazette* reported in June of that year that

*"The most spacious room in the island will now be the mess room at the military barracks which is 40 feet long by 21 feet wide, embracing an area of 920 square feet."*

Seventy of the boots found dated back to the early 1800s. Most were made by using small timber pegs, and some were of welt construction. Both methods refer to the way the sole was attached to the leather upper. A strip of firm leather, known as welting, was stitched to the upper leather, and then the sole was stitched to the welting. Pegs deleted the need for stitching. They were inserted with a punch and then hammered to secure them in place.



The cloth samples were possibly a mix of fabric used by soldiers, convicts and free settlers. Pictured here is an example of a jacket collar which bears the name of soldier T. Lannon of the 63<sup>rd</sup> Regiment. From 1829 to 1834 this regiment served in Hobart. It does not necessarily mean that it was Lannon who

wore the jacket. It may have been regimental issue. The name does not match any of soldiers known to have been in Hobart. There could be many scenarios as to how the collar survived.

There is conjecture as to what buildings may have originally been on the site of the soldiers' barracks and the extension. It is possible that a cobbler or a tailor, or both, had also occupied the site.

### Sources:

<https://www.kidsnews.com.au/history/archaeological-dig-unearths-boots-and-all-in-tasmania>

an ABC video at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rZkeg2U6MO8>



## **'BABES IN THE WOOD' SITE AT PARRAMATTA**

'Babes in the Wood' was the name originally given to a timber hut built by convicts in 1790. Artefacts were also discovered at this site, but they were not in as good a condition as those found under the Hobart Barracks. (Unfortunately, the Parramatta Lancers Barracks also did not yield objects like those found in Hobart.)

The 'Babes in the Wood' hut was originally known as the 'Hawkesbury Settler Inn' and was situated on the corner of George Street and Smith Street. Andrew Nash was the licensee from 1813 to 1825. Bill Watkins then became the publican. Unfortunately, in 1829, the building was engulfed in flames. Nathaniel Payten, a wealthy citizen of Parramatta, rebuilt it, and it was he who named it 'Babes in the Wood'. Payten also built such landmarks as the Parramatta Gaol, the All Saints Church, Perth House and Houison Cottage.

From 1837 to 1847, after the death of the previous owner, James Bridges became the licensee. James Carvey had the Inn from 1848 to 1870. When the site was sub-divided in 1881, part of the Inn was demolished. A cottage and outbuildings were altered over the years and new ones built. In the 20<sup>th</sup> century more changes were made to that site and nearby sites in the name of progress.

In 1985, part of the 'Babes in the Woods' site was excavated. Four years later, further excavations took place. More artefacts were uncovered. There were numerous bottles, the explanation being that Emanuel Brown's cordial factory was nearby.

Some huts were also discovered. It is believed these were the convict huts referred to in historic documents - *"...originally built by Governor Phillip for the reception of convicts, but which had been some years neglected, and were now in a state of ruin. Many indeed had fallen down"*.



The retrieved items have been sorted in categories such as - aboriginal artefacts; bone materials; building materials; ceramics; glass; kaolin (soft white clay); metals; miscellaneous coins; miscellaneous - other; organics; shell unworked; stone; and synthetics. Dating them has proved to be difficult because of the length of time the inn operated. Tableware, ceramics

and porcelain items would indicate that the inn also provided accommodation at some stage.

All of the excavated items play their part in revealing more about life in colonial Parramatta.

### **Sources:**

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<https://digital.library.sydney.edu.au/nodes/view/9413>

## A PIRATICAL SEIZURE IN VAN DIEMEN'S LAND 1827.

The *Colonial Times and Tasmanian Advertiser* of 19 January 1827 tells of a number of convicts who escaped from the Hobart Barracks, seized a boat from the wharf, and then piratically seized the ship, *Ellen*. By following various reports in the Van Diemen's Land newspapers, more is revealed.

### *Piratical Seizure.*

*On Saturday night last, about 11 o'clock, some prisoners, it is supposed about twelve in number, escaped from the Barracks during the whole of the night. Constables were in search of them in all directions, but without effect. The next morning, it was ascertained that they had taken a boat from the wharf, and proceeded down the river; and, as the colonial cutter 'Ellen', Mr. Purden, master, of Pitt-water, had sailed early that morning down the river, also, it was feared she would be piratically taken by the run-aways.*

The convicts did manage to out-manoeuvre the Master of the *Ellen* and they did indeed take possession of the cutter. They sailed out to sea!

The Government brig, the *Prince Leopold*, under Captain Welsh, along with several whale boats, their crews and a party of soldiers went in pursuit of the convict pirates. They were unable to chase the men due to the windy weather.



When questioned, Master Purden claimed that he had been bound for the Scrutanes near Great Swan Port for barrilla, but the weather prevented him from rounding Cape Pillar. He noticed a vessel, a rigged schooner, about eight miles distant to the south and believed it to be suspicious. Because of the weather, he turned the *Ellen* around to head towards the Derwent River.

The convicts, seeing an opportunity to take the vessel, headed towards the *Ellen* and came within half a mile of her near Cape Raoul. The boat containing the 'would be pirates' pulled into the shore out of sight. Meanwhile, the *Ellen* struggled to move westwards. When the cutter came closer, the boat came out of hiding and chased her. When they were within firing distance, two musket shots were fired, and Master Purden realised there was nothing to do but lower the ship's boat and row away. They had no arms on board to fire back and feared for their lives. It was 9 pm, and the Master and his two crew members rowed away from the *Ellen* in the dark. They set off to raise the alarm – covering a distance of 50 miles in heavy seas. By the time they relayed the message to the authorities, the pirates had the *Ellen* well and truly under sail.

The Master, in hindsight, regretted not stopping to throw their provisions overboard before abandoning his ship. The convicts, thought to be more than six in

number, now had 80 lbs. of biscuit, 50 lbs. of salt meat, 3 lbs. of tea, 15 lbs. sugar, and 30 gallons of water according to the report.

The *Prince Leopold* was heading for the Derwent River when the ship *Fanny*, which was leaving Hobart, relayed a message about the escapees. The Captain was to be on the lookout for the stolen ship. It was hoped that the pirates would be caught and brought to justice – but the *Prince Leopold* did not sight them.

Of the twelve absconders, Alexander Stirling was a former collier's mate; John Clarke was a mariner; James Nelson was a seaman; James Thompson was a rope maker; Henry Alderson was a cooper; and William Ironmonger was a carpenter. All were useful trades fit for purpose on the stolen ship.

According to the *Hobart Town Gazette* of 27 January 1827, it was suggested that the runaways must have had help in order to take the boat from the Derwent River. Further investigation had apparently revealed that Alexander Stirling was previously a mate on board a vessel used in the coal trade between Newcastle and Aberdeen, so he knew something about navigation. Joseph Clark had purchased a quadrant in Hobart Town some months earlier suggesting an escape by sea was being planned. Vessels were being watched in order to find a suitable target. The intention was probably to sail to New Zealand and then perhaps head for Valparaiso in South America.

The *Colonial Times and Tasmanian Advertiser* on 2 February 1827, reported that there had been no news of the pirates. The owner of the *Ellen*, Captain Walker, with a Military party, had gone in pursuit of his vessel, but had returned unsuccessfully. Other ships coming and going from port were still keeping a lookout for the *Ellen* and her new crew.

On 10 February, the *Hobart Town Gazette* had more to add. The *Prince Leopold* had returned from a search, but had not sighted the pirates. They had sailed northwards following the east coast and then along Bass Strait. Captain Welsh, owner of the *Prince Leopold*, was in no doubt that New Zealand had been their destination. It was hoped that the Government could engage a small colonial armed vessel to prevent further occurrences along with *smuggling, and other irregularities in the river and round the coast*.

A year later, on 23 February 1828, the *Hobart Town Courier* reported that the pirates were living in Tucopia (Tikopia, Solomon Islands). It was reported that the natives had broken up the ship for the iron work to make such things as tomahawks. Another report later said that the men had gone by whaler from there to the Bay of Islands in New Zealand. It was hoped that these pirate convicts and other runaways who had made it to New Zealand and other Pacific islands would eventually be captured.

Between 1790 and 1829 more than eighty ships, vessels and boats were piratically seized by convicts in Australian waters. Around twenty more attempts had failed. Naturally, further seizures occurred after 1829, but the statistics for this

earlier period, although covering all the penal settlements, is rather alarming. In Van Diemen's Land, from the 1820s to the 1850s, the piratical activity of the convicts was so prevalent that, by Order, ships when moored in the Derwent River, had to take the sails off the spars and the rudders had to be taken ashore.

Another brazen piratical attempt occurred in July 1833, when twelve convicts took the schooner *Badger* all the way to Manila. Most of the men were experienced seafarers and had been sent to Van Diemen's Land. Soon after arriving these convicts had been appointed to man the schooner, a government boat! The newspaper editors at the time harshly accused the government of extreme negligence in allowing the vessel to be manned entirely by convicts. George Darby had been a lieutenant in the British Navy before being convicted of stealing in 1830 and transported for life. William Philp was a Master Mariner before being transported for life for blowing up a sloop with gunpowder in Penzance. Both believed they would be sent on the same convict ship, and their plan to seize it was uncovered before they sailed. The masters of the ships they were placed on were warned that they may attempt mutiny, and they did – but were thwarted! Both men were on board the *Badger* when she was sent to the East Bay Neck military station with provisions, muskets, ammunition and nautical instruments. When they did not arrive, it was supposed that they had headed for New Zealand or even South America. Ironically, one of the ships sent in pursuit also had a crew comprising mostly of convicts! Just over a year later, it was found that they had reached Manila, been shipwrecked, and taken to Macau by a Spanish ship. The Portuguese authorities allowed them to stay. Seven did, and the others apparently went to America.

Note: The *Ellen* was heading for the Scrutanes near Great Swan Port for barrilla. Both the Scrutanes and barrilla had me puzzled. I could not locate the former, but I did find that barrilla referred to plants harvested to make soda ash. This could have been kelp, seaweed or mangroves which were harvested, dried and then burned. The ashes were washed with water to form an alkali solution. This was then boiled to create soda ash or potash. Soap, paper and glass were the industries which used soda ash. I also found that an early salt works was established at the mouth of the Little Swan Port River in the 1820s. James Radcliff was granted 2,560 acres of land in 1819 and, with convict labour, he built his Lisdillon salt-works. Throughout the 1830s he provided salt for Van Diemen's Land, but it was not a commercial success.

