Descent

In This Issue

Cover Image

MIDAS 6/000359_001: Mounted wedding photograph of unidentified couple c1919, from the Chadwick Collection, purchased Colchester 1977.

Acknowledgment of Country

We acknowledge the First Nations peoples and we pay respect to Elders past, present and emerging. The Society acknowledges the Gadigal people of the Eora nation, the traditional custodians of the land on which Richmond Villa stands.

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President's Message

MELISSA HULBERT

The March/Autumn edition of *Descent* brings with it a thematic focus that has shaped the history of our nation – the stories of convicts. This edition promises to delve into the intricate tales of those who were once deliberately ignored within many families and are now celebrated as pivotal to the nation's colonisation.

The theme of convicts offers a unique opportunity for us to uncover the untold stories of resilience, survival and redemption. From the bustling cities to the remote corners of the continent, the lives of convicts are woven into the very fabric of our genealogical tapestry. This edition will serve as a gateway to understanding our convict ancestors, acknowledging their hardships and recognising their enduring impact on Australian society.

Whether your ancestors are Indigenous Australians, arrived as convicts or as free settlers, their stories contribute to the mosaic of our shared heritage. The Society of Australian Genealogists is committed to providing resources and guidance to help you unearth these stories, connecting you with the narratives that have shaped your family history.

Expanding the Ironclad Sisterhood: Charting New Territories

Building on the success of the Ironclad Sisterhood, which has admirably championed the cause of recognising and celebrating the role of women in our genealogical pursuits, we are excited to announce an expansion of this database and continued information connecting our past archival research with today's online database tools.

The Ironclad Sisterhood serves as a testament to the power of collaboration and shared narratives. We invite all members to actively engage with this initiative, contributing stories, insights and expertise to enrich our understanding of the women who have played pivotal roles in shaping our nation.

Building on the Success of Family History Connect: Navigating New Horizons

The success of the Family History Connect initiatives in 2023 has paved the way for exciting developments in the year ahead. Our commitment to providing innovative resources and fostering a sense of community among our members remains steadfast. The coming months will witness the continuation and expansion of Family History Connect, with new initiatives designed to facilitate connections, share research methodologies, and celebrate the achievements of our members.

We are proud to announce that our in-person and online events will be further enhanced, offering places for members to engage in discussions, share discoveries, and seek guidance from fellow genealogists. Family History Connect is not just a program – it's a dynamic part of our community where the spirit of collaboration thrives.

Focus on Our Library Collection

Following an extensive stocktake involving dedicated efforts from our staff and volunteers, we are excited to draw your attention to the wealth of resources housed in our library collection. With over 40,000 items of published family history materials meticulously organised, our library stands as a valued resource for members and the public to support their genealogical research.

This autumn, we invite you to explore our library's vast collection, uncovering rare gems and hidden stories that may hold the key to unlocking your family's history.

Our staff and volunteers have worked tirelessly to ensure that the library remains a beacon of knowledge, and we encourage you to make the most of this invaluable resource.

Engaging Research Groups: A Collaborative Approach to Discovery

Looking ahead, our research groups are gearing up to engage members in collaborative efforts. These groups provide a platform for shared exploration, allowing members with similar research interests to connect, exchange insights, and tackle challenges together. By fostering a collaborative approach to genealogy, we aim to create a vibrant community where expertise is shared, and breakthroughs are celebrated collectively.

Diverse Events and Activities: Enriching Your Genealogical Journey

The coming months will witness an increased number and diversity of events and activities hosted by the Society of Australian Genealogists. From workshops and webinars to special lectures and exhibitions, our events aim to cater to the varied interests of our members. Whether you are a seasoned genealogist or just beginning your journey, there will be something for everyone.

Fundraising for Sustainability: Ensuring Our Legacy Endures

As we embark on these exciting initiatives, we are mindful of the importance of fundraising for the sustainability of our society. Your support is integral to ensuring that we can continue our mission to provide education, training and support to family historians. We will be launching fundraising campaigns and initiatives throughout the year, and we invite you to participate actively in securing the future of the Society of Australian Genealogists.

Melissa Hulbert
President

Editor's Letter

DANIELLE TEBB

Welcome to our first issue for the year.

While the theme of the issue is convicts, the breadth of articles extends much further – capturing war experiences in time for Anzac Day, particularly with contributions from SAG's writing group, as well as other articles, exploring Irish heritage, the meaning of names and musings on research by a previous SAG editor and honorary member. We are also pleased to publish our finalised Code of Conduct, in conjunction with our existing Code of Ethics. We would like to thank all the members who have been involved in producing this document and would ask everyone to read it.

While a theme can help your focus and work as a trigger to write up a piece of research, articles outside the theme are always welcome for *Descent*: just keep in mind they may be moved to a subsequent issue due to space constraints. We also welcome pieces from the Society's various interest groups, so if your group is doing something interesting, or has exciting updates, please let us know so we can let the wider membership know – perhaps you'll gain some new members to your group!

The themes for the rest of 2024 are listed here:

Artificial Intelligence:
Submissions due 18 April 2024 for the June issue of *Descent* with a Conference scheduled for 22 June.

Gold Rushes (Australia, NZ, USA and others):
Submissions due 18 July 2024 for the September issue of *Descent* with a Conference scheduled for 17 August.

Wills and Probate/end of life records:
Submissions due 15 October 2024 for the December issue of *Descent* with a Conference scheduled for 30 November.

Danielle Tebb
Editor, *Descent*

Biography

Dean, William (Lumpy): (c1778–1847)

LOUISE MILLAR-HOFFMANN

William (Lumpy) Dean, grazier and publican, was born about 1778 in Dorking, Surrey, England, son of John Dean and his wife Sarah, née Forsey.

By age sixteen, William was a house servant in Cavendish Square, London. On 24 June 1795, William stole £20 from his employer's coat. The theft was discovered and William stood trial at the Old Bailey on 1 July 1795, was sentenced to death by hanging, then incarcerated in death row at Newgate Prison. A year later, and on a point of law rather than compassion, William's sentence was commuted to transportation for the term of his natural life. For the next two years, William was imprisoned in a floating prison hulk. In October 1798 he, along with 297 other men, was boarded onto the convict ship *Hillsborough* bound for Sydney Cove.

When the *Hillsborough* (later given the moniker 'the death ship') arrived in Sydney on 26 July 1799, Governor Hunter described the convicts as "a cargo of the most miserable and wretched convicts I have ever beheld." Ninety-nine had died of typhoid en route or within days of arrival. Hunter was appalled that "those who still survive are in the most sickly and wretched state, put on board the ship in England with the cloaths [sic] only in which they stood, consequently arrived here naked." Almost every convict required hospital treatment after landing.

Within days William was aboard another boat sailing up the Parramatta River to serve his sentence labouring, possibly under the supervision of Reverend Samuel Marsden, the infamous 'flogging parson'. William kept out of trouble and was granted a Ticket of Leave by 1806 and a Conditional Pardon in May 1811, twelve years after arrival.

On Christmas Day 1806, William married Elizabeth Hollingsworth at St John's Church of England, Parramatta. Elizabeth was a convict who had been assigned to him the year before, and when they married they had one child and were expecting their second. The family grew to include another six children over the following seventeen years.

In 1814 and 1817, William received land grants totalling 150 acres along the Western Road, 11 miles from Parramatta, from Governor Macquarie on the recommendation of Reverend Marsden. He grew wheat and raised cattle to supply the government stores. With the assistance of convict labour, William built a large family home named Hollingsworth House in honour of his wife Elizabeth.

William was granted a further fifty acres on the condition that he maintain and keep a house of entertainment for travellers; otherwise the grant would revert to the Crown. As areas to the west were beginning to open to settlers and it was a seven hour ride from Sydney, there was a need for a resting place. William opened The Bush Inn on the southern side of Western Road; this quickly became a popular stopping point and local landmark as well as an extremely profitable venture for William.

By the 1830s, a small village eventually known as Eastern Creek had grown around The Bush Inn. William had grown too, into a gigantic man six feet in height and weighing twenty stone (130 kg) or more. Known throughout the colony as 'Lumpy Dean', he was a host of infinite jest and pleasing conversation who could dance a jig as well as any man half his age or size. William had an oversized cedar chair custom-made to accommodate his immense girth, and renamed his establishment The Corporation Inn in celebration of his corpulent body.

In May 1836, aged 58, William stood trial in the New South Wales (NSW) Supreme Court on the charge of knowingly receiving stolen cattle. His second son, John, born in the colony in 1807, stood trial for stealing the said cattle. The jury acquitted William but found his son, who had a wife and young family, guilty. John Dean was sentenced to transportation to Van Diemen's Land for life as a colonial convict. Father and son never saw each other again, in a pitiful repeated outcome of William's own transportation forty years before.

By the time of his death on 7 November 1847, William Dean was a very wealthy man known for his generosity of spirit and philanthropic support for educating the poor. Hundreds attended his funeral and burial at St John's Church, Parramatta, and he and his inn were fondly remembered for decades after. Over a century later, the NSW government honoured William by naming the western Sydney suburb Dean Park and the William Dean Public School in his memory.

The granddaughter of William 'Lumpy' Dean, Eileen Olson is photographed with her grandfather's red cedar chair. Bankstown City Libraries, CC Attribution 3.0 Licence

Select Bibliography:

Margaret Learmonth Allen, *William Dean: A Colourful, Colonial Character* (Sydney, 1999)

Frank Clune, *Bound for Botany Bay: A Narrative of a Voyage in 1798 Aboard the Death Ship* (Sydney, 1964)

Nepean Times (Penrith), 25 September 1909

Sun (Sydney), 24 September 1913

Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser (Sydney), 19 February 1819 and 21 May 1836

Sydney Morning Herald (Sydney), 11 November 1847

Croker Prize for Biography 2024

PHILIPPA SHELLEY JONES
CONVENOR, CROKER PRIZE COMMITTEE

Whether you're an aspiring or fully fledged writer, it's time to dust off the creative side of your brain and get cracking on an entry for this year's Croker Prize for Biography. The competition, now in its eleventh year, publicly recognises the generous bequest given to the Society by Colin and Loas Croker; the $1,000 first prize is funded from the bequest. All entries are published on the Society's website for 12 months and will be retained by the Society as part of our manuscript collection.

The Croker Prize for Biography is an excellent way for members to record their research for posterity and for the Society's collection of biographical material to be added to for future generations of members and researchers. It doesn't matter how long you've been a member of the Society, where you are located, or how long you've been researching – just give it a go.

A competition entrant must be a financial member of the Society and submit an 800-1000 word biographical essay **about one relative**, based on the chosen theme for the year. The entry must be accompanied by a completed entry form which can be found, together with the conditions of entry, on the Society's website: **sag.org.au**. Click on the 'Join Us' option on the taskbar to access the Annual Croker Prize for Biography page. Entries must be submitted by midnight on 31 May 2024, with the winner announced and their biography published in the September/Spring edition of *Descent*.

Please note that it is strictly forbidden to make use of AI programs for all or any part of your entry.

The competition is judged by the Croker Prize Committee, consisting of myself as Convenor; board member Sonya Russell; and previous winners of the award, Michael Considine (2023) and Michele Bomford (2021). We extend our sincere thanks, for their expertise and generous donations of time, to Bill Dudley (2020) and Bob Wright (2022), who will not continue on the Committee in 2024 – perhaps they will try their hands at entering again!

The Committee was delighted to see another very healthy number of Croker Prize entries in 2023, with 29 family historians submitting wonderful biographies centred around the theme 'A Family Myth'. The popularity of the competition continues to impress us (and gives us lots of marking to do!); we hope that will continue to be the case in 2024 and beyond.

So, to this year's theme:

A Special Family Connection

The topic allows scope to explore the various definitions and interpretations of the word 'connection' – it could relate to an emotional bond, a DNA discovery, a meaningful artefact or object, a generational skill or talent, a connection to a social movement or event, or even a mystical 'feeling' about an ancestor. However, please remember that this is a **biography** competition – the **entry must be about the person and not the object, discovery, skill, event etc giving rise to the special connection.**

Also, a reminder to those entering to read the conditions carefully, in particular the word count specifications and the requirement that the submission be **about the entrant's relative** i.e. the biography must be about **one person in your own family tree**.

The writer's relationship to the subject of the biography must be clearly stated in the entry itself. This year we have added to the checklist on the entry form to make it easier for entrants to ensure they have met the competition's requirements. That checklist is as follows:

- My entry is between 800 and 1,000 words (not including title, references and any illustration captions)
- My relationship to the subject of the biography is clearly stated in my entry.
- I have included no more than one illustration and the caption for that illustration is 10 words or less.
- I have not used any form of AI in the writing of my entry.
- I have provided references and those references do not include extra biographical material or analysis.
- I have read and agree to the Conditions of Entry for the Croker Prize for Biography.
- I declare that my entry complies with the Conditions of Entry for the Prize.

Although detailed information about the judging criteria can be found on the website, the following suggestions might prove useful:

i. Relevant detailed and properly formatted sources provide evidence of good genealogical research skills. Referencing guidelines are provided on the Annual Croker Prize for Biography page. Remember that references are not included in the word count.

ii. A good introduction helps to engage interest and set the scene; a meaningful conclusion rounds off the entry for the reader.

iii. Good grammar and spelling boost an entry, as does evidence of a thorough proofread.

iv. Those entries which rate highly often make good use of descriptive language, occasional humour, sensitivity, relevant historical context and a logical sequence of events.

v. Entries without a good anchoring to the theme will receive marks at the lower end of the range.

vi. An entry which doesn't clearly state the relationship between its subject and the author is at risk of disqualification.

Reading previous successful entries on the website will provide some insight into what makes a good entry. The *Let's Talk About …* session on the last Monday in March will be dedicated to the 'dos and don'ts' of a Croker Prize entry.

Good luck to all. We look forward to reading about some special family connections and the associated journeys of research and discovery.

Title image: The Carroll family from Manchester on board the Georgic, 1949, State Library of New South Wales

In Stone by W. L. Walton   From a Sketch by Col! Mundy   Printed by Hullmandel & Walton

In Search Of ...
CONVICTS

From Shackles to Settlements:
The evolution of penal colonies and convict legacies

by Ruth Graham

Over the centuries, humanity has navigated a turbulent journey marked by the oppressive chains of slavery, the brutal ordeal of shipping convicts to distant shores, the binding contracts of indentured servitude and the hidden terrors of human trafficking. These exploitative practices have loomed large in the chronicles of history, leaving behind a poignant trail of suffering and injustice deeply ingrained in the collective consciousness of societies worldwide.

From the vast expanse of the transatlantic slave trade to the persistent presence of modern slavery, the narrative of human exploitation stretches back to the earliest days of civilisation, intricately weaving a dark tapestry of oppression that demands acknowledgement, contemplation and decisive action.

Australia's history as a penal settlement from the onset of European settlement is well-documented, but it was by no means the only part of the British Empire to receive transported convicts. The practice of sending prisoners overseas was widespread from the 17th to the 19th century, leaving an indelible mark on various regions.

The 1600s

The 17th century marked the beginning of Britain's overseas penal colonies. Overcrowded prisons led the British government to seek alternative solutions, resulting in the establishment of settlements in the Americas. Bermuda, situated in the Atlantic Ocean, became an early destination for transported convicts. The harsh conditions on the island contributed to its development, echoing the prevailing belief that forced labour could simultaneously punish and benefit the homeland.

During the 17th century, convicts often sentenced for petty crimes or theft, were sent to colonies like Virginia and Maryland. The labour-intensive demands of agriculture and burgeoning industries provided a ready source of forced labour for the colonies.

The 1700s

Australia, with its first convicts arriving in 1788, is the most well-known example of a British penal colony. However, other regions in the British Empire also served this purpose. The West Indies, including islands such as Jamaica and Barbados, became significant destinations. Convicts were employed in the cultivation of sugar and tobacco, shaping the economic landscape of these colonies.

In the 18th century, the system expanded as a means of populating and developing the colonies. Convicts became a valuable labour force for plantation owners, contributing to the economic growth of the region.

While the convict transportation system to American colonies was not as systematic or extensive as later practices in Australia, it laid the groundwork for the broader patterns of penal migration that characterised Britain's colonial history.

The 1800s

As the British Empire expanded, so did the need for cheap labour. The Cape Colony, now part of South Africa, received a substantial number of transported prisoners. The Andaman Islands in the Indian Ocean also served as a penal colony, primarily for prisoners deemed challenging to manage in Australia.

The 19th century witnessed a shift in punishment. Penitentiaries, such as those established in Gibraltar and Bermuda, emphasised rehabilitation and discipline over forced labour. These changes reflected evolving societal attitudes towards crime and punishment. Into the 20th century, the treatment of prisoners from concentration camps to killing fields, involved new horrors of human extinction. And in the 21st century, the establishment of institutions such as the Guantanamo Bay detention camp, provide a new era of convict transportation on the global stage.

The Changing Perceptions of Convict Ancestry in Australia

For many years, having a convict in the family tree was considered a source of shame in Australia. However, over time, Australians have undergone a remarkable shift in their attitudes towards convict ancestry. What was once a dark secret is now often celebrated as a unique aspect of the national identity.

The phenomenon of "Australian Royalty" emerged, with individuals proudly embracing their convict heritage. Museums, family history societies and genealogical websites actively encourage Australians to explore their family history, uncovering stories of resilience, survival and, in some cases, redemption. This changing perspective is indicative of a broader societal shift towards acknowledging the complexities of history and inherited shame or pride in our ancestors.

Must read open access article

"Genealogies of Enslavement and Convictism: Family Histories and Their Legacies in Barbados, Mauritius, and Australia" by Clare Anderson, Tony Birch, Nicolas Couronne, Sharon Cox, Carrie Crockett & Lorraine Paterson, in *Family & Community History* (2023) **https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/14631180.2023.2230731**
This article provides an excellent insight into how family historians can engage with academic research and the practice of moving convicts from India and Southeast Asia to the colonies.

Resources on UK Parliamentary Acts:

- Information on the Acts of Parliament of the United Kingdom can be found at: **https://archives.parliament.uk/**

- Access to acts of the UK Parliament varies depending on the time period. Up until 1707, for instance, you can view online at: **https://www.british-history.ac.uk/search/series/statutes-realm**

- Transcriptions of acts are also available on The Statutes Project website which has been put together by John Levin: **https://statutes.org.uk/site/the-statutes**.

- Information about these acts and related sources can be found through the Australian Joint Copying Project, Trove and library collections.

- The British Parliamentary Archives are in the process of moving from the Victoria Tower in Westminster to Kew in west London, to be located within The National Archives (UK) facility.

- While not related specifically to transportation, the Habeas Corpus Act established the right to a fair trial and protection against arbitrary imprisonment, laying the groundwork for legal protections for individuals facing transportation.

