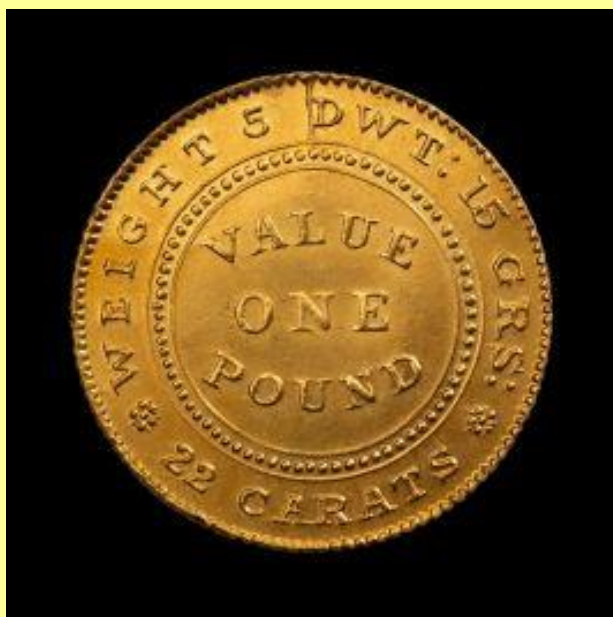




## *Colonial & Convict Interest Group*

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

# **THE CHRONICLE**



*Australia's First Gold Coin  
When and where was it minted?*

*October 2024*

---

**Please address all correspondence to:**

**Convict Connections  
c/- Genealogical Society of Queensland Inc.  
PO Box 1471  
CARINDALE QLD 4152**

---

**PLEASE NOTE OUR ADDRESS**

**Email:** [CandC@gsq.org.au](mailto:CandC@gsq.org.au)

**PLEASE NOTE OUR BANK DETAILS**

**BENDIGO BANK**

BSB: 633 000 Account: 198816720

---

Our *Chronicle* is published in  
February, June and October

Subscribers need not be members of GSQ.

**Annual subscription is \$20 (including postage) or \$15 via email.**

---

The Genealogical Society of Queensland Inc. does not hold itself responsible for any statements made, or opinions expressed by authors of articles in this newsletter.

V. Blomer (Editor)

---

# CONTENTS



<b>Front Cover – Australia’s First Gold Coin</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>From the Convenor</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Hobart artist, Benjamin Duterrau</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Britain’s Penal Settlement in West Africa</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>What were the Swing Riots?</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Convict William Haylor</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>Matthew Flinders – a prisoner in Mauritius</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>Johnny Cassim – a convict from Mauritius</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>Augustus Caesar, dealer of Sydney</b>	<b>31</b>
<b>Emanuel Solomon – a prosperous Adelaide merchant</b>	<b>38</b>
<b>Flood Affects the Windsor Orphan School 1842</b>	<b>40</b>

## **FRONT COVER**

### **AUSTRALIA'S FIRST GOLD COIN – WHEN AND WHERE WAS IT MINTED?**

While listening to overnight radio recently, I was interested to hear a coin collector speak of the value and rarity of the first gold coin minted in Australia in 1852. I would have guessed, by the year, that it was minted in Ballarat or Melbourne after the 1851 gold discoveries.

But, I was wrong! It was in Adelaide that these gold coins were made! On 23 September 1852, the very first of what is now known as “the 1852 Adelaide Pound”, was struck at the Adelaide Assay Office. This was the Nation’s first gold coin – a genuine 22 carat coin! Why did Adelaide and not Melbourne or Sydney mint the first gold coins?

Queensland did not separate from New South Wales until 1859, but South Australia had separated much earlier in 1836. Gold discoveries began in 1851 in NSW and Victoria and transformed the economy of these states. Gold was later found in Queensland, Northern Territory and Western Australia and the population in these states increased as prospectors went to remote areas.

But South Australia did not have any gold fields! In desperation the government had even offered a reward of £1,000 for the discovery of gold, but none was ever found. The mass exit of the inhabitants to the Victorian gold fields caused the South Australian economy to collapse. The gold seekers had taken their money with them. There was a real concern that South Australia would descend into complete insolvency.

Those lucky men who returned with gold nuggets from Victoria, found there was a problem in determining their monetary value. A meeting was held on 9 January 1852 between Lieutenant Governor Sir Henry Young and nearly 300 bankers and businessmen who supported the minting of coins. However, the government had no authority to set up a mint.

A hastily prepared piece of legislation known as Bullion Act No. 1 was passed so that an Assay Office could cast gold nuggets into ingots rather than sovereigns. In February, the Adelaide Assay Office was established so that the gold could be converted into ingots as a form of currency. Each prospector’s gold could be melted and purified into an ingot and stamped with its weight. A fixed price for gold dust was set at more than the Victorian rate. Armed escorts guaranteed the delivery of gold from the Victorian diggings to Adelaide.

Once the Assay Office had determined the weight of the ingots the banks could issue certificates allowing them to be used as legal tender for 12 months. Within the first two weeks, deposits at the Assay Office totalled £24,000.

It was a daring move by the government, and it allowed banks to issue banknotes as legal tender under specified conditions when the gold ingots were

deposited. As these were ingots and not currency, they could not attract Royal disapproval in Britain.

However, the ingots soon proved unpopular so a further modification of the “Bullion Act” was made nine months after it was introduced. A loophole in the legislation was found by Sir Henry Young. It was a paragraph which referred to issuing currency in the case of “urgent necessity”. With only three months before the Act expired this modification allowed for the production of gold coins. As a consequence, it was the Assay Office that became Australia’s first mint – even though the Office had not been given Royal approval to produce coins.

Legally, it was coin-shaped ingots and not coins that would be struck and circulated. The intention was to have 10 shilling, £1, £2 and £5 gold pieces. Only the one pound coin was struck as the time involved in preparing the dies for the £1 obverse and reverse sides took time. The first coin was struck in September 1852 and minting ceased in February 1853. So, although they were all dated 1852 not many of the coins were actually produced in that year.

When word finally came from Britain that coins could not be minted in South Australia, it was too late. By then the coins had served their purpose and most had been exported to England by profiteers. It had soon been realized that the value of the gold contained in each coin was greater than the nominal value of £1. In London they could be melted down.



The dies made at the Assay Office to cast the coins were the work of Joshua Payne, an Adelaide jeweler and engraver who had arrived in Adelaide in 1849.

When the gold was being cast into ingots no real expertise had been required. But, to mint coins, there had to be a uniform weight adhered to, and there had to be a uniform design.

The obverse side of the coins designed by Payne would show that they were issued by the Government Assay Office Adelaide. The words encircled a crown with the date 1852 underneath. The reverse side of the coins showed the weight of 5 pennyweight (DWT) and 15 grains (GRS), and that they were of 22 carats. In the centre of the coins were the words, “Value One Pound”.

A problem arose not long after production began. It was not known just how much pressure would be required to place on the dies to give a pleasing design on the gold. The pressure exerted gave nice strong edges to the coins but affected the definition of the crown on the obverse side. Only a small number of these coins were minted because the pressure used was excessive and the die developed a severe

crack. Payne had to prepare a second die for the reverse side. A new die had to be made before further minting could take place.

The first was known as Type 1. The new die had marked differences, so it is easy to establish whether a coin was struck from the first die or the second.

While Type 1 displayed stylish lettering and a simple beaded inner circle, Type 2 was altered to show plain lettering and a scalloped inner circle.

With the lessened pressure for the second run of coins, the perfection of the indents on the edge was lost, but the definition of the crown was improved.



In all, 24,648 Adelaide Pounds were made. Only about 40 of the first type, in varying degrees of quality, have survived, so these will always be Australia's most coveted gold coins. Only three of these are considered to be of excellent quality. It is estimated that around 250 of the Type 2 coins are in the hands of collectors.



**Joshua Payne**

#### **Sources:**

[https://www.neilsberman.com/coins\\_Adelaide\\_One\\_Pound.htm](https://www.neilsberman.com/coins_Adelaide_One_Pound.htm)

<https://coinworks.com.au/1852-adelaide-pound>

<https://collections.museumsvictoria.com.au/items/55682>

## CONVENOR'S REPORT

Health professionals these days advise us that as we join the ranks of the retired, our need to belong to community increases. This gives us a sense of purpose and enhances our well-being. (For those members who are not retired, please let me reassure you that your membership of our group is essential and necessary).

As communication is the key to participation and promotes a sense of belonging, I introduced a small research task for members to undertake prior to each meeting. All members have been invited to select an ancestor, either a convict or free immigrant and answer a set of questions relating to a specific topic and aspect of their life. Every member is given the opportunity to present their research findings at our meetings. At our August meeting we reported our findings about our chosen ancestor's voyage to Australia and at our October meeting, our research task is about the arrival of our ancestor in Australia. Our members have enjoyed sharing their findings. Their enthusiasm has been so amazing that it is now necessary to impose a time limit of ten minutes. I prefer to request a time limit rather than limit the number of speakers.

Kate and I agree that we would like to continue this project in 2025 as we all have many ancestors to research. Included in our meetings for 2025, will be a five-minute segment when our members can volunteer to share information about a new website they have discovered or perhaps present a review of a book they enjoyed.

At our August meeting, I distributed a survey. Thank you to all those members who returned their completed surveys. If you need to return a survey, I will be most grateful if you could do this at our October meeting on Sunday 13<sup>th</sup>.

Also, at the August meeting I gave a brief book review. I was fortunate to receive a copy of "1788" by Watkin Tench. This is a first-hand account of life during the first few years at Port Jackson. As a primary source, it gives real insight into living conditions and problems encountered during those early years. The language and expression whilst more formal and complex compared to today's literature, was an interesting aspect of the book. I have since donated the book to our C & C Lending Library.

Whilst on that topic, our esteemed member, Greg Woodbury, has spent many hours, checking the books in the library and has classified them according to title and author. The resulting new catalogue has been placed in the C & C library. Members of the C & C Interest group may borrow books from our Lending library but please ensure that you enter your details in the lending library book. Books may be borrowed for one interval between meetings or returned to the C & C pigeonhole at the GSQ. We offer our sincere thanks to Robyn Fletcher who previously maintained the library for the Interest group.

Many thanks are due also to the previous convenors, Val Blomer and Lyn Caldwell, who have left the Group with a tremendous wealth of publications and research material. Particularly valuable is the 2018 publication by Convict Connections titled *My Handy Research Folder* that provides resources and guidance to research convicts. This practical kit will be updated and available for purchase in 2025.

In September, Russell, a new member to the group, Kate and Greg as well as myself, attended the GSQ Open Day. Even though we almost melted in the unusually hot day, we enjoyed chatting to several interested and potential new members. We proudly displayed our new corflute, that has been arranged by the Management Committee and financed by our Interest group. Our display of several complimentary leaflets and bookmarks attracted the attention of many visitors.

We are looking forward to the 2025 “Connections: Past Present and Future” Conference to be held from 21<sup>st</sup> to 24<sup>th</sup> March in Brisbane. The early bird rate for registration to attend, is still available. I encourage all members to attend this event as an opportunity to gain new knowledge, enjoy the stimulation of a high-level event and the opportunity to mingle with other family history enthusiasts. Please check the following link for more details. <https://www.connections2025.org.au/>

Finally, I must commend Val Blomer for her dedication to the publication of the ‘Chronicle’ over many years. There are many subscribers who willingly pay their annual fees and look forward to reading the captivating and informative articles. Next year, our member Fleur Creed has offered to continue Val’s work. With an impressive range of qualifications, including a Diploma in Family History from UTAS and a Certificate in Genealogical Research from SAG as well as a Certificate in Applied Public History from the University of London (UoL), and a Certificate in Genetic Genealogy from the University of Strathclyde (UoS), I feel confident that Fleur will also produce a fascinating journal. Fleur is involved with societies both here and in the UK – GSQ, SAG, FHACT, BFHS (Buckinghamshire), DFHS (Devon). If you would like to submit an item or story, Fleur would love to hear from you.