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<https://convictrecords.com.au/convicts/philp/william/104897>

## THE GRAVE OF ELEANOR MCCABE

The grave of convict and First Fleeter, Eleanor McCabe (or McCave), and her infant daughter and unborn child, required protection during the construction of the Parramatta Light Rail project. This is one of the oldest convict gravesites in New South Wales so is of great importance historically.

Having left England on the *Lady Penrhyn* and arriving in Port Jackson on the *Prince of Wales* ship, Eleanor McCabe married fellow convict Christopher Magee, also known as Charles Williams, in August 1788.

Eleanor had been tried at the Old Bailey in 1785 for assaulting John Harris and was sentenced to transportation for seven years. She had numerous prior court appearances, and even a commuted death sentence which saw her spending six months in the House of Correction. While on the *Lady Penrhyn* she gave birth to a still-born son.

Christopher Magee was also tried at the Old Bailey. He was sentenced to transportation in 1784 for theft. He arrived in Sydney on the ship *Scarborough*. He had previously been transported to America as a convict for seven years in 1773 and had been put to work on a tobacco plantation. He was then aged around eleven years! How he arrived back in London after eight years is unknown. He was one of the last transportees sent to America - and would be amongst the first to arrive in the new colony of New South Wales.

A son, James Magee, was baptized in November 1789 but was buried at Rose Hill in January 1790. The land on which he was buried would become the burial ground for St John's Church at Parramatta. A year later, in January 1791, a daughter, Mary, was baptized at Rose Hill, which had been renamed Parramatta.

Thirty acres of land on the south side of the Parramatta River was granted to them in March 1791. They were the neighbours of farmer James Ruse. Having had some experience in farming, Magee perhaps saw the opportunity to recreate the farming experience he had in America – but this time as the 'plantation owner'. The Magees worked diligently and had eight acres of land cleared and under crop within just six months.

Military officer, Watkin Tench, wrote the following - *He has no less than eight acres in cultivation, five and a half in maize, one in wheat, and one and a half in tobacco. From the wheat he does not expect more than ten bushels, but he is extravagant enough to rate the produce of maize at 100 bushels (perhaps he may get fifty); on tobacco he means to go largely hereafter. He began to clear this ground in April, but did not settle until last July. I asked by what means he had been able to accomplish so much? He answered, "By industry, and by hiring all the convicts I could get to work in their leisure hours, besides some little assistance which the governor has occasionally thrown in." His greatest impediment is want of water, being obliged to fetch all he uses more than half a mile. He sunk a well,*

*and found water, but it was brackish and not fit to drink. If this man shall continue in habits of industry and sobriety, I think him sure of succeeding.*

Two months after Tench's visit, the Magees, in February 1792, were the first to be granted land at Camellia.

Tragically, on 18 January 1793, Eleanor, a male child and another woman drowned in the Parramatta River. Eleanor and the infant were buried together near the family home. Judge-Advocate, David Collins, wrote at the time - *On Friday the 18th, Eleanor McCabe, the wife of Charles Williams, the settler, was drowned, together with an infant child, and a woman of the name of Green. These unfortunate people had been drinking and revelling with Williams the husband and others at Sydney, and were proceeding to Parramatta in a small boat, in which was a bag of rice belonging to Green. The boat heeling considerably, and some water getting at the bag, by a movement of Green's to save her rice the boat upset near Breakfast Point, and the two women and the child were drowned. If assistance could have been obtained upon the spot, the child might have been saved; for it was forced from the wretched mother's grasp just before she finally sunk, and brought on shore by the father; but for want of medical aid it expired.*

David Collins had a different view of the Magees. He said that they were "noted in the colony for their depravity". Now that they had their own land, they should have been prospering, but something had gone wrong, and their sobriety was in question. They were often quarrelling.

With Eleanor pregnant again in late 1792, and with Mary as a toddler, they went to Sydney. They were intoxicated when they headed home in a small boat with convict Mary Green. It was said that the Magees were fighting even before they got into the boat. The boat tipped when Mary Green reached for her bag of rice which had become wet. Magee managed to take the child from Eleanor's grasp as she sank below the surface. He was able to get the child to the shore, but she did not survive.

The bodies of the women were found a few days after the incident. It seems Magee/Williams was criticised for burying Eleanor, two year old Mary and their unborn child not with baby James in the cemetery, but close to the house.

The loss had a profound effect on Magee, and it was said that *a short time after he had thus buried his wife, he was seen sitting at his door, with a bottle of rum in his hand, and actually drinking one glass and pouring another on her grave until it was emptied, prefacing every libation by declaring how well she loved it during her life. He appeared to be in a state not far from insanity...*

In October 1793, he sold the property for a good price but remained as a labourer until moving to work at the Hawkesbury with James Ruse. They were among the first twenty-two Europeans to settle on the banks of the river.

Christopher Magee, also known as Charles Williams, died in 1815 and was buried at St Matthew's Cemetery at Windsor.

Eleanor's grave was restored in the 1920s by the Royal Australian Historical Society. A brass headstone was inscribed in 1924 - *In this grave lie the remains of ELINORE MCGEE and her infant child who were drowned in the Parramatta River. January 1793. The grave is one of the oldest in this continent.*”

The Fellowship of First Fleeters, in 1982, added a memorial plaque. It is hoped that there will be access to the grave site when the Light Rail is completed.



*Here lyeth the body of the much lamented  
ELINOR MAGEE  
and her beloved infant, MARY MAGEE  
who were unfortunately drowned  
in returning from Sydney, January, 1793.  
The unhappy off-spring of an affectionate father  
was two years old and its mother in the 32nd year of her age.*

*Forbear, kind husband, weep no more, 'tis vain  
When heav'n decrees, 'tis folly to complain  
A most loved wife and babe are laid,  
Who, bound from Sydney sunk below the wave  
Reaching the home beyond the narrow grave  
Thither the hapless husband oft shall roam,  
To drop the willing tear upon the tomb,  
And strive to deprecate their closing breath.*

**Sources:**

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<https://stjohnsonline.org/bio/the-magees/>



## HOBART'S PENITENTIARY CHAPEL

Construction of Hobart's first gaol in Murray Street began in 1816. It soon fell into disrepair as the bricks used were inferior and the ground was always damp. As more convicts arrived, the gaol quickly became overcrowded, and escapes were numerous. Thus, a convict barracks was built in Campbell Street in 1821 and was able to house 640 men, but on completion, and with so many convicts arriving each year, the barracks was almost immediately overcrowded. It was extended in stages over the next ten or so years until it could accommodate 1,200 men. The convicts were housed at night and joined work parties during the day to make roads and construct buildings. Those men considered to be of bad character were either put to work grinding grain on the treadmill at the barracks, or breaking rocks from the quarry so that the stones could be used on the roads.

By 1829 the St David's Anglican Church in Hobart Town was overcrowded and a second church was required – not only for the free inhabitants, but also for the increasing number of convicts who were housed at the barracks on the corner of Brisbane and Campbell Streets. The barracks was also known as “The Penitentiary” or the shortened version, “The Trench”.

The Colonial Architect and Civil Engineer, John Lee Archer, in 1829, designed a new gaol which was to be built beside the court house. This would place the new gaol and the courthouse opposite the convict barracks. Archer's plan included a Chapel, and although his gaol was not built, his plans for a T-shaped Chapel did come to fruition. Also referred to as the Trinity Church, his Chapel was built beside the convict barracks in the 1830s and included 36 solitary confinement cells on the ground floor below the actual chapel.



Newspapers reported in July 1833 that *Everyone knows, who has seen the recent additions that have been made to the Prisoners' Barracks, especially the Chapel, will acknowledge that nothing has yet been turned out of hands by the Government in so workman-like a manner. It does great credit to the Colonial Architect and to the builder, Messrs Archer and Addison. The work is both stone and brick of the most substantial kind and is finished in a style superior to anything in the colony. It is, however, a matter of regret that this fine building has to be subjected to an "improvement" in breaking a door into the north-west end to admit the free inhabitants of the town into the Penitentiary Chapel. If this had been done at first not only would a considerable expense have been spared, but much injury to the building would have been avoided. The regular attendance of Crown prisoners at Divine Service at the Bar racks will be much felt at St David's Church, as it will throw open the gallery in accommodating many more of the inhabitants who are prevented from attending the Established Church for the want of a second Church.*

*The Penitentiary Chapel will also afford some trifling further accommodation to the Public until the new Church shall be built.... We hope that the temporary accommodation in the gallery of the St David's Church or the opening of the Penitentiary Chapel will not delay or prevent the erection of the New Church.*

We also learn that the chapel building adjoining the gaol, erected for the use of prisoners was lofty and capacious. It was divided into five main compartments – two wings were for the seating of male prisoners from the Penitentiary. In between these wings there was a pulpit on the southern wall. In front of the pulpit were two pews and benches to seat forty free inhabitants. Behind these seats was a compartment for the female prisoners from the female factory. The clergyman was visible to all. It could seat up to 500 prisoners in each of the east and west wings.



The chapel had two entrances – one for free settlers and the other for the convicts. A tower with its installed clock housed a spiral staircase which was used by the free.

Although never consecrated, the Chapel was being used before its completion date in 1834. Normal services were held along with baptisms, funerals, and marriages until 1845. Noise was a problem, however. This came from the chained prisoners in the solitary confinement cells below. These cells were very small, had no light, and had little ventilation.