- "The Bloody Code" (1688–1815): During this period, a series of laws were enacted that expanded the list of crimes punishable by death. Transportation became an alternative punishment for those who were not sentenced to death but still faced severe penalties.

- The Piracy Act/Transportation Act of 1717: This act formalised the practice of transportation as a punishment for certain crimes. It allowed judges to sentence individuals to transportation to the American colonies for a specified period: **https://statutes.org.uk/site/the-statutes/eighteenth-century/1717-4-george-1-c-11-the-transportation-act/**

- The Transportation Act of 1776: With the loss of the American colonies, this act shifted the destination for transported convicts to other British colonies, including those in Australia.

- The First Fleet (1787–1788): The British government organised the First Fleet to transport convicts to the newly established colony of New South Wales.

- The Penal Servitude Act of 1853: This legislation marked a shift in the punishment system, replacing transportation with penal servitude within the British Isles. Convicts were now sentenced to hard labour within the UK.

- The Penal Servitude Act of 1857: This act further refined the penal servitude system and allowed for the transfer of convicts to overseas penal colonies, including Australia, after the termination of their sentence.

- The Prisons Act of 1865: This legislation aimed to improve conditions in British prisons and marked a shift away from transportation as a primary form of punishment.

- The Penal Servitude Act of 1891: This act consolidated previous laws related to penal servitude and reaffirmed the use of prisons as the primary means of punishment for serious crimes.

- The Penal Servitude Act of 1899: This legislation made further adjustments to penal servitude laws, clarifying the procedures for the release of prisoners on licence.

- The Penal Servitude Act of 1907: The final act related to penal servitude; this legislation further refined the legal framework surrounding the punishment of serious crimes.

- By the early 20th century, the practice of transporting convicts overseas had largely ended, replaced by other forms of punishment and incarceration within the United Kingdom. The legislative journey from the early authorisation of transportation in the 17th century to the eventual abandonment of the practice reflects changes in societal attitudes toward crime and punishment.

In Search Of … Convicts

THE CONVICT AND THE COPPER

by Peter Day

It sounds like the start of a joke, doesn't it? A convict and a copper walked into a bar ... But this little story is a drama, not a comedy.

It concerns a first cousin of mine, four times removed: one Richard Bailey Illidge. Richard was born into an illustrious family in 1820 at Newcastle-on-Lyme (near Stoke-on-Trent), in Staffordshire.[1] His father, William (1775-1857), was a prominent second-generation tailor in Newcastle; Richard's elder brother William (1809-1843) continued the family business. His uncles included Thomas Illidge (1771-1847) (one of my third great-grandfathers), who was a glass engraver (at the time quite a prestigious occupation, being a cross between a tradesman and an artist) in London; George Illidge (1773-1854), a merchant and long-time member of the Council of Policy on the Dutch part of the Caribbean island of St Martin; and John Illidge (1778-1846), who was a wildly successful stockbroker, member of the London Stock Exchange and elected Sheriff of London for 1834-35. John's estate was estimated at £60,000, about £6 million today.

Despite his family background, or perhaps in part because of it, Richard seems to have been one of those young men who was constantly in trouble. In 1835, at just 14 years of age, he

was convicted of larceny at the Newcastle Borough Assizes and sentenced to six months imprisonment.[2] In 1837, he got into trouble again. It seems he hid in the public house of George Bowers who, on retiring for the night of 3 January, had hung his gold watch and chain, which had cost him £17, over his head. About 3am, he had thought there might have been someone in the room, but went back to sleep. George woke up the next morning to find the watch gone.[3]

Richard was subsequently seen with a watch resembling the one stolen, so was under suspicion and was later arrested by a policeman, Cottrill. Richard was allowed a conversation with his mother, Ann (née Winstanley, c1781-1849). Cottrill arranged matters so he could overhear, and later reported that Ann said to Richard, "Say it was your father's old pinchbeck watch, and that you exchanged it with an Irish boy for the gold one." Richard replied that he had taken the maker's name out, to which Ann said she would manage that. There followed a farcical little scene. Under interrogation, Ann claimed that a man, whom she did not know, had told her the watch was buried in the back yard of her house. Cottrill and Ann went there. Dig, dig; no watch. Cottrill having momentarily turned away, Ann exclaimed, "Here it is!", and produced the watch.[4] Cottrill was unimpressed: Richard was

Stafford Assize Hall, built 1795-1798; supplied by author

charged with larceny, and Ann was charged with receiving stolen property. And no, this is not the copper of the headline.

At the Tunstall Petty Sessions at Stoke-on-Trent, on 24 January 1837, Richard and Ann were committed for trial at the county assizes, which was to be held at Stafford in March. They were sent from Newcastle in an open cart to Stafford Gaol, 16 miles away, and they remained in the gaol until their trial on Saturday, 18 March (the weather at the time of their imprisonment was said to be severely cold and frosty).[5]

Perhaps somewhat fortuitously, Ann was found not guilty by the jury. Despite the best efforts of their barrister, Richard was found guilty. It being his second offence, Richard was sentenced to transportation for life. It was reported that Ann fainted on hearing the sentence pronounced. Richard was possibly unlucky; I have seen the same sentence handed down for the more serious offence of the assault and rape of a young teenager.[6]

Richard's uncle, Thomas, was pretty dismissive of both Ann and Richard and seemed to blame Ann for Richard's behaviour. In November 1837, Thomas wrote a long letter to his son Josiah, who had emigrated to Sydney earlier that year. In that letter, Thomas agreed with the judge's comment that Ann "did not stand free of blame," and wrote, "were it not for the strong feelings of my Brother, I should have been glad if she also had been sent out of the country." Warning Josiah not to have anything to do with Richard if he should be sent to Sydney, Thomas described Richard as an "artful old rascal", and finished by writing "it is said that what is bred in the bone will come out in the flesh".[7]

For some months, Richard was imprisoned on the prison hulk *Ganymede*, moored off Woolwich.[8] He was subsequently put on the *Moffat*, which departed Sheerness on 7 November 1837. Delayed by damaged rigging requiring repairs at Spithead, the *Moffat* arrived at Hobart, Tasmania, on 1 April 1838.[9] Tasmania's penal colonies were notorious convict destinations due to their harsh environment, isolation and reputation for being inescapable.

Richard continued to get into trouble. His Tasmanian prison record shows a sentence in 1840 of two years hard labour for larceny under £5, and further but lesser sentences, such as 14 days for assaulting a fellow prisoner and 10 days for threatening language. Both resulted in solitary confinement.[10]

Transportation for life did not necessarily mean that one was a prisoner for life: usually after 14 years or so, a prisoner was awarded a conditional pardon, the condition being that the convict had to remain in the colony (Australia, but not necessarily Tasmania). Having previously unsuccessfully applied for a pardon in 1848 (it is unclear why he thought he might get an early release, with that record), Richard was finally granted a pardon in December 1850.[11] He promptly sailed for Melbourne,[12] where in 1851 he married Catherine Jones (b c1821).[13] By 1853, Richard and Catherine were in Geelong, where Richard was working as a stable hand and coachman.[14]

It was at Geelong that one Trooper John Goldman was due to hang for murder at 8am on Monday, 15 August 1853. Yes, now we have got to the copper of the headline.

Goldman and his superior, Corporal William Harvey, were part of the Ballarat Troop of the Gold Fields Police, whose job was to escort the gold wagons from Ballarat to Geelong. On 1 February 1852, Goldman shot Corporal Harvey in his tent at Buningyong (near Ballarat) following Goldman's altercation with a local shopkeeper over the ownership of some boxes. Harvey died 24 hours later, and Goldman disappeared for 14 months before being arrested. At his trial in Geelong before Judge Redmond Barry on 27 July 1853, Goldman was convicted of wilful murder and was sentenced to death. It was to be the first public execution in Geelong. However, it seems that there was considerable sentiment in the town against capital punishment and there was an appeal to Lieutenant Governor Charles La Trobe, which was denied.

The hanging continued to be controversial, and on Sunday, 14 August 1853, a parson, the Rev Theodore Stretch, and a schoolmaster, Mr Behan, wrote up a second petition addressed to La Trobe. One imagines them getting together after Sunday morning service and deciding over a lunch of roast beef and claret that Something Must Be Done![15]

The petition not being completed until late in the afternoon, and there being no railway (which did not arrive in Geelong until 1856), no coaches scheduled and no boats running, the only option was to send a courier 80 kilometres through the rough bush track to La Trobe's residence in Toorak. Stretch and Behan enlisted the help of a Mr Gibson, the owner of the stables where Richard worked. They first asked a John Montgomery, who had mounted a horse and was ready to start on the journey, but when he heard a man's life depended upon his being back before 8am the next day, he declined the responsibility, as he was a 'new chum' and by no means certain he would be able to find his way in time. So, they next asked Richard to undertake the ride, and he agreed.

Richard later said he set off for Melbourne just as it was getting dark (which suggests a departure about 6pm, as sunset at Geelong at that time of the year is about 5:45pm; other accounts suggest a 4pm departure). I have been unable to find a contemporary account of Richard's ride, but later accounts suggest he had a terrible ride. The weather turned, and the resulting rain turned the track to mud and flooded creeks. He missed the ford at Little River and nearly drowned. His horse knocked up there, but he secured a fresh horse from a paddock. Despite six (or eight) hours hard riding, he did not reach La Trobe until around midnight. Despite his refusal of the previous petition, the Lieutenant Governor gave Illidge an authority for the Sheriff, Foster Fyans, to stop the execution and another to procure a fresh horse. The latter was dated 15 August. Richard then set off on the return journey.

By 7:30 am, he had not arrived at Gallows Flat, where Fyans waited with Goldman, and the crowd that had assembled to see what would transpire started to become restless. There had been a false alarm at 7am, when a horseman arrived, but he was a stranger. Then, at about 7:45, just as the Fyans' men were about

View of Geelong, painting by Edward Snell, 1853. Image from Geelong Heritage Collections.

Geelong Gaol. The first stage opened in April 1853. The gallows were erected in the forecourt. Image courtesy Geelong Gaol Museum.

to take Goldman to the scaffold, up rode Richard with La Trobe's commutation. As might be expected, much rejoicing followed.

Richard's ride does not seem to have attracted much newspaper attention at the time; their reports were focussed on Goldman's last-minute reprieve. However, it was certainly noticed by the Geelong public, who raised a purse of 75 sovereigns that was presented to Richard, together with a testimonial printed in gold. And the ride seems to have lived on in folklore: 23 years later, there were a number of articles about it in various newspapers, which prompted Richard to come forward with his own version of the tale. A century later, in 1950, a poem, "The Ride of Richard Illidge" written by Mary Finnin, an Australian artist, art teacher and poet, was published in—where else—*The Bulletin*.[16] The poem was later included in Finnin's book of verse, *The Shield of Place*.[17] And in 2021, there was a podcast: *Ride for Life—The Near Execution of John Goldman*.[18] Richard's ride has, perhaps, grown in the telling: his own account did not mention the rain, the mud, and the flooding creeks. But there is no doubt it was a great feat of horsemanship, and his just-in-time arrival is confirmed by several newspaper reports at the time.

Goldman's sentence was commuted to 15 years hard labour. He served about 10 years before being given a Ticket of Leave. He died in 1913, at St Kilda in Melbourne, at the age of 83.[19]

After Richard's first wife, Catherine, died in 1862, Richard remarried, to a widow, Elizabeth Beardmore (née Cole, 1817-1874).[20] There do not seem to have been any children from either marriage. By the early 1870s, Richard and Elizabeth were living at Buninyong.[21] This completed a circle of sorts; as you may

recall, this was where Goldman shot Harvey. By 1876, Richard had a part share in, and worked on, the Dead Horse Gold Mine, also in the Ballarat area. On 21 July 1876, Richard and another miner, George Boyce, were killed at this mine when the roof of the drive they were working fell on them. Richard's brother, Thomas, who had emigrated to Victoria in 1853, had the melancholy task of identifying his body.[22]

Some may see this as a story of redemption. Mary Finnin certainly did: her poem, and her subsequent article in *The Australian Journal*,[23] suggest a prior friendship between Richard Bailey and John Goldman. However, some of the facts she mentions are at odds with the newspaper reports. I think that it is all of a piece. Richard seems to me to have been a larrikin and a show off. The watch was likely taken as a lark.[24] Similarly, I think he undertook the ride not to save Goldman—as an ex-convict, he probably didn't care whether Trooper Goldman swung or not —but to impress people with his horse-riding skill. Perhaps I am too much the cynic, but I have even wondered whether he staged the last-minute arrival back from Melbourne, which on one view of the timing he might well have. The theft got him a lot more than he bargained for; the ride, exactly what he was looking for!

Peter Day is a retired accountant. He first started researching his family history in 2013 when he was still working, but soon concluded that it could quickly become all-consuming, and so put it aside until he retired. Now that he has taken it up again, he has found he was right! Peter acknowledges the helpful comments of the Port Macquarie and Districts Family History Society Writers' Support Group on an earlier draft of this story.

1. Findmypast.com.au. *Staffordshire Baptisms* [data set]. Richard Bailey Illidge, baptism, Newcastle under Lyme, St Giles, 9 August 1820. Archive reference: D3251/1/10, 231. https://search.findmypast.com.au/search-world-records/staffordshire-baptisms.
2. Ancestry.com. *England & Wales, Criminal Registers, 1791-1892* [database online]. Richard Illidge, 5 March 1835, Staffordshire. Original data: Series HO 26 and HO 27, The National Archives, Kew, Surrey, England. https://www.ancestry.com.au/search/collections/1590/.
3. Except as noted, details of the theft, police investigation and subsequent trials are taken from "Tunstall Petty Sessions", *Staffordshire Advertiser*, 28 January 1837, 3 and "Staffordshire Assizes", same paper, 25 March 1837, 4.
4. That was the evidence Cottrill gave at the committal hearing. At the trial, Cottrill's evidence on this point was slightly different.
5. Thomas Illidge, letter to his son Josiah, dated 27 November 1837, in Neil Priddy, "Harriot Muckleston - Illidge Connection", *Muckleston Family History*, https://muckleston.one-name.net/, posted 22 January 2018, accessed 24 January 2021.
6. "Conviction for Rape", *Leeds Intelligencer*, 27 July 1833, 3.
7. Thomas Illidge, op. cit.
8. Ancestry.com. UK, *Prison Hulk Registers and Letter Books, 1802-1849* [database on-line]. Richard Illidge, *Ganymede*. Original data: HO9, The National Archives, Kew, England. https://www.ancestry.com.au/search/collections/1989/.
9. Ancestry.com. *Australian Convict Transportation Registers – Other Fleets & Ships, 1791-1868* [database on-line]. Richard Illidge per *Moffat*. Original data: HO11, The National Archives, Kew, England. https://www.ancestry.com.au/search/collections/1180/ and *Free Settler or Felon – Convict and Colonial History*, https://www.freesettlerorfelon.com. Convict Ship *Moffatt* – 1838, accessed 22 May 2002.
10. Libraries Tasmania. *Names Index*, https://libraries.tas.gov.au/#search, Richard Illidge, Convicts, Conduct Record, CON31-1-25, image 4.
11. Ibid.
12. "Shipping Intelligence", *The Argus* (Melbourne, Vic), 4 January 1851, 2.
13. Victorian Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages, Certificate of Marriage Richard Illidge and Caroline Jones (1851 no 5768).
14. Except as noted, details of this and the following events at Geelong are taken from: "Geelong Circuit Court", *Geelong Advertiser and Intelligencer*, 28 July 1853, 3.; "Geelong", *The Argus* (Melbourne, Vic), 12 August 1853, 4. "Condemned Criminal", *Geelong Advertiser and Intelligencer*, 16 August 1853, 2.; "Geelong", *The Argus* (Melbourne, Vic), 16 August 1853, 4. "Goldman", *Geelong Advertiser and Intelligencer*, 22 August 1853, 2.; "Ride for Life", *Geelong Advertiser*, 8 January 1876, 5. "All About Illidge's Ride to Melbourne", *Geelong Advertiser*, 12 January 1876, 4.; L B J Blake, "Unveiling of a Commemorative Plaque at Geelong", *La Trobeana*, vol 5 no. 1, August 2006, 15-16, https://www.latrobesociety.org.au/latrobeana.; Mex Cooper, "Amazing Stories: Saved from Geelong Gaol's Gallows by the Bell", *The Geelong Advertiser*, https://www.geelongadvertiser.com.au/, posted 10 April 2014, accessed 22 May 2022.
15. I am being unkind! It was reported that Behan knew a boy who gave evidence at Goldman's trial, and thought him unreliable, so he went to Stretch with this information. However, the boy's evidence does not seem to have been that important.
16. Mary Finnin, "The Ride of Richard Illidge", *The Bulletin*, 16 August 1950 (vol 71 no 3679), 12.
17. Mary Finnin, *The Shield of Place*, Angus and Robertson, Sydney. 1957.
18. Deb Robinson, "Ride for Life - The Near Execution of John Goldman", *Locked Up With History*, https://lockedupwithhistory.com.au/, posted 18 April 2021, accessed 30 July 2022.
19. *Ibid*.
20. Vic State Government. *Family History Search*, abstracts. Marriage registration of Richard Illidge (1862 no 4194). https://my.rio.bdm.vic.gov.au/efamily-history/.
21. Ballarat Historical Society. *Ballarat Benevolent Society Consolidated Registers 1860-1925*, http://www.ballarathistoricalsociety.com/index.php/the-collection/bbsr, Elizabeth Illidge.
22. "Fatal Accident at the New Welcome Claim, Dead Horse", *Ballarat Courier*, 24 July 1876, 3.
23. Mary Finnin, "The Lonely Horseman", *The Australian Journal*, 1 October 1953. I have not been able to access this work in full, only a partial transcription.
24. Although there was evidence at the trial that Richard told a friend that he might sell the watch and buy a pony with the proceeds.

SHADRACH WAS A (PENTON)VILLAIN!

by John M. Slattery

In his book *The Pentonvillains*,[1] Ian Wynd records that "Pentonvillains" was the name given by Melbournians to a group of convicts sent to Port Phillip in the early 1840s, despite the fact that Port Phillip was not a penal settlement. The majority of these convicts came from Pentonville Prison in London, hence the nickname. Officially, they were called "Exiles".

This "Exiles" scheme was introduced following the abolition of transportation to New South Wales in 1840, with the result that Van Diemen's Land (now Tasmania) then became the only Australian penal colony to which Britain could send convicts. Full details and analyses of this scheme can be found elsewhere,[2] but a convenient summary is given by Dr. Colleen Wood:[3]

"The early 1840s was a time of economic distress and increasing crime in Britain, but also a time of changing attitudes to prison reform. This period also witnessed economic depression in the Australian colonies. The exile scheme was created largely in response to the deteriorating employment circumstances in the penal colony of Van Dieman's [*sic*] Land, to which the exiles were destined. One aim of the experiment was to provide opportunities for the exiles to begin new lives in the colony.