My first year as Convenor of the Colonial and Convict Interest Group has been enormously challenging but I have to say that it has also been fantastic. Despite one monumental error, I have persevered, and with the wonderful and much appreciated support of my friend and co-convenor, Kate Peters, my hope is that our members are enjoying the meetings very much. My ongoing aim is to attract new members to our Interest Group to expand on the current energy and enthusiasm.

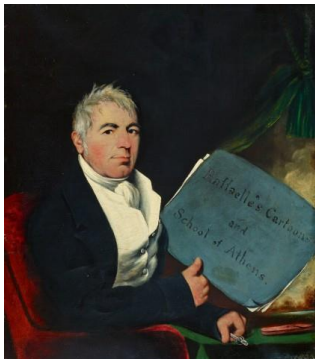
Please note that our Interest Group now has a new email address:- [CandC@gsq.org.au](mailto:CandC@gsq.org.au).

Beverley Murray.



## **BENJAMIN DUTERRAU**

**(born 1768 Britain – died 1851 Hobart, Australia)**



For some time now, I have sought out rare Australian colonial memorabilia and artefacts to place on the front page of our Chronicle. This self portrait by Hobart artist, Benjamin Duterrau, an oil on canvas, was sold at auction in Melbourne in December 2021. The painting measures 95.5 cm x 82.5 cm. It is signed with the artist's initials and the date 1835. The sale price was \$196,364! The first owners were early Hobart bakers who had acquired it as payment for a debt. It was part of a private collection when it was sold in 2001.

A slightly smaller version of the portrait was painted by the artist in 1837. It is presently in the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery, having been donated by the artist to the Hobart Town Mechanics' Institution.

Who was Benjamin Duterrau and why was his self-portrait so valuable? After reading about this gentleman and the artistic works he produced in Van Diemen's Land, I found that the art he produced there was of historical significance because he had arrived in Hobart at a time when the Governor made a decision that would be considered controversial today. His artwork recorded a troubled event in Tasmania's history. Duterrau arrived in Hobart just months after the end of the colony's Black War, and he produced fine drawings and paintings depicting "The Conciliation".

For those unaware of the Black War and the Conciliation, much can be read about these topics and the removal of the Island's aborigines to Flinders Island. Tensions arose between two aggrieved parties - between the Tasmanian Aborigines and the European settlers. Between 1824 and 1831 there were constant clashes between both parties. Indeed, from as early as 1803, the settlers had been gradually increasing their land holdings and were being met with retaliations.

As the problems escalated, there was a need for a solution. Governor Arthur decided that the best way to ensure the survival of the natives was to relocate them to a settlement. George Augustus Robinson, in 1829, was engaged as 'Protector of Aborigines' at Bruny Island and his "Friendly Mission" was tasked with persuading the aboriginal people that it would be for their own good to relocate. The intentions were considered humane in that the Governor proposed a settlement with huts, a school and a potato ground. The people would be encouraged to till the soil, adopt European habits, and learn English. Their children would be educated and would learn trades.

Robinson soon realized that he needed to know more about aboriginal culture, so he went all around the island seeking out existing tribes. He encouraged

them to come to a place where they could be fed and clothed and be safe from settlers. Robinson was unaware that a permanent settlement was not going to be on the mainland of Tasmania, but in Bass Strait on Flinders Island.

There was already a small aboriginal community on the Bass Strait island, so it may have seemed like a convenient solution. The new community would be provided with shelter, food, and clothing. Some 200 aborigines were moved to the Wybalenna settlement in 1833, but around 150 died due to exposure to European diseases. It was not until 1847 that the remaining natives were taken from the island and relocated at Oyster Cove, south of Hobart, except for ten women who remained on Flinders Island with sealers.

Artist Benjamin Duterrau arrived in Hobart in 1832 and died in 1851, so he was acutely aware of the problem and the government's proposed solution. He obviously felt compelled to portray the Aboriginal people through his drawings in pencil and oil paint, and also in etchings and plaster relief. He focused on the relationship between George Augustus Robinson, the lay preacher and Government agent who was commissioned to remove the native people to Flinders Island, and a select small group of the Tasmanian aboriginals.

Duterrau was already 65 years of age when he arrived in Hobart Town on the ship *Lang* on 17 August 1832. He was born in London and had Huguenot ancestry. His daughter travelled with him. Although apprenticed as an engraver he later studied at Oxford University. As a portrait painter he excelled.

It is quite probable that Thomas Webb Duterrau, a watchmaker who had arrived at the Swan River Colony (Perth) in 1831, was a relative. Benjamin and his daughter spent a short time at Swan River but he decided it was not a place where he could make a living with his artwork, so they continued on to Hobart. With numerous paintings brought from England Benjamin wasted no time in setting up a studio in Hobart Town to sell his art pieces and to advertise his expertise in portrait painting. Thomas Webb Duterrau also made the move to Hobart for a brief time before returning to London.

From November 1832, Benjamin was advertising that he *begs respectfully to announce to the gentry and inhabitants of Hobart town, that having arranged the paintings which he recently brought with him from London, he will be happy to exhibit them to such ladies or gentlemen as may wish to view or to purchase any of them, as well as to follow his profession of portrait painting. Campbell Street, opposite Mr. Bisdee's.*

In 1833 he produced seven paintings of Aboriginal people of Bruny Island, all of whom were associated with George Robinson. Two of these were of Trukanini (Truganini) and Woorrady. Did he use these images as publicity for his skills, or was he genuinely interested in these people? Was his main objective to highlight the problem or was it to gain notoriety as an artist and ultimately obtain commissions from the prominent and wealthy inhabitants to paint their portraits?

As he immersed himself in getting to know more about the Bruny Island people, it seems he gained a better understanding of the situation. Benjamin produced a series of engravings, plaster reliefs and portraits characterising his cast of “noble savages” to dramatise the hollow treaty struck between George Augustus Robinson and who he believed to be the last resistance fighters to oppose British rule. His artwork showed his passion in directly confronting the seriousness of the Black War.

In July 1835, Benjamin Duterrau placed an advertisement in the *Hobart Town Crier* saying that he was displaying an outline of a proposed National Picture to commemorate the benefits received by the Aborigines of Van Diemen’s Land through conciliations at the exertions of Mr G A Robinson. Viewings were at his residence at 24 Campbell Street and at the Hobart Courier Office in Collins Street



**'G.A. Robinson with a group of Van Diemen's Land natives', 1835.**

The year 1835 was a busy one for the artist. He delivered four lectures on “Sculpture and Painting” at the Hobart Town Mechanic’s Institute. His second lecture in July 1835 was based on his sketch of the proposed National Picture, *The Conciliation*, to be 14 feet long and 10 feet high. There were etchings of six of his Aboriginal subjects.

While Benjamin worked on his oil painting of *The Reconciliation* he advertised in August 1836, in the *True Colonist Van Diemen’s Land Political Despatch*, the sale of Bas-relief Heads “the size of life”. They were –

- 1 Mr Robinson, in his bush dress
- 2 Manalargorna, the Chief
- 3 Tanlurbouger, wife of the Chief
- 4 Wooredy, a native of Brune Island
- 5 Trugernena, wife of Wooredy

The rest were named of Aborigines of various expressions of some particular passions –

- 6 Credulity
- 7 Anger
- 8 Surprise
- 9 Suspicion
- 10 Cheerfulness
- 11 Incredulity

12      *Attention*

13      *The manner of straightening a spear*

*Plaster of Paris Casts of the above on tablets 13 inches by 10 may be seen at Mr Duterrau's, 24 Campbell Street, Hobart Town. Price: 30 shillings each Cast, in a cedar frame.*

The treaty with the Aborigines to resettle them at Bruny was discarded by the Governor once he had them under his control. Robinson became the tragic hero in the whole saga. Truganini witnessed the entire drama. She was an idealistic young woman who desperately wanted to see an end to the killing of her people, and supported Robinson's attempts. She was left dismayed when they were all sent to Flinders Island and so many died.

It was also in 1835 that Benjamin's self-portrait was completed. It was titled *School of Athens*. It depicts the artist holding a folder of engravings of a famous painting called *School of Athens* by the Italian Renaissance artist Raphael between 1509 and 1511.

In 1849, Duterrau explained that he had spent years at Oxford University studying the original *School of Athens* painting where Plato and Aristotle were surrounded by philosophers, past and present, in a splendid architectural setting. He likened it to the School of Hobart Town (The Mechanics' Institution) which had



been established to 'disseminate useful knowledge'.

The artist's fascination with Raphael shows that the painting of *The Conciliation* reflects a similar sentiment. Where Raphael alludes to the Apostles as founders of the Christian church, Duterrau depicts a scene where the war is brought to an end with pious authority. His oil painting was completed in 1840.

*The Conciliation.*

[Oil on canvas, 121.0 x 170.5 cm; Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery, Hobart]

When Benjamin Duterrau died on 11 July 1851 in Hobart Town he was described as a "*highly talented artist, and much respected*". The 14ft long National Picture, although supposedly completed, has never been found. It may have been rolled up thus making it more difficult to locate, or more easily damaged.

#### **Sources:**

<https://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/piguenit-william-charles-4400>

<https://www.daa0.org.au/bio/benjamin-duterrau/biography/>

<https://theconversation.com/coming-to-terms-with-tasmanias-forgotten-war-11333>

<https://www.portrait.gov.au/magazines/57/the-art-of-conciliation>

<https://www.deutscherandhackett.com/auction/lot/self-portrait-1835>

## **BRITAIN'S PENAL SETTLEMENT IN WEST AFRICA**

British convicts had been transported to Virginia before America refused to take them after the American Revolution and the Declaration of Independence in 1776. With judges in Britain still sentencing prisoners to transportation beyond the seas, there was nowhere to send them. Overcrowding in the gaols and on the hulks became a real problem. It was decided that the slave forts on West Africa's Gold Coast would be a solution. The forts were owned by the Company of Merchants Trading to Africa, and they objected to the plan. They feared for the security of the forts if thieves and worse were transported. A convict element would also compromise their slaving enterprise. They believed, as Europeans, that the slaves showed them due respect, and they were not keen for criminals to stain that status.

The government countered the Company's fears by sending the 101st and the 102nd Independent Companies of Foot to guard the transported men. However, these two Companies were made up mostly of men who had been apprehended for crimes but were coerced into joining the naval and armed services instead of facing sentences. So, there was a situation where thieves and murderers were the ones overseeing those transported.

There were many slave forts along the Gold Coast and European ownership over the years had changed due to the spoils of war. Originally built as trade centres for timber and gold, it was the slave trade which evolved as a most profitable trade. Enslaved Africans were held in the forts until they were loaded on ships and sold in the Americas and the Caribbean. Large underground dungeons were built, and they held up to a thousand slaves at a time. The dungeons gave rise to them being referred to as castles.

George Katenkamp and Kenneth Mackenzie were appointed to take charge of the new penal settlement. They did not know that they were going to Cape Coast Castle, West Africa, until days before they set sail in June 1771. Such a posting was not looked on favourably by regimental leaders.