An early description of a service at the Trinity Church can be found in the *Hobart Town Crier*, 13 August 1831. *Between 500 and 600 prisoners, among whom were the chain gangs ... took their seats in the greatest order and regularity, and remained perfectly quiet until the entrance of the Clergyman ... In front of the little platform erected for the pulpit or reading desk, was a large table, round which about a dozen of the congregation sat who took the lead in singing the psalms—whilst two of them had flutes to keep them in tune. The service was performed with exemplary propriety, the responses being very generally heard even from the remotest corner.*

Linus Millar, a 22 year old American lawyer, was transported as a result of his part in the 1838 Canadian Rebellion. He arrived in Hobart in 1840 and was sent to the Penitentiary. He described his attendance at a Divine Service in the Chapel – *'On looking about me, I could not discover more than twelve, among twelve hundred prisoners, who appeared to be taking any notice of the service.*

*Some were spinning yarns, some playing at pitch and toss, some gambling with cards; several were crawling about under the benches, selling candy, tobacco, &c., and one fellow carried a bottle of rum, which he was serving out in small quantities to those who had an English sixpence to give for a small wine-glass full.*

*Disputes occasionally arose which ended in a blow or kick; but in these cases the constables, who were present to maintain order, generally felt called upon*

*to interfere. If any resistance was offered to their authority the culprit was seized by the arms and collar, dragged out of the church and thrust into the cells beneath.'*

In 1853, the official year of the cessation of transportation to Tasmania, the Reverend Mr J. Medland was the incumbent at the Chapel. The Penitentiary was proclaimed a Gaol and a House of Correction in 1857 and an execution yard was installed. There were 32 prisoners executed from that time until 1946.

Two Supreme Criminal Courts were ensconced in a part of the Chapel in 1859 after extensive renovations. Tunnels connected the Courts to the Gaol. The area which remained as a Chapel was in use until 1961, and the Courts until 1983.

The Penitentiary Chapel Historic Site allows us to view and understand more of life in colonial Hobart. There was some controversy in 2016 when the National Trust of Australia (Tasmania) was given permission to convert part of the historic Chapel into a video theatre. Some were not at all impressed on seeing three large projectors suspended from the original timber ceiling beams and 24 audio speakers mounted around the interior. Images were projected onto the walls which had been painted white. All five of the heritage windows were fitted with remote controlled blinds to darken the chapel. The first video shown lasted 90 minutes and was titled "Pandemonium", possibly apt for those not in favour with the alterations made to such an historic building.

Progress did not stop there. In 2023, some 190 years after the Penitentiary Chapel was built, the Convict Memorial Hub introduced digital technology with the help of AI. Visitors can use mobile phones to access millions of records from many sources on individual convicts. The information is displayed on a 'memorial pillar' suspended from the ceiling. 'Humanising of the convicts' has been completed already for around 1,000 'AI-generated avatars'.

A grant awarded to the National Trust Tasmania, the University of New England and Monash University is allowing the project team for the Hub to expand into other historical convict sites throughout Tasmania. It has been acknowledged that AI takes data from the internet, but the digital work has been accessed from archival documents.

## **Sources:**

<https://ontheconvicttrail.blogspot.com/2012/12/penitentiary-chapel.html>

<http://www.penitentiarychapel.com/index.htm>

<https://greataustraliansecret.com/tasmania/southern-tasmania/hobart/old-hobart-gaol-and-penitentiary-chapel-historic-site/>

*The Colonist and Van Diemen's Land Commercial and Agricultural Advertiser*  
9 July 1833

Tasmanian Heritage Register Datasheet

<https://www.une.edu.au/connect/news/2023/11/world-first-digital-project-gives-unique-insights-into-convict-life>

## **THE OLD REGISTERS ONE TO NINE.**

### **NSW State Archives Collection NRS-5605.**

Back in 2008, Convict Connections purchased a DVD called **Old Registers One to Nine: The Registers of Assignments and Other Legal Instruments**. It is no longer on the shelf at GSQ, but the DVD is available to view at the NSW State Archives and at State Libraries. As the title suggests, this is an index to the very early registers of land and legal assignments which date from 1794 to 1824. The DVD was mentioned at one of our recent meetings as a resource seldom used. Only two in the group knew about the DVD and it had been many years since either had viewed the contents. It may no longer be available to purchase, but like all indexes, new and old, they can be worth consulting.

Nine early registers recorded land transactions up to May 1824, along with such subjects as promissory notes, receipts relating to the sale of livestock and crops, apprentice and work agreements, marriage separation agreements, and power of attorney entries.

The Department of Lands and the State Records NSW (now Museums of History NSW), in cooperation, were responsible for releasing the DVD. All of the proceeds from sales went towards the conservation of the old records.

Although you may find information regarding the names of the parties involved and the nature of agreements, a word of warning is that this DVD is rather complicated to use - but if your ancestor is included it could well be of benefit. You will find that more complete details appear from Register 5 onwards.

On the DVD you will find two folders. The first has four different files containing alphabetical indexes. All four should be consulted as they may contain different information. Take note of the index references and then go to the second folder which will reveal the digitized copies. When consulting Indexes don't forget to consider the spelling of any name variations!

**Series NRS-5605** - the Indexes and images of which are on the DVD - covers the period from 22 January 1794 to 15 May 1824.

As far as land grants go, Governor Phillip had the authority to encourage free settlement and could grant 100 acres to non-commissioned Marine Officers and 50 acres to Privates. Smaller grants were offered to some convicts. Free settlers, although there were few in the earliest years, were also encouraged to take up grants.

In 1792 land grants were also made available to Commissioned Military Officers by the Acting Governor, Francis Grose.

It was not until the late 1790s that there was more widespread granting of land, sometimes somewhat concerningly when granted to family and friends. By this time, free settlers and ex-convicts who were considered to be of good character were able to apply for land. Each single male was able to apply for 30 acres. Married men could apply for 50 acres. For each child, the applicant could obtain an extra 10 acres, as long as that child was residing with him. Women were also able to apply.

Ellenor Frazer was the first woman to receive entitlement - 20 acres at Concord on 20 February 1794.

During the 1808-9 Rum Rebellion, supporters of the NSW Corps were issued grants. When Governor Macquarie arrived, he reviewed these, and many were cancelled.

Under Governor Brisbane, who took over office on 1 December 1821, the system changed. He found that land had been occupied and transferred without any legal title, and boundary disputes were common. In 1822, tickets-of-occupation were issued so that land already occupied and not yet surveyed gave graziers reassurance of entitlement to continue using the land. Land was promised to those who were prepared to use it productively, and these tickets were granted only when proof was given that further stock had been purchased. Immigrant settlers were also granted land according to their capital. All landowners had to agree to maintain one convict labourer for every 100 acres granted.

With a need to have more accurate surveys of the settled areas of the colony so that purchases and sales of land could be better recorded, Governor Brisbane hindered further land exploration until the surveys were completed. Unoccupied lands were to be valued and later sold by tender.

Crown land was sold from 1824 at 5 shillings per acre. In the following year more than 500,000 acres were sold. Thus, the land transactions before this time are what you will find indexed on the DVD.

To give a perspective of how the registers can be located in the NSW State Archives, their web-site can be consulted to find the relevant microfilm reels. For example -

NRS 1215 contains the first four Registers from 1792 to December 1809.

NRS 13836 contains Registers of land grants from 1792 up to 1856. [Note that Microfilm Reels 2548 to 2550 and 2560 to 2562 are available at the State Library]. Here are parts of NRS 13863 which show early entries –

Reel	Item	Vol.	Description	Dates
2560	[7/444]		Entire colony, including Van Diemen's Land	1792-1807
2560	[7/445]	1	Entire colony, including Van Diemen's Land	1792-1809
2560	[7/446]	1A	Entire colony, including Van Diemen's Land	1792-1804
2560	[7/444]		Entire colony, including Van Diemen's Land	1792-1807
2560	[7/445]	1	Entire colony, including Van Diemen's Land	1792-1809

Reel	Item	Vol.	Description	Dates
2560	[7/444]		Entire colony, including Van Diemen's Land	1792-1807
2560	[7/445]	1	Entire colony, including Van Diemen's Land	1792-1809
2560	[7/446]	1A	Entire colony, including Van Diemen's Land	1792-1804
2561	[7/447]	2	Entire colony, including Van Diemen's Land to 1819	1810-1821
2561	[7/448]	3	Colony, not including Van Diemen's Land	1816-1822
2561	[7/449]	4	County of Cumberland only from 1823	1822-1836
2548	[7/452]	1	Argyle	1822-1838
2548	[7/454]	3	Camden	1822-1838
2548	[7/456]	5	Durham and Brisbane	1823-1837
2549	[7/459]	8	Northumberland and Hunter	1823-1836
2549	[7/464]	13	Westmoreland	1823-1858
2550	[7/466]	15	Phillip and Roxburgh	1823-1862

While this gives an overview, you really need to know who and what you are looking for as the actual DVD Indexes do not appear to be on-line.

[If you are looking for information at the NSW State Archives about criminal and civil cases heard before the Judge Advocate's Bench of Magistrates from 19 February 1788 to 25 November 1820 then you can search the index at - <https://mhns.wa.gov.au/indexes/courts-lower/bench-of-magistrates-index/> ]

Having explained about the early Land Registers, we can now jump to the digitisation by Ancestry.com! You may come across an entry in their *New South Wales, Australia, Registers of Land Grants and Leases, 1792-1867*. Note the broader period of time thus indicating the use of different microfilm reels.

The following article on the land grants to Ellenor Frazer shows more detail by using images from Ancestry.

#### **Sources:**

<https://www.nswlrs.com.au/Old-System-Land-Titles>  
<https://mhns.wa.gov.au/guides/land-grants-guide-1788-1856/>  
[https://search.records.nsw.gov.au/primo-explore/fulldisplay?docid=ADLIB\\_RNSW110005848&vid=61SRA&search\\_scope=Series&tab=default\\_tab&lang=en\\_US&context=L](https://search.records.nsw.gov.au/primo-explore/fulldisplay?docid=ADLIB_RNSW110005848&vid=61SRA&search_scope=Series&tab=default_tab&lang=en_US&context=L)  
<https://www.ancestry.com.au/search/collections/1782/>

## THE LAND GRANTS TO ELLENOR FRAZER/ELLEN FRASER







Ellenor (or Ellen) Redchester (a variation of her surname ‘Register’), was born around 1764 in England and died in 1840 at Concord, NSW. At the Manchester Quarter Sessions in January 1787, she was found guilty of theft and sentenced to transportation for seven years. Also sentenced was William Fraser. It was not revealed at the trial that they were married and had at least one child. In fact, they had been married in Yorkshire in November 1783, and had this been known it was quite possible that Ellenor would have been acquitted. It could have been argued that she was under the influence of her husband when they committed the crime.