Between 1844 and 1849, Britain transported to Port Phillip nine shiploads of conditionally-pardoned exiles from Pentonville, Millbank and Parkhurst Prisons. These 1727 men and boys had experienced lengthy periods under the 'separate system' of incarceration, during which they learned a trade and improved their literacy levels. Upon arrival they landed as free men in Melbourne, Geelong and Portland, provided they did not return to Britain during the remainder of their sentences."

The scheme was introduced in 1844 by Lord Stanley, then Secretary of State for the Colonies, who wrote, after considering the situation in the Australian colonies:[4]

"The result of our deliberations on the subject is first of all to convince us that there is no sufficient reason why the better class of Prisoners, who have served the prescribed period of secluded punishment at Parkhurst and Pentonville, should be transported as Convicts at all. We apprehend that they may with equal advantage to Society at large and with greater benefit to themselves be sent to Australia as Exciles [sic]. That is, it appears to us that this Class of Persons should leave this Country with Free pardons qualified only by the condition of their not returning hither until the expiration of their Sentences."

As Wynd comments,[5] this was a semantic way out of the problem —"a convict was placed on a ship in England, miraculously underwent a sea change on the voyage, and arrived in Australia a free man."

Shadrach[6] Petford was an Exile—he was transported to Port Phillip on the *Maitland*, one of the nine ships which transported the Exiles, arriving on 9 November 1846.

In the 1841 England Census, Shadrach (then aged 18) was recorded living with his mother, Mary, and younger brother, David, in the village of Stockgreen, near Inkberrow, in Worcestershire, England.[7]

On 3 October 1844, *Berrow's Worcester Journal*[8] reported:

"On Wednesday morning last, four men, Shadrach Petford, Wm. Petford, James Farmer, and William Marshall, were taken before the Rev. W. Vernon, J. H. Galton, and W. H. Ricketts, Esqrs., at Droitwich, charged with having, on the 22nd instant, killed, stolen, and carried away, an ewe sheep from a field at Inkberrow, the property of Mr. William Saunders, farmer, of that place. It appeared that the sheep was killed in the field, on the Friday night; and on the Saturday morning part of the mutton was found in the houses of the prisoners Petford and Farmer. The evidence altogether against those two, being quite conclusive, they were committed for trial at the Sessions. The others were discharged."

Two weeks later, on 17 October 1844, the same newspaper reported that following the trial of Shadrach Petford and James Farmer for "sheep stealing", held at the Worcester County Quarter Sessions on 14 October 1844,[9] "(T)he Jury returned a verdict of guilty against both prisoners, who were sentenced to ten years' transportation."

According to the newspaper report, after the animal was found to be missing, "the skin, entrails and feet of a slaughtered sheep" were discovered, the skin being of a peculiar kind known by the name of "magpie-eye". A police witness gave evidence of having traced footmarks to the prisoner Farmer's house, where he found clothing "wet with blood". Some pieces of liver were also found in Farmer's house. At Petford's house, the witness found some cloths also "wet with blood", as well as "the two fore quarters of a sheep, with the lights[10] and part of the liver, locked up in a box upstairs". The two prisoners had been apprehended the same day, coming from Worcester together in a cart, and some keys were found on Petford which fitted the box in which the mutton was found. The principal evidence against Petford was given by Marshall (who had previously been charged but not committed for trial). He lived in the same house as Petford, and gave evidence of Petford "having left the house on the night in question, and returned some time in the morning, when he heard him unlock his box". In broad terms, it could be said that the prisoners had been caught "with blood on their hands".

The *Register of Prisoners, Pentonville Prison, Middlesex*,[11] records that Shadrach, aged 23, was transferred to Pentonville from Millbank Prison on 9 December 1844. He remained there for a period of just over 18 months until he embarked on the *Maitland* on 22 June 1846.

According to the *Convict Records database*,[12] Shadrach was one of 299 convicts transported on the *Maitland*, that arrived at Van Diemen's Land on 27 October 1846.[13] The convicts were not disembarked there, but were taken on to Port Phillip where they were disembarked—as Exiles—at "Williams Town" on 9 November 1846.[14]

The fact that the Exiles were granted a Conditional Pardon on arrival, i.e. that they were "free" men (subject only to the condition that they could not return to England during the remainder of their sentence), is reflected by the inclusion of their details in the *Register of Assisted Immigrants from the United Kingdom*, held at the Public Records Office of Victoria.[15] This Register includes both a nominal list of Exiles from the *Maitland* and a disposal list of those Exiles. The former list records that Shadrach was

24, single, could read and write, was formerly a labourer and had been taught the "shoemaker" trade at Pentonville prison; while the disposal list records that on arrival at Port Phillip he was employed by "John Tracey for six months at £20 p.a.".[16]

Nothing further is known about Shadrach until 7 February 1854 when he married Sarah Cameron at the house of Rev. Dr. Cairns in East Melbourne, Victoria. Sarah,[17] daughter of John Cameron and Catherine Kennedy, then aged 16, was born in Kilmonivaig, Inverness, Scotland and arrived in Victoria (with her parents and siblings) on the *Genghis Khan* on 1 July 1853. Their marriage certificate[18] records Shadrach's age as 26,[19] his parents as Thomas Petford and Mary Hughes, and that he was born at Stock Green, Worcestershire, England.

According to the Victorian birth records, Shadrach and Sarah had one child, George, who was born at Bacchus Marsh, Victoria in 1857.[20] Other records (see below) also record another son Frederick, born about 1859.[21]

While still married to Sarah, Shadrach was named as father of three more children born to two separate mothers: Alberta Petford (Williams), born (and died) 1861 at Ballan, Victoria to Annie Williams;[22] and Joseph and William Petford, born 1867 and 1868 respectively, at Lethbridge, Victoria to Bridget McDonald.[23]

In the light of these further births, it is perhaps not surprising to find a mention of Shadrach in a notice in the *Victorian Police Gazette* of 3 January 1877,[24] as follows:

> "SHADRACK PITFORD [*sic*] is charged on warrant, issued by the Ballan Bench, with deserting his wife last April. Description: — English, labourer, 46 years of age, 5 feet 9 inches high, stout build, dark complexion, dark hair, whiskers and beard turning grey."

There is no indication that Shadrach was located and/or arrested on the warrant (which presumably was issued in late 1876), and his whereabouts remained unknown; furthermore, the place and date of his death are unknown. In a number of ways, however, he had lived up to the nickname of "Pentonvillain".

After being deserted by Shadrach, Sarah (as Sarah Patford) re-married on 2 December 1876 at Sandridge (Port Melbourne), Victoria.[25] Her second husband was William John Crawford who was born about 1841 in London, England, and died in South Melbourne, Victoria in 1890.[26] The informant on his death certificate was "F. Patford, Stepson"—presumably Frederick, the second son of Shadrach and Sarah.

It is interesting to note that the notice in the *Victorian Police Gazette* asserts that Shadrach deserted "last April", presumably April 1876; however, on her second marriage certificate, Sarah's status is recorded as "Widow" and the date of decease of her former husband is stated as "1867". It is possible that as far as Sarah was concerned Shadrach had "disappeared" in 1867, and she then "presumed" he was dead when she re-married in December 1876; however, this does not explain why the warrant for desertion was apparently not issued until late 1876, and notice of it was not circulated in the *Victorian Police Gazette* until after Sarah's second marriage.

Sarah Crawford died at South Yarra, Victoria on 14 March 1906.[27] Her death certificate lists two sons from her marriage to Shadrach: George (died 1890) and Frederick (aged 47, so born about 1859), as well as one son from her second marriage (William Henry Crawford, born about 1881).

Perhaps the last word regarding Shadrach Petford should be left to the anonymous person who left the following note at the foot of the entry for him in the *Convict Records* database:[28]

> "After arriving in Port Phillip, Shadrach was pardoned. He settled in the Ballan area and married Sarah Cameron. They had one son, George Petford.[29]
> Shadrach was a womaniser and also had two other ladies on the side, who bore three children to him. He then went awol, possibly to New Zealand.
> Shadrach was my Great Great Great Grandfather."

John Slattery has been researching his family history (with ancestors from Ireland, England and Scotland) for around 20 years. In 2021 he completed the SAG Diploma in Family Historical Studies (Dip. FHS) with a thesis entitled "A Cameron family and descendants: From the highlands of Scotland to the Victorian goldfields and beyond".

This article focuses on an "interesting" individual he came across in researching his family history.

1. Ian Wynd, *The Pentonvillains* (Newtown, Victoria: Ian Wynd, 1996).
2. For example: Wynd; Keith M Clarke, *Convicts of the Port Phillip District* (Waramanga, A.C.T.: K.M. & G. Clarke, 1999); Colleen Wood, *Great Britain's exiles sent to Port Phillip, Australia, 1844-1849: Lord Stanley's Experiment*. PhD Thesis, School of Historical and Philosophical Studies, University of Melbourne, 2014 (minerva-access.unimelb.edu.au).
3. Wood, abstract, iii.
4. From *Historical Records of Australia (HRA)*, I, XXIII, see Wynd, 3.
5. Wynd, 3.
6. Sometimes called "Shadrack".
7. Ancestry.com. *1841 England Census* (database on-line). Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc. 2010.Surname incorrectly transcribed as "Welford".
8. *Berrow's Worcester Journal, Worcester, England* (accessed via The British Newspaper Archive, Findmypast Newspaper Archive Limited, London, UK).
9. Ancestry.com *England & Wales, Criminal Registers, 1791-1892* (database on-line). Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2009.
10. The "lights" are the lungs of an animal.
11. Findmypast.com.au *England & Wales, Crime, Prisons & Punishment, 1770-1935* (database on-line).
12. *Convict Records* (database on-line) www.convictrecords.com.au.
13. James Farmer was also transported on the *Maitland*.
14. Although 299 convicts were initially embarked, two were taken to hospital at Portsmouth before the ship sailed, three died at sea, and three were taken to hospital at Hobart Town when the ship reached Van Diemen's Land. Accordingly, 291 convicts were disembarked at Port Phillip.
15. Public Records Office of Victoria; Series VPRS 14; Series Title: *Register of Assisted Immigrants from the United Kingdom*. See also, Ancestry.com *Victoria, Australia, Assisted and Unassisted Passenger Lists, 1839-1923* (database on-line). Lehi, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations Inc., 2009.
16. See also Clarke. Appendices: Data, Exiles

17. Sarah, also known by the Gaelic equivalent "Morag", was a younger sister of my father's Great Grandmother, Mary Cameron.
18. Victorian Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages, Marriage Certificate No. 89/1854 - Shadrach Petford and Sarah Cameron.
19. This age cannot be correct if Shadrach was 23 when transferred to Pentonville prison in 1844; in 1854 his age would have been about 33. Perhaps he "lost" several years because he was marrying a girl aged 16.
20. Victorian Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages, Birth Certificate No. 5546/1857 – George Petford.
21. Sarah and her sons later used the surname "Patford".
22. Victorian Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages, Birth Certificate No. 1903/1861 – Alberta Petford; Death Certificate No. 1340/1861 – Alberta Williams, 3 mths.
23. Victorian Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages, Birth Certificate No. 9020/1867 – Joseph Petford; Birth Certificate No. 17349/1868 – William Petford. Bridget later used the surname "Petford".
24. Ancestry.com. *Victoria, Australia, Police Gazettes, 1855, 1864-1924* (database on-line). Lehi, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations Inc., 2016.
25. Victorian Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages, Marriage Certificate No. 3931/1876 – William John Crawford and Sarah Patford.
26. Victorian Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages, Death Certificate No. 16720/1891 – William John Crawford.
27. Victorian Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages, Death Certificate No. 3476/1906 – Sarah Crawford.
28. *Convict Records* (database on-line) www.convictrecords.com.au.
29. Clearly, the anonymous person didn't know of the second son, Frederick.

Title image (previous page, top): Pentonville Prison in 1842; public domain

In Search Of … Convicts

THE DECISIONS OF A POOR SHEPHERD

by Chris Bedford

On 26 July 1772, a baby boy was born in Lidlington, Bedfordshire, England. No other verifiable parental or filial information is available. His life and decisions would take him to the other side of the world.

His name was John Bollard.

Life in those days was arduous for the common man. They were generally employed at an early age, males on the land and females as domestics such as housemaids or nannies. Very few of the poorer class in England were able to read or write in the early 1700s. Using OpenRefine (a free piece of software), data from Deb Oxley's *Convict Maids* and comparing the female data from Van Diemen's land (as supplied by Professor Hamish Maxwell-Stewart) it can be seen that a large proportion of females were not able to read AND write.[1] Comparisons of male convict data cannot be made at this time as the New South Wales male convict table is incomplete.

NSW Female Convicts

Country of birth			Total = 13,147	
	England	Ireland	Scotland	Wales
Totals	2,813	4,366	377	96

Literacy				
Unknown	467	493	29	6
Neither	405	1,950	30	22
Reads	1,080	1,478	195	36
Reads and Writes	857	443	123	32
% of unknown and neither	30.9	58	15.6	29.1

Van Diemen's Land Female Convicts

Country of birth			Total = 91	
	England	Ireland	Scotland	Wales
Totals	51	19	15	0

Literacy				
Unknown	13	2	4	0
Neither	5	9	1	0
Reads	17	5	5	0
Reads and Writes	16	3	5	0
% of unknown and neither	35.3	57.9	33.3	0

John himself had been working as a shepherd for Edward Pratt Esq for some time before he married 25-year-old Hannah Johnson on 30 October 1798.[2] Together they had eight children: Frances (born 1799), Sarah (born 1801), Thomas (born 1803), Hannah (born 1805), William (born 1807), Benjamin (born 1809), John (born 1811) and Zilpha (Cox) (born 1815).

Bedfordshire Archives reports that John was committed for sheep stealing and was held in the Bedford Gaol awaiting trial.[3] According to the convict records (and the *Northampton Mercury*), he escaped custody at 5am on 12 October 1811 and a reward of ten guineas was offered for his recovery.[4] John was apprehended and his trial took place at the Lent Assizes. He was convicted of the stealth of sheep from Mr Richard Randall of Church Farm in Marston-Moretaine. He was given a death sentence that was commuted to life beyond the seas. In the interim, he was sent to the Hulk* *Captivity* in Portsmouth. From his Convict Indent, John is described a 5 foot 10½ inches or 1.8m tall. He had fair skin with a ruddy, pock-pitted complexion with black and grey hair and hazel eyes. He was 29 years old.[5]

A **hulk** was a ship moored on the water but incapable of sea travel. The convicts on board wore irons and were woken at 5am. They were rowed to the nearest town where they laboured on building or other public works for ten hours in the summer and seven in the winter. The hulks were overcrowded and disease was rife.[6]

Eventually, John Bollard left England forever on the *Fortune* which set sail on 31 October 1812. He shared the ship with 199 other men, all bound for what would be known as Sydney Town. After seven and a half months, they reached Sydney on 11 June 1813. Everything he knew of life was about to be turned on its head.
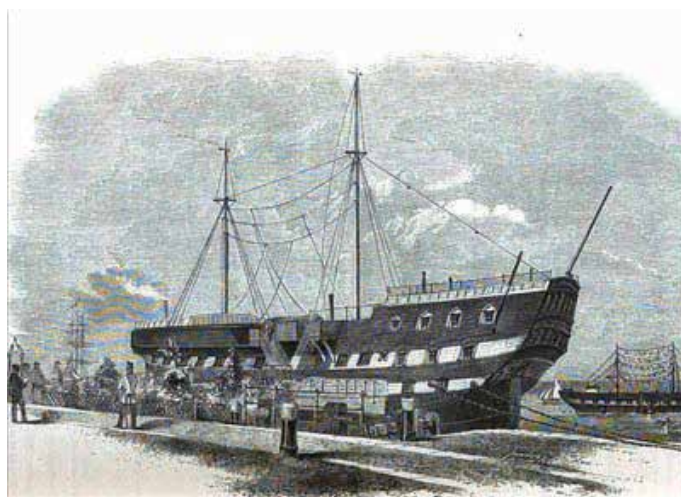
[Anonymous], "The Warrior *hulk with the* Sulphur *washing-ship in the distance", from Henry Mayhew and John Binny. The* Criminal Prisons of London, and Scenes of Prison Life, *Volume 3 of The Great Metropolis (1862), 256. From Wikimedia Commons.*

The seasons were upside down. The heat was draining. There were strange animals and the feeling of being watched by the first inhabitants was always there. The world he had known had entered the Industrial Age. In Sydney, all work was powered by convicts and the few beasts of burden brought with the convict ships. Punishment was swift and brutal. Minor offences resulted in flogging with the cat-of-nine-tails, while major offences (which included the stealth of food) resulted in hanging. Male convicts made up the majority of the population.

Gaol Record Detail For: John Bollard

Record ID:	1031
Commital Year:	1811
Reference Doc:	BLARS QGV10/1
ID in Reference Doc:	24
Age:	39
Gender:	male
Height	5 feet 6½ inches
Hair Colour:	Dark Brown
Complexion:	Dark
Residence (town/village):	Lidlington
Residence (county):	Bedfordshire
Offence:	Sheep Stealing
Committed by:	John Miller Esquire
When Committed:	12/10/1811
Trial/Conviction Date:	05/03/1812
Trial Type:	Lent Assizes
Type of Gaol:	Bedford County Gaol
Sentence: For	Death reprieved Transportation Life
How Disposed:	Put on board Capitivity Hulk Portsmouth 13th May[7]

Lachlan Macquarie was Governor of the Colony (1810-1822) when John arrived. Macquarie utilised the abilities of convicts such as Greenway to change the landscape of Sydney Town, apart from the haphazard construction in The Rocks.[8] It has been said that Macquarie "changed New South Wales from a struggling penal colony into a British settlement – a place where free and emancipated persons could establish new lives, with better access to land and opportunities."[9]

Sporadically, the British Government offered a Convict Family Reunion Scheme.[10] This, in part, was an attempt to increase the low numbers of women in the colony. Luckily for John, this opportunity was taken up by Hannah. While the passage on offer from the Government was free, the family still had to supply themselves with clothing and other essentials to suit the new climate, as required on a detailed list, as well as arrange their own transport to the port of departure. It is possible that the parish assisted the family with these necessities.