The intense humidity and insufferable heat made West Africa a feared place to be sent. It was referred to as a "white man's grave" such were the resultant deaths. Tropical diseases were prevalent. Racial conflict existed against the native tribes. In all, under a thousand convicts were sent to this West African trading post.

It was only six months after their arrival at Cape Coast Castle that George Katenkamp died, and 21 year old Lieutenant George Cranstoun was named as his replacement. A few miles away from the British encampment was the Dutch slave fort of Elmina. When the regiments, made up of the convict soldiers, were ordered to attack the Dutch fort, the inexperience of the troops was no match for them. Cranstoun was injured in the melee. Kenneth Mackenzie was left in control, but he proved to be a totally ineffective leader.

Cranstoun's men frequently mutinied against him. Mackenzie found it difficult to command the troops who were unwilling participants in any case. He

was often cruel to his men. Many deserted. When found, the deserters were confined to small prisons called “slave holes”. Mackenzie was also reported as having placed some of his men under the cruel command of one of the convicts named William Murray whose aliases included William Mackenzie and Kenerth McKenzie. (He may have been related to the officer.)

Personal greed was Mackenzie’s motivation. He was disappointed with his posting and his poor pay. He devised schemes to make money. One example was to use slaves to cultivate the same crops produced in the British Caribbean. To cultivate sugar or cotton in West Africa would eliminate the need to ship slaves to the more distant Caribbean. The schemes were looked upon as a threat to the foundation of the British Company in Africa. His fall from grace occurred when he accused William Murray of organizing a mutiny and sentenced him to death without a trial. On Mackenzie’s orders Murray was tied to a cannon muzzle, and Mackenzie forced a convict to fire the cannon. It was Mackenzie who was then convicted of “wilful murder” in 1784 and sentenced to death. He was subsequently pardoned in 1785. The Regiments were disbanded, and the convict-soldiers were retained as indentured servants to the Company.

After Mackenzie’s departure, Maryland, Honduras Bay, the Mosquito Shore, and southwestern Africa were all given consideration as new places to send convicted felons, but they were not viable. In 1783, New South Wales re-emerged as a possibility, and if that failed, another African site was to have been considered.

McCarthy Island had been acquired when the Treaty of Versailles in 1783 gave Britain exclusive rights to territories on the River Gambia. With the intention of using the island solely as a penal settlement, it was purchased by the government in 1785. This small island was situated some 320 kilometres upstream!

An advance mission was sent to see if the island was suitable for the purpose but returned with negative reports. It was situated in a hostile environment, was rife with mosquitoes, and was considered unhealthy to sustain large numbers of convicts when there would surely be a high mortality rate.

The island became instead an important trading centre and would become an experimental resettlement site for liberated slaves.

Although New South Wales was further away, and despite the isolation and problems in the early years, it was a much better alternative for a penal colony and settlement.

Luckily more thought and planning had to be given to the sailing of the First Fleet and to the choice of the people who were put in charge. I am glad my convict ancestors were sent to Australia and not to West Africa.

## **Sources:**

[www.h-net.org/reviews/showpdf.php?id=41580](http://www.h-net.org/reviews/showpdf.php?id=41580)

<https://thehistorybucket.blogspot.com/search/label/Convicts%20in%20West%20Africa>

## WHAT WERE THE SWING RIOTS?



***£50 Reward. Whereas, on Saturday last, Letters signed “SWING” were sent to Mr Hawkins and Mr D Symes, Esquires of Axmouth, threatening to destroy their premises by FIRE! Whosoever will give the information leading to the discovery and conviction of the writer, shall receive a reward of 50 POUNDS. All communications to be addressed to the Church Wardens and Overseers of Axmouth.***

Who signed the said letters with the name “Swing”? Why was there a £50 reward to disclose the writer of the letters that were sent to Mr Hawkins and Mr Symes? These were farmers of Axmouth, and it was they who were threatened with intended arson of their premises.

Such letters to farmers were prevalent in County Sussex in 1830. They were sometimes signed by “Captain Swing”. Of course, there was no such person. He was merely a mythical figure. The letters are a tangible reminder of a period in English history known as the Swing Riots. This also becomes part of our Australian history as men involved in these riots were convicted and transported to our shores.

The Industrial Revolution saw the introduction of machinery into the factories. These machines caused unemployment and poverty. It was no different in the rural areas of eastern and southern England. Farm machinery also took away jobs from agricultural labourers. During the Napoleonic Wars, however, there was an increased demand for food, and labour was in short supply, so the civil unrest of the farm workers was dampened somewhat during that time. Between 1803 and 1815, a fair wage could be earned. When the soldiers returned from the war, there was more competition for employment. The farmers also began to suffer when the prices of grain plummeted. A glut of workers seeking jobs resulted in a decrease in wages, and unemployment increased.

In 1830, millions of acres of common land were enclosed so that the poor no longer had access to the land to graze their cattle and grow crops. Such land had been freely available since 1770. With their rights to use the common land removed, the peasants soon became destitute. The common land was divided up and given to the larger landowners. Wages now earned by the farm labourers were used to pay the farmers for the food they used to grow themselves on the common ground.

There were other factors leading to the discontent of 1830 and the “Swing Riots”. In the 1780s, towns had ‘hiring fairs’ whereby agricultural labourers could obtain one-year contracts from farmers and landowners. This offered security to both parties. However, when there were poor harvests, shorter contracts were offered – sometimes for just a week or a month. Naturally this caused a great deal of uncertainty and distress.

By 1830, the suffering of the agricultural poor manifested in riots. Threshing machines often became the target of crimes. Haystacks and barns were burnt. Captain Swing was a name adopted to represent the anger of the protestors. The men were advocating for fairer wages, contracted labour and no use of machinery. Threatening letters first appeared in West Sussex and Kent and soon spread to the counties of Hampshire and Wiltshire.

The courts dealt harshly with the rioters. Thomas Goodman was a “Swing Rioter” who was sentenced to death. On the night of 2 December 1830, he was seen in the vicinity of Yew Tree Farm at Battle. He was tried at the Lewes Assizes on 21 December and found guilty of setting fire to the barn of Robert Watts. His footprints were found between the burning barn and his lodgings. He was sentenced to death by hanging, but it was commuted to transportation for life. He arrived in Van Diemen’s Land in 1833.

Edmund Bushby, accused of setting fire to a stack of wheat, was sentenced to death when tried at the same Assizes, and both were sent to prison to await execution. A petition was organised to delay Bushby’s hanging, but it was to no avail. Possibly the reason for Goodman’s good fortune was that he had confessed to the involvement of William Cobbett:- *‘I, Thomas Goodman, never should af thought of douing aney sutch thing if Mr Cobbet Cobet had never given aney lectures i believe that their never would bean any fires nor mob in Battle nor maney other places if he never had given aney lectures at all.’*

William Cobbett was a member of parliament who campaigned about the appalling conditions of the agricultural workers. He travelled around England advocating for reform. He was also a farmer, a pamphleteer and a journalist. He was an educated man and an avid lecturer. He stirred the emotions of those living in poverty, but they wanted a quicker and more radical change to occur. Cobbett tried to distance himself from Goodman’s confession.

When the riots spread to Sussex, many blamed Cobbett for inciting the labourers. A total of 52 Sussex men were tried. Of these, 18 were acquitted, 16 sent to prison and 17 transported to Van Diemen’s Land. Three were hanged.

### Sources:

<https://sussexhistoryforum.co.uk/index.php?topic=19901.0>

<http://www.djbryant.co.uk/westbourne-yesteryear/swing-riots.html>

<https://www.hampshire-history.com/the-swing-riots/>



## CONVICT WILLIAM HAYLOR

David Mills of England is interested in the fate of William Haylor who was transported to NSW in 1830 on the ship *Lady Feversham*. Although William may not be regarded as a “swing rioter” he was from Pulborough in Sussex, a county which was hugely affected by the conditions leading up to the riots. His occupation was given in the convict records as that of gardener. It was his third conviction that led to him being transported, even though a prior conviction had resulted in a sentence of transportation.

It appeared to me that William’s age had been recorded on the Convict Indents as 62 years. However, David was able to provide the register entry showing that he was baptized at Pulborough on 16 January 1791. The age on the Indents may in fact be 42. I had been concerned about what work a 62 year old man may have be expected to do as an assigned convict, so was pleased to learn he was younger. Before looking at where and to whom William was assigned once he arrived in Sydney, let’s look at why he was convicted three times.

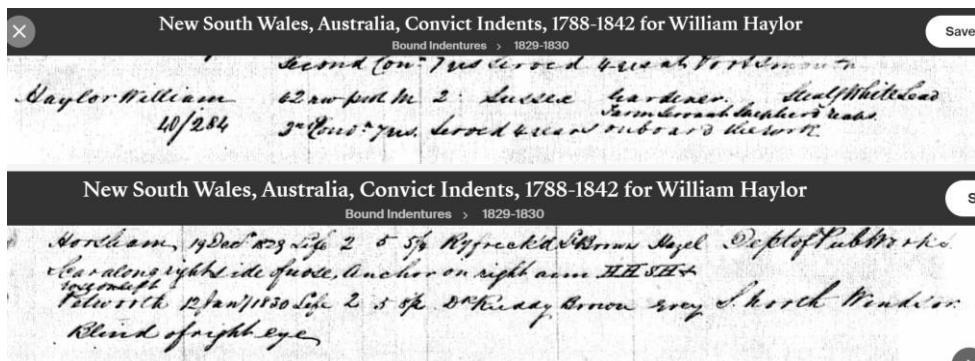
In July 1817, at around age 26, he was sentenced to transportation for seven years when convicted of larceny. It seems that he stole a thermometer and some broccoli from the Vicar’s house in Pulborough. As he was not transported, he would have served time on a hulk. According to the records he had married in 1814, and a daughter was born in 1816, but sadly died in 1818.

William’s second conviction in 1829 was for stealing wheat. The *Sussex Advertiser*, on 24 August 1829, reported that at the Summer Assizes William Hayler and another were convicted of stealing seven bushels of wheat from a windmill at Wadhurst. They were each sentenced to transportation for fourteen years. Once again, he was not transported. He was sent to the hulk *Captivity* at Portsmouth.

The third offence in 1830 did in fact see him transported for life when he was sentenced at Petworth. The Convict Indents show the information which was gleaned at an on-board muster when the *Lady Feversham* arrived in Sydney. The details recorded were based on individual questioning of the convicts, although some data would have been taken from hulk or gaol lists. The reason for recording descriptions of the convicts was to keep track of them in the colony in case they absconded.

The ship had arrived in Sydney on Thursday, 29 July 1830 after leaving Portsmouth on 8th April 1830. The prisoners were mustered on board on 31st July 1830 by the Colonial Secretary, Alexander McLeay. On the morning of 10 August, the men were landed. The *Sydney Monitor* reported that *they appeared fine active stout men, and the greater part were distributed to various applicants*.

It seems not all were fine stout men as the youngest prisoner on board was Martin McCarthy who was 14 years old. He was sent to Carters Barracks on arrival. Eleven young lads aged 15 to 17 years of age were also sent to the Carters Barracks.



<https://convictrecords.com.au/convicts/haylor/william/72043>

We see by the columns from the Convict Indents (added here in two parts for legibility) that William was 42 (?) years old when he was transported on the *Lady Feversham*. He could read and write. He was Protestant. He was married and had 2 children. His native place was Sussex, and he was a gardener. Farm servant and shepherd had been added. He was convicted of stealing White Lead.

The next line in the first image shows he was granted a Ticket of Leave in 1840 – 40/284. It also indicates that a previous sentence was for 7 years and that he spent four years on the hulk *York*.