Both arrived in Port Jackson with the First Fleet and William worked as a blacksmith. Two sons, John and Daniel, were baptized in 1789 and 1791, but William Fraser died on 13 June 1791 before the baptism of the second child. The work he did in his own time as a convict was paid for in rum, and his drinking had become excessive. This is said to have contributed to his death.

Several years after her husband’s demise, Ellenor was granted land in 1794 under the name Frazer. It seems she was the first woman to be granted land in New South Wales. By 1796 she was definitely co-habiting with her neighbour, William Morgan, a private in the New South Wales Corps. He had arrived with the Second Fleet. Together they had five children between 1797 and 1806 – all registered under the name Morgan, although no marriage was recorded.

A search on Ancestry of the *New South Wales Registers of Land Grants and Leases 1792-1867* shows several relevant grants under the name “Frazer” -

### All New South Wales, Australia, Registers of Land Grants and Leases, 1792-1867 results for Frazer

View Record	Name	Date of Grant	Location of Land Granted	View Images
<a href="#">View Record</a>	Thos Frazer	20 Feb. 1794	Concord	
<a href="#">View Record</a>	Ele Frazer	20 Feb. 1794	Concord	
<a href="#">View Record</a>	Eler Frazer	20 Feb. 1794	Concord	
<a href="#">View Record</a>	Chas Frazer	22 Jul. 1795	Concord	
<a href="#">View Record</a>	Elear Frazer	22 Jul. 1795	Concord	
<a href="#">View Record</a>	Elear Frazer	22 Jul. 1795	Concord	

[https://www.ancestry.com.au/search/collections/1782/?name= Frazer&count=50](https://www.ancestry.com.au/search/collections/1782/?name=Frazer&count=50)

The digital copies of the records are available. The source is the Index to State Records NSW **NRS 13836**, Items 7/445 and 7/447-451. This index is of the first six volumes of the Surveyor General’s Registers of Land Grants and Leases 1792 to 1867. The columns in the entries are for number of acres; grant/lease (in these cases - grant); district; by whom granted; when granted; annual quit rent (1 shilling); when it commences; name of farm.



There are three entries for 20 Feb 1794 for Thos, Ele and Eler Frazer. This is the one for Ele Frazer –

161	Ele: Frazer.	20	Do	Do	Do	Do	1	20 Feb Frazer 1804 Do
<p>J<sup>r</sup> White. Laying &amp; situate in the district of Concord; on  S. Shaw. the W. side of Grantham Farm, from which it  M<sup>r</sup> Gibbons. is separated by a road of 100 feet in width.  D Collins &amp; Co.</p>								

Source: State Records Authority of New South Wales; *Registers of Land Grants and Leases*;  
Series: NRS 13836; Item: 7/445; Reel: 2560

The above entry shows that Ele Frazer was granted 20 acres in the Concord District by Francis Grose on 20 Feb 1794 at an annual quit rent of one shilling commencing on 20 Feb 1804. The name of the farm is given as Frazer. The four magistrates listed were J White, S Shaw, M Gibbons and D Collins. The 20 acres were “laying and situate in the District of Concord on the W side of Grantham Farm from which it is separated by a road of 100 feet in width”.

You will note that the first entry on the Ancestry index is for Thos Frazer. The land description is identical to that of Ele Frazer granted by Francis Grose. A closer look shows that the name ‘Thomas’ transcribed also looks like it could be ‘Charles’. Who was Charles or Thomas? William Fraser had been deceased for several years, so we know it did not refer to him.

An entry on the same page as that of Ele Frazer is one for William Morgan for 25 acres at Concord, and was granted on the same day. Morgan’s Farm was in the district of Concord on the West side of Langstaff Farm from which it is separated by a road of 100 feet in width.

The other entry for “Eler Frazer” with a grant on the same day is in different handwriting but has the same information. The microfilm reel is the same, but the Item number differs -

161	Ele: Frazer	20	Do	Do	Do	Do	1	20 Feb Frazer & 1804
<p>J<sup>r</sup> White. Laying and situate in the district of Con  S Shaw cord on the West side of Grantham farm  M<sup>r</sup> Gibbons from which it is separated by a road of one  D Collins hundred feet in width</p>								

State Records Authority of New South Wales; *Registers of Land Grants and Leases*;  
Series: NRS 13836; Item: 7/446; Reel: 2560

There are three entries for land granted on 22 July 1795. Once again Charles Frazer is a recipient and there are two entries under 'Elear' Frazer.

1795	Chas Frazer	20	Ac	Concord	Ac	Ac	1	22 July 1795	Frazer's
								1805	do
<p> <i>Int. Harris</i>  <i>Thos. Laycock</i>  <i>Int. Woody</i>  <i>W. Collins</i> <i>Int.</i> </p> <p> <i>Laying and situate on the S.W. side of the allotment granted to Thomas Day and adjoining to Morgan's Farm.</i> </p>									

State Records Authority of New South Wales; *Registers of Land Grants and Leases*; Series: NRS 13836; Item: 7/445; Reel: 2560

This grant was by Captain William Paterson. It shows a 20 acre grant on 22 July 1795 "Laying and situate on the SW side of the allotment granted to Thomas Day and adjoining to Morgan's Farm". The description of the land grant to Charles Frazer is the same.

The last entry in the Index is confusing. It appears to show 20 acres granted on 22 July 1795 on the Hawkesbury River in the district of Mulgrave place.

1795	Chas Frazer	20	Ac	Concord	Ac	Ac	1	22 July 1795	Frazer's
								1805	do
<p> <i>S. Foxenup</i>  <i>Thos. Rowley</i>  <i>Int. Loring</i>  <i>S. Collins</i> <i>Int.</i> </p> <p> <i>Laying and situate on the river Hawkesbury in the district of Mulgrave place.</i> </p>									

State Records Authority of New South Wales; *Registers of Land Grants and Leases*; Series: NRS 13836; Item: 7/446; Reel: 2560

We have seen that William Morgan had been granted land on 20 February 1794. He was discharged from the Corps in November of that year. The following year on 22 July 1795 he was granted a further 55 acres "laying and situate on the SW side of the allotment granted to Thomas Day and separated by a small creek in the District of Concord".

William Morgan and Ellenor had five children together (the first born in 1797). By 1802, Ellenor had 45 acres of her own and was growing wheat and maize on 15 of those acres. Morgan had 100 acres and employed three free workers. The

marriage was apparently not without its colourful events. In November 1798, William was charged with having some of Ellenor's pigs illegally. He was ordered to return them. It was stated that they had been living together for seven years at the time but had since separated.

By 1800 they were together again when their daughter, Lucy Morgan, was born. By July 1805 William had managed to get himself into debt. The Provost Marshall was to sell, by Public Auction, on the premises, the effects of William Morgan, 1 cow and calf; 4 goats; 1 ewe; 1 breeding mare; 30 pigs; a quantity of poultry; a quantity of maize; and a farm. It was up to the Provost Marshal to see that civil Court judgments were carried out. This often resulted in seizing and putting up for sale all goods and estates to pay restitution. Extensions of time, or payment in installments, were often given, or, as a last resort, gaol terms could be served if a debt was not satisfied. Conditional assignments were another way of paying a debt. These were essentially mortgages on a property.

William and Ellenor seem to have parted ways in 1806. Her son, Daniel Frazer, aged 15, died that year. The *Sydney Gazette* reported on 20 July 1806 that *Yesterday, a fine young boy, son of E. Morgan, settler at Concord, was unfortunately drowned, owing to a canoe upsetting in which he was crossing an arm of the Parramatta River. A man who was in the canoe at the same time, saved his own life with difficulty. An inquest was taken on the body the day following: whose verdict was dictated by the unfortunate event.* [The report actually says son of I. Morgan.]

The lad's funeral was held at St Phillip's Church in Sydney. He was buried in the Old Sydney Burial Ground and not with his father, William Fraser, who had been buried in the first Sydney Cemetery which was beside the military barracks in the Rocks area.

In 1813, Morgan announced he was going to Hobart Town. He leased his property to Ellenor's other son, John Fraser, until he sold it in 1814. John is recorded under the name of Frazier. He later moved to the Windsor area and worked as a wheelwright. Could this have been the land granted to Ellenor in the district of Mulgrave Place? [Mulgrave Place was the name given to the Hawkesbury district rather than a specific place.]

In 1817, the *Sydney Gazette* advertised a Public Auction at the Market-Place in Sydney to be held on 13 November by the Provost Marshall's Office – *by virtue of Execution in this Cause, all that capital FARM of LAND called or known by the name of **Frazer's Farm**, adjoining Morgan's Farm, situate and being in the District of Concord; containing 20 acres more or less, the property of the Defendant in this cause.* [The case was Terry v Hudson and was heard in the Supreme Court.]

By 1822, Ellenor was listed as the 'wife' of Thomas Humphries in Sydney. He had been assigned to her in 1814 and received a conditional pardon in 1818. Her son, John Frazier, was then farming the land at Concord. Sadly, John died in 1823.

Ellenor had lost both of the sons she had given birth to in the early years of the colony.

In the census of 1828, she and her son, Richard Morgan, were living on 20 acres of land and she called herself Eleanor Morgan. William Morgan had died in October 1828. She was 64 years of age according to the census. Thomas Humphries, age 40, was working as a labourer for Mrs E Morgan at Concord.

Thomas had arrived as a convict on the *Friendship* in 1800. He had been transported for life. When seeking his pardon in 1817 he wrote to the Colonial Secretary saying that he had been employed at Concord for upwards of twelve years to settlers Frazer and Burns, and was an industrious and sober man.

Ellenor died on 18 November 1840 at her residence at Concord at the age of 76 years. She was buried at St Luke's Liverpool as Eleanor Fraser. Her obituary stated that "*Her intellect was unimpaired to the last and she had a perfect recollection of the first deeds in NSW. Her remains were interred with those of her eldest son John in St. Lukes Churchyard Cemetery, Liverpool.*"

She had reportedly become a highly respected pioneer settler at Concord. In the Will of Eleanor Frazer, dated 6 July 1833, she *bequeathed to William Frazer*



*Morgan and Richard Frazer Morgan 20 acres each of land originally granted to Richard Hudson, provided that Thomas Humphries (carpenter) to be provided for, for the rest of his life. She directed that her sons take care of him for the remainder of his natural life.*

The Will was witnessed by Isaac Nichols, James Hopson and John Kelly. The executors were listed as George Nichols and Thomas Humphries.