Although expensive for the parish, it was ultimately cheaper than the parish 'keeping' them in the long run. It is difficult to understand the hardship Hannah had lived through without the breadwinner of the family. It can be suggested that Hannah went back to domestic service, as she was in the employ of the Cox family and 'Gentleman Cox' is written as the father of Hannah's last child.[11] Most likely, in keeping with traditions of the times, Hannah would have been sacked with no references once her pregnancy was known. Between 1813 and 1822, Hannah had had to deal with the deaths of three children: Thomas in 1813, Sarah in 1816 and her namesake Hannah in 1817.[12] Hannah and her surviving children arrived in Sydney as free settlers on 7 January 1822 on the ship *Providence*.

Women were not usually able to get land grants in their own name under British law, however, as John was a convict and had no rights, she was able to procure land in Picton, New South Wales. Ultimately, John was assigned to her as a convict and the family was together again. Zilpha, although not John's biological child, was brought up as a Bollard.

John was eventually given a Conditional Pardon. As a 'lifer', he could never return to England but as Australia offered him opportunities he never would have attained in his homeland,

doubtless he was content. With a pardon, although conditional, John regained his rights and the property that Hannah had received as a grant was now considered his. He and his family farmed and prospered in the Picton area.

The 1828 Census records him and his family thus:
- Bollard, John 56, conditional pardon, *Fortune* (2), 1813, life, Protestant. farmers, Cobbity, Cooke, 96 acres, 40 cleared, 38 cultivated, 4 horned cattle
- Bollard, Hannah, 56, came free, *Providence* 1822, Protestant
- Bollard, William 22 came free, *Providence* 1822 Protestant
- Bollard, Benjamin 20 came free *Providence* 1822 Protestant[13]

Partly due to the high proportion of convicts in the population, it's hardly surprising that four of the five children of John and Hannah married people who were either convicts or close relatives of convicts.

Frances married William Fisher in 1822. William Jude Fisher was born in West Yorkshire, England, tried in Lancashire Quarter Sessions for larceny and sentenced to seven years. He arrived on the *Sir William Bensley*.

Benjamin married Jane Graham in 1834. She was born in Glasgow, Scotland, and worked as a nurse girl. She was tried in Lancashire for stealing a hat and sentenced to fourteen years. Jane arrived on the *Buffalo*.

Zilpha married Arthur Francis Walker in 1831. He was born in Limerick, Ireland and worked as a carpenter. Arthur was tried for burglary and stealing gunpowder and sentenced to Life. He arrived on the *Brampton*.[14]

John married Rosanna Cullen in 1836. While Rosanna was not a convict, her father Cornelius (aka Connor Quillan) was transported to Australia from Ireland in 1822. He was sent out for Life but no crime has been found thus far.

Grave of Hannah Bollard

When John Bollard died on 22 June 1849 in Redbank, Picton, his sons had land of their own and his daughters were married to men who were employed. He was buried in Picton Anglican Cemetery. His wife, Hannah, died on 29 October 1852 in Redbank, Picton and is buried near her husband.[15]

All in all, John's decision to rustle sheep caused a domino effect that gave him more opportunities than he would have enjoyed back in England. By no means would his convict life have been pleasurable, but his good conduct meant he was not sent to a place of secondary punishment and allowed his remaining family to join him and he had the chance to become a landowner, something he could not have done in his homeland.

Information about convicts is becoming increasingly more accessible. All available information on Tasmanian convicts is now housed on a database that has been compiled by the University of Tasmania. The University of Armidale is in the process of doing the same with New South Wales convicts.

John's and Hannah's family now spreads across a great part of Australia and numbers in the hundreds. One descendant, Brian Robert Bollard, wrote *The Bollards of Bedfordshire: The Descendants of John and Hannah Bollard* in 1993 for a family reunion in Picton, NSW the same year, making copies available for purchase. Another book, *The Bollards and Relatives of Redbank Upper Picton pre-1900: Their lives and Times as contained in Court Records*, compiled by John William Bollard and Brian Robert Bollard, followed in 1998. It has since been

found that a portion of the family was omitted due to the way births in Queensland omitted illegitimacy on registration.

In earlier years, the shame of having a convict in the family resulted in hidden or manufactured family histories. This has been replaced somewhat by a sense of pride in having descended from 'Australian Royalty' (a term that appears to have been coined by Jack Thompson when he featured in *Who Do You Think You Are?* on 13 January 2008).

A twist in this Bollard dynasty results from the finite number of non-Indigenous persons in the early colony. If your family is originally from another country and was transported as a convict to Australia, the odds are that there will be connections to many others in the same situation: my best friend and I are descended from Benjamin Bollard and William Bollard respectively; the builder that another friend engaged is descended from Frances Bollard and another friend is related, by marriage, to another descendant of William's.

The world truly is small, and an amazing place.

Chris Bedford has always been interested in history. When she found genealogy, she started searching where her family was from and what their lives were like. She loves to place family history inside a social context. Finding one part of her family story originates in Bedford, she finds quite amusing. Chris has completed a Graduate Diploma in Local, Family and Applied History at the University of New England, Armidale. Her other qualifications include a Diploma of Teaching and a Bachelor of Education.

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In Search Of ... Convicts

BRYAN O'CONNOR

Doctor, Rebel, Convict, Free

by C. J. Eddington

Ninety-one percent of Australian convicts were transported for petty crimes.[1] Dr Bryan O'Connor*[2] was not one of them – in 1798 he was found guilty of high treason along with two of his brothers-in-law and sentenced to transportation for life. He was not your typical convict – he was a surgeon; he was transported with friends and relatives and only served three years of his life sentence before returning home after nine years in New South Wales.[3]

Unfortunately, these early convicts to New South Wales have no bio-metric data in their convict records, so little is known of Bryan's physical appearance. But as a surgeon he would have been able to read and write. He had taken part in the United Irishmen rebellion in Ireland and was such a danger to the crew of the *Minerva* – by conspiring mutiny – that he had to be put in irons for a substantial part of the voyage.[4] According to Dr Maxwell-Stewart, 10 percent of convict ships arriving in Van Diemen's Land had been subject to attempted mutinies on the voyage.[5] The biggest problem for the mutineers was not the actual seizing control of the ship but what to do afterwards. Did they have the skills to sail a ship?

Of the 17,880 convicts transported to Australia in the period 1788 -1818, only 24 had a medical background.[6] Bryan was convicted of high treason in 1798 and arrived in New South Wales in 1800 on the *Minerva* after 193 days at sea.[7] In April 1800 there was a brawl at Toongabbie camp and Bryan O'Connor, surgeon at the camp, dressed the wounds of John O'Neil, another convict.[8] Bryan was quickly emancipated in 1801 and worked as assistant surgeon on Norfolk Island between 1802 and 1804.[9] Although

transported for life, he only served three years of this sentence. This is well below the average of 8.7 years.[10] From 1806, he was self-employed as a surgeon.[11]

In one aspect, however, Bryan was a typical convict – he was Irish. Irish felons made up about 22 percent of all male convicts.[12] It is difficult to know the exact numbers of Irish born men and women who were convicts. Using place of conviction as a substitute for place of birth, there are 27,100 men from Ireland from a total of 119,000 male felons transported to Australia.

A number of these Irish convicts were convicted of treason, although a lot of Irish were petty criminals transported for the same range of crimes as other British convicts.[13] The relationship between the Protestant (Anglican) British establishment and Roman Catholic Ireland is complicated. There are political, religious and cultural differences that eventually resulted in the creation of the Irish Free State in 1912 and later the Republic of Ireland in 1949.

Bryan was part of the Society of United Irishmen's rebellion of 1798. It was a brutal conflict. The rebellion is not simple to explain. On one side were the Irish dissenting (i.e. non-Anglican) Protestant groups, such as Presbyterians; plus, Irish Catholics and French. On the other side were the Anglo-Irish Anglican Ascendency and the English. To maintain Protestant power, Catholics were denied many rights. They couldn't vote, hold political office, join the Army, or purchase and inherit land.[14]

Against the backdrop of the American War of Independence (1775-83) and the French Revolution (1789), the Society of United Irishmen was founded by Theobald Wolfe Tone in October 1791. Initially they wanted reforms but eventually they sought to break all ties with Britain in order to create a wholly independent Irish republic, and embraced violence as a means to achieve this.

On 15 December 1796, there was an abortive attempt by Tone to land on the shores of Bantry Bay in Cork with a French fleet

carrying about 14,450 men and a large supply of war material. The fleet had to turn back. Eventually in May 1798 the United Irishmen launched their attacks. There were a series of skirmishes, but the only one to seriously challenge the English was in Wexford. But even this was a crushing defeat for the Irish. By October 1798 the rebellion was over. It was total failure for the United Irishmen.

It is unclear at what point Dr Bryan O'Connor and his brothers-in-law joined the United Irishmen, or where he was captured.

Some of the defeated rebels were burnt to death, some hanged, some imprisoned and some transported.[15] This ruthless treatment by the English of the Irish rebels may go some way to explaining his mutinous behaviour aboard the *Minerva*. By 15 December 1799, four months into the voyage and on the Rio de Janeiro to Port Jackson leg, John Washington Price, surgeon on board the *Minerva*, reports that, "O'Connor one of our most troublesome convicts, was this day put in irons, for his improper conduct."[16] He appears to have not been released for some time.

Bryan O'Connor was fortunate in that he was transported with both friends and relatives. He was transported with fellow rebels – two of them brothers-in-law. Bryan O'Connor's wife Jane McCarthy had a brother Florence McCarthy[17] who was on the *Minerva*; as was Henry William Alcock who was married to Margaret O'Connor, Bryan O'Connor's sister.[18] There are cases of felons sailing with free family members – spouse, siblings, a parent or children.[19] This would be an interesting area of research.

Only a tiny percentage of transported convicts returned home to their former lives: some sources say as low as 10 percent.[20] Bryan was one of them.[21] He appears in the 1806 NSW muster[22] as Bryan O'Connor *Minerva* Surgeon; together with Hannah Harris born here; and lastly Mary Eades *Surprize* Housekeeper. He is not in the 1811 muster.

By 1814 he is back in Cork. The Cork baptism records have three children born to Bryan O'Connor M.D. and Jane McCarthy: Ellen (1814) and John (1816) in Skibbereen, Cork, and Honora (1818) in Clonkilty, Cork.[23] He also had a daughter in Australia – Eliza Eleanora O'Connor, with Mary Eades (his housekeeper) in 1806, who, on the death of her mother in 1807 and the departure of her father, was raised by her maternal aunt.[24] Elizabeth Connor (*sic*) appears in Van Diemen's Land with Viana Brackenrig Blinkworth (née Eades).[25]

However, no record can be found of Bryan O'Connor listed as a passenger/crew leaving NSW between 1809 and 1813, or arriving in Ireland/England, but clearly he did leave. Maybe he used the money from the sale of his land grant to fund his passage, or money from the fees he charged for private consultations, or he worked his passage back as a ship's surgeon. Governor Bligh wrote glowingly of his medical expertise so it is possible that the navy would have been happy to have him as a senior crew member despite all the problems he created on the outward journey.[26]

Bryan O'Connor was not your typical convict. He was one of the many transported from Ireland. Although Irish, he was not a petty criminal; instead, he was a political criminal, a professional man. His return to Ireland marked him out as different to the rest.

He left his daughter, Elizabeth, as a legacy of his time in New South Wales.

It is not known when Bryan died, or what happened to his Irish children, but they would have been in their 20s and 30s during the Great Famine of 1845-1852.

Carolyn was born in Tasmania but raised in Western Australia. Her ancestors migrated from Britain in the days of sailing ships, and building on her parents' research using internet resources has uncovered a bigamist, a traitor and several publicans. She has completed the University of Tasmania Diploma of Family History to better equip herself, particularly with convict records. Using DNA has both confirmed her documented family tree and found new branches for it. This year she wrote the stories of her 22 migrant ancestors and published them on her blog *fromoaktogumtreedpress.com*

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THE GENEALOGY OF FATHER JOHN JOSEPH THERRY

Some Unanswered Questions

by Damian John Gleeson[1]

Father John Joseph Therry is revered as Australia's first 'apostle' and the "founder of the Catholic Church in Australia".[2] Little, though, has been written about his Irish genealogy. In his official biography a century ago, Fr (later Archbishop) O'Brien commented that "facts concerning his [Therry's] early life have been difficult to obtain".[3] Fr Therry's birthdate and baptism were not identified and although he did not know the priest's parents' names, O'Brien assumed they were a "pious couple".[4] Despite having access to Therry's extensive papers and diaries—then located at Loyola College Pymble and now at the State Library of New South Wales—O'Brien gave incorrect years for the deaths of Mr and Mrs Therry.[5]

Most writers say John Joseph Therry—the assumed eldest son of John Therry and Eliza Conolly—was born in Cork city in 1790 or 1791.[6] Fr Therry wrote that he was in his 29th year when he sailed from Cork on 5 December 1819 and was 30 years of age by the time he arrived at Botany Bay in May 1820, which suggests he was born between December 1789 and May 1790.[7] An extensive search of the parish registers of the Therry family parish, St Finbarr's (South Parish) and nearby parishes of Cork city, could not locate an entry for John or John Joseph Therry to the above named parents. Historians have assumed John Joseph's father was John Therry, based on the baptismal entries for his siblings, James, Jane Ann, and Stephen at St Finbarr's Parish.[8] Advice given by solicitors to the Jesuit Fathers in early 1876 also identified Mary Therry (b 1797) as another sibling.[9] No researcher, however, correctly identified that Fr Therry had another brother, David Stephen Therry (b 1802) or more importantly that they had at least two half-siblings, Ann and Ellen Therry.[10] In all, a large, blended family of at least nine mouths to feed at various times around the time of the 1798 Irish rebellion. Except for an 1829 death notice for Mr John Therry senior, which mentioned his son, Fr John Joseph Therry, no other primary sources recorded John Therry senior as the priest's father.[11]

On face value, the absence of Fr Therry's baptismal certificate may appear inconsequential, although the general good quality of Cork Catholic parish registers for the period raises a flag. Moreover, in tandem with other contextual factors that will be addressed in this article, there are grounds for a reconsideration of the traditional story of Fr Therry's birth and early life in Ireland —including the circumstances surrounding his "premature ordination" to the Catholic priesthood—prior to departing for New South Wales in December 1819.[12]

In April 1815, Archbishop John Thomas Troy of Dublin ordained John Joseph Therry as a 'regular' or 'secular' priest.[13] The records of St Patrick's College, Carlow, indicate that John Therry began studying at the seminary in September 1812, when he was 21 years of age.[14] There is no evidence that John had been a lay student of philosophy etc. elsewhere before entering St Patrick's, which begs a question as to what employment he may have undertaken before then.

Therry's "premature ordination", which occurred after he had completed less than two and half years' study at Carlow, has been attributed to Therry family difficulties. Writing to Bishop Edward Slater OSB in July 1819, Therry remarked:

> "The course of my college studies was interrupted, at an early stage, by family embarrassments, the knowledge of which influenced my superior to allow me to be prematurely ordained; but, in justice to him, I must say that it was not without strong recommendation to him, which I had elicited from the too great partiality of my professor (Dr Doyle, Bishop of Leighlin and Kildare)."[15]

"Family embarrassments" were unstated, but in precipitating Therry's early ordination, they suggest something serious. O'Brien and later writers interpreted "family embarrassments" to be of a pecuniary nature.[16] The available financial records of Carlow seminary do not record Therry as a student, but secondary sources claim that his annual tuition fees of £27 were paid in full to June 1815, despite John leaving the college in April of that year.[17] We do not know who paid the fees. By itself, financial issues may seem a plausible reason for Therry's early ordination, but other possible reasons may be considered.[18]

The baptismal entries for Fr Therry's siblings—mentioned earlier—were recorded at St Finbarr's Parish. In the 1790s the family lived nearby at Clarke's Bridge. In April 1805, when one of Fr Therry's stepsisters, Ann Therry, married James Barrett, the family was recorded as living at the adjacent Crosses Green.[19] By the mid-1820s the family address on correspondence to Fr Therry was Peter Street, Cork. The family were thought to have been lower middle class, and certainly there were sufficient resources to send Fr Therry's youngest surviving sibling, Jane Ann Therry, to study in France.[20]

If the "embarrassments" were not financial, might they have been religious, political, or sexual? In terms of religion, numerous Therry/Terry families of County Cork were not Catholic or through intermarriage with Protestants had become nominal Catholics. Sir Roger Therry, a colonial judge in New South Wales, for example, was the son of the Irish Revenue Commissioner, John Joseph Therry, whose branch had maintained their wealth and property, included Castle Therry, near Mitchelstown, Cork, through the intercession of their influential Protestant uncle, the philosopher, Edmund Burke.[21]

In terms of Fr Therry's stated father, John Therry senior, we do not know his religion, circumstances, or trade. Fr Therry's supposed mother—Eliza Conolly—also remains a mystery. Her Christian or birth name are not mentioned in the extensive Therry Papers, nor in the works by O'Brien et al. Irish women in pre-Famine Ireland often used their birth name, even if they were or had been married, so Conolly may have been her birth name. Official biographies that recorded Eliza Conolly as the mother of the priest's siblings have thus assumed she was also his mother. But there is no evidence for this. It is possible that Fr Therry was born to a previous wife of Mr John Therry senior or to Eliza Conolly by a different partner/husband.

The reason for this conjecture is several fold: there is no baptism of John Joseph Therry in ca.1789/1790 recorded in the otherwise detailed records of St Finbarr's. A simple explanation may be oversight by a careless priest or clerk, but St Finbarr's records appear to be comprehensive.[22] We do not know if Mr Therry senior was local to the district or had returned to the Cork area, where the Therry/Terry Sept had held court in business and merchant trade for more than six centuries.[23]

It is possible the future priest was baptised—similar perhaps to his stepsisters—in another parish, where the records are not extant or comprehensive.[24] The absence of a baptismal certificate, however, is germane to consideration of Therry's "family embarrassments" statement. Perhaps he was born a Conolly, not a Therry, and out of wedlock, which (if true) would have cast serious doubt over his ability to be considered for the Catholic priesthood. Perhaps ecclesiastical authorities asked the Therry family to supply a certified copy of John junior's baptism certificate, and none was forthcoming.

A baptismal record at St Finbarr's comes into consideration. On 20 December 1789 a John Terry [sic], son of John Terry and Betty Kenely, was baptised. Betty was short for Elizabeth, but was Kenely a misprint for Conolly? There were other Kenely and Conolly families in the South Parish recorded accurately, so it is unclear if Kenely had been written for Conolly. In the other five Therry sibling baptisms, at St Finbarr's between 1793 and 1802, Eliza Conolly was correctly recorded. If Betty Kenely was Mr Therry's first wife, then the two older stepsisters, Ann and Ellen (later known as Therrys) may have been children from Eliza Conolly's previous marriage? If the 20 December 1789 entry is the priest's baptism, this does not explain why this entry was overlooked by the solicitors for the Irish Jesuits in 1876, who concluded that Fr Therry's baptism had not been recorded in the South Parish.[25]

In terms of sexuality—had a member of the Therry family done something that potentially embarrassed their brother or stepbrother? When Ann Therry, as mentioned earlier, married James Barrett on 20 April 1805, banns were dispensed with, likely because they were related. Ann did not have her daughter Margaret until more than nine months later, which eliminates the likelihood that she was pregnant at the time of her marriage and a reason to dispense with banns. Even so, these events were well before John Therry's seminary days and appear unlikely contributors to possible "embarrassments". Another Therry stepsister, Ellen, appears to have married a Riley, but no further details have yet been ascertained.