Moving to the second image, we find that he was tried at Horsham on 19 December 1829, and he was sentenced to life. His previous convictions were listed as two. The description was: height – 5'5½"; ruddy freckled complexion; light brown hair and hazel eyes. The last column is headed "How disposed of" and the notation is "Department of Public Works".

The next line tells us that he had a scar along the right side of his nose, an anchor on his right arm and the initials HH and SH and a rose on the left arm.

The third conviction shows that he was tried at Petworth on 12 January 1830 and received a life sentence. Two prior convictions are noted. His physical description was given as being 5'5½" tall. His complexion was dark and ruddy. His hair was brown, and his eyes were grey. He was also blind in the right eye. He was assigned to S. North at Windsor.

What was the offence that led to a sentence of transportation? It was *Stealing White Lead*. He "stole a firkin of white lead and oil from his employer Francis Jarrett".

A firkin is a measurement which indicates one quarter. The British firkin refers to a quarter of a barrel, and that equates to 41 litres of liquid. White Lead was mostly used by artists, and it was rather toxic. It was also used in cosmetics.

Had he intended to use the white lead himself and for what purpose, or did he intend selling it?

As a result of his misdemeanors William was leaving a wife and two children to survive as best they could, no doubt with help from the local parish.

On his arrival in Sydney, William was assigned to Mr Samuel North of Windsor, and his Ticket of Leave dated 1840 allowed him to remain in the District of Windsor.

Irish-born Samuel North had arrived in New South Wales in 1826 as a Lieutenant in the 102<sup>nd</sup> Regiment, but the following year he entered the civil service as the Superintendent of bonded warehouses. Another description of his job was “Bonded Storekeeper in the Customs earning £400 per annum”. When William Haylor arrived in 1830, Samuel North had, since 1829, been the Police Magistrate for Windsor. This was a position he held until 1844 when he then accepted the position of Police Magistrate at Berrima.

From newspaper articles it seems that Samuel North Esquire was an “*active and humane Police Magistrate*”. His position at Windsor offered him the same pay as he had previously been earning - plus a house. When he left office in 1844, he organised a public auction to sell the following goods in October – several horses and mares; milking cattle; a wagon, drays and carts; a water truck; farming utensils; a harness; a quantity of good hay; about 300 bushels of maize; a quantity of household furniture; and several other articles too numerous to list.

The *NSW Government Gazette* advertised in December 1844 that it was offering the “Government Cottage at Windsor, recently occupied by Mr North, for lease for a three year term. The premises consisted of a cottage, stabling and other out-buildings, with a paddock and garden fronting the Hawkesbury River.

Interestingly, in April 1844, Samuel North offered a reward for the recovery of a mare and filly which were stolen from his paddock at North Richmond. This may have been the paddock fronting the River.

Was William a gardener, a farm servant or a shepherd when he was assigned to Mr North? Did he perhaps continue to work for him until the Magistrate was transferred to Berrima?

In *The Early Days of Windsor* written by James Steele in 1916 (which can be read on-line <https://gutenberg.net.au/ebooks13/1302241h.html>) we find that the Government Cottage was on rising ground with a view of the river from the rear of the premises. In Governor Macquarie’s report in 1822, a new coach house and stables had been added. There was also reference to Samuel North residing there from 1829 to 1843 and that he also lived at “Northfield” at Kurrajong Heights.

When North died his obituary in 1864 stated that *as a magistrate he added the courtesy and character of a thorough gentleman— qualities that gained for him among our citizens both respect and personal esteem.*

William Haylor would have been around 50 years of age when he received his Ticket of Leave in 1840.

It was another seven years before he was granted a Conditional Pardon [No.47/643] dated 30 July 1847. Recommendations for his pardon were given the previous year by Justices of the Peace William Cox, R Fitzgerald and L D Whitaker; and a man named Thomas Cadell junior.



Had William been working for Thomas Cadell after Samuel North had left Windsor? Cadell had arrived in Sydney in 1832 and resided there until around 1845 when he moved to Windsor and established his brewing business. He died at Windsor in 1857.

From 1848, William was a free man. How did he earn a living? A death entry in the NSW Registry suggests that William Hayler died at Windsor in 1862 and was 76 years old. This would indicate a birth year of 1786 (not 1791) but seems to be the correct William.

A letter to the editor in the *Sydney Morning Herald* dated 1 March 1858 tells of the plight of an elderly gentleman named Hayler who was “upwards of seventy years in age”.

*Sir- As act of oppression, arising out of the late election for the Cumberland Boroughs, has been perpetrated here on a poor defenceless old man, which I think, on public grounds, ought to be made known, and, as it is not very fashionable to espouse the cause of the poor and influential, I will take it upon myself to set forth his wrong. The victim, whose name is Hayler, is not one who would shine in the character of a martyr, but of my own knowledge I can testify that he has been a hardworking man, and I believe obtained his livelihood honestly by his vocation as a market gardener. Hayler is upwards of seventy years old, without means, without relatives, and without education.*

*Some ten years ago, he rented of a person named Freeman, about an acre of land within this borough, which he cultivated as a garden, and upon which was a small tenement, in which he dwelt. He appears never to have had any misunderstanding with his landlord till the day before the poll at the last election, when he was informed that unless he voted for Mr. Dalley, he should be ejected. In spite of this notification from Freeman, Hayler chose to vote for Mr. Redman, which I presume no one will dispute his right to do, and has in consequence been ejected, and his home, which does not appear to have been his castle, has been occupied by another tenant. Leaving this fact for the consideration of those opposed to vote by ballot.*

*I remain yours, etc,*

*J. COPE.*

*Windsor, February 23.*

Mr Cope and Mr Freeman were political opponents, so this letter was no doubt politically motivated to cast Freeman in a poor light. With that in mind, you have to wonder if Cope actually knew the elderly gent, or was he using the case to cast Freeman in a bad light?

The fact that Hayler began renting some ten years earlier would fit with the granting of his Conditional Pardon. Being ejected from his acre of land over a voting issue seems very harsh, so maybe there was more to this story. Where was he to go if he was indeed ejected from the property?

In 1834 an acre of land had been set aside in the town of Windsor for the Hawkesbury Benevolent Society to build a two-storey home to accommodate the aged and the destitute. It was completed in 1836 and known as a Home for the Infirm. In 1846 the Society was given the old convict hospital in Macquarie Street, Windsor, and aged inmates were transferred to the Asylum wards on the ground floor of the hospital. This may have been where William spent his last years.

TICKET OF LEAVE.	
No.	44/24 25th January 1840
Prisoner's No.	35/1225
Name	William Hayler
Ship	Lady Swanton
Master	E. Hayler
Vessel	1830
Native Place	
Trade or Calling	
Officer	
Place of Trial	James R. S.
Date of Trial	12 Aug 1830
Sentence	4
Year of Birth	
Height	
Complexion	
Hair	
Eyes	
General Remarks	
<p>Allowed to remain in the District of Windsor  On recommendation of _____ Bench.  Dated 10th 1839</p>	

## Sources:

<https://gutenberg.net.au/ebooks13/1302241h.html> Title: Early Days of Windsor

Author: James Steele 1916 - A Project Gutenberg Australia eBook.

[https://www.records.nsw.gov.au/searchhits\\_nocopy?id=65&Surname=Hayler&Firstname=william&Alias=&Vessel=&Year=&RecordType=&Citation=&Remarks=](https://www.records.nsw.gov.au/searchhits_nocopy?id=65&Surname=Hayler&Firstname=william&Alias=&Vessel=&Year=&RecordType=&Citation=&Remarks=)

<https://convictrecords.com.au/convicts/hayler/william/72043>

trove newspapers

## MATTHEW FLINDERS – A PRISONER IN MAURITIUS

Explorer Matthew Flinders was on his way back to England from New South Wales when his ship was urgently in need of repairs. He stopped at what was then the French occupied Ile de France in December 1803 hoping he could repair the vessel and continue his journey home. He did not know that France and England were at war. As a result, Flinders spent six and a half years on the island as a prisoner.



In July of this year, Lyn and I went to Ile de France, now Ile Maurice or Mauritius. We saw the monument erected in memory of Matthew Flinders on the south-west coast of the island where Flinders first came ashore. It was situated a long way from the island's main harbour and town of Port Louis - to where he was promptly taken. The monument was unveiled in 2003 to honour the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the arrival of Flinders at Baie du Cap.

Matthew Flinders was born in Lincolnshire in 1774. His father was a surgeon, and he received a good education. In 1789 he joined the navy, and he served under William Bligh as a midshipman on a voyage to Tahiti in 1791. He sailed to Port Jackson on the *HMS Reliance* in 1795. George Bass was the surgeon on that ship. On arrival Flinders and Bass explored Botany Bay and the George's River in small open boats. They briefly visited Norfolk Island and also ventured down to Lake Illawarra. Flinders rejoined the *Reliance* for a journey to the Cape of Good Hope to obtain livestock for the colony. Promoted to Lieutenant, he joined the schooner *Francis* in 1798 and sailed to Van Diemen's Land to engage in hydrographic work. After another trip to Norfolk Island, he and Bass circumnavigated Van Diemen's Land in the *Norfolk* and proved it was an island.

In March 1800 Flinders joined the *Reliance* again and was homeward bound where his reputation and capabilities as a naval officer had already reached England. The following year he published his book titled *Observations on the Coasts of Van Diemen's Land, on Bass's Strait and its Islands, and on Part of the Coasts of New South Wales*,

This watercolour on ivory miniature painting is held by the Mitchell Library in Sydney. It is thought to have been painted around 1800. The artist is unknown.

Flinders was promoted to Commander of the *HMS Investigator* in February 1801, and he married Ann Chappell in Lincolnshire in April. With the Admiralty having planned for him leave almost immediately to map the southern coastline of mainland Australia, it was decided that Ann



should accompany him. Her presence on board was discovered and Flinders had to leave her at Portsmouth so that he could continue his mission. His new bride returned to Lincolnshire to await his return. However, after the years spent in exploration, followed by more than six years spent as a prisoner of the French in Mauritius, it would be some nine years before they would be reunited.

The *Investigator* duly arrived in Sydney and Flinders began charting new territory as he circumnavigated Australia. There were hardships along the way. In the Gulf of Carpentaria, the boat began leaking badly but he managed to temporarily patch it and sail skillfully through the Strait to Timor. He did not actually follow the coastline down the west coast but went further out to sea. It was the Unknown Coast, the southern coastline, that the English, and the French, needed to explore to complete the navigation of the mainland. As it happened, both parties met at what was named Encounter Bay because Flinders was sailing west to east, and the French under Captain Baudin, were sailing east to west.

With the mission completed, Governor King was anxious for Flinders to quickly return to England and complete his map. He arranged for him to be a passenger on the *HMS Porpoise*. When the ship was wrecked on the Great Barrier Reef, Flinders and some of the crew had to row and sail in a small boat back to Port Jackson (a distance of 1127 kms) to raise the alarm that one hundred people were stranded on the reef. King then made the *Cumberland*, a Sydney-built schooner, available to Flinders. It was only 20 metres long. He sailed with a dozen crew via the Torres Strait, but the vessel was to prove unfit for such a voyage and it required constant pumping to stay afloat. It seems that Governor King had advised Flinders not to stop at Mauritius, but he needed repairs, and he was short of food and water. So it was that on 15 December 1803, the *Cumberland* anchored off the Baie du Cap.

The twelve crew members were initially kept on board the ship under prison guard while Flinders was taken to Port Louis to see the Governor, General De Caen.