<http://www.fellowshipfirstfleeters.org.au/ellanfraser.htm>

<https://peopleaustralia.anu.edu.au/biography/fraser-william-31030/text38399>

<https://sydneymagic.net/fraser.html>

<https://australianroyalty.net.au/tree/purnellmccord.ged/individual/I67763/Ellen-Redchester>

<https://www.nswlrs.com.au/>

## MOLLY MORGAN – THE QUEEN OF THE HUNTER VALLEY

It is said, according to the *Newcastle Herald* in 2010, that Molly Morgan was a *wild, wanton woman with a string of grog shops and known for her sexual exploits – an angel of mercy, although marrying three times and transported to New South Wales twice as a convict!* One of her three husbands was William Morgan who married Ellenor Frazer. [see previous article]

The Sydney *Truth* newspaper had an article on 14 January 1951 about the



Queen of the Hunter Valley using this illustration and introduction. "*Molly Morgan was an amazing woman; a nobody who became a somebody. She was an irrepressible charmer, a female Casanova with more men in her life than a Hollywood modern.*"

Born Mary Jones in Shropshire, England in 1762, she had any number of beaux clamouring for her attention. It was William Morgan that she married in 1785 and they settled down momentarily to raise her illegitimate daughter and their two sons. Money was scarce, and while the children were left to fend for themselves, Will and Molly Morgan stole some hempen yarn. William evaded a sentence, but Molly

was to be transported to New South Wales.

She sailed on the notorious *Neptune* and arrived in Sydney on 28 June 1790. William had enlisted as a private in the NSW Corps in late 1789 to avoid capture and sentencing. He was not the only rogue who enlisted for a similar reason. Incredibly, he sailed on the same ship as Molly! For a short time the two lived together at Parramatta.

Molly apparently had a roving eye and 'vanished' towards the end of 1794. Rumours spread that the "Beauty of Botany Bay" had gone bush to live with the natives. But, Molly had actually taken to the high seas – bound for England!

She concocted the rumour about going bush herself so that she could carry out her real plan. One night, in the dark, she swam out into Sydney Cove to board a whaling ship, the *Resolution*, which was ready to sail. She was stowed away in the Captain's cabin, and, not surprisingly, became his mistress during the voyage. Several other convicts had been smuggled on board the whaler.

David Collins, in his *Account of the English Colony in New South Wales*, Volume 2, wrote - *On the morning of the 9th the ships Resolution and Salamander left the cove, purposing to sail on their fishing voyage; soon after which, it being*

*discovered that three convicts Mary Morgan and John Randall and his wife, were missing, a boat was sent down the harbour to search the Resolution, on board of which ship it was said they were concealed.*

*No person being found, the boat returned for further orders, leaving a serjeant and four men on board; but before she could return, Mr. Locke the master, after forcing the party out of his ship, got under way and stood out to sea. Mr. Irish, the master of the Salamander, did not accompany him; but came up to the town, to testify to the lieutenant-governor his uneasiness at its being supposed that he could be capable of taking any person, improperly from the colony.*

*On the day following, it appeared that several persons were missing, and two convicts in the night swam off to the Salamander, one of whom was supposed to have been drowned, but was afterwards found concealed in her hold and sent on shore. The Resolution during this time was seen hovering about the coast, either waiting for her companion, or to pick up a boat with the runaways.*

Back once more in ‘merry old England’, Molly, worked as a dressmaker in Plymouth. She married again in November 1797. Tom Mears, however, did not live up to her expectations, and Molly was back before the Court for setting fire to Tom’s house in 1803. She escaped to London but was soon accused of stealing a shift, a petticoat, a napkin and other articles from Elizabeth Jones. In Court, her former history caught up with her, and she was sent back to Sydney in 1804 on the *Experiment*. She found herself back in Parramatta at the Female Factory. No doubt she became aware that her legal husband was living with Ellenor Redchester/Frazer.

Before long, Molly was heading north to Newcastle for her part in cattle duffing in 1814! She was to serve a further seven years. However, Molly lived there in style as the mistress of an Officer.

In 1818, with a ticket-of-leave granted by Governor Macquarie, Molly, now nearing 50 years of age, was sent to the Hunter River to help establish a settlement at Wallis Plains where the cedar getters and small farmers were settling. She received land at Horseshoe Bend and had convicts assigned to her to clear and cultivate the land and build a cottage.

Molly set up a slab and bark shanty – a grog shop at Shanty Town (later Maitland). Those going up and down the river, day or night, would frequent Molly’s shanty and partake of her rum. She became a rich woman.

One of the convicts assigned to her was a much younger Tom Hunt who had been transported for life in 1812 for highway robbery. Tom would become her third husband in 1822.

Molly Morgan-Hunt bought up parcels of land and built the Angel Inn in Maitland. She did not have a publican’s licence so she leased it out. Her application for a licence in 1828 was unsuccessful.

In 1825 she wrote to the Colonial Secretary seeking more land for her stock. *Understanding that by a late Regulation of Government Individuals are permitted*

*to purchase Lands under stated Regulations I am therefore with great respect emboldened to address your Excellency to state that I hold a Farm at Wallis's Plains of a small extent and quite inadequate to sustain my present Stock consisting of 303 head of horned cattle, 18 horses, including 8 brood mares, and 100 sheep which stock I mean to add to should your Excellency be graciously pleased to allow me to purchase land.*

In all, she eventually held around 150 acres. She became a respected settler and was generous towards the needy. She also sold land to new arrivals. Her shanty soon faced opposition from other grog sellers. By 1830 there were around twenty places competing for the liquor trade.

Molly died in 1835 at her home at Anvil Creek. Tom Hunt, who received a conditional pardon that same year, did not have a legal claim to any of her properties. Her son, Jimmy Morgan, had joined the British Navy, but there was not a great deal to inherit. Although she had sold off parcels of land and donated money to build a school, her wealth had gradually reduced and there was little left of value.

The *Maitland Daily Mercury* on 7 January 1933 recalled a piece written back in the 1890s saying of Molly - *there are still some among us to whom the little old woman with her age-stooped back, her nodding head, her eccentric gesticulations, her quavering, garrulous tongue and her ready wit are but as things of yesterday.*

The *Australian* published her obituary on 3 July 1835.....*She was at one time possessed of a most valuable property in Maitland, during which she was in the constant habit of lending the most valuable assistance to all who asked it; the settlers of the years 1820 to 1826, have reasons to remember her, as many without the aid rendered by her, would not have borne themselves through the trying seasons of that period, while many from her ignorance of accounts fattened themselves on her good will. The writer of these remarks, often favored by her, only regrets that her latter days were not those of enjoyment of the comforts of this life to which she was entitled from the numerous acts of kindness she had evinced to all around her.*

The *Maitland Mercury* wrote of Molly Morgan..... *she is almost fallen out of the memories of men, and only a few of the older residents can recall the figure of the little old woman, with her age stooped back, her clutch on the shoulder, her nodding head, and her impressive gestures, as she gave the ever-ready advice.*

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## **ELIZABETH VERLOPPE - A SLAVE FROM MAURITIUS**

Elizabeth Verloppe was just 14 years old when she arrived in Sydney as a convict in 1834 on the brig *Dart*. She was not transported from England or Ireland, but from Mauritius.

This Island, uninhabited at the time, had been claimed by the Dutch in the 17<sup>th</sup> century and was named Mauritius. It was then claimed by the French in the early 1700s and was renamed Ile de France. Nearby Bourbon Island (now Reunion Island) had also been claimed by the French and the French East India Company brought in slaves from East Africa to work on coffee plantations. Between 1770 and 1810, a great number of slaves were brought into both Islands from Africa, India, Madagascar and Asia. Ile de France soon had spices, coffee, vanilla and sugarcane growing for export. This small island in the Indian Ocean became important as a trading post. During the Napoleonic Wars, the British acquired both islands. Sugar cane plantations replaced many of the coffee plantations. Reunion was given back to the French in 1815 after the war had ended. Ile de France became Mauritius once again and was under British rule.

To appease the existing plantation owners, the British made no changes to the French legal system, and the island's cultural customs remained. Although in 1833, British legislation was passed to emancipate the slaves, it was not until 1839 that this actually came into effect after a period of time where the plantation owners were able to keep their slaves under an apprenticeship scheme for six years.

So, Elizabeth Verloppe, aged 12, and her younger cousin, 8 year old Constance Couronne, were described as being slaves when they were convicted in May 1832 of attempting to poison Madame Morel to whom the girls had been 'hired out' by their mistresses so that they could learn needlework. Elizabeth was a slave owned by a widow named Madame Geffroy. Constance was owned by Madame Marie Julie Melanie Deville la Sabloniere. It would appear that Elizabeth's mother and probably two siblings were also slaves of the Geffroy family.