More likely, the embarrassment concerned some event involving a member of the Therry household between 1812 and 1814. Might the parents, especially Mr Therry, have entered a quarrel with a priest, or may it have been a political matter? A review of contemporaneous

newspapers did not reveal a John Therry caught up in a political affair. Perhaps Mr Therry was unhappy that his eldest son, John, had entered the seminary.

Fr Therry's two surviving brothers, James and Stephen, are worthy of consideration.[26] We know from later correspondence that Fr Therry had a special bond with James, whom he said had experienced misfortunes in his life.[27] Stephen Therry was a heavy drinker, a matter Jane Ann Therry raised with Fr Therry in correspondence, which may explain why Stephen was sometimes left out of Fr Therry's wills or bequeathed a smaller legacy than his siblings, James or Jane Ann Therry.[28]

Two other factors, again perhaps coincidental, might be considered. First, over many years of correspondence, Jane Ann Therry—a decade younger than her brother priest—found it necessary to explain first cousins and other relatives to Fr Therry.[29] Understandably, the priest had left Ireland in 1819, and being so far away, Jane Ann may have thought it was helpful to remind Fr Therry of his uncles and their children, who lived in rural County Cork, such as at Charleville, and in Limerick city.[30] But Fr Therry, as postulated above, may not have been born a Therry, and hence had less connection with his step-father's family. Despite his rashness and erratic behaviour, Fr Therry was a person of considerable detail, so it is surprising he did not know his close Therry cousins.

Second, a lack of communication between Mr Therry senior and Fr Therry begs a question as to their relationship. Between 1820 and 1829, there is no correspondence between father and son. Perhaps Mr Therry was unable to write, although all his children were well educated, including Fr John who was fluent in spoken and written English, Latin and Greek before he entered the seminary.[31] We know that Mrs Therry, who adored her priest son, was heartsick with his departure. She did not write, perhaps because she was unable to, but her fond sentiments were regularly expressed in correspondence from Jane Ann Therry and from John Goolding, a close family friend.[32] If Mr Therry was the priest's stepfather, this might explain a level of discontent between the two men. Yet, after Fr Therry learned of his father's death, he wrote in a subscription book, which also served as a diary:

"John Connell, farmer, Hobart Town, whose brother, Thomas Connell, per ship *Medway*, and late of Cloheen, near Cork informed me last Saturday that my dear Father departed this life on the 11th July last. Requesia in peace, 24 December 1829."[33]

This is the only recorded remark that Fr Therry expressed about his father. After his mother died on 9 November 1836, Fr Therry wrote to his confidante and de facto business manager, John O'Sullivan:

"I can no longer cherish the fond hope I had for many years indulged, of seeing once more my native land, as the principal inducement I had to visit it no longer exists; my dearest Mother is no more. RIP Amen."[34]

This paper has perhaps raised more historical questions than answers, which is not ideal. Nevertheless, the primary sources quoted have added to our knowledge of the Therry family, especially the existence of stepsisters, and thus the implication that one or both parents of the priest had previously been married. On the balance of probabilities, Mr Therry senior may have been a widower and Eliza Conolly a widow before they married. However, it is unclear if Conolly was the priest's birth or stepmother. If Fr Therry was born out of wedlock, could this have been the "family embarrassment"? Generally, being illegitimate by birth disqualified a man from becoming a Catholic priest at that time.[35] But what if Catholic authorities did not know this when they accepted John Therry, and only found out later? From his seminary days John Therry had expressed an interest in missionary work. Perhaps the ecclesiastical authorities and Therry came to an unwritten agreement that his hurried ordination would be permitted on the basis that after a few years' experience he would be sent to a new colony, such as New South Wales. Given the era, there were no photos; but portraits of Fr Therry and his first cousin's son, Stephen Therry— founder of the Holy Name Society in New York —show little similarity. While this discussion about Fr Therry's genealogy is not conclusive, it has moved our knowledge beyond the simplistic treatment that has for too long dominated Australian history.

Damian John Gleeson, Diploma in Family Historical Studies (1983), has been researching Irish-Australian genealogy for four decades. This article—the first in a series for *Descent*—draws from the Therry Papers held at the State Library of New South Wales. A future article will outline the benefits of this extensive collection to genealogical researchers.

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4. O'Brien makes no other mention of Mr Therry senior.
5. Mr John Therry died in 1829 (not 1827 as O'Brien stated); Mrs Elizabeth Therry died in 1836 (not 1833). O'Brien, *Life and Letters*, 38. Mr and Mrs Therry were buried in St John's Graveyard, Cork city.
6. Fr Therry's death certificate, NSW BDM, No. 1778/1864, recorded an age of 75 years, suggesting he was born in 1789. *The Freeman's Journal* (Sydney), 22 July 1865, p. 460, said Therry was born in Cork city in 1791, which supports an official obituary in the *Sydney Morning Herald* (21 June 1874, p. 7) which said he lived to 73 years. Other newspaper accounts suggest he was 71 years when he died.
7. Fr Therry MSS, cited by Cardinal Patrick Moran, *History of the Catholic Church in Australasia*, Sydney, ca 1892.
8. James Waldersee, 'The letters of Jane Ann Therry, 1828-1838', *Journal of the Australian Catholic Historical Society*, p. 15; O'Brien confuses James Therry (brother) with Stephen Therry, a first cousin who worked in London, and whose family unsuccessfully applied to Fr Therry to be given assistance to migrate to Van Diemen's Land.
9. McCarthy and Hanrahan Solicitors, South Mall, Cork, to Fr Ronan, SJ of Limerick, letter, 10 January 1876, ML MSS. 1810, Vol. 46, SLNSW; St Finbarr's Catholic Church (The South Parish), Microfilm 04778/02, National Library of Ireland (NLI).
10. Two stepsisters, Ann and Ellen Therry, are mentioned in several Fr Therry wills. For example, in a will written while "feeling rather ill this evening", Fr Therry bequeathed to his "stepsister, Ann Barrett £100", Therry Papers, Ml. MSS.1810, Vol. 68, 135-138, SLNSW. In 1841 Fr Therry left Ann Barrett and Ellen Riley £50 each. Neither women feature in later wills, perhaps because they had died.
11. *Cork Constitution*, 11 July 1829. This death notice, which listed Mr Therry senior of Peter Street, Cork, was also reprinted in several other contemporary Irish newspapers, as was the 19th century Irish practice.
12. Therry travelled with Fr Philip Conolly (no relation) per convict ship Janus, which arrived in Botany Bay on 3 May 1820.
13. No official record of ordination has been found. Regular or secular means diocesan priest, in contrast to Catholic priests belonging to religious orders, such as the Jesuits.
14. St Patrick's Carlow, Students Rolls, 1812-1818, Delaney Trust Archives, County Carlow, Ireland. Madder is one of the few writers to correctly record Therry's age as 21 years when he entered the seminary.
15. John Joseph Therry to Bishop Edward Slater, 1819, Therry Papers, ML MSS. 1810, Vol. 2, SLNSW.
16. Archdiocese of Melbourne, *Father Therry – 100 Years on*, Melbourne, 1964.
17. Therry's tuition fees cited in a speech by Fr Kevin O'Neill, President of Carlow College, at launch of Fr John McSweeney's book, *A Meddling Priest John Joseph Therry*, Sydney, 2000, at the Archdiocese of Melbourne, 22 August 2000, Fr Therry File, Archdiocese of Melbourne Archives (AMA). I am grateful also to Dr Perry McIntyre for reviewing the Carlow seminary records held on microfilm in the National Library of Ireland (NLI) in April 2023.
18. Despite the 'premature ordination', Fr O'Brien (12) says that Therry 'very probably — since we have no records to authorize an opposite opinion — completed his college course in much the same fashion as any other student'. This is not an accurate nor consistent statement with the above facts.
19. *Ibid.*
20. Of the five siblings born of John Therry and Eliza Conolly, two died in childhood: Mary (b 1797) and David Stephen (b 1802).
21. For a fascinating insight into Catholic-Protestant relations and the Therry family see the obituary of John Joseph Therry Esq, *Freeman's Journal* (Ireland). See also C.J. Woods. 'Therry, John Joseph', *Irish Dictionary of Biography*, https://www.dib.ie/biography/therry-john-joseph-a8510
22. Each of the parish's priests clearly identified which baptism and marriages they were involved in.
23. The Therry of Cork were related to the Gould merchant family of Charleville, Cork.
24. At least one uncle of Fr Therry lived at Charleville, County Cork. Unfortunately, the baptismal records for this parish are not extant before May 1827, NLI, Microfilm 05002/01, NLI.
25. McCarthy and Hanrahan Solicitors to Fr Ronan, SJ, letter, 10 January 1876
26. The youngest brother, David Stephen Therry, b. 1802, did not survive childhood.
27. See letter from JJT to JAT
28. Will of Fr John Joseph Therry, 7 October 1840, Therry Papers, ML MSS.1810, Vol. 68, 135-138, SLNSW. As his mother was deceased by this time, in the 1840 Will Therry granted £350 each to James and Jane Ann Therry, and £150 to his brother Stephen Therry.
29. Jane Ann Therry to Fr Therry, letter, 6 July 1838, Therry Papers, ML MSS. 1810, Vol.19, SLNSW.
30. Stephen Therry, 'couzen' to Fr Therry, letter, 1 May 1833, Therry Papers, ML MSS. 1810, Vol. 13, 103-106, SLNSW; Mrs Mary (Stephen) Therry, Limerick, to Fr Therry, letter, 17 November 1842, Therry Papers, ML MSS. 1810, Vol. 23, 269-272, SLNSW; Fr Charles Ferguson SJ, Dublin to Fr Therry, letter, 4 October 1842, Therry Papers, ML MSS. 1810, Vol. 23, 227a-231, SLNSW.
31. Therry Papers, ML MSS.1810, Vol. 2-122, SLNSW.
32. John Goolding of Cork to Fr Therry, letter, 22 May 1836, Therry Papers, ML MSS. 1810, Vol. 17, 67-70, SLNSW. See also John Goolding to Miss Murphy, letter [before her departure to Van Diemen's Land with Miss Jane Ann Therry], 11 August 1839, Therry Papers, ML MSS. Vol. 20, 171-181, SLNSW.
33. Therry Subscription Book, 1822-1825, Item no 4, 1829, ML MSS. 1810, Vol. 106, SLNSW.
34. Fr John Therry to John O'Sullivan, letter, 10 May 1837, O'Sullivan, John 1802-1870: Biographical Notes relating to John O'Sullivan, 1802-1870, MS. 8613, 13, State Library of Victoria.
35. This impediment to ordination as a Catholic priest existed until the *1983 Revised Code of Canon Law of the Catholic Church*.

THE JOYS AND AGONIES OF FAMILY HISTORY
by Evan Best

My name is Evan Charles Best, born Hobart, 1937, educated at The Friends' School, Hobart High School, the University of Tasmania and Sydney University. All further information can be found in *Who's Who in Australia*, but my genealogical and historical interests were mentored by Geoffrey Stilwell of the Tasmanian State Archives, family members who responded to the impertinent questioning of a teenager and my early discovery of the Society of Australian Genealogists, in Sydney.

The attitude in the 1950s was that we leave all that 'posh' stuff behind in England and Europe to make our new lives here. My two years at the Hobart Commonwealth Immigration Department after leaving school opened my mind to the wealth of cultural experience that the 'New Australians' brought with them despite their being foreign refugees; I found my school French and German very helpful and made some learned friends. The claim that the unfortunate convicts incarcerated at Port Arthur were 'Australian Royalty' was not as perceptive as the welcome influence of the post-War 'Reffos' on our Australian antecedents.

My historical research began in London in 1956 at the Society of Genealogists, where the help of library assistants and fellow historians was far greater than any Australian education. The use of published material and indexes reinforced the importance of finding clues and related information in books, rather than in computerised indexes which merge everything under a name or query indiscriminately (because I was searching a Will index recently, I found the wife's name on the same page of the Will as her husband's). The English published County Directories for the last two centuries are invaluable, as are the Sand's Directories for New South Wales or the Tasmanian Year Books for example. Use the Library, not the computer.

Without denigrating the usefulness of Ancestry.com, Find My Past, Family Search etc, I must emphasise that when a particular ancestral line is being researched one should question the birth, death and marriage relationships and dates of those involved. Are they of marital or child-bearing age, are they living in the same district or at an unlikely distance apart, are the place names those that one would find in that area on a map? Are the pre-1837 details supported by Church or government records, land or address records? Wills are the most important evidence for dates, places and relationships. The information in the English Census records from 1841 to 1921 is most important for all facts and family relationships, as it was given by the persons themselves; their occupation and address in combination immediately reveals their social and financial status.

When European origins are being sought, I can only recommend hiring local researchers or visiting the local libraries and archives. So much in Europe was affected by war, whereas in Australia we have local collections such as the Electoral Rolls for each state, local library and historical societies, and most importantly, the wonderful online newspaper site Trove. In Tasmania, we are even more fortunate to have the State Library online site LINC, which has a wealth of recorded family, social and political histories, photocopied birth, death and marriage records, convict records and Wills. Nobody need look further to begin with; then search land grants, local council records and the many wonderful published books on Tasmanian settlement, architecture and personal histories.

Just remember that much Tasmanian history has been influenced by social attitudes, for example the destruction of the 1831 Land Commissioners' Journal by some of the landed families because of its amusing revelations about them. Our Aboriginal history has also suffered greatly from social inequality and early conflict – the influence of politics and society is always prevalent in genealogy.

The camaraderie enjoyed by being a member of a local society such as the Society of Australian Genealogists, is especially valuable in the exchange of information, collection of memorabilia such as the many family photos indexed by intrepid volunteers and collections of artefacts from local families which illustrate their contribution to the success of their home region. I am delighted to have been given the opportunity to share my memories and experience with you all.

Evan C. Best, O.A.M., F.S.A.G., B.A. Hons. (Tas)., M.A. (Syd). Schoolmaster and Genealogist, retired. (NOT Geneologist!).

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

With apologies to anyone called Louise

by Michelle Goldsmith

My mother, Violet Agnes Goldsmith née Horseman, and one of her brothers had been named for their parents, spending their lives known as Little Vi and Little Jim. Mum vowed that no child of hers would ever have the same first or second name as anyone in the family and be subject to such an epithet. Apparently, this caused some friction with her mother-in-law when my brother was born and Mum flatly refused to call him Charles, a paternal family name.

To that end, my brother and I ended up with names that, whilst very 1960s, belonged to no one else in the family, or so we thought. For me, it was bad enough having the same first name as a popular Beatles song—although Mum and Dad rigorously denied I was named after the song that had been released the year before my birth—but they also gave me Louise (another song) as my middle name. I hated it. I would launch into my "Why I hate Louise" rant to my parents at least annually. My mother's response was always, "I just liked the name" whilst my father would say I was named after Lake Louise, in Canada, a place he had never visited but had always thought "sounded nice".

Sometime around my 18th year, my father responded to my annual rant with, "Well, my dad's middle name was Lewis, and I had an Aunt Louisa. Louise sounded like those". My mother, not normally given to bouts of anger, exploded. Quite a scene ensued with my mother apologising to me, "I didn't know this; I would never have agreed," whilst yelling, "You never told me," at my father. From that day on, my father's annual response returned to, "I liked the sound of Lake Louise," and nothing would budge him from that statement.

My father's parents arrived in Sydney from London in 1923 and, according to him, rarely spoke of their prior life. As such, Dad had minimal knowledge of his ancestors. It wasn't until I started digging after his death that I discovered the name Louis, Lewis and Louisa had started to appear on my paternal side as far back as 1786. It continued when the Griffiths and Lane lines were joined through marriage.

Louisa Goldsmith c1915

List of family members named Louis, Lewis, Louisa, and Louise known at the time of writing:

Richard Lane married **Louisa** Barrow in 1786[1]

Thomas Griffiths married Ann **Lewis** date 1794[2]

Harrison Griffiths (grandson of Thomas and Ann) married **Louisa** Lane (granddaughter of Richard and Louisa) in 1850[3]

Louis Griffiths (son of Harrison Griffiths and Louisa Lane)[4]

Louisa Griffiths (daughter of Josiah Griffiths, son of Harrison and Louisa Griffiths)[5]

Charles **Lewis** Goldsmith (son of Charles Goldsmith and Lillian Griffiths, daughter of Harrison and Louisa)[6]

Louisa Goldsmith (daughter of Charles Goldsmith and Lillian Griffiths, daughter of Harrison and Louisa)[7]

Author's middle name: **Louise**

Charles Lewis Goldsmith and mother Lillian Emily Goldsmith née Griffiths c1940

Naming protocols in England during the period 1700–1875 were relatively clearcut. Angus Baxter in *In Search of Your British and Irish Roots*[8] outlined the pattern as follows:

- The first son was named after the father's father.
- The second son was named after the mother's father.
- The third son was named after the father.
- The fourth son was named after the father's eldest brother.
- The first daughter after the mother's mother.
- The second daughter after the father's mother.
- The third daughter after the mother.
- The fourth daughter after the mother's eldest sister

It would appear the Goldsmith line and associated branches in England had tended to follow this protocol. My grandparents continued the tradition in Australia when their own children were born.

Charles Lewis Goldsmith married Ethel Thomas in 1921[9] and had the following children:

- William Charles Goldsmith[10] (my dad: named after his father with William being a common name through both lines)
- Lillian Emily Ann Goldsmith[11] (a combination of Charles and Ethel's mothers: Lillian Emily Griffiths and Ann Gordon)
- Gordon Jason Goldsmith[12] (with Gordon being the surname of Ethel's mother[13])

Sadly, my father passed away in 2005, before I discovered just how widespread the Lewis/Louis/Louisa names were in his line (and it is possible there are many more out there). Let's just say my mother wasn't too impressed with my discoveries. Knowing that none of my cousins or my brother had received a family name, I can picture my dad having quiet chuckles to himself over

my middle name. For me, I still don't like the name Louise, but an awareness of its history means I am now at peace with it. A name can give a stronger sense of connection — in my case to my dad's family and those ancestors in London of whom he knew nothing. Just don't ever sing the songs in my presence.