Did the Governor of Ile de France have reasons to keep Captain Flinders captive on the island? The vessel he was sailing back to England was never built for such a journey. The scientific passport Flinders carried would have been suspicious to the French as it named him as Captain of a different ship, the *Investigator*. To the French these men were sailing in a ship called the *Cumberland* which had not been built for the purpose of scientific exploration, and it did not look as though it was in any condition to sail long distances. The Governor of Mauritius thus had concerns that Flinders was a British spy.

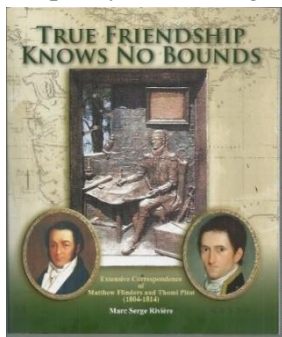
Could there have perhaps been another reason to keep him captive? The *Géographe* and the *Casuarina*, the ships of the French expedition under Captain Baudin, had already arrived in the Ile de France so the Governor probably would have been aware of their accomplishment in completing the charting of the Unknown Coast. Baudin had died while at Ile de France, and the *Géographe* left

Port Louis the day after the arrival of Flinders in the south of the island. The accompanying ship, *Casuarina*, and her crew remained in port.

It takes years to draw up a map from the copious number of pages of log books, and if the Governor had suspected that Flinders was the English Captain with the same chartered evidence of the Unknown Coast then perhaps he detained him so that the French could have time to produce the first map. [And they did!]

The crew members of the *Cumberland* were gradually released over time, but Flinders was still a young man, and his lengthy incarceration was to affect his health and rob him of years of further exploration.

Flinders kept a diary during the time of his stay on the Island. As a naval man it would have been second nature for him to write a daily log. His written works have survived, and they tell us more about the man who was first to call our country Australia. Extensive records relating to Flinders and his exploits can be found on the National Library of Australia website's digitized copies of the AJCP Admiralty documents and letters. His time on the Ile de France has also been documented as he spent years writing a book in the years following his release.



Another book of interest is that by Professor Serge Rivière, who published *True Friendship Knows No Bound* in November 2023. Born in Mauritius, and then having studied overseas, the Professor returned to the Island in 2008 and wrote about the extensive correspondence between Matthew Flinders and Thomi Pitot from 1804 to 1814. The letters show what it was like living in Mauritius during that time from two points of view – that of two men with opposing political and military ideas who were able to create a true friendship.

The correspondence with Pitot continued after Flinders returned to England. The letters were not written with publication in mind, so they reveal comments and observations on the part of both men – one a patriotic citizen of the Island and the other who had spent years as a prisoner of the French until June 1810.

General De Caen had placed Flinders under arrest Port Louis until August 1805, first at Café Marengo and then at Maison Despaux. He was not completely confined as he was able to visit the theatre, attend military parades and dine with the local French inhabitants.

Captain Bergeret was the naval officer in charge of prisoners, and it was he who was instrumental in recommending that Flinders be paroled onto a country estate at La Marie which is situated in the centre of the island. Flinders had also formed the friendship with Thomi Pitot who would become the leader of the white population in 1817 during British occupation.



The estate to which Flinders was moved was owned by a respectable French widow, Madame D'Arifat. Flinders became fluent in French and was treated well by the local people. He explored the island and would visit the nearby ruined residence of the French navigator, La Perouse.

In early 1807 he wrote his *Biographical Tribute to the Memory of Trim*. Trim was the cat who had accompanied him on his explorations and disappeared mysteriously – believed by Flinders to have ended up in a cooking pot. The essay was an exercise in which he could practice writing in French. It was at this time that he began teaching Madame's daughters to speak English and taught her sons mathematics and navigation.

Bergeret and Pitot often visited him. Much of his time was spent writing a memoir on his imprisonment. Always scientifically curious, he recorded climatic conditions and described geographic locations. He borrowed books from his growing circle of friends. He sent botanist Joseph Banks a paper on the Marine Barometer which was read before the Royal Society in 1806. In 1808, he worked on the effect of magnetism on a ship's compass.



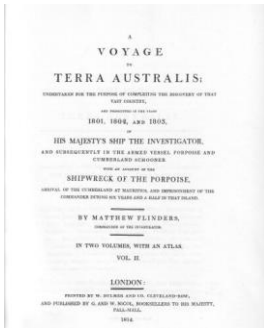
This portrait of Flinders was painted by artist Toussaint Antoine de Chazal around 1806/1807 while he was at the country estate. Antoine was a local farmer who had acquired his painting skills in Paris. [It is now in the possession of the Art Gallery of South Australia, having been purchased in 2000.]

Numerous attempts were made by his friends and the English to secure his release. Napoleon did actually approve his release in March 1806, but De Caen refused to follow the order. Flinders wrote - *I have been so often flattered with similar hopes and so often deceived, that I am almost become callous to prospects of being set at liberty.* It was not until 14 June 1810

that Flinders left Mauritius.

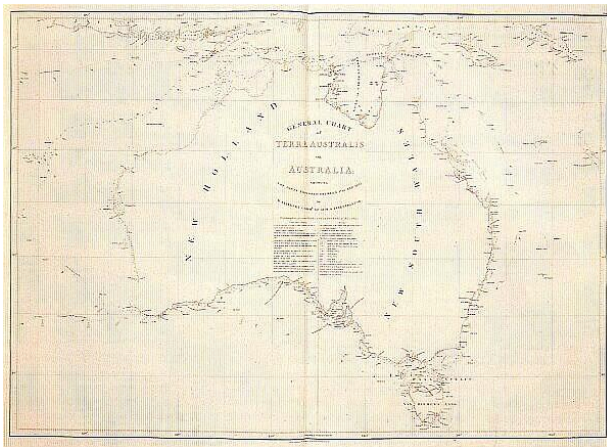
He later wrote - *On bidding adieu to Mauritius, it is but justice to declare that during my long residence in the island, as a marked object of suspicion to the government, the kind attention of the inhabitants who could have access to me was invariable; never, in any place, or amongst any people, have I seen more hospitality and attention to strangers – more sensibility to the misfortunes of others, of whatever nation, than here – than I have myself experienced in Mauritius.*”

He was finally reunited with his wife. A daughter, Ann, was born in 1812. His health had deteriorated, and he struggled financially. He worked diligently on his book, *A Voyage to Terra Australis*. On 18 July 1814, his story of navigation and



discovery, through devotion, tragedy and determination was published in two volumes – the day before he died. He was just 40 years of age. The book is available to read online at <https://gutenberg.net.au/ebooks/e00050.html>

After Captain Baudin had died, the drawing of a map of Australia by the French was left to Freycinet and, incredibly, none had been released while Flinders was held captive. Flinders completed his map not long before his death in 1814, but Freycinet managed to produce one two and a half years earlier.



This map was published in 1814. It did NOT appear in *A Voyage to Terra Australis*.

## Sources:

<https://biblio.com.au/book/true-friendship-knows-bounds-extensive-correspondence/d/1575309465>

<http://www.mauritiustimes.com/mt/how-can-our-youths-not-know-who-the-great-men-were/>

[Mauritius Times](#) November 24, 2023

<https://mautourco.com/fascinating-facts-in-history-of-mauritius-mathew-flinders/>

<https://globalmaritimehistory.com/matthew-flinders-private-journal-private-journey/>

<https://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/flinders-matthew-2050>

<https://nla.gov.au> Series ADM 1. Admiralty and Secretariat Papers, 1801 – 1812  
AJCP digitised

<https://www.gresham.ac.uk/watch-now/discovering-australia-legend-and-reality-navigator-explorer> [a You Tube video with a presentation by David Hill]

## More about the portrait by Toussaint Antoine de Chazal.



This painting, the only known life-size portrait of Matthew Flinders painted from life, was previously owned by billionaire businessman Alan Bond. It was purchased by the Art Gallery of South Australia, with a private donation and assistance from the State Government, in 2000 for \$780,000.

Alan Bond had purchased it in 1987 at an auction in Melbourne. The painting then vanished in mysterious circumstances in 1989 when Bond's corporate empire collapsed.

For some years it was not known where the painting was located until it was discovered in a packing crate in a London security warehouse. It was wrapped in a blanket and had been illegally flown out of Australia to Switzerland strapped to the floor of one of the Bond corporate jets in December 1989.

The paper trail leading to the discovery of the painting was uncovered by a court-appointed liquidator of Bond's companies. He spent years untangling the web of assets.



Another painting of interest held by Bond was a portrait of James Cook by John Webber who sailed with Cook on his third voyage. It too was found in Switzerland.

Webber made some 200 drawings and watercolours, many of which appeared in his three-volume account of the journey which was published in 1784. There were at least four portraits of Cook, including the one purchased by Bond, which was painted from memory in London three years after Cook had died in Hawaii in 1779.

This historic painting was purchased in 2000 by the Commonwealth Government and generous donations. It is displayed in the National Portrait Gallery in Canberra.

It is interesting that the artist depicts him wearing the glove he customarily wore. It concealed the scars Cook sustained in North America in 1764 when a horn of powder he was holding exploded.

### Sources:

<https://www.adelaidenow.com.au/entertainment/arts/portrait-of-matthew-flinders-back-on-display-at-art-gallery-of-sa-after-explorers-remains-found/news-st>  
<https://www.aasd.com.au/news/540-alan-bonds-gift-to-contemporary-art/>

## **JOHNNY CASSIM – A CONVICT FROM MAURITIUS**

I had long been aware of the name Johnny Cassim. I grew up in the Redlands area south of Brisbane and was familiar with the Cleveland Grand View Hotel and what we referred to as ‘Cassim’s Folly’. The Grand View was originally built as a guest house overlooking the bay, and it was managed by Johnny and his wife. Johnny also built the first Cleveland Hotel on that same corner of the road which led down to the Court House and Cleveland Point. For a time, the train terminated near his establishments, but that part of Cleveland never did develop as the planned port for Moreton Bay.

It was not until 1988, the bicentennial year, that many publications (books and newspaper articles) emerged about the history of the area. I became aware then that Johnny had been sent to Brisbane as a convict from Mauritius. I learned that it was not he who built the Grand View. It was built by a Member of the Legislative Assembly, Mr Frances Bigge around 1852, and he called it Cleveland House. He also built the Old Courthouse in 1853. Bigge was intent on seeing Cleveland become the capital of Queensland. When that did not occur, Cleveland House was left unoccupied until Johnny and Mary Cassim operated it as a boarding house from 1855 to 1860. Apparently at the time it was known as ‘Bigge’s Folly’ and not ‘Cassim’s Folly’ as I had thought.

With my visit to Mauritius looming last July, I decided to have a closer look at Johnny Cassim’s life so that I could get a better understanding of the place he had left as a convicted felon. I found our tour guide in Mauritius was reluctant to speak about the history of the Island. Slavery under French and English rule was briefly mentioned – but nothing about transported convicts. I doubt that the guide even knew that convicts were sent to Australia from Mauritius. The history of the Island is not a focus in their education curriculum.

Once the British abolished slavery in 1835, indentured labourers, mostly from India, began to arrive. Other labourers were from various parts of Africa and Asia. With most of these new arrivals having Hindu and Muslim backgrounds, there was a change in the type of society that developed.

It is thanks to dedicated researchers who found convict records relating to Johnny Cassim/Cassin/Cassia who was born in Calcutta around 1820. He was convicted in Mauritius in 1839 and was transported to Van Diemen’s Land for seven years.