Although I cannot identify the source, a descendant of Constance gave me a copy of Madame Morel's original complaint to the authorities. No doubt there is a copy in the Archives at Mauritius. You will see that Elizabeth was known as Zabeth. The Widow Morel was a dressmaker, and she wrote on 15 May 1832 - *Sir, I would like to inform you that a crime was committed against my child and myself last Friday, 11th May, by two young negresses, one owned by Mr La Sabloniere, the other by Madame Geffroy. They were then at my house attending lessons in dressmaking.*

*Here are the facts. At approximately 3pm I gave my child a cup of tea and asked for one myself. I found it had a strange taste and informed the negress named Zabeth of it. She had presented me with the cup. She replied that she did not know what it could be but suggested that perhaps that the pot had not been very clean.*

*I was satisfied with this explanation but ten minutes later I was suffering from a violent headache, dizziness and palpitations. I collapsed on my bed and was afraid that I was going to have a stroke. I was given some "Eau de Cologne" and at this moment I started to vomit. At this moment also, my child aged three, cried out that he was about to vomit too. As a matter of fact he was as soon as sick as me. By this time, I had an idea that the beverage contained something bad. I told so to Zabeth who had given it to me and to one of my negresses who had made it.*

*This negress, named Belise, reminded me at once that I had drunk two cups of the beverage in the morning and that I didn't experience any discomfort. Zabeth claimed again that it must have been the pot which had not been cleaned properly.*

*I gave myself and my child some "Ayapana" which had been prepared for a dressing. Soon we became so ill that I sent for Mr Cox, the doctor. He found us very sick. Later I had a talk to Belise who had prepared the beverage and I told her that she had been negligent and that she had probably put something bad in it and that if we had died she would have been responsible.*

*She repeated her previous statement, adding to it that she was sure that all the ingredients used in it were good. Then turning towards Zabeth, maintained that it was not so. Then, continues the other, we will see who could have done harm to Madame. I insisted on accusing them both of negligence. The next day at approximately 8 o'clock Mr Cox came to see us. He found us much better and had dinner with us. The meal was nearly over when Belise entered the room.*

*"Well," she said, "You have accused me Madame, however, Constance, the young negress from Mr de la Sabloniere, has just been kneeling at my feet admitting that she did put some powder in your tea but pleaded with me not to say anything. She confided in me because Helene had seen her pouring the powder into the beverage and had threatened to come and tell you if Constance herself did not come to tell you."*

*I was so shocked that I could not ask any questions. I told the negress to go and talk to Mr Cox. He then asked the negresses to come to him and he interrogated them separately. Constance admitted that she had used the powder contained in a small flask and knew that it was arsenic because Madame, having one day given it to her, had taken it back immediately telling her that she feared her orders would not be followed precisely and that she could poison herself. The flask was then brought in, and Constance recognized it. It was an emetic. Asked if she had any accomplices she admitted that the idea was hers and that she only had told Zabeth about it and had asked her if she should use this arsenic. She was told yes, adding that after I died they could go back to their Quarters and wouldn't need to learn to work any more.*

*Helene, a child of seven, told us she had heard this conversation between Constance and Zabeth and she had seen the first pour some powder in the palm of her hand in a large quantity and then ask of Zabeth if it was enough of it. She*

*replied, "Yes". Then she threw it in the pot. Zabeth then admitted to charges laid against her. The young negresses were put under surveillance whilst I informed Madame Geffroy of the facts.*

*After two hours Constance accused Zabeth of having started it all of her own accord by putting in my tea, every day, sometimes urine, sometimes saliva. Then she said she heard four months ago Belise tell one of her friends that she was leaving and that on her return she would find Her dead. Constance assured me that Belise was talking about me.*

*I have no suspicion against this negress and do not believe this accusation which I believe came from a desire for vengeance. However, as I do not understand the mentality of these people, especially in these terrible circumstances, I beg you, Sir, to come and take Belise away. Strong reasons force me to act in this manner as I have seen my daughter being taken from me five months ago. Never has a death been more cruel or more extraordinary.*

*I beg pardon for daring to suspect that the crime of these two young negresses was committed in cold blood. I ask that the investigation be complete and thorough as to discover the truth.*

*I am, Sir, Your Servant,*

*(Signed) Widow Morel.*

At their trial, despite their ages, it was decided unanimously that what had occurred had been a premeditated act in order to poison Madame Morel. The two young girls were placed in prison for more than a year before they were sentenced to transportation for life. There was some discussion as to where they should be sent. Robben Island, the Seychelles and Diego Garcia Island were all options before the decision was made to send them to New South Wales. Interestingly, the girls, once sentenced, became 'convicts' and technically lost their status as 'slaves'.

It must have been a horrifying experience for the girls, both in the prison and then leaving their families and country as the *Dart* sailed out of Port Louis. With a cargo of sugar bound for the colony, on board the ship were the two girls and two male convicts.

When Elizabeth arrived in Sydney at the age of 14, she was described as being 'black'. Her occupation was 'laundress and needlewoman'. She and Constance were taken to the Parramatta Female Factory. They would have appeared as a novelty to those in the Factory because they were young, of colour, and could not speak English or Gaelic.

What was to become of them? Fortunately for the girls, they were both assigned to Police Magistrate Henry Wilson. He had arrived some 18 months earlier with three daughters. He was a widower, and Elizabeth Verloppe became a lady's maid for the Magistrate's eldest daughter, Elizabeth Wilson, who was 21 years old. Constance was assigned as a lady's maid to the younger daughter, Marcia Wilson.

Henry Wilson, however, felt that the girls belonged with their families back in Mauritius. Their behaviour had been exemplary, and he attempted to get pardons from the Governor for both girls in 1840. His attempts were unsuccessful. He then contacted the Mauritian authorities on their behalf to find out if there was a way in which they could be pardoned and returned. This too was not successful.

Jean Larimie was also from Mauritius and had arrived in Sydney as a free man in 1839. It is possible that he was working for Mr Wilson. On 16 September 1840 when Jean and Elizabeth were married at St James Church in Sydney, it was Mr Wilson who acted as a witness. Jean was described as being a ‘muleteer’, suggesting mixed race.

In May 1842 Mr Wilson, who unfortunately had become insolvent, wrote to the Colonial Secretary informing him that both girls were now married and that they had been assigned to their husbands.

Jean and Elizabeth lived impoverished lives in The Rocks, Surry Hills and Paddington. They had six children, with at least three dying in infancy. Jean died in 1861. Elizabeth died at Woolloomooloo in 1874 as Elizabeth Larame.

And what became of Constance Couronne? She was also recorded as Constance Louise Couronioere or Sablonniere. She was born on 18 January 1824 at Port Louis, Mauritius (despite her death certificate saying that she was born in France!). When she was 8 years old, the Slave Register reveals that Constance was a plantation slave at Grand Port and her ‘owner’ was Monsieur Gabriel Henry Isidor La Sablonniere. When she was convicted, Constance, her mother, Adele Couronne, and her sister, were the property of Madame Marie Julie Melanie Deville la Sablonniere, the mother of Gabriel.

When this little girl arrived in Sydney, she was described as being ‘black’ and was ‘an embroiderer and needlewoman’. Documentation in Mauritius shows that Constance was of mixed colour. Her mother was also of lighter colouring and was most likely of Indian and African descent.

In 1840, Marcia Wilson travelled to Bathurst where she married William Finch. Constance accompanied her and she stayed with the Finches on their property in the Wellington Valley. It was there that she met the station’s stockman Robert Trudgett. They married in Bathurst on 3 March 1841. Constance adapted to life as the wife of a grazier and bore him eleven children. She died in 1891 at Euchareena, NSW.

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*From the Edges of Empire* by Convict Women’s Press Inc

## THE ECONOMIC DEPRESSION OF THE 1840S IN NSW

It is more than likely that your research has led you to ancestors who faced insolvency hearings during the 1840s. Kate talked about using timelines at the last group meeting. Timelines enable you to understand better the times in which your ancestor lived. The depression of the 1840s had such a huge impact, so it may be worth looking at it in more detail. Of course, this was not the only economic depression that the country experienced. There was also great hardship during the declared depressions of the 1890s and the 1930s.

The downturn in the economy at the commencement of the 1840s meant that possessions, including land, were lost, jobs were lost, money was scarce, and the number of suicides increased.

By 1840 the colony had long been producing fine wool for export. Whale oil was also a profitable export commodity. Areas of settlement had expanded, and the population had increased. Immigration schemes had commenced to bring out families, labourers and single females. New South Wales, however, was facing the cessation of the transportation of convicts, and this caused concern for those wealthy landowners who were accustomed to having convict labour.

As the economy grew, there had been a great deal of investment made by numerous British and Scottish merchants. Some were also landowners and bankers. Free settlers and bounty migrants had been arriving often on ships owned by such businessmen in the U.K. They used their vessels to take back wool and whale oil.

So, what went wrong? Blame was placed on the debt-ridden economy of the United States of America. A ripple effect hit the United Kingdom, and thence spread to the colonies of Australia and New Zealand. The prices of wool and wheat, in particular, fell significantly. With such heavy reliance on these commodities and U.K. investment, economic damage was inevitable.

By the late 1830s there had been reports from England about the economic downturn they were facing.

In February of 1840, the *Colonist*, in their Commercial Intelligence column, reported that NSW was experiencing problems - *The great scarcity of money, combined with the immense quantities of goods daily arriving from Europe, has a very serious effect on the market. The extent of business done at this season of the year is very trifling when compared with former years – scarcely an article is now in demand, spirits excepted; and in all probability the depression will not be relieved for some time to come. It is not at all unlikely if the Banks are not very liberal in their discounts, that serious consequence will yet follow.*

It was at the close of 1840 that bankruptcies began to increase. The numbers grew over the following years as the inability to pay debts became a real source of concern.

Newspaper accounts in June 1841 show a wider picture. The *Sydney Gazette* informed readers that *the monetary affairs of this town and colony are still*

*in a most depressed and unsatisfactory condition* - despite former predictions that the hard times would have come to an end.

*A general dullness pervades all classes of the community, and all branches of trade, which nothing can so effectually remove as cheering news from England ; the low figure wool is at, and the comparative trifling demand there exists for stock of any kind, which are the sources whence emanate all our prosperity, are disheartening in the extreme to shew the unfortunate position recent circumstances have plunged this colony in...*

A poem printed in the *Sydney Herald* on 30 January 1841 was titled “The Lamentations of a Sydney Merchant”. It begins –

‘Tis very sad, the times are bad,  
And there’s a deal of croaking,  
Go where I will, none pay a bill,  
And many leave off joking;  
In every place there is a face  
Extended many inches,  
That one might see there needs must be  
A shoe that somewhere pinches.

Unemployment had become a huge issue. Caroline Chisholm had set up her own employment office. She was aware that often when men were out of work it was the daughters who worked as domestic servants and used their wages to support the family.

In February 1842 an Insolvent Office was established in Sydney within the Supreme Court House. The Chief Commissioner appointed to hear cases was barrister William Kerr. He was aided by “Official Assignees”.

Lists of insolvents began to appear in the newspaper columns. For example, in June 1842 – ***New Insolvents*** - *The following persons filed their schedules on Saturday last: Charles Macquarie, settler, Paterson River; William T Walters, painter and glazier, Jamison-street, Sydney; Patrick Mulholland, schoolmaster, Campbelltown; Humphrey Thorn, yeoman, Parramatta; William Bielby Parker, gentleman, Balmain.*

***Meetings for today*** – Robert Russell, for examination, at 10 a.m.; Benoit Peyras, for examination, at 12 noon.

***Important Notice Respecting Insolvency Business*** – *For the future, hours will be fixed for holding the meetings in the respective insolvent estates, and parties having debts to prove against such estates, must produce their affidavits at the hour specified, or they will not be received.*

Five sheets made up Schedules A to E. On these were listed assets and liabilities. When declared bankrupt, the person had to “file his Schedule”. It was determined how the creditors were to be paid. Once determined, the case was then taken to the Supreme Court. Judge Burton, who devised the Insolvent Bill, presided

over many of the cases. In 1842 there were 629 who filed Schedules. In 1843, the number was 539. Two directors of the Bank of Australia filed Schedules after the bank closed in March 1843. Directors of the Commercial Banking Company and the Bank of New South Wales also had filed schedules.