Michelle Goldsmith is a family history librarian who enjoys encouraging and assisting newbies with their family history research, as well as discovering more about her own. She credits listening to the stories of her older relatives with starting her down the family history rabbit hole, but wishes she had asked them many more questions!

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2. Marriage of Thomas Griffith to Anne Lewis, 23 June 1794, Berkshire England. Ancestry.com. *England, Select Marriages, 1538-1973* [database on-line]. Lehi, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2014.
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6. Birth certificate of Charles Lewis Goldsmith, General Register Office, 224/1892, Registration District: St Olave, Southwark, Rotherhithe, London.
7. Marriage of Louisa Harriett Goldsmith to George Smith, 25 December 1915. London Metropolitan Archives; London, England; *London Church of England Parish Registers*; Reference Number: DRO/036/023. Ancestry.com. London, England, Church of England Marriages, and Banns, 1754-1938 [database on-line]. Lehi, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2010.
8. Angus Baxter, cited in "In Search of Your British and Irish Roots" https://www.genealogy.com/articles/research/35_donna.html
9. Marriage of Charles Lewis Goldsmith and Ethel Thomas, 24 July 1921. Dorset, England, Church of England Marriages, and Banns, 1813-1921.
10. Birth certificate of William Charles Goldsmith, NSW Registry of Births Deaths, and Marriages, 66/1923.
11. Marriage certificate of Lillian Ann Emily Goldsmith, NSW Registry of Births Deaths, and Marriages, 24522/1947.
12. Birth certificate of Gordon Jason Goldsmith, NSW Registry of Births Deaths, and Marriages, 615/1928.
13. Death certificate of Ethel Goldsmith née Thomas. NSW Registry of Births Deaths and Marriages, 18402/1978.

ALFRED EDGAR CONYERS (1886–1915)

by Colin Kilduff

While tidying up details of the life of my great-grandfather Peter Lenz (1877-1933), I looked again at his second marriage. He married Evelyn Conyers in 1917. According to the records of this marriage Evelyn was a widow.[1]

This sent me down one of those rabbit (wombat?) holes. Who was Evelyn's first husband and when did he die? A search of the NSW marriage indexes found only one marriage of a man surnamed Conyers to a woman with first name Evelyn: that of Alfred E Conyers to Evelyn E Sibson, in 1915.[2]

Alfred married Evelyn Elleanor [*sic*] Sibson at Harris Park near Parramatta on 8 March of that year. According to the marriage certificate Alfred was aged 28, so was born about 1886 and his birth place was given as Bombay, India. His parents were recorded as Walter Richard and Ethel Marette Conyers. Evelyn Sibson was aged 23, born at Gladesville NSW in December 1891. Her parents were recorded as Albert Henry and Ida Jane Sibson.[3] No births to an Evelyn Conyers from the brief time Alfred and Evelyn had been together were found.[4]

At the time of Alfred's birth, India was a part of the British Empire. The divisions of British India for administrative purposes were

Bombay, Madras and Calcutta (now Mumbai, Chennai and Kolkata respectively). Baptism/Christening, marriage and burial records for those of European background were collected by the British India Office. They are available through FamilySearch, **familysearch.org** and subscription websites including Find My Past, **findmypast.com.au**. The baptism records include the supposed birth date, as stated by a parent.

Alfred was said to be born on 5 October 1886 and was christened on 3 January 1887 at Ahmedabad, then in the Bombay province. His father was Walter Richard Conyers, described as a driver, B. G. Railway. His mother was Ethel Marette Conyers.[5]

While it can be difficult to determine where the events happened in colonial times, in this case, the image of Alfred's baptism shows his parents' abode as Bhownagar, now Bhavnagar. The city is about 170 kilometres from the city of Ahmedabad. As Alfred was three months old when he was baptised, he may not have been born at Bhownagar.[6]

In 1911, Alfred's father Walter travelled to Sydney, arriving 30 October on the *Yarra*.[7] This seems to have been a preliminary trip as he returned to Australia with his wife and Alfred, as well as

another son and a daughter, on the French mail packet *Armand Béhic*, arriving in Fremantle WA, on 10 March 1912, then in Sydney 10 days later.[8]

In the 1913 Electoral Rolls for Parramatta, Alfred's address was given as Hospital, Rydalmere, and occupation as attendant.[9] No record of Alfred's death was found in the NSW birth, death and marriage indexes, but since both his marriage and presumed death occurred during WWI, it seemed probable that Alfred had enlisted and died overseas.

By searching the WWI military papers available on the National Archives of Australia website,[10] I discovered that Alfred enlisted for the First AIF (Australian Imperial Force) on 18 January 1915, two months before his marriage. On his attestation page, Alfred declared he was born in Bombay, of British nationality by birth. He gave his occupation as pressman and his next of kin as his mother Ethel Conyers. Following his marriage, this was changed to Evelyn.

He was described as aged 28 (and three months), five feet, 10½in tall (1.79m), with a fair complexion, blue eyes, and dark brown hair.

Alfred sailed with his unit—the second battalion—in April, leaving his young wife behind. By May 1915 he was stationed at The Dardanelles.[11]

During his time there he wrote lengthy letters to his family, some of which were later printed in Sydney newspapers. The hopes and beliefs that he and his comrades held at the time are a sober contrast to what we know occurred.

"We are still in the trenches in the firing line awaiting further developments and are as happy as possible under the circumstance. There is nothing doing at present beyond a bit of sniping on both sides, and exchange of big gun fire, just to show them we are still here; but before long there's going to be some fun which will about decide the question, and then for "Home, sweet home." As we are now, we could stay till we grew old and Mr. Johnny Turk has had about enough …

Am glad to say I am keeping very well and fit. The life out here is not all beer and skittles but, on the whole, we are having a good time, and put up with any hardships with a good will. It is no place for growlers.

From here we can hear the big guns of the warships bombarding the Narrows. Once they can force an entrance it's all up with Mr. Turk and a straight run for Constantinople We hope to be there before long, the sooner the better."[12]

Alfred died at Gallipoli (Turkey) on 25 July 1915. His remains were later buried at Lone Pine on the Gallipoli peninsula. The Commonwealth War Graves Commission records the names of Alfred's parents,[13] and Alfred is also commemorated on the War Memorial at Burwood NSW as one of those who died in the Great War.[14]

Lone Pine Cemetery and Memorial, Gallipoli Peninsula

1. NSW Registry of births, deaths and marriage, marriage reference 1917 No. 239, transcription.
2. NSW BDM, marriage reference 1915 No. 3745, transcription.
3. NSW BDM, birth reference 1892 No. 31693.
4. NSW BDM, births for 1914-1916.
5. "United Kingdom, British India Office, Births and Baptisms, 1712-1965", database, FamilySearch (https://familysearch.org). Alfred Edgar Conyers person reference 6VY9-K39L. B.G. Railway may mean Broad Gauge, as distinct from the narrow gauge.
6. Location of Bombay, Ahmedabad and Bhavnagar maps.google.com.
7. Ancestry.com. *Victoria, Australia, Assisted and Unassisted Passenger Lists 1839-1923*. Public Record Office Victoria; *North Melbourne, Victoria; Inward Overseas Passenger Lists (Foreign Ports)* Series: VPRS 7667. Year: 911. Named among arrivals, "SHIPPING. ARRIVALS Oct. 30." *Sydney Morning Herald* 31 October 1911, 10.
8. Ancestry.com. *Fremantle, Western Australia, Passenger Lists, 1897-1963*. (database online). National Archives of Australia (NAA), Series Number: K 269; Reel Number: 35. For the arrival in Sydney see "Shipping. Arrivals." *Sydney Morning Herald* 21 March 1912, 10.
9. Ancestry.com. *Australia; Electoral Rolls, 1903-1980*. Australian Electoral Commission; Canberra, Australia; Electoral Rolls.
10. NAA, https://recordsearch.naa.gov.au, Name Search tab. *Army personnel records, World War I*.
11. NAA. Alfred was incorrectly indexed as Alfred Edward.
12. "Died for king and country." *Cumberland Argus and Fruitgrowers Advocate* (Parramatta, NSW) 21 August 1915, 4.
13. Ancestry.com. Author: Peter Singlehurst. Commonwealth War Graves Commission; Series Title: *British Commonwealth War Graves Registers, 1914-1918*.
14. War Memorials Register (NSW) https://warmemorialsregister.nsw.gov.au.

MH ON THE RECORD
Museums of History NSW

by Emily Hanna
Lead Archivist, Collection Discovery

Community partnership indexing and digitisation project

We are looking to partner with groups or societies with an interest in history and in making the State Archives Collection more accessible. We are aiming to digitise and index a set of records from the Collection that will highlight your local area and enhance our digitisation efforts.

The project
This project will involve the digitisation of Small Debts Registers from the Courts of Petty Sessions. Not only are the records imaged as part of this process, but they will also be indexed.

About the Small Debts Registers
Small Debts Registers were created by Courts of Petty Sessions throughout NSW. The courts had the authority to recover debts up to 10 pounds. The registers contain information such as the name of the plaintiff, name of the defendant, the cause of the action, amount of the claim, costs, judgment and amount of the judgment.

These records are all about people taking other people to court to recover debts! So, there are events in people's lives or in a local community that you may not find in other records.

There are over 375 Small Debts Registers in the State Archives Collection from about 70 geographic locations.

Indexing records at the Western Sydney Records Centre. Photo: Joshua Morris

If your group or society would like to get involved by digitising registers onsite at our Western Sydney Reading Room at Kingswood and/or indexing entries either onsite or remotely, find out more information and express your interest on our website.

Additions to Inquest Index
Over 9,100 extra entries have been added by our Volunteers to our online Inquest Index and our Inquest copy order service. The records added include:

- Surviving inquest papers from 1916-1939. These papers are part of NRS 345, our main series of Coroners' inquests. Around 5% of inquest papers from these years have survived. The good news is that the papers are now fully listed and findable in the index.

- Files dated 1918-1920 relating to inquests where an open verdict was brought by the Coroner, or a reward was offered to bring forward more information. These files were found in series NRS 313, Letters received by the Attorney General.

- Inquests from January 1940 – June 1942 and July – December 1963. Not previously listed, but now completing our full list of Inquest papers for the years 1940-1963

Search the Inquest Index via our Subjects A-Z or through our catalogue – just look for the name of the individual or the locality. Coroners also had the jurisdiction to inquire into the cause and origins of fires that destroyed personal or real property, so you will also find inquests into fires in this index.

Please note that there are photographs that are part of the exhibits in some inquest files, and that they may be considered distressing.

For more information about searching for inquests in the State Archives Collection see our Inquests & coronial records guide.

New copy service

We hold over 158,000 film negatives of photographs taken by officers of the Government Printing Office. They cover a wide variety of subjects, including infrastructure development such as the construction of the Sydney Harbour Bridge; public transport; housing estates; schools and colleges; city, urban and country scenes; harbour, beach and coastal views; royal visits; ships; official events such as the openings of the Opera House and parliament; award presentations; festivals and public occasions such as Carnivale and the Royal Easter Show; parks and gardens; jetties and wharves; dams and waterways; sporting events; hospitals, prisons and other public buildings; and portraits and group photographs of dignitaries, parliamentarians, public servants, awardees and others.

The images are listed in our catalogue in the series NRS-21689, and we are now offering a high-resolution digital copy service from the original film negatives. You can order copies directly from the catalogue for a fee. As copies are made they will be uploaded to the catalogue.

Original boxed film negatives from NRS-21689

This series of negatives was held by the State Library until 2019, when they were transferred to the State Archives Collection. The images are also listed in the State Library of NSW catalogue with call numbers starting Government Printing Office 2, Government Printing Office 3 and Government Printing Office 4. Low resolution copies are available for viewing in the Library's catalogue, which can be helpful to identify an image prior to ordering a higher resolution copy from us.

Researching Convicts in the State Archives Collection

Between 1788 and 1842 about 80,000 convicts were transported to New South Wales. Family stories, birth death and marriage certificates and records such as muster and census records can help to identify if you have a convict in your family.

The State Archives Collection holds records that document the movement of a convict through their time served in NSW. The starting point for convict research is the indent, the list of convicts transported to NSW on a particular ship. Records such as trial records, tickets of leave, certificates of freedom, conditional pardons and correspondence can help to flesh out the story of a convict and what happened to them after they arrived in NSW.

See our website for our Guide to Convicts and Convict Administration and a comprehensive range of guides on convict research. You can search our convict indexes and our indexes to correspondence such as the Index to the Colonial Secretary's letters received, 1826-1896, and find our webinars on convict research. Search across all of our indexes at once using our catalogue.
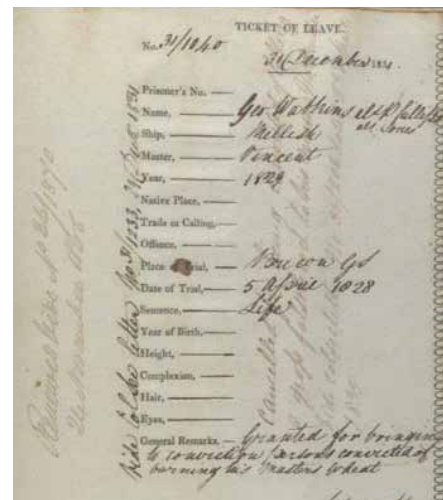
Ticket of leave, George Watkins, 1829

Webinar program

Catch our upcoming webinars! Register on our website for:

22 March   Inquest Index,1916-1963
19 April   Colonial Secretary's Minutes, 1826-1896.

Don't forget that we upload all of our webinars to Subjects A-Z on our website. Come back and watch as many times as you need

Customer Satisfaction Survey—2024

Every year we undertake a survey to gauge our website, reading room, enquiry and copying services.

One of our key results from the 2023 survey was the overwhelmingly positive reaction to the digitisation of records. Many people also reported that they were keen to see more digitisation of records in the future and easier ways to locate them. We are continuing to digitise records and upload these to our catalogue. One of the largest additions to the catalogue in the past year is the Public Service employee history cards – you can search for and download over 280,000 digital images.

We welcome your input for this year's survey to help evaluate our services. Visit **https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/CSD7BPS** to take our brief survey, open until 31 March 2024. It should only take about 3 minutes.

The survey gives us an idea of how well we are delivering services to you and how we can better plan for the future. Your opinion is important and we appreciate your time.

March and April 2024 Reading Room Opening hours

Changes to opening hours for our reading room over the Easter/ANZAC holiday period:

Friday 29 March – Monday 1 April   CLOSED
Thursday 25 April   CLOSED

We wish everyone a safe, happy and healthy holiday break.

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Society of Australian Genealogists:
CODES OF ETHICS AND CONDUCT
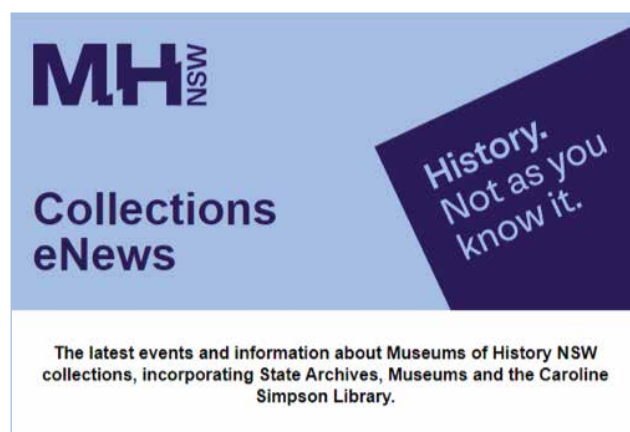
The following Code of Ethics was originally published by the Australian Federation of Family History Organisations Inc. (AFFHO) and was adopted by the Society of Australian Genealogists (SAG) on 12 July 2017.

CODE OF ETHICS

The Society of Australian Genealogists has adopted the following Code of Ethics and encourages all members and researchers to adhere to its principles.

Responsible family historians respect the law and the feelings of others and will always:

Seek by all reasonably available means to inform themselves about the legal principles in force from time to time governing the protection of copyright and of personal privacy.

Observe the legal rights of copyright owners, by copying or distributing any part of their works only with their permission, or to the extent allowed under the copyright law's fair use provisions;

Be sensitive to the hurt that revelations of criminal, immoral, bizarre or irresponsible behaviour may bring to family members;

Obtain specific consent from living people that they are agreeable to further sharing of information of themselves;

Inform people who provide information about their families of the ways it may be used, carefully recording and observing any conditions they may impose about the use of it; and,

Recognise that legal rights of privacy may limit the extent to which information from publicly available sources may be further used, disseminated or published.

Our Code of Conduct was approved by the Society's Board of Directors on 12 February 2024. It is designed to complement the Code of Ethics and was created after careful consideration and collaboration with our members, volunteers, staff, and advisory committees to provide clear guidelines for respectful and responsible interactions within our community. We believe that fostering a culture of courtesy, respect, and inclusivity is essential for maintaining the integrity and spirit of our society.

Key aspects of the Code of Conduct include:

Courtesy and Respect:
Emphasizing the importance of treating all individuals with courtesy and respect, regardless of their background or experience level.

Communication:
Encouraging open and empathetic communication, while also recognizing and respecting diverse communication styles and preferences.

Managing Information:
Highlighting the sensitivity and ethical considerations involved in handling genealogical information, especially when it pertains to living or recently deceased individuals.

CODE OF CONDUCT

This Code of Conduct defines our expectations for interactions and communications between Society members, volunteers, staff, visitors and guests. It sits alongside SAG's Code of Ethics, which outlines our guidelines for the responsible and respectful conduct of genealogical research.

Courtesy and respect

In all our activities we are courteous and respectful.

Interactions

In our interactions we are courteous and respectful of:

- SAG members, and their individual interests, research areas, viewpoints and levels of experience.
- SAG volunteers, and their contributions to our work and programs.
- SAG staff and their right to set guidelines around access to, and handling of, SAG resources.
- SAG visitors and guests, including invited speakers, for their generosity in sharing their knowledge and skills.

Communication

In our communications we behave courteously and respectfully by:

- Seeking to understand another's point of view without judgement.
- Disagreeing without criticising the person.
- Being patient with those less experienced with family history research.
- Showing empathy to people encountering technological challenges.
- Understanding that individuals have different communication styles and preferences.
- Sharing information and discoveries openly and being open to feedback.
- Always giving proper credit when using the work of another and only reproducing work with permission.
- Disclosing potential conflicts of interest.
- Valuing the diversity of cultures, genders and personalities that enrich our SAG community and working actively to create an atmosphere of inclusion and belonging.