Clare Anderson worked in the National Archives of Mauritius as a PhD student in 1994. Her research can be found on-line. She already had a list of convict names supplied to her by her former PhD supervisor who had searched the convict indents and records of Van Diemen’s Land. Clare was asked to search the Mauritius records to see if any further information could be gleaned. She discovered that nearly 1,500 convicts were actually sent to Mauritius from India by the East India Company between 1825 and 1837. In fact, the Indian penal settlement on the Island

was used until 1853. However, in comparison to the number of indentured labourers brought in from India and China after the abolition of slavery, the number of convicts was not overly large. They were first put to work on sugar plantations alongside slaves, and then on bridge and road construction.

When Johnny Cassim was tried at the Port Louis Assizes, he was in the service of a merchant named Arbuthnot. It is possible that he had arrived in Mauritius not as a convict or an indentured worker, but privately as a servant. He and a man named Ruffee were arrested in August 1839 for stealing a quantity of silverware from Arbuthnot. Ruffee was described as being an ex-convict who was transported to Mauritius in 1828. There was no such record attached to Cassim's name. The trial revealed that Cassim had stolen the silverware and given it to Ruffee to sell. While Cassim was found guilty and sentenced to transportation for seven years, Ruffee was sentenced to seven years hard labour on the Island.

Cassim was sent to Van Diemen's Land on board the *Waterwitch*, but almost immediately was transferred to Sydney in a general transfer of African and Asian convicts who could not physically bear the cold weather. From Hyde Park Barracks in Sydney, Cassim was taken to the Moreton Bay Penal Settlement, arriving in April 1840. At this time the settlement was being wound down and he was sent to Limestone Hills (Ipswich) where he was one of 59 convicts looking after the Government's livestock.

From the convict records we know the following from the indents –

Age:	20
Read/Write	neither
Religion:	Musselman [Muslim]
Status:	widower
Children:	none
Native Place:	Calcutta
Trade:	House Servant
Offence:	theft
Where Tried	Port Louis assizes
When Tried:	September 1839
Sentence:	7 years
Former Convictions:	None
Height:	5'0¾"
Complexion:	Dark copper coloured and a little pockpitted
Hair:	Black
Eyes:	Dark chestnut
Particular marks:	Right ear pierced, dark mole on right breast, mark of a burn on back of left hand.

It is interesting that he was described as a widower at age 20.

Johnny was granted an early Ticket of Leave in December 1843 following a petition from Mary Taylor who claimed she was his wife. She was an Irish lass who probably had arrived as a convict. Although no marriage has been recorded,

Johnny converted to Catholicism around 1844/45. From this time he seems to have added the name Vincent as a middle name.

By 1851 they were living at Kangaroo Point. They had purchased land and opened a boarding house which became so popular that they relocated to another building which offered 17 rooms. An advertisement stated - *John Cassim, a native of India, and accustomed to attend upon gentleman, will with his wife be prepared to provide board and lodging.*

In the late 1850s John and Mary leased Bigge's Cleveland House at the sparsely populated part of Cleveland Point. It was perfect as a place for colonists who may have desired time spent at a healthy retreat. The Cassims employed only indigenous servants, either because of a shortage of domestic servants available, or as a conscious decision. In 1856 it was advertised that *John V. Cassim had opened Cleveland House, Moreton Bay, as a boarding house. There is abundance of sport in the neighbourhood in kangaroo hunting, shooting, catching turtles, fishing, and visiting the various islands.*

Melbourne journalist Edward Wilson wrote in 1857 in the *Moreton Bay Courier*:- *The establishment of Host Cassim is unique. It is quite isolated, the nearest resident being a fellmonger, upon a creek, four miles off. Cassim himself is a small native of the Mauritius, as dark as one of the aborigines: his wife is an Irishwoman and the only white personage in the establishment, with the exception of a small boy.* There does not appear to have been any condemnation of a mixed marriage.

It became a successful venture and Johnny and Mary were able to purchase their own land nearby and they built Cleveland's first hotel around 1860. It included a bar, parlour, sitting-rooms, bedrooms, storeroom, a kitchen with servant's room attached, and verandahs front and back. The grounds included stables, coach house, fowl house, garden, jetty and bathing house.



When Mary died in 1861 she was 45 years old and was buried at Dunwich on Stradbroke Island. Johnny continued to operate his Cleveland Hotel, even making it available for conducting Mass. He married again in 1868 to another Irish lady, Mary Ann Rafter.

Johnny Cassim died in 1884 and was buried with his first wife at Dunwich.

### Sources:

<https://www.stradbroke-museum.com.au/exhibitions-events/dunwich-benevolent-asylum>

<https://www.convictsc.le.ac.uk/2023/05/04/cassim-an-extraordinary-life-part-i/>

<https://www.convictsc.le.ac.uk/2023/11/07/cassim-an-extraordinary-life-part-2/>

<https://www.pictureipswich.com.au/nodes/view/25580>

## **WHO WAS AUGUSTUS CAESAR, Dealer of Sydney**

In the last Chronicle, I mentioned the NSW Old Registers One to Nine. By chance, just recently, I came across a folder of photocopied pages from the DVD of that name which is no longer available at GSQ. I am not sure why I would have photocopied the pages. The entries date from 30 April 1819 to 16 August 1822.

I chose one entry because the name Augustus Caesar fascinated me. The reference to the entry is Book C 1822 No 443. Interestingly, the first entry on the following page is also No 443, and the two Indentures are not related. This highlights the fact that you may find a name on a human generated index, go to the original document and feel the indexer has made a mistake when you cannot find the name you are seeking. Check to see if the mistake was in the original record - whether it be page numbers that were repeated twice (or not chronological) or entries such as this example.

On 22 January 1822, Entry Number 443 was an Indenture between Underwood and Howe and Augustus Caesar. George Howe had died on 11 May 1821 and Joseph Underwood was one of the Executors of his estate. In the indenture we see that the name appears as Caesar Augustus rather than Augustus Caesar. This made it even more intriguing. The best I can do to decipher the faded page is as follows -

*Indenture bearing date 24 December 1821 between Joseph Underwood of Sydney, Merchant, and Michael Robinson of Sydney, Gentleman, executors of George Howe, late of Sydney deceased of the one part, whereby it is witnessed that for the consent therein mentioned they the said Joseph Underwood and Michael Robinson as has aforesaid did grant bargain sell assign transfer and set over unto the said Caesar Augustus his ground and all that cottage or tenement with the outbuildings and situate Number 2 in Kent Street Sydney with the appurtenances and all the estate etc to hold the said cottage and rear of grounds with the appurtenances unto the said Caesar Augustus his executors etc for the term and the estates which the said George Howe at the time of his decease to the said Joseph Underwood and Michael Robinson at the time of the execution of the said Deed were possessed of ??? to execute further Deeds which said Indenture is witnessed by James Morton and was registered at 2 o'clock in the afternoon of the 22<sup>nd</sup> day of January 1822.*

The Deed appears to have been transferred on 20 March and 'Caesar Augustus' signed with an X.

### The deceased.

George Howe was the Government Printer. He was 52 years old when he died at his residence in George Street in 1821. I was unable to find any reference to him living at the property in Kent Street. His executors did however advertise for

any debts to be paid into his estate and any claims to be submitted. His house and goods were later listed for auction.

Howe had been born at St Kitt's in the West Indies where his father conducted the Government Press. He went to London and was employed there by some respectable newspapers.

It was as a convict that he arrived in 1800 on the *Royal Admiral*. In March 1799 he and a friend had been tried at the Warwick Assizes for shoplifting. He used the name George Happy, alias Happy George. Although he received the death sentence, he had a benefactor who not only had the sentence commuted, but also allowed his family to sail with him. Unfortunately his wife died on the voyage. Almost immediately he was appointed as the Government printer and he became the original printer of the *Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser* which began in 1803. His brother, Robert Howe, helped him in that venture. George was granted a conditional pardon in 1803 and was emancipated in 1806.

Howe remarried and had to supplement his income during 1807/8 when the *Gazette* ceased publication during the troubled Bligh years. He opened a stationery shop and gave private tutoring. When Governor Macquarie reinstated him, his economic position improved. He liked to write poetry and developed a friendship wit Michael Robinson who wrote many patriotic odes which Howe printed.

### The Executors

Michael Massey Robinson was one of the executors of George Howe's estate. He died in 1826 at age 82. Like Howe, he had arrived as a convict. He had studied at Oxford University and had practised as a lawyer. After being prosecuted for blackmail at the Old Bailey in 1796 he was transported to New South Wales on the *Barwell* in 1798. The voyage was not arduous for him as he had gained the favour of the Captain of the ship. Also on that ship was Richard Dore who had been appointed as the deputy Judge Advocate. Robinson went out of his way to present himself to Dore, and, as a result, Robinson became his secretary. He was not paid, but his position gave him some status. Just two weeks after landing he was awarded a Conditional Pardon.

In November 1800 he became the officer in charge of registering all legal documents, except land grants, in the colony. He was known to have forged the signature of Richard Atkins, Dore's successor, for monetary gain. In 1802 he was convicted of "wilful and corrupt perjury" after demanding rum as a fee. He was to be sent to Norfolk Island but a number of Sydney merchants began a petition for a pardon. Governor King realised there was no one with the expertise to replace him, so he was reinstated until 1805 when he was sent to Norfolk Island to serve his sentence after he began sending complaints about the colony to England. He was only there for a year and he returned to Sydney in December 1806.



Joseph Underwood had arrived in Sydney in 1807 and was more than a merchant. He invested large sums of money in the colony in buildings and business ventures. He returned to England briefly in 1819 and arrived back in Sydney in December 1821. The following year he began acquiring large grants of land but still operated as a merchant in George Street. He died in 1833.

### Augustus Caesar

Augustus arrived in Sydney on the ship *Lynx* on 1<sup>st</sup> February 1816. He was a free man. Obviously there are several variations in the spelling of his name – Cesar, Cezar, Casar, Ceasar - but with available documentation and newspaper reports I was able to glean a little about his life. It is interesting that mostly the ‘æ’ diphthong was used in the spelling of Cæsar. Augustus was listed as being 35 years old in the 1828 census so it would seem that he was around 23 when he arrived in Sydney. However, the 1841 census shows an age discrepancy which suggests he may have been 32 years old on arrival.

The *Sydney Gazette* reported – *On Thursday arrived from the Isle of France the brig Lynx, Captain Read, formerly of the Amelia. She sailed from the island on 5<sup>th</sup> December, prior to which accounts had been received of the Battle of Waterloo, and the glorious events that had succeeded that brilliant victory.*

How bizarre that I had randomly chosen this indenture from the Early Land Register and Augustus Caesar arrived on a ship sailing from the Isle of France! I had already written the articles about the monument to Matthew Flinders and convict Johnny Cassim, and it was not until I read a newspaper account from 1848 that I found Augustus was a man of colour and was indeed from Mauritius.

I have relied mostly on the newspapers to chronologically piece together his life in the colony.

Trading relationships had been established with Mauritius as early as 1803, mostly based on the sugar trade. Captain Read of the *Lynx* was “of the merchant service” when he married in 1816. He carried cargo mostly from Mauritius and the Phillipines and delivered it to Sydney and Hobart. Merchants, seamen and families were able to board the merchant vessels in Mauritius in the early 1800s and settle in Australia. Augustus Caesar was one of them.

The slavery records of Mauritius show that there were French slave owners named C  zar and Cesar. Whether Augustus was of French origin, or if he was a slave (or a descendant of a slave) who took his master or mistress’s surname, is not known.