Some well known figures were saved from facing the Insolvent Office when family and friends helped them financially. One was Dr Bowman who was able to retire to Ravensworth in the Hunter Valley when his wife's brothers (James and William Macarthur) handled the sale of two of his properties. Alexander MacLeay, who had lost his position as Colonial Secretary in 1837, had almost completed his splendid Elizabeth Bay House when he was struck with debt while still paying for his rural holdings and livestock. Luckily for him, his son arrived from England in 1839 with substantial capital. Unlucky for him, that son took over the mansion and evicted his parents!

John Manning, a registrar of the Supreme Court was in charge of Intestate Estates (where there was no Will). He committed fraud by supplementing his income with inheritances where next of kin were overseas and thus ignorant of their good fortune. He was ordered to pay restitution when found out.

John Piper, who had retired to the Bathurst district in the late 1820s after losing his Point Piper mansion, had used up much of his funds before the depression hit. All of his properties had mortgages. Creditors foreclosed on him in April 1843.

There is an **Insolvency Index 1842 – 1887** on the NSW State Archives web-site: <https://mhns.w.au/indexes/bankruptcy-and-insolvency/insolvency-index/> Obviously, this index is not just for the 1840s years of the Depression.

Randomly taken from the Index, we find that Major Edmund Lockyer had surprisingly faced insolvency in 1844-1845. He arrived in Sydney in 1825 with the 57<sup>th</sup> Regiment. With him were his wife and ten children. The following year, he was instructed by Governor Darling to form a settlement at King George Sound on Australia's west coast. On returning to Sydney in 1827, he decided to become a settler. He was granted 2,560 acres in the Marulan District. Unfortunately, it seems he was not a good farmer. Appointments such as Police Magistrate in Parramatta and Principal Surveyor of Roads and Bridges, however, had given him a steady income. In 1842 he was part of an association looking to bring in labour from India.

He must have traded his way out of insolvency because by 1853 he had extended his property holdings so that he held 11,810 acres.

## Sources:

Various Newspaper articles

<https://adb.anu.edu.au/essay/29/text40594> *Barrie Dyster; 'The Depression of the 1840s in New South Wales', Australian Dictionary of Biography, National Centre of Biography, Australian National University, originally published 1 August 2022.*  
<https://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/lockyer-edmund-2366>



## WHAT'S NEW ON THE BDA?

<https://www.bda-online.org.au/>

The **Biographical Database of Australia** is a great resource, and new information is constantly being added to their web-site.

The site offers the full text of many baptisms, marriages and burials between 1788 and 1850 in New South Wales; 1837 to 1842 in Victoria; and many in Tasmania. Added more recently are Church of England Parish Registers for –

- St James, Melbourne 1838-1841
- St Lawrence, Sydney 1838-1856
- Wellington, NSW 1837-1856

Some of the information can be gained for free. An annual subscription to the site is available for just \$39. At GSQ, of course, you have access via their subscription. It is advisable to regularly check the site for new additions such as –

Assisted Immigrants –

- to NSW 1832-1896
- to Moreton Bay 1848-1859
- to Port Phillip 1839-1851

Unassisted Immigrants

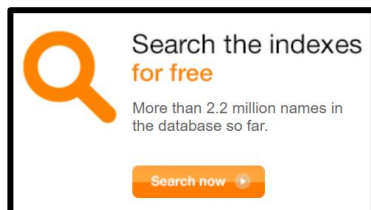
- to NSW from 1788-1857

Convict records are in abundance for NSW, Qld, Vic, Norfolk Island, and Tasmania. There are musters and census records, along with Colonial Secretary's correspondence, and records of soldiers.

If you had ancestors buried in the old Sydney Burial Ground between 1819 and 1901, inscriptions are now available.

Other items which may be of interest and may encourage you to use the website –

- Transcripts of Certificates of Freedom 1834-1840
- Absconded convict notices 1822-1841
- Ships' deserters, Sydney 1852-1867
- Pay lists for soldiers of the 28<sup>th</sup> and 80<sup>th</sup> Regiments in Australia 1835-44
- Anglican clergymen appointed to NSW parishes 1809-1858



## CAPTAIN GEORGE BUNN – SHIPPING AGENT, ETC.



The *Sydney Monitor*, on 10 January 1834, announced the passing of Captain George Bunn – *We are sorry to announce the rather sudden death of Captain Bunn at his new residence across the water, yesterday, at 3 p.m., to the great grief of his family and a numerous circle of friends. Captain Bunn had been many years a Justice of the Peace and one of the principal merchants of Sydney.*

Born in London in 1790, Captain Bunn was just 44 years old when he died. He had been a master mariner, a businessman, a magistrate and a Director of the Bank of Australia.

Between 1821 and 1824, as Captain, he made three voyages transporting convicts to Port Jackson and to Hobart on the convict ship *Countess of Harcourt* which was under charter by the merchant firm of Buckle & Co. When Captain Bunn returned to Sydney in January 1826 it was as the shipping agent for Buckle, Buckle, Bagster and Buchanan. While the firm had contracts with numerous convict ships and traded with the East India Company, it had also diversified its interests in the 1820s to become a major importer of Australian wool.

Operating as George Bunn & Co at 98 George Street in Sydney, Bunn's London connections and access to funds helped him to quickly enter the town's business circle. He advertised soon after his arrival in the *Sydney Gazette* on 1 February 1826 that he would *have a constant and regular Supply of all Articles of general Consumption, and he ready at all Times to make liberal Advances upon Colonial Produce, for the London Market. He also flatters himself from his Connexion in London, to have Orders for British Goods executed in a very satisfactory Manner, and on most advantageous Terms.*

Incredibly, there were some 24 shipping agents operating in the colony when George arrived. Within a matter of weeks, he was nominated for membership of the Agricultural and Horticultural Society. Several months later he was a committee member of the Chamber of Commerce, and later became the Chairman.

It was not long before he would receive a grant of land – 2650 acres near Braidwood which he stocked with 5 horses, 400 cattle and 6,000 sheep. A manager was put in place and George never lived on the property.

He married Anna Maria Murray in 1828 and they settled at Pymont. Anna Maria had arrived in Sydney in January 1828 with her father, Terence Murray, who had been paymaster in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Brigade of Foot Guards and later the 49<sup>th</sup> Regiment of Foot before retiring in 1827 and deciding to settle in New South Wales. The Murray family settled at Erskine Park near Penrith. The agent for the property they

were purchasing was Mr George Bunn. There must have been an immediate attraction between George and Anna Maria because they were married in May!

They had three children. John was born in 1830, George in 1831, and Ellen in 1833. Sadly, Ellen died as an infant. By then, George had added to his commercial interests with a wharf and warehouses and sealing and whaling facilities. He invested in ships and was hoping to establish a sheep station in New Zealand.

He had recently built a new home for his family on the Ultimo Estate when he died on 5 January 1834 of a “short but severe illness”. The funeral was well attended. There were *thirty or forty carriages which conveyed most of the Civil Officers, Magistrates, and friends of the deceased.... In private life, and in the circle of his intimate friends, Mr Bunn was affectionately esteemed. A cheerfulness of disposition and warmth of heart rendered him a pleasant companion as well as a valuable friend.* He was buried in the Sydney Burial Ground.

Anna Maria was left with a considerable debt on his estate. She stayed at the Sydney house until 1841, then divided her time between the properties of her two brothers in Woden and Yarralumla until permanently moving to the Braidwood property in 1851.



She proved herself to be a novelist and an amateur artist. While living at Pymont, in 1838, she wrote the first novel to be published on mainland Australia. It was titled “*Guardian. A Tale by an Australian*” and printed by James Spilbury of Jameson Street in Sydney. This was her only literary work and it was written anonymously.

For many years it was thought that it was written by the wife of Governor Darling. It was not until 1968 that a note was uncovered by a family historian on the Bunn’s Braidwood property. It said that “Mother was the author of *The Guardian*, the first novel ever published in Australia”.

The novel was probably sensationalist in its time as the story culminated in a revelation of incest between a brother and sister unknowingly involved in a relationship. The setting for the novel is south-west Ireland and England with New South Wales mentioned only a few times – and in a derogatory manner suggesting that life there was uncivilised and that the people were stupid.

Anna Maria Bunn died on 23 September 1889 at the age of 81 years.

### Sources:

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<https://pymonthistory.net.au/anna-maria-bunn>

*The Australian* 13 January 1834, page 2

[https://dictionaryofsydney.org/person/bunn\\_anna\\_maria](https://dictionaryofsydney.org/person/bunn_anna_maria)

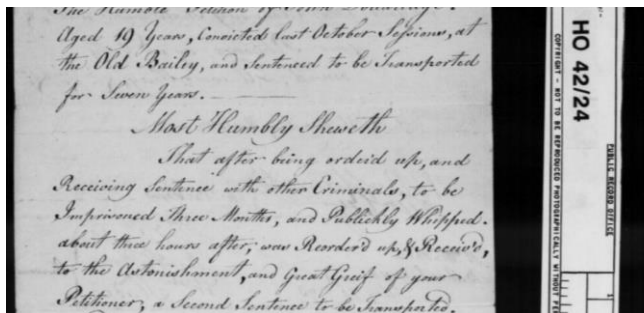
## A PETITION ON BEHALF OF JOHN DODDRIDGE

<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-728075871/findingaid>

I chose this petition randomly from the Home Office records which have been digitised by the National Library of Australia. I did not think it would prove to be so interesting!