Managing information

We demonstrate courtesy and respect by:

- Treating information about living or recently deceased people with sensitivity.
- Treating potentially unwelcome family history discoveries with sensitivity and empathy.
- Considering the feelings of living people when sharing information about close relatives.
- Taking a culturally sensitive approach to family history information when a community has different traditions and beliefs to our own.
- Ensuring that the operational protocols set out by the Society for information management, including recordings of Society events, are adhered to for Society events and activities.
- Not publishing or publicly presenting genealogical or genetic information of living people, other than that which is already publicly available, unless informed consent has been given.
- Not capturing any image or living individuals' details from online/recorded presentations, unless informed consent has been given.

Developed by the Genealogical Ethics and Standards Advisory Group Committee with volunteer and Director consultation in 2023. Original draft by Penny Oxford.

Breaches of the SAG Code of Conduct will be dealt with on an individual basis.

We encourage all members to familiarize themselves with the Code of Conduct, as it reflects our shared commitment to upholding the values of our society. Existing members will be asked to read and accept the code of conduct alongside our existing privacy policy upon renewal of their subscription when renewing online.

OUR SAG COMMUNITY

We congratulate the following members of the Society who recently completed the Diploma of Family Historical Studies:

Vanessa Cassin, NSW: *All will be revealed: What our ancestor's probate records are telling us*

Michelle Goldsmith, NSW: *John Thomas Higgins, The Convict Butcher: Following the butcher trade in the Higgins family from London to Woolloomooloo circa 1760-1949*

Jennifer Howarth, NSW: *A History of the Burials in the Lewis Ponds General Cemetery 1861-1919*

Yvonne Masters, SA: *The last of the Village Basket makers (Basket makers of Arkholme: The Irelands c1712-1959)*

Sandy Pullen, WA: *A Fustian Coat. The Story of Richard, Thomas and George Croxon*

We congratulate the following members of the Society who completed the Certificate of Genealogical Studies:

David Bedwell, NSW
Madeline Black, VIC
Judith Charlton, VIC
Jane Darby, WA
Allesandra Fabro, NSW
Anna Geaney, QLD
Dale Leorke, VIC
Amy MacKintosh, VIC
Louise Millar-Hoffmann, VIC
Cathryn Murphy, QLD
Yvonne Price, WA
Emily Purser, NSW
Cassandra Thickett, QLD
Diane Thornton, WA
Kathryn van der Mei, VIC
Annesley Watson, NSW
Colin Whitewood, WA

If you would like to enrol in our August 2024 or February 2025 intake for the Certificate of Genealogical Research, or want to find out more about our other online and in-person courses, visit:
sag.org.au/StudyOnlineWithUs.

Volunteer thank you

The Board is grateful to everyone who has assisted the Society in a voluntary capacity during 2023, either in the Library, on committees, with indexing, specialised advice, data entry or miscellaneous projects.
This list does not include Directors or other honorary office bearers whose names already appear in the journal, unless they carry out additional volunteer work. Members who have assisted in more than one area are listed under their primary area of volunteering.

Library
Roger Benson
Geoff Bovard
Judy Day
Vicki Eldridge
Philippa Garnsey
Janet Howe
Tony Jackson
Doug Jenkins
Jack Kelly
Jackie Kelly
Colin Kilduff
Judy Meyer
David Morris
Robert Nash
Margaret Neyle
Sharon Reece
Cathey Shepherd
Hilary Walker
Ken Webber

MIDAS & Archives
Robin Bishop
Michael Burleigh
Andrew Goffe
MaryEd Hartnell
Terence & Jenny Hicks
Lesley Hume
Christine Marcroft
Barbara Reen
Jill Roberts
Ann Rowntree
Norma Smith
Judith White
Alison Wilson
Alison Wolf

Education Leads & Helpers
Thistle Anderson
Jill Ball
Kathryn Barrett
Sally Bryant
Elizabeth Capelin
Larry & Colleen Czarnik
Melanie Dunstan
Dale Fogarty
Michelle Goldsmith
Kathleen Hackett
Vicki Hails
John Heath
Lyn Hudson-Williamson
Melissa Hulbert
Suzanne Hyde
Beverley Hyssett
Alan St John Jones
Danielle Lautrec
Lorraine Luks
Yvonne Masters
Kristine Newton
Danny O'Neill
Michelle Patient
Diana Pecar
Linda Radulovitch
Sharon Shelley
Helene Shepherd
Sally Skulte
Marianne Spencer Young
Annesley Watson
Sharon Lee-ann Watson
Pauline Weeks
Veronica Williams
Christine Woodlands

Committees: Certificate & Diploma, *Descent*, Croker and others
Michele Bomford
Lorraine Brothers
Christine Cavanagh
Louise Coakley
Vivienne Cunningham-Smith
Rose Cutts
Sandra Dexter
Nyree Dietrich
Jennie Fairs
Kerry Farmer
Karol Foyle
Heather Garnsey
Tracey Grady
Chris Hingerty
Alicia Howard
Chris Kavanagh
Lesley Kuhn
Daryl Low Choy
Lilian Magill
Janette Pelosi
Andrew Redfern
Greg Ross
Christine Sanderson
Charlotte Schaefer
Philippa Shelley Jones

Deaths

The following deaths of members and former members were notified to the Society between November 2023 and January 2024.

We extend our sympathies to the family and friends of them all.

Michael John Freestone
Marulan
4 November 2023

Merle Kavanagh
Sutherland
21 October 2023

John D. Wilson
Kingswood
9 December 2023

Photo: Chris Lawson, Unsplash

Obituary
John Dalton Wilson
1934–2023

John Dalton Wilson (1934-2023), a retired marine engineer and former Vice President, Honorary Treasurer and Honorary Librarian of the Society of Australian Genealogists, died on 8 December 2023 at Penrith, NSW, after a long illness.

John was born at Parramatta on 13 February 1934, the third of four sons of John Edwin Wilson and Kathleen Wilson (née Downey). He also had five sisters, and three of his younger siblings predeceased him.

His father came to Sydney from Ludlow, Shropshire, England. His maternal grandfather John Downey emigrated from Kilmore, Killeroran near Ballygar, Galway, Ireland in 1907, while his maternal grandmother Elsie Downey (née Gavin) had early Australian ancestors, back to First Fleeter James Wright (c.1765-1825), who was baker to the Governor at Parramatta for 17 years. It was from his paternal grandmother Catherine Wilson (née Dalton) that he received his middle name.

John attended Parramatta High School until 1949, then served his apprenticeship as a marine engineer at Cockatoo Island. His national service was with the Royal Australian Navy. He joined the Adelaide Shipyard and remained there until 1975, residing at Glenelg. When he returned to Sydney, he rejoined Morts Dock and Engineering at Cockatoo Island until his retirement in 1993. He was the last marine engineer to leave the Island on its closure as a shipbuilding operation in that year.

John undertook extensive family research on his Wilson, Downey and other forbears, including George Howell (c. 1760-1839) (arr. 1802) an early miller at Parramatta; John Agland (c. 1783-1861) (arr. 1812); Michael Gavin (c.1820-1889) of Spring Hill near Orange, NSW and related families.

John joined the Society in 1976, became Honorary Librarian in 1977 and joined the Council in 1979, from which he retired in 1994. He was Vice President in 1980 and Honorary Treasurer in 1983 and 1988-1994. He remained an Honorary Librarian until his retirement from Council. Between 1977 and 1983, he and member Molly Breckenridge catalogued the library collections. As the convener of the Finance Committee, he implemented a number of improvements to our accounting procedures. In and above these onerous duties he and Malcolm Sainty were the supervising members of the team of Society volunteers which transformed Rumsey Hall during 1992-1993, from a derelict disused building to a commodious overseas library with seminar room and bookshop, in use for 15 years.

On the formation of the Australian Biographical and Genealogical Record in 1982, a not-for-profit entity established to avoid ABGR becoming a drain on the Society's financial resources, he was Honorary Treasurer for 10 years. In fact, the project added considerable income to the Society from the sale of its publications.

John was elected a Fellow in September 1988 and an Honorary Member in November 1995, and was also a Benefactor. He bequeathed his substantial research files, also containing many certificates and some photographs, to the Society. John Wilson gave outstanding honorary service, over a period of 17 years and always enjoyed the respect and confidence of Councillors and members alike, as well as staff appointed from 1978 onwards. His contributions and loyalty to the Society are gratefully acknowledged, we have lost a greatly valued, long-standing member and supporter.

Keith Johnson AM
Vice-Patron and Fellow

The Society of Australian Genealogists needs your help to bring the past into the present. We are working to digitise our extensive collection of archival materials, making them accessible, not only to our members, but also other genealogists and researchers, as well as the wider public.

By preserving these invaluable records, we can uncover the stories of our ancestors and deepen our understanding of our heritage. However, we cannot achieve this without your generous contribution. Your donations will enable us to digitise fragile documents, photographs, and maps, ensuring their longevity and greater accessibility for future generations. Together, let's unlock the treasures of our past and preserve them for a brighter future.

Donate today and make history accessible to all

EDUCATION@SAG

BY VANESSA CASSIN

Although it's now March, I would like to take this opportunity to welcome all our members and friends back to another year of exploring your family history.

I have been pleased to speak with many of our volunteer group leads, presenters and event hosts since we all returned from the holiday period and it's been a joy to hear of the progress many of them made in their research over the break and see the excitement they have at being able to share their successes with other members. The enthusiasm of our volunteers is one of the greatest assets of the Society.

Our Education Program started the year at full speed with most of our research interest groups having held their first meetings, three of our longer format courses already underway (Intermediate Research Methods, Analysing Your AncestryDNA Results and NSW Land Records and the HLRV) and a hugely successful in-person special event being held in conjunction with the Ulster Historical Foundation.

The Ulster Historical Foundation Lecture Tour was held on 21 February at the Sydney Mechanics' School of Arts and was the first large-scale in-person event the Society has hosted since Covid-19 put a stop to gatherings in early 2020. Sydney was the last stop on the Australian leg of the Foundation's tour of Australia and New Zealand and we were excitedly awaiting our turn after hearing wonderful feedback from those attending the sessions in other States and Territories.

After much anticipation, Sydney's day finally arrived and SAG was delighted to be able to welcome just over 100 members and friends to our event. Those who were able to attend enjoyed a full day of presentations by Irish genealogy experts Fintan Mullen and Gillian Hunt. After all being told for years that researching in Ireland was next to impossible, everyone was left astounded and inspired by the amount of resources Fintan and Gillian were able to demonstrate. We also had a good laugh at some of the eccentricities of Irish record keeping, such as adding little comments about height or appearance to records in the Griffiths Valuation to differentiate between people in the same town with the same name.

Our venue also did not disappoint. The staff at the Sydney Mechanics' School of Arts were very keen to assist us in any way they could. The Henry Carmichael Theatre was easily accessible, provided ample space and large screens to enable everyone to see the presentations clearly. There was also a lot of positive feedback about the delicious finger food provided by their caterer for the morning and afternoon teas!

While this special event was delivered in person only, we will be continuing to provide many more online opportunities for those unable to travel to attend our education events. In addition to our courses, regular webinars, book club meetings, hang outs and groups this year, we will have four online virtual conferences on the topics of: convicts; artificial intelligence and technology; gold rushes; and wills, estate and death related records. We will also be hosting a new series of three smaller UK-focussed events on Scotland, England and Wales and Islands.

I look forward to welcoming many new and familiar faces to our various events in 2024. As always, please check the events page of our website regularly as we add new events most weeks.

Top: Library Manager Gemma Beswick thanking Ulster Historical Foundation speakers Gillian Hunt and Fintan Mullen.
Middle: Gillian, Fintan and retired Irish Library volunteer Terry Eakin with staff members Alex, Gemma and Danielle.
Bottom: Lucky door prize winners with Fintan.

DNA CORNER

BY CHRISTINE WOODLANDS

Changes at AncestryDNA

AncestryDNA is the largest testing company: if you spit into their tube, you could share autosomal DNA (atDNA) with any of the more than 25 million people from across the world who've tested there. Until early February 2024, you didn't need an Ancestry membership to access all the AncestryDNA features, the main difference being in looking at your matches' trees and building your own tree.

AncestryDNA Plus is a new level of membership for those who don't have an Ancestry membership. It costs $39.99 for six months. The features for current and future testers who don't have an Ancestry or AncestryDNA Plus membership are limited to ethnicity estimates, DNA communities, DNA matches, contacting matches, *DNA compare* and some traits. In addition, testers without a membership can see only the three largest matches they share with any match and if the match has a public or private family tree, along with its size.

Membership is required to access the following features:

- viewing more than three shared matches
- viewing the trees of any matches
- common ancestors and ThruLines
- all the SideView features including matches, ethnicities and communities by parent and the chromosome painter
- matching surnames with matches' public trees, and
- matching common ancestor surnames in matches' public trees

More information can be found here:

https://support.ancestry.com/s/article/AncestryDNA-and-Memberships?language=en_US

If you've tested at AncestryDNA and don't have a membership, you can share your test results with an Ancestry or AncestryDNA Plus member who will be able to see your full results. You can also share the tree that your test is linked to.

More information can be found here:

https://support.ancestry.com.au/s/article/Sharing-AncestryDNA-Results

https://support.ancestry.com.au/s/article/Sharing-a-Family-Tree

AncestryDNA continues to enhance the features available to members. The SideView technology groups our DNA matches based on the parent they are related to, without the need for our parents to test. Our DNA communities are now displayed along our parental lines. I've found it fascinating to review my DNA communities by parent and hypothesise which of my ancestors lived in these areas.

It's important to think about which test to take, who to test and where to test. We suggest that most Australians start with an autosomal DNA (atDNA) test at AncestryDNA. You can follow the pathway in this chart to 'fish in all the ponds' for matches. It's best to test the earlier generation and there's not much to be gained by testing a child if both parents have tested. Test the sibling or cousin of a parent instead. Y-DNA and mitochondrial DNA (mtDNA) tests at FamilyTreeDNA are often taken by genetic genealogists researching specific ancestral lines.

You can read more here:

https://mossiesmusings.blogspot.com/2020/08/dna-testing-strategy-for-australians.html

https://genie1.au/dna-transfers-how-to-download-a-copy-of-your-raw-dna-data-file-upload-it-to-other-databases-to-get-free-matches/

Tree building at Ancestry is a key tool for working with DNA evidence. Ancestry have also announced ProTools at a monthly fee of US$10. It's available with an Ancestry membership and can be cancelled at any time. The main features are a tree checker, charts and reports, advanced filters and map views for your trees.

You can read more here:

https://support.ancestry.com.au/articles/en_US/Support_Site/Ancestry-Pro-Tools-Membership

SUGGESTED DNA TESTING PATHWAY FOR AUSTRALIANS
AS AT 2024
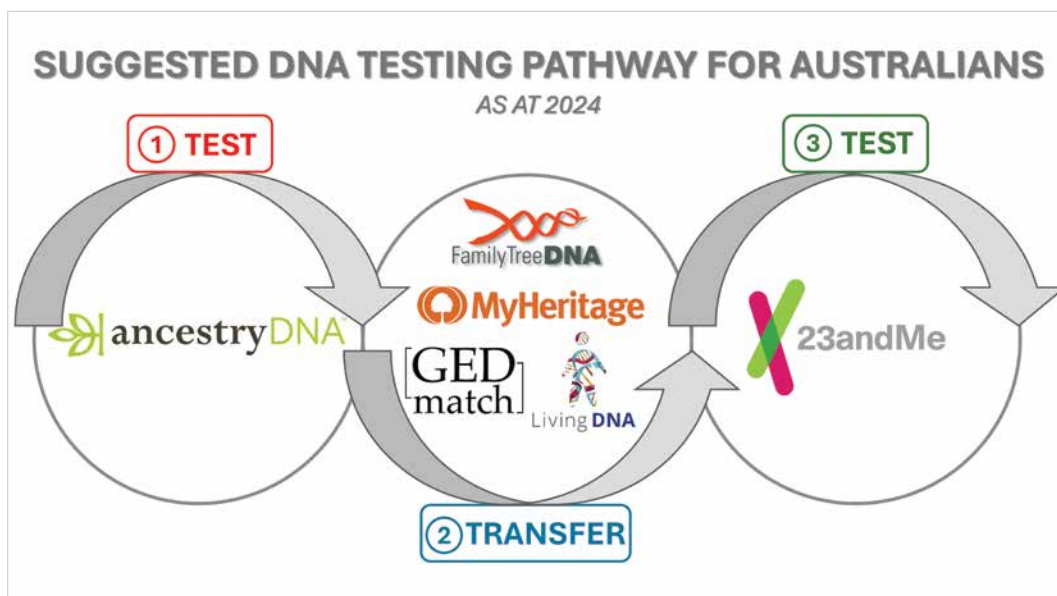
SAG EVENTS:
Writing Flash Stories

A regular feature of the SAG Writers' Group is the 'flash story': 300 words on a topic to be read out at a meeting. The aim of the short piece is to encourage writing that is succinct and tight. Following are some pieces members of the group wrote for their November meeting to reflect on Remembrance Day.

OH! THE IRONY
By Michael Considine

Alf Daniels was a body snatcher, but, alas, not a very good one. Let me correct you lest you be thinking that I am writing of Victorian-era England where churchyards were raided to dig up freshly buried bodies which were then sold to anatomy schools.

No Alf, from a tin mining community in north-east Tasmania, served in the Australian Army 3rd Field Ambulance as a stretcher bearer during WWI. This was the same unit made famous by the exploits of Private John Kirkpatrick Simpson and his donkey at Gallipoli, transporting wounded soldiers from the battlefield to the safety of the beach. Alf never met Simpson as a sniper killed the man with the donkey some 11 months before Alf's arrival at the front.

One of the key attributes of a stretcher bearer is fitness. Despite his work in the mines, once enlisted, the sturdy miner suffered from knee soreness. Alf was transferred to hospital and diagnosed with synovitis of the left knee; his days as a body snatcher were numbered. He was returned to Australia for six months of change. Treatment was carried out at the Australian General Hospitals at Hobart and Launceston, where Alf demonstrated that he was not a model patient with several misdemeanours recorded including going AWOL, probably to visit a girlfriend who had written letters to his Commanding Officer inquiring about the soldier's health and welfare, as well as disobeying the orders of the Medical Officer.

The final irony was that the injury suffered by foot soldier Private Alf Daniels was, in the opinion of the army's medical evaluation team, caused by marching!

The Postcard
By Janet Cooksey

The postcard tumbled from a pile of my grandmother's photographs.

It contained a birthday greeting with a few simple words squeezed in at the end: 'I saw in the paper that Ray Donnelly was killed in the war.'

Realising that 'the war' was World War 1, and the postcard was from May 1915 or 1916, I was immediately curious.

Questions raced through my mind—who was Ray, and how did my grandmother know him? I wondered where he served, how he died, and if he had family who still remembered him.

Sadly, as I know it, Ray's story is far too brief. He was a 22-year-old engineer who was not married and did not have children. He lived in Parramatta and was most likely a childhood friend of my grandmother.