From the 1821 Indenture we know that Augustus was occupying the premises at 2 Kent Street at least from early 1822, or possibly earlier. On 19 August 1822, after receiving permission from His Excellency the Governor, he married convict Margaret Pollett at St Philips Church. The register lists him as Ceasar Augustus. He was 35 years old (another age variant) and Margaret was 26. She is

described as an emancipist who arrived on the *Lord Melville* in 1817. He was listed as a dealer.

In 1823 'Mr Ceazer' applied for two assigned convicts and one was allotted. He and Margaret were still living in King Street where he was a shopkeeper.

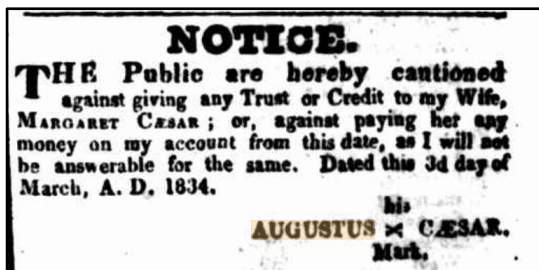
At the Sydney Quarter Sessions, in October 1827, Augustus was charged with assault. He had taken his horse to the nearby Carter's Barracks and the watchman told him he could not water his horse there. The water was for Government horses only, but Augustus ignored his warning. An argument led to Augustus striking the man with his horse whip. When the watchman was asked if he had received money from the accused to drop the charge, he said he had not. A witness, a girl of 12 years of age, said she saw Augustus pay the watchman a dollar so as not to prosecute. Augustus claimed that the incident would not have occurred if the watchman had not grabbed hold of the reins. In that case, apparently it was justified that Augustus could strike the man. He was found not guilty.

An advertisement in *The Australian* on 18 January 1828 shows that Augustus Cæsar was still operating his shop in King Street. He thanked *his friends and the public in general for the liberal patronage he has received* and informed them that he had newly arrived articles for sale. These were mostly clothing, haberdashery and material.

The 1828 census shows that Augustus was 35 years old, thus born around 1793. He was a shopkeeper at King Street. His wife, Margaret, was 31 and was transported as a convict on the *Lord Melville* which had arrived in Sydney on 24 February 1817. She had completed her seven year sentence so was free by servitude. They owned two horses.

There was a change of address by April 1832 when Augustus claimed that a pair of chains, painted black, had been stolen from the front of his house at 5 York Street and he was offering a reward.

Two years later, a notice appeared in the *Sydney Gazette* on 4 March 1834. *The public are hereby cautioned against giving any Trust or Credit to my wife, Margaret Cæsar; or, against paying her any money on my account from this date, as I will not be answerable for the same. Dated this 3<sup>rd</sup> day of March, A.D. 1834.* AUGUSTUS CÆSAR – (signed with his Mark)



In June 1834, a description of allotments in the Town of Sydney, and the names of their occupiers, were listed in the newspapers by order of the Colonial Secretary. For a period of three months any discrepancies could be altered - whether it was a misspelt name, wrong land description, or if anyone else had claim to the allotment. Augustus was listed as occupying 29 perches of land bounded on the east by York Street and on the west by Clarence Street. Quit rent was 14 shillings and 6 pence per annum.

Next we hear of Augustus in the newspapers is that he was retiring from business in November 1834. He offered household furniture and items for sale at his York Street premises. He thanked his friends and patrons and recommended his successor, Mr J Bird, who would be operating from the premises and would be selling groceries, glass earthenware, etc. Two years later, Mr Bird offered the York Street house and shop for a moderate rent. It was situated *next to the Barracks in a populous neighbourhood. The original proprietor Mr A Caesar retired independent from the fortune realised in the premises.*

In 1839, Augustus was granted a town allotment of 13 perches in York street. The following year he and his wife sold it for £1,250. They were then living at Windsor.

In March 1840, the death was announced of the son of Mr Augustus Caesar of George Street, Windsor. No name or age was given. The 1841 census verifies that Augustus was at George Street, Windsor – but his age is given as 57 - which would give a year of birth around 1784 and not 1793, earlier than that suggested in the 1828 census.

The Court of Claims gave notice in October of 1840 for hearings which would investigate claims to town allotments. All parties had to attend with relevant documents and witnesses. Case 758 was between Augustus Caesar of York Street and Margaret Caesar. Reference was made to the 29 perches described in 1834. Margaret claimed that a Deed of Grant had been made out to Augustus because there had been no objections made within the three month period. She now claimed that the allotment had been conveyed to Henry Ashly as a trustee of a certain indenture that gave her a life interest in the allotment.

In 1843, with the concerns about the loss of convict labour through the cessation of transportation, a letter to the editor appeared in *The Australian* on 19 April 1843 and was signed by Augustus Caesar. He was advocating to the Committee of the New Legislature that there was a need to eradicate the convict stain as the colony progressed. There were convicts still serving their time, some had conditional pardons and some had tickets-of-leave. As long as this situation remained, progress would be hindered. A better solution was to give any prisoner a conditional pardon if he was deserving of it. A ticket of leave holder was neither free nor bonded, yet was trading with business owners. Legally such a person was still “in slavery” and could run up debts, and such debts could not legally be

recovered. Rewards were given to prisoners who aided in the apprehension of bushrangers, so why not reward those who maintained themselves without the need for expensive government help. (I doubt that Augustus physically wrote this, but he gave his name to it.)

In April 1844, a man named Robert Cornwall claimed he was assaulted by Augustus. The newspaper described him as *an individual, rejoicing in the imperial name of Augustus Cæsar, but more generally known among the immediate circle of his acquaintances as "Black Cæsar"...*

When, in November 1844, four men were apprehended in Sydney on suspicion of a grisly murder, Augustus Cæsar was asked to act as interpreter. One of the accused was English, one was from the Isle of France, and two were Frenchmen. Just the Frenchmen were found guilty.

It was in July 1847 that Alfred Louis Caesar was appointed by the Governor as an Interpreter and Clerk in the Sydney Police Office. When he died in 1857, his age was 45 years thus giving him a birth year of 1812 – several years before either Augustus or Margaret arrived in the colony. Perhaps he was Margaret's son.

In 1848 Augustus was living in Sydney and a tongue-in-cheek article appeared in *Bell's Life in Sydney and Sporting Reviewer* on 9 December under the title *Police Office Sketches*.

*Augustus Cæsar, of the Isle of France ... boldly plunged at once into the back parlour of a butcher's shop in George-street, formerly kept by Mr. Holmes, and insisted upon having satisfaction from somebody, (no matter whom) for some imaginary grievance committed by a party or parties unknown, at an equally indefinite period of time. But Cæsar has to be described - Fancy, gentle reader, a yard of Cambridge butter dipped into one of the blacking bottles of Mr. Lavers...*



[Blacking bottles, or pots, were storage vessels for a liquid or paste blackening substance, which can be considered a precursor to modern day shoe polish. The pictured bottle is made from coarse grey stoneware, but blacking bottles were also made from earthenware and porcelain.]

Does this refer to the complexion of Augustus? A 'yard of Cambridge butter dipped in a blacking bottle' – such a man who dared to storm into the parlour behind a butcher's shop seems to be the inference.

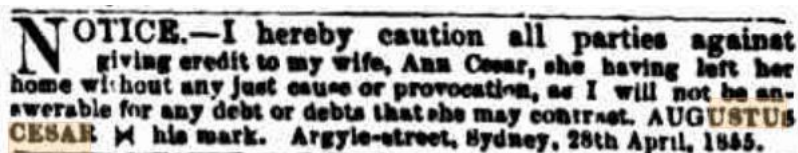
*... and Cæsar stands before you, precisely in that position, when the gallant Captain requested him to tell his tale of wrong. Upon that hint. Caesar spoke thus - "Me deal im giniral in York strit; den we walk im indo droo de Butchah shop jus to see Missah Hyland. Den me alvay walk him afore troo for clod and sticken, an me walk him troo agen once more all overe. Den me see him man, Mistere Adam; he say, get out you old sweep - ere; me say, you only clerks. He say, ah! ah! dat is your game, an*

he jompish up and shovsh me out by de collarsh, and he----- The Bench here interrupted Mr. Cæsar, and requested to be informed what countryman he was. To which he replied, with all the naivete in the world, "A Wesleyan." (Roars of laughter, which the lugubrious aspect of Cæsar did not tend to diminish.)

Mr. St. Clair Adams explained to the Bench that he was the party implicated in the affair. Mr Rogers, formerly of the Hyde Park Barracks had become a carcass butcher and had told Adams not to allow anyone to enter the back of the shop unless he was paying a bill. As Cæsar was not there to pay, St Clair Adams said he had the right to remove him from the premises.

*William Baxter, another gentleman in the butchering line, having testified that the darkey was too saucy by half to Herbert Theodore Augustus Alfred Fitz-Bogus St. Clair Adams, and that he had refused to leave the room when requested by that gentleman; the Bench, without any hesitation, wisely dismissed the case, recommending Cæsar to be a little more cautious in future; and not to mistake a new slaughtering establishment for an "Old Curiosity Shop. The case was dismissed.*

There are two marriage entries for Augustus Cæsar in the 1850s – one in 1850 to widow Anna Brown in Sydney, and the other in 1853 to Ann Horton in Pitt Street, Sydney. A daughter, Mary, was born in 1854. Perhaps this was one wife and two recorded marriages. Augustus was now living at 50 Argyle Street, Sydney. However, in April 1855 a notice appeared in the *Sydney Morning Herald* and Augustus was still signing with 'his mark'. *I hereby caution all parties against giving credit to my wife, Ann Cæsar, she having left her home without any just cause or provocation...*



**NOTICE.—I hereby caution all parties against giving credit to my wife, Ann Cæsar, she having left her home without any just cause or provocation, as I will not be answerable for any debt or debts that she may contract. AUGUSTUS CÆSAR & his mark. Argyle-street, Sydney, 28th April, 1855.**

In a Police report in February 1858, Augustus was living at South Head Road - with his wife!

Augustus Cæsar died on 31 December 1870 and was buried at Rookwood Cemetery. He would have been either 77 years old or 86 as recorded by the 1828 and 1841 census.

### Sources:

<https://adb.anu.edu.au/biography>

Trove newspaper articles

[www.bda-online.org.au/](http://www.bda-online.org.au/)

[mhns.wa.gov.au/collections/state-archives-collection/](http://mhns.wa.gov.au/collections/state-archives-collection/)

## EMANUEL SOLOMON – a Prosperous Adelaide Merchant



Although no convicts were ever sent to South Australia, there were indeed ex-convicts who had moved there. Many were employed by pastoralists as stock keepers, shepherds, fencers, sawyers, house builders, sealers and whalers.

One arrival in Adelaide was an ex-convict named Emanuel Solomon. He had already established himself as a businessman in Sydney and would become a wealthy shipping agent.

Emanuel was born in London in 1800. His father was a pencilmaker. At the age of 17 he and his brother, Vaiben Solomon, 18, both pencilmakers, were arrested at a boarding house in North Yorkshire in 1816 and were accused of breaking into a farmhouse and stealing clothing – some of which they had already sold. At the Durham Assizes on 6 August 1817, they were found guilty of the theft but not breaking and entering. The latter would have been a capital offence, so they were lucky to have each been sentenced to transportation for seven years. After the depression in Britain following the Napoleonic Wars, the brothers had most likely become itinerant salesmen. They were a long way from London.

After several months they were taken from the hulk *Justitia* and placed on board the *Lady Castlereagh* bound for Port Jackson. They arrived in Sydney on 1 May 1818 only to find that Governor Macquarie had stipulated that only 39 of the prisoners on board could disembark. The remaining 261 were taken to Van Diemen's Land. In 1821, they reverted to old habits and stole clothing and were then sent to Newcastle to work the last three years of their sentences in irons.