The petition was presented on 20 February 1793. John Doddridge was facing transportation. The source is -

[Home Office records, 1779-1871 \[microform\]/Fonds HO/Series HO 42/File 24. AJCP Reel No: 7204/Item 576 B-C](#)



*To The Kings Most Excellent Majesty. The Humble Petition of John Doddridge. Aged 19 Years, convicted last October Sessions, at the Old Bailey, and sentenced to be transported for Seven Years. Most Humbly Sheweth That after being ordered up, and Receiving Sentence with other Criminals, to be Imprisoned Three Months, and Publicly Whipped, about three hours after, was Reordered up, and Received to the Astonishment, and Great Grief of Your Petitioner, a Second Sentence to be Transported.*

*Deign Most gracious Sire, to grant, and Mitigate his Punishment, being his first Crime, and his Early Years, he hopes may plead that he may be sent abroad in the Service of his Country or Otherwise disposed of as your Majesty in your great Clemency shall think meet, and Your Petitioner as in Duty bound, will ever Pray, etc, etc, etc.*

The petition was signed by J C Hubbard, Minister; 2 Church Wardens; 3 Overseers; and 11 others mostly from Bethnal Green and the Hamlet of Stepney.

*We whose names are hereunto Subscribed beg leave to Recommend the Petitioner to His Majesty's Royall Mercy.*

I looked at the Newgate Gaol records (HO 26 Criminal Registers) for October 1792 and found that John Godridge (sic) was sentenced to Transportation for 7 years and was "removed on board the *Prudentia* Hulk on 2 February 1793".

The hulk records (also digitised) for the *Prudentia* cover the dates from July 1793 to January 1797. The same entry appears each time and tells us that John

Dodridge was tried in London on 31 October 1792 and that he was to be transported Beyond the Seas for 7 years.

167 John Castledine	118	dillo 9 Jan 1790	do	7	La
168 Hendrick Henderson	19	London 12 Sept 1792	Bay's	has	7
169 John Dodridge	17		do	7	
170 James Mill Holland	22		do	7	
171 James Jones	23		do	7	
172 John Harrison	29	dillo 31 Oct 1792	do	7	

The Old Bailey records are interesting. A search in the index did not find John Dodridge or Dodderidge, so I had to search through the whole proceedings for 31 October. I found that he was indicted for *feloniously stealing, on the 24<sup>th</sup> day of August, a wooden chest, value 6 pence, and 81 pounds of tea valued at 10 shillings, the goods of Edward Eagleton, privately, in his dwelling house.*

John Wright told the court that he was a shopman living with Mr Eagleton, a tea dealer in Cheapside. A Constable, on 25<sup>th</sup> August, asked them if they had lost a chest of tea. On checking, they noticed that Chest number 4683 was missing. However, Mr Wright said that he had seen the chest on the same day at Hercules Court in Threadneedle Street. It had been delivered to Constable Hunt. He swore that he had never seen the prisoner at their house.

William Renshaw, a ticket porter, said that on the 24<sup>th</sup> August, about 9 p.m. he saw the prisoner and two men coming along Cornhill. He followed them through Finch Lane. They went up Threadneedle Street. They pitched the box, which the witness suspected they had stolen, and he ran for Constable Hunt. The box was on the prisoner's back and he dropped it as the Constable took him prisoner. The prisoner said he had been given 6 pence to carry it.

In Court, Constable Hunt said that the prisoner dropped the box and ran away. He took the chest of tea to his own house and had kept it there ever since. There was tea in it, but the box was damaged. The number on the box was 4683.

In his defence, John Dodridge said he was asked to carry it for 6 pence. It was heavy but he said he would if he could. At the trial he called four character witnesses but their evidence was not recorded in the proceedings.

The value of the tea was listed as being at least 10 shillings. The London Jury found him guilty and fined him 39 shillings. There was no sentence of whipping or transportation evident.

Moving to the end of the day's sessions was a page headed "The trials being ended, the Court proceeded to pass Sentence as follows".

This is where we find John Doddridge sentenced to transportation for seven years.

*The Trials being ended, the Court proceeded to pass Sentence, as follows:*

Received sentence of Death, 9, viz.					
Bonus John	—	502	Hugh John	—	447
Brown John	—	448	Johnston George	—	501
Caffledine John	—	450	Jones James	—	503
Cowden Sarah	—	453	Kelting George	—	491
Davis Philip	—	479	Leaver Joseph	—	515
Foulkes Thomas	—	451	Long Thomas	—	407
Graham William	—	448	Mason George	—	490
Radley Thomas	—	480	Millholland James	—	460
Wild Henry	—	477	Morris Thomas	—	512
			Newton Sarah	—	483
			Newman William	—	461
A jury of matrons were impanelled on Sarah Cowden's application to the court that she was pregnant, and they returned a verdict that she was with quick child, upon which the execution was stayed.			Orange John	—	485
			Isaac	—	ibid.
			Poore Thomas	—	499
			Powell Job	—	491
			Richard	—	472
			Price Robert	—	489
			Rigley Alexander	—	488
			Rolf, Jeremiah	—	402
			Russell, Richard	—	505
			Smith William	—	498
Received sentence of Transportation for Seven years, 43, viz.					
Bidwell Judith	—	500	Stanley John	—	486
Blewis Nathaniel	—	476	Scotney Owen	—	487
Bridges William	—	468	Thorne Ann	—	463
Brown John	—	497	Thompson James	—	511
Bulkin John	—	474			
Burne Charles	—	482	To be imprisoned Twelve Months.		
Cave Mary	—	508	Margaret Snow (fined 1s.)		
Causeway William, alias Corley	—	464	Ann Harris (fined 1s.)		
Carpenter James	—	449			
Clarke Thomas	—	504	To be imprisoned Nine Months:		
Croker William	—	475	Robert Wilberry.		
Doddridge John	—	454			
Evans Robert	—	492	To be imprisoned Six Months.		
Foster Robert	—	496	William Young Chant (fined 1s.)		
Francis John	—	467	Isaac Ball.		
Gower Sarah	—	484			
Hall Martha	—	465			
Hartley John	—	503			

NUMB. VIII. PART II.

I

Ann

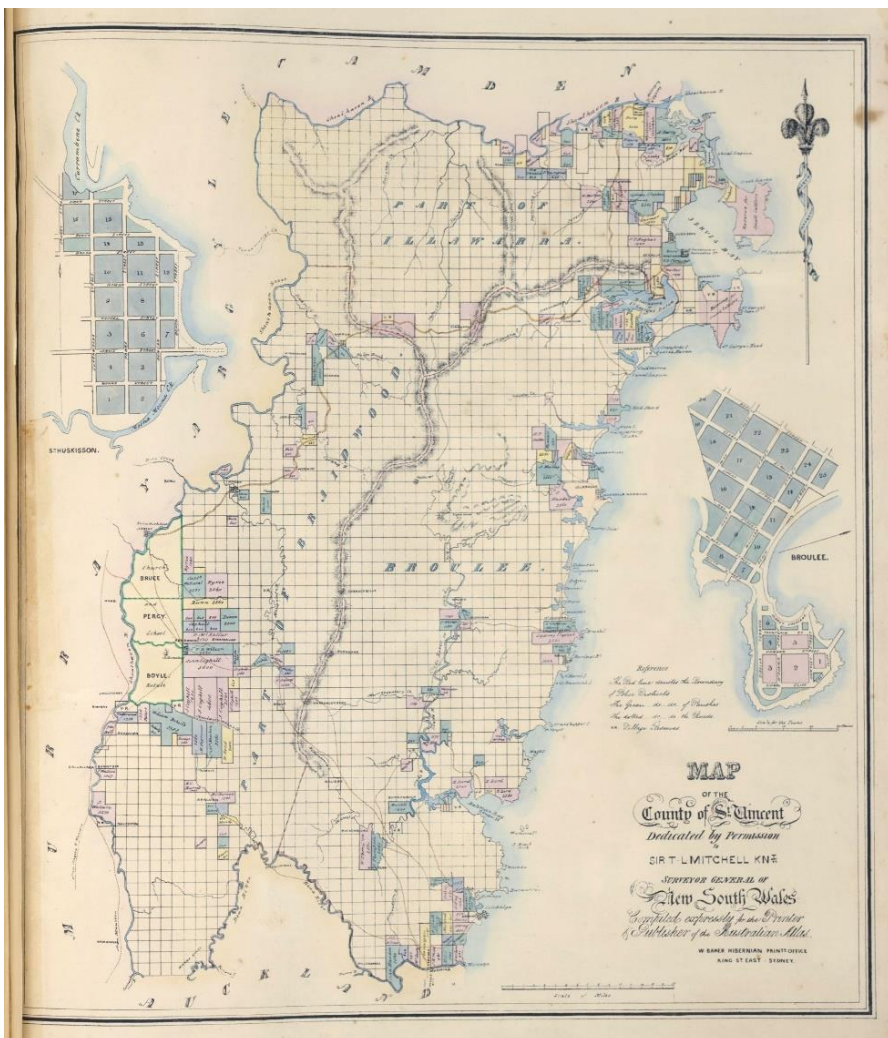
There is no record of John Doddridge arriving as a transported convict. As he was on the *Prudentia* for several years, it would be reasonable to assume that he served his sentence on board the hulk at Woolwich.

#### Sources:

<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-728075871/findingaid>

<https://www.oldbaileyonline.org/>





## County of St Vincent

*One of the maps contained in W Baker's Australian County Atlas: dedicated by the publisher to Sir T L Mitchell... showing the various parishes, townships, grants, purchases and unlocated lands.*

**Convict Connections** was originally formed as an Interest Group of the Genealogical Society of Queensland Inc. to accommodate the growing interest and enthusiasm in our Convict Heritage.

Now, as **Colonial and Convict Connections**, the Group endeavours to service the needs of those members whose ancestral path has led them back not only to the Convict Era but also the Colonial Era. The Eras intertwine. Your ancestor may have been with the military, or came as a free settler, or perhaps was part of the judiciary, a bureaucrat, a surveyor, an explorer, or maybe a merchant or tradesman, etc., etc, etc.

### **Aims and Objectives**

**Colonial and Convict Connections** aims to provide a specialist forum for members with a particular interest in Convicts and Colonial Heritage, to share and exchange information, achieve a wider knowledge, and foster a greater appreciation of those who suffered the horrors of transportation.

#### **Meeting dates for 2024**

<b>11 February</b>	<b>14 April</b>	<b>9 June</b>
<b>11 August</b>	<b>13 October</b>	<b>8 December</b>