From 1824 they began to accumulate money. In 1825 Emanuel was listed as a labourer but it was not long before they became general merchants at their premises in George Street, Sydney. Their partnership continued for many years even though Vaiben later opened a tailoring shop and Emanuel moved to Adelaide in 1837.

Emanuel had married convict Mary Ann Wilson in 1826. She had been sentenced at the Old Bailey and arrived in 1825. Vaiben married Mary Smith, also in 1826. By 1828 the brothers already owned a brig which ferried passengers and goods between Sydney and Adelaide and also Hobart. Their young nephew, Judah, arrived in 1831 and was educated at Sydney College. Other family members also migrated. The brothers began to accumulate land in Sydney and in Bathurst before Emanuel bought a share of land grant in South Australia.

Between 1838 and 1844 Emanuel and his family lived in Adelaide and, as a merchant, he brought goods in from Sydney on the vessel they owned. He brought

in lime juice and ginger beer along with drapery, clothing, sugar, tobacco, hardware and overseas newspapers. Judah worked for his uncles on the ship until 1842 before going to Brisbane as a Government Auctioneer. Judah returned to Adelaide in 1846 to join Emanuel and another uncle, Isaac Solomon as auctioneers.

In 1844, with competition from another brig, personal problems, and a downturn in the economy in South Australia, the partnership between the brothers was mutually dissolved. Despite the country's economic depression in the 1840s, Emanuel had diversified his interests by building Adelaide's first theatre and also residential homes. He was a shareholder in the South Australian Mining Association and hence the huge Burra copper ore mine. In 1848 he established Solomontown on land he owned near Port Pirie.

He entered politics in 1852 as an Alderman and then as member of the House of Assembly before becoming a member of the Legislative Council.

In 1870 he retired. He was one of the founders of the Adelaide Hebrew Congregation. He died on 3 October 1873 at his residence in Franklin-street West after being confined to his bed for several months as the result of a stroke.



Emanuel was buried in the Jewish portion of the West Terrace Cemetery. There was a large attendance at his funeral, the cortege consisting of nine mourning coaches and over fifty other vehicles. He was survived by his third wife, four daughters and three sons.

Vaiben Solomon did not achieve the same degree of prosperity as Emanuel but was still a very wealthy man in his own right. He died in 1860 at his mansion 'Horningsea Park' originally built in the 1830s with convict labour. The home stood grandly on a 500 acre estate at Liverpool which Vaiben had purchased in 1855.

## Sources:

<https://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/solomon-emanuel-4623>

<https://www.portrait.gov.au/magazines/38/the-saint-and-the-merchant>

<https://adelaideaz.com/articles/emanuel-solomon-a-prominent-achiever-in-not-so-convict-free-early-south-australia>

*The Mail* 7 November 1936

*South Australian Register* Obituary 9 October 1873



## FLOOD AFFECTS THE WINDSOR ORPHAN SCHOOL 1842

On 24 May 1842 the *Australasian Chronicle* reported that the house in Windsor in which the Catholic Orphans were lodged had been almost totally destroyed in the recent flood. Reverend Mr Brady had taken the children to an abandoned building which had been used as a government hospital. What followed became known as the “Windsor Controversy”. It seems that the damage to the house the orphans had been occupying was the result of a rainstorm on 19 April, rather than rising flood waters. The temporary accommodation was the subject of concern.

The *Australasian Chronicle* began publication in August 1839. It was Australia’s first Catholic newspaper and was being published twice weekly during the saga of the plight of the orphans in 1842. The aim of the newspaper was “to explain and uphold the civil and religious principles of the Catholics, and to maintain their rights”.

St Matthew’s Catholic Church at Windsor had opened in 1840. Prior to that, services had been held in the Convict Barracks before they were converted into a hospital, and also in privately owned houses or barns until money was raised to build the church. St Patrick’s Orphan School was established through funding from both Catholic and Protestant subscribers and was run in association with St Matthew’s Church. The Reverend John Brady, Dean of Windsor, was the founder of the Orphan School. Seven children were in residence when it opened and within months the number rose to twenty. Although based on Catholic principles, the school did not exclusively accept Catholic children, or indeed children exclusively from the Windsor district.

In September 1841 it was reported that Mr Brady could not say “No” to any call for admittance. One day, while in Windsor, Rev Brady was approached by a Constable who had come from Vinegar Hill with an orphan child in a cart. He explained that the mother had been killed on the Parramatta Road and the child was an orphan and an ‘object of charity’. Rev Brady escorted them to the Orphan School and admitted the child.

The *Australasian Chronicle*, in March 1842, indicated that *any child who had lost both parents could be admitted to the home, and children who had a single living parent could be recommended to the home by members of the committee or supporters of the home. If the parent was able to work, they were required to pay a maintenance fee for each child living at St Patricks. The rules also stated that girls admitted to the home were not to leave the school for domestic service placements until they were able to read, write, and understand basic arithmetic.*

Because of water damage to the Orphan School in April 1842 Reverend Brady had removed the children to a temporary safe haven. The newspaper’s initial report said that *during the late flood at Windsor the house in which the Catholic orphan children were lodged was almost entirely destroyed, in consequence of which the Rev. Mr. Brady made a kind of forcible entry for them*



*into a corner of the building recently used as a government hospital. His Excellency did not, of course, disapprove of this under the circumstances, but he sent an order to the police magistrate to have them ejected with all convenient speed.*

Rev Brady wrote to Mr. North, the police magistrate, demanding extra time to find a place for the children. In the meantime, he went to Sydney to represent his case to the Governor. The Colonial Secretary assured him that he would be allowed two or three weeks to find a suitable place. On returning to Windsor, a letter from Mr North informed him that it was *impossible I can extend the time allowed for the children remaining in the hospital beyond Saturday next. After that day the gate will be locked, and no one admitted without a written authority from me or Dr. Gamack.*

The editor added - *... the children are now, we believe, prisoners within the hospital. Whether they receive any food or not from their jailor we have not heard. We shall make no comment at present upon this exercise of power until we learn what step the Governor will take in the matter; but we do think the use of an empty brick building for a month or two would not have been an extravagant contribution on the part of government for so valuable an institution under such distressing circumstances.*

It seems that it was an exaggeration that the house had been 'almost entirely destroyed'. Although the Governor had not condoned the Reverend for making a forcible entry into the building, he did send an order to Mr North to have the children removed as conveniently as possible. After Rev Brady had met with the Governor in Sydney he was indeed allowed two or three weeks to find a suitable alternative.

A further letter to the editor of the *Australasian Chronicle* showed the dismay the public thought on the matter – *If the Queen knew that eight and twenty orphan children, four of whom are Australian aborigines, were, for the crime of seeking shelter from the flood in an empty building belonging to Her Majesty, locked up, with their nurse and matron, in the government hospital, by order of the police magistrate, at six o'clock this morning, and all communications prohibited, even to the exclusion of the very necessities of life; and that this incarceration of innocents was done in Her Majesty's name, what would be Her Majesty's feelings upon her Royal birthday? No sooner, however, was it known in Windsor that the orphan children were imprisoned, and no admittance to them permitted, than the benevolent inhabitants contrived to throw in at the window large loaves and dampers to feed the poor destitute children, until His Excellency the Governor, the Queen's representative, would have time to take their case into his kind consideration. The Rev Mr Brady has been refused admission to the hospital, and I believe the children have also been deprived of medical attendance.*

The Colonial Assistant Surgeon, Dr Gamack objected to rumours that there had been 'forcible entry'. He said that Rev Brady had approached him prior to the

flooding to ask if shelter could be sought in the hospital just in case they were affected by the flood. He was agreeable and he directed the overseer to permit entry. The flood waters, he said, did not affect the house. He also said that in his opinion Mr North had been badly misrepresented in the newspaper accounts.

Rev Brady refuted the doctor's claims about right of entry and the extent of damage to the school. The Doctor's letter in reply was published by the *Sydney Herald* in June and was rather scathing of Reverend Brady's 'perversion of the truth'. He also was not impressed with the misrepresentation of Mr North whose conduct would bear the strictest scrutiny. He concluded with - *I beg to state that any further misrepresentations which may emanate from the reverend gentleman, will be treated by me with that silence which his correspondence merits.*

Mr North outlined the whole matter in his reply. Dr Gamack had allowed Rev Brady the use of the hospital without questioning the truth of the statement that the children were in danger due to the flood waters. It was not a forcible entry as stated by the Reverend. The children were to remain in the building until the flood waters had subsided. Some days later, Mr North told Rev Brady that he had to comply with his order to have them removed, and that he had inspected the house, and it was above flood height and repairs would take but a few days. On 13 May, he gave Mr Brady seven days to move the children, but the notice was not complied with. On 25 May, the day after the queen's birthday, the gate was closed, and orders were given to the constable in charge not to admit anyone without permission. No one was refused entry and usual supplies were received by the children. He gave consent for the time to be extended until 9 June, and they were removed on that day.

*It is not true that twenty-eight orphan children were locked up in the government hospital on the Queen's birthday, nor on any other day. It is not true that all or any communications were prohibited during the time they occupied the hospital. It is not true that any of the necessities of life were excluded. It is not true that either loaves or dampers were thrown in at the windows. Nor is it true that the children were deprived of medical attendance...*

The *Australasian Chronicle* was naturally keen to end the saga which had caused such dismay to the public and those directly involved - ... *it does appear to us that there has been rather more warmth on all sides than was necessary... With respect to the apparently conflicting facts and dates, it appears to us that charity and good nature might reconcile some of them with each other and with truth. On the rest we offer no opinion.*

Repairs were made while the children remained in the old hospital. The Catholic Orphan School re-opened on 9 June 1842 and operated in those premises until at least 1845.

#### **Sources:**

<https://www.findandconnect.gov.au/entity/st-patricks-orphan-school/>  
various newspaper articles

*Hark ~~hark~~ the dogs do bark  
The beggars are coming to town  
Some in rags and some in tags  
And one in a velvet gown.*

This rhyme is not as well known as many of the nursery rhymes we learned as children. It dates back to 13th century England when beggars came to towns looking for sustenance and employment. It was also a time when minstrels and troubadours travelled around the countryside singing their songs like modern day buskers. However, a lot of the rhymes and ballads they uttered often had secret messages and were a form of political propaganda. Sometimes they led to increased numbers of people being incited into joining plots and uprisings.

Strangers entering a village or town were looked upon with suspicion. Dogs barking alerted the townspeople to strangers in their area, hence the words "*Hark, hark the dogs do bark.*" The beggars were in rags, the minstrels and performers would have been the ones with 'tags' or recognised for what they were.



With the Dissolution of the Monasteries declared from 1536 to 1540, and the introduction of the protestant Church of England, there were many nuns and priests made homeless. King Henry VIII and his chief minister, Oliver Cromwell would loot the monasteries and sell the lands to increase the wealth of the realm. Begging was made a punishable crime.

Who was the one in a velvet gown? Although it probably refers to the King, another explanation could be that it refers to William of Orange who brought his Dutch followers to Britain. As King William III of England, Scotland and Ireland, he and his wife became joint monarchs in 1689. They succeeded the Catholic King James II and restored the Protestant faith. The beggars may have referred to his Dutch followers, and it may have been this King who was dressed in the velvet gown.

**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 2025**

<b>9 February</b>	<b>13 April</b>	<b>8 June</b>
<b>10 August</b>	<b>12 October</b>	<b>14 December</b>