In memoriam: R. R. Donnelly

Official records confirm that Robert Raymond Donnelly (No. 115) joined the AIF on 17 August 1914 as a Private with the 7th Company, 3rd Infantry Battalion. He sailed from Sydney on 20 October 1914 aboard the *Euripides*. Ray died at Quinn's Post on 28 April 1915, just eight months after enlisting and three days after the first landings at Gallipoli.

On 31 May 1915, Ray's name appeared in the *Sydney Morning Herald*'s Roll of Honour. There were just two small notices, one from his family and one from his 'old chums' Fred, Will, Roy, Frank, and Bert Ardill.

I know nothing more than these bare facts, a few short sentences to sum up a life, but I hope his name still features on a family tree and his life and memory are honoured.

I will never know why Ray was important to my grandmother, but his importance to her makes him important to me.

Rest in Peace, Robert Raymond Donnelly.

Cyril
By Joan Lewis

Cyril Thomas Lewis was born in July of 1897 at Milthorpe and moved with his parents to Kogarah until he gained his apprenticeship as a carpenter at North Sydney.

He was 18 years and nine months old when he joined the Australian Infantry forces. His mother Elizabeth Mary Lewis signed the consent form along with his father Thomas John Lewis.

He embarked at Sydney along with his older brother Leo on the *Argyllshire* on 31 October 1916 with the 22nd Battalion. Then they went from UK to France.

He fought at the battle of Bullecourt and on 3 May 1917 he was reported as being killed in action. Just seven months and three days after leaving Australia. His brother Leo was injured. They were together and Cyril stepped on a land mine. From the family story we heard that Leo remained silent on anything to do with war, even on Anzac Day. He'd sit in quiet contemplation just thinking.

The family received his medals in 1923. The Star, the Victory medal and the British medal. He is buried at HAC Cemetery, Ecoust-St Mein, Pas de Calais, France.

I have heard the saying that they are not gone as long as someone remembers them. Although I never met him, I will remember him.

In Remembrance of David Shaw 1891-1918
WW1 Service No. 2219
By Rhonda Kroehnert

In February 1916, David Shaw, his brother Malcolm Shaw and cousin Ben Shaw enlisted in the Australian Imperial Force (AIF) at Dubbo, New South Wales. All three were assigned as privates in the Army's 54th Infantry Battalion and sailed together from Sydney in August that year on *HMAT Boorara* arriving in Plymouth, England in October. By Christmas 1916 they were at the Commonwealth reinforcement camp at Etaples, France before being transferred to their units fighting in the battlefields on the Western Front.

A shearer, David was born and employed, like his parents Alexander and Sarah Shaw and his 11 siblings, on the 55,000 acre Yarrowin Merino Stud near Brewarrina in north-west New South Wales.

Those fighting on the Western Front endured a despairing existence, as did David for the last 16 months of his short life. In February 1917 he was hospitalised for three months, being transferred by ship to England with an accidental bayonet wound to the abdomen while in the front-line trench. After furlough, he returned to France, rejoining his unit in July 1917.

By early September he had contracted Influenza and later that month, Trench Fever, being hospitalised in the 14th Field Ambulance, 58th General Hospital at St Omer and 7th Convalescent Depot at Boulogne, France.

On rejoining the 54th Battalion at the end October he spent four months in the battlefield before a short leave in United Kingdom where he celebrated his 27th birthday. On rejoining his unit on 5 April 1818, David was killed four days later in action in the Field, France. David is buried in Aubigny British Cemetery, Somme, France.

David's brother Malcolm Shaw and cousin Ben Shaw returned to Australia. The battles of war remained with them forever.

The Machinist and the Sapper
By Beverley Richardson

Alma

It was two o'clock on Sunday morning when the Japanese submarine arrived off the coast of Newcastle. After a midnight attack on Sydney, it had now come to shell the industrial heart of New South Wales. The city was unprepared. Lights shone, "like a string of glittering diamonds"[1] along the waterfront. Moonlight illuminated the headlands, the Hunter River and industries that were in peak production for the war. The people, unprepared for an attack, were awake, startled by flares that lit the sky and the return fire of guns on Fort Scratchley.[2] They heard the shells, nine in all, whistling overhead and through their windows they saw them fall into the harbour or onto the streets. Alma Asquith and her landlady, Mrs Stuart, sitting on the balcony of their terrace house in Alfred Street, Newcastle East, heard one shell explode in nearby Parnell Place. It tore apart the weatherboard facades of the 19th Century cottages, smashed windows and furniture and sent splinters of material into nearby streets. Within a moment Alma was struck on the thigh by a flying piece of shrapnel that eventually landed five houses away. The burn she received that morning, 8 June, 1942, she would remember for the rest of her life.[3] In shock, she thought of her fiancé, Ray, who was facing every day the fear that she now knew ... where was he? She felt so alone. The broken chain of letters she received were heavily censored: words covered with rectangles of black. Warm in bed in her single room, her wound having been dressed by Mrs Stuart, Alma's thoughts drifted to her life; her past and her future.

Alma and Raymond

Raymond

I joined the 19th Army Field Company, Australian Born Engineers, a small unit, drawn mostly from the Hunter River Valley.[4] When we arrived at camp, near the small town of Largs, our leader, Ken Crawley, told us about the part we'd play in the defence of Australia. We were going to support the troops: without us they couldn't advance and fight and they couldn't safely retreat.[5] I knew my life would never be the same when I put on the uniform and held my .303. From then on, I slept in a tent, and ate army food.

The Reveille woke me up at six every morning and for the rest of the day I jumped to the sound of the commanding officer's voice. I marched until I was exhausted on untarred roads and up steep hills. At night I tracked through farmland on map reading assignments. I had a compass and the stars to help me. We used any materials we could scavenge to build pontoon bridges over the Clarence River. Our Basic Training included rifle drill, firing practice,[6] bayonet practice, making fires, digging holes, erecting barbed wire entanglements and fighting in mock battles. We were building up our fitness and endurance: it was all part of a rookie soldier's introduction to war.[7]

1. 'New Facts About Japanese Blow at Newcastle', *Newcastle Morning Herald and Miners' Advocate*, Friday 17 August, 1945.
2. A former coastal defence installation.
3. The personal details included in this text are drawn from a series of interviews conducted with Alma throughout 2019.
4. War records of Raymond James Rogie, National Archives of Australia. B883, NX1443.
5. *The Sappers' War* by Ken Ward-Harvey Norman Morris Printers, Newcastle 1992), 10.
6. At the Largs/Rutherford Firing Range.
7. *A History of World War 11 Largs Military Training Camp*: a collection of memoirs written by returned sappers who had received Basic Training at the Largs camp. Publication prepared for the unveiling of the Military Training Camp on Saturday, November 1995. Booklet available at Maitland and District Historical Society

Title image (previous page, top): vintage camera photo by Susie Burleston, Unsplash; modified in Adobe Photoshop to add darkness and flash effect.

ARCHIVES REPORT

Ironclad Sisterhood Update

by Dr Alexandra Mountain

Miss Jessica Hill, a volunteer research assistant for the Society of Australian Genealogists' Library, started collecting information in 1970 on female convicts who arrived in New South Wales. Her initial interest in convicts came from, of course, her own ancestry linking back to a convict who settled in Australia. However, uncovering documentation and compiling a list of resources concerning convict women quickly became a passionate research project of Miss Hill's, and she continued building the index of "her girls" until her death in 1995. Then, her unfinished notes and index were donated to the Society's Library and Archives for future family history researchers to use.

This incredible resource lived in the compactus at Richmond Villa until 2022, when I presented the collection to the Society's new Colonial Australia Research Group, which prompted member Andrew Redfern to reach out and see if there were any possibilities to collaborate on a project using Jess' Girls. Andrew instantly saw an opportunity to take Jess' Girls out of the archive for a larger audience, and he dedicated himself to bringing Miss Hill's research to a new generation of family historians.

To be frank, I don't believe Andrew knew what he was getting himself into, because I certainly did not. Our Jess' Girls project, now called *Ironclad Sisterhood*, has become so much more than we originally intended.

Ironclad Sisterhood is at once a digital research resource, used by family historians, professional researchers and academics alike; and a creative reimagination of convict women and their experiences, building a rich and nuanced portrait of under-documented and marginalised historical actors. Our project has two main parts: both macro and micro. The macro focus of our project is the development of an easily accessible biographical database of convict women who arrived in New South Wales from 1788 to 1818, available at **ironcladsisterhood.sag.org.au**. Additionally, the website also acts as a central collaborative site, bringing together other online resources focused on convict women, and working with other heritage institutions to connect passionate researchers together. The micro focus, where we merge fictive imagination with intensive research to better understand the lives of convict women, is shown through our podcast, artificial intelligence images, and creative biographies, all hosted within our website.

Ironclad Sisterhood has been extraordinarily successful. Our online launch event attracted over 500 registrants and catapulted our podcast into the top 35 on the Apple podcast charts for Australian History. We have been invited to speak at a number of different groups about the *Ironclad Sisterhood* project, including the Botany Bay Family History Society, the North Sydney Council, and the Earlwood Probus Club. Our project was also featured in the Ancestry.com newsletter, published as a National Library of Australia's Trove's Treasure, and written up in *Who Do You Think You Are?* magazine.

The success of *Ironclad Sisterhood* is due to the incredible leadership, intellectual artistry, and technological acumen of Andrew Redfern, and the in-depth research, meticulous transcription, and creative brilliance of our three Macquarie University students who joined the project: Georgia Charlier, Alexandra Scouller, and Christina Wisniewski. I have been so

From left: Andrew Redfern, Dr Alexandra Mountain and Alexandra Scouller. Photo credit: TWHPhotography

amazed by their hard work and instinctual attachment to the project and have loved meeting the women uncovered and reimagined through their efforts.

Most recently, *Ironclad Sisterhood* was awarded a special commendation by the NSW History Council for the 2023 Macquarie-PHA Applied History Award. Andrew, Alexandra and I were able to attend the awards night, held at the Anzac Memorial Auditorium, and it was truly such a wonderful evening. We met other award winners and saw the incredible historical work being done in our communities. Speaking with such creative and inspiring historians has galvanised us to do more to actively engage members and non-members with our collections and bring to life the rich social histories contained in our archives.

Family history is, after all, the first history that many of us experience, and is also the most personal and intimate. Memories of our past ancestors, told to us in so many different ways, are the common stories of humanity that tie our society together. Our work as family historians is to be the keeper of these tales; but, importantly, to act as the storyteller as well. Every retelling of a family history reveals something new about our past and our present, mutable and changeable depending on individual connections. *Ironclad Sisterhood* offers just one imagining of our ancestors and hopes to be a place where other interpretations can grow.

The Society of Australian Genealogists has always been at the forefront of building community networks and resource sharing for family historians, with a deep commitment to projects designed to make genealogical records more accessible. Society members have long held the responsibility of being the discoverers, the keepers, the sharers of family history. Miss Hill's work, from its inception, was designed to make information about women convicts more easily and readily available; to bring family stories out of the archives and into our family conversations. The team at Ironclad Sisterhood is deeply indebted not just to the work of Miss Hill, but the spirit in which she built her index: trying to help family historians uncover their own legacies.

Intimate Lives: the Ethics of Uncovering Family Secrets

by Dr Ashley Barnwell

Every family has secrets, though some may not yet know it. Secrets can be kept for various reasons: out of necessity, out of self-interest, with the best of intentions, with malicious intent, to protect, to survive, to hide shame, to shield love.

Often when we discover our ancestors' secrets through family history research we are drawn a little closer into their lives and times, to understand their character and social context. The emotions that unearthing past secrets can evoke are also varied. Secrets, depending on the content, the distance and the impacts, can feel light and spark curiosity, even a little mirth, but they can also feel heavy, unsettling and still raw. Most of all a family secret, once found, can compel us to do something – even if just to let it rest. If you are researching and writing a family history, the discovery of a secret might raise a minefield of new issues – how to square it with the cover-story, how to verify it, who to tell or not to tell, whether to include the secret in your story, and if so, how?

Writing about family secrets can be both fascinating and fraught. Secrets may hold disparate meanings and consequences for different family members.

As a result, the family historian is often faced with both practical and ethical questions about how to set the story right for the living as well as the dead. Sometimes chasing a secret can feel like a labyrinth: everywhere you turn is a dead end, especially when information has been lost or held back by gate-keeping relatives or institutions. At other times, the challenge of sharing secrets can be grounded in social change, where the mores around, for example, sexual relationships, have become less shrouded in secrecy over time. The shifting moral tides can require careful contextualisation so the story is sensitive to older generations, yet also understood by present and future generations.

With some family secrets, there can be important ethical work in keeping rather than revealing (or at least fully revealing) a secret. Reframing secrets, if done sensitively, can also allow a new voice in the story to be heard, and a shift in the power of secrecy to occur.

In a research project titled *Intimate Lives: The Ethics of Uncovering Family Secrets*, Society of Australian Genealogists' Archivist Dr Alexandra Mountain and University of Melbourne Sociologist Dr Ashley Barnwell are exploring the ethical issues family historians face when discovering and writing about intimate secrets in their ancestors' lives. One of the proposed outcomes of the project will be an evidence-based guide for researchers who are navigating family secrets in their family history research.

To get a better understanding of researchers' experiences and needs, Drs Mountain and Barnwell have been running a number of focus groups with SAG members. If you are interested in participating in the project, please contact Dr. Mountain at **archives@sag.org.au**. Your stories, insights, and experiences may contribute to a deeper understanding of the complexities that shaped the lives of our predecessors and help to support future family history research.

LEST WE FORGET PROJECT

RECORD OF SERVICE

Full name:	
Date + Place of birth:	
Also Known As / Alias (if any):	
Service number(s):	
Next of kin, relationship and address:	
Age on enlistment:	
Marital status on enlistment:	Photo caption:

Sometimes it's hard to recall all the details of an ancestor's service when called on to recount details for family, particularly around Anzac Day. In response to some of our members asking for a simple form that could be filled out ahead of time to have ready for those questions, especially from children and grandchildren, we've designed a form to assist in gathering all the necessary information. We've asked the advice of some of our volunteers to ensure it serves for any form of service: military, naval or air force, as well as for ancillary roles such as nursing, women's auxiliary service and so on.

If you do fill it out, we would appreciate it if you would lodge a copy with us which we may add to our website, then to our archives for future generations. On the left is the first section of the two-page form, which can be downloaded from: **www.sag.org.au/Lest-We-Forget**.

Please send your completed forms to: **admin@sag.org.au**

LIBRARY NEWS

BY GEMMA BESWICK

Retro Research … that never goes out of style!

By Gemma Beswick, Library Services Manager
(and 3ʳᵈ great granddaughter of convicts who stole a pile of shoes, and a handkerchief).

Bellowsers, Derwent Ducks, Lags' Land, Pentonvillians …

Have you ever wondered what a *bellowser* is? Where *Lags' Land* was? Or, who *Pentonvillians* or *Derwent Ducks* were? You can find all this and more in the resources of the Society's library collection.

The term 'convict' has been one of the most-searched terms in our library collection catalogue in recent years. Once a 'stain' on the family trees of some family historians, today having a convict in your family tree is not only celebrated but sought after for many. "Convict chic," some might say!

The Society's library collection holds over 1,000 items with the word 'convict' in the title or description alone. Items include books, microfilm reels, pamphlets, and electronic/digital resources — they are just the tip of the convict ship!

In the spirit of 'retro' research, or to look at resources not available easily or online, we have compiled a list of convict related resources in the collection where you may not have thought to look (or request a look-up) before.

To help with general terms and concepts of the time:

- *Convict words: language in early colonial Australia* by Amanda Laugesen A9/74/6 (Book)
- *A mini dictionary A-Z: a succinct guide to colonial anecdotes, incidents and interesting information* compiled by Barbara Daniels-Pressick, Carol Bergen and Ron Bergen A9/80/1(b) (Book)

Learning about the lives of convicts before and after conviction:

- *Chain letters: narrating convict lives* edited by Lucy Frost and Hamish Maxwell-Stewart, A3/23/29 (Book)
- *Design for convicts: an account of design for convict establishments in the Australian Colonies during the transportation era* by James Semple Kerr, A3/23/31 (Book)
- *Aboriginal convicts: Australian, Khoisan and Maori exiles* Kristyn Harman, [Variant title: *Australian, Khoisan and Maori exiles*] A3/24/4 (Book)
- *The crimes of the First Fleet convicts* by John Cobley, B3/23/4 (Book)
- *The convict lottery: forced removal of surplus population: a study of convict transportation* by Peter K B Edwards, B3/23/16 (Book)
- *The intolerable hulks: British shipboard confinement, 1776-1857* by Charles Campbell, M3/23/3 (Book)

Sources you may not have thought to check:

- *Convict records: bank account records, 1833-1840,* 4052 (Microform)
- *Index to convicts & employers 1832-1833* compiled by Aileen Trinder & Pat Stemp, NSW-CNV:1 (Microfiche)
- *The convict theatres of early Australia, 1788-1840* by Robert Jordan A3/32/32 (Book)
- *Australian genesis: Jewish convicts and settlers 1788-1860* by John S. Levi and G. F. J. Bergman, A3/98/3 (Book)
- *Dispatched downunder: tracing the resting places of the First Fleeters* by Ron Withington A5/90/120 (Book)
- *Convicts of the Australian Agricultural Company 1825-1850*, A7/40/CD.3 (Electronic Resources)
- *Norfolk Island victualling book, 1792-1796* compiled by Jess Hill, B7/30/1792-6 (Book)
- *List of reported convict absconders from Van Diemen's Land, 1830-1834: sourced from the Hobart Town Gazette* compiled by Dianne J. E. Cassidy [Variant title: *Convict absconders from Van Diemen's Land, 1830-1834*], D3/23/Pam.8 (Pamphlet)
- *Portraits of the past: faces and facts of transportees* by Tony Satchell, D5/90/11 (Book)

Tales of specific people, places, ships and events:

- *The rebel ship Minerva: Ireland to New South Wales, 1800* by Barbara Hall, A3/23/74 (Book)
- *The passage of the damned: what happened to the men and women of the Lady Shore mutiny* by Elsbeth Hardie, A3/23/78 (Book)
- *A study on the Three Bees and the convicts who sailed on her* by William D. Archbold, A3/23/CD.1 (Electronic Resource)
- *Never to return: the story of Manx prisoners transported to the penal colonies* by Hampton Creer, A3/23/50 (Book)
- *Convict by choice* by J. Marjorie Butler, A6/AUS/1 (Book)
- *The convicted gunsmiths of New South Wales: a definitive history, 1788-1850* by R. C. Solomon, B5/35/2 (Book)
- *Prisoners on board the hulk Phoenix: index to transportation entrance books 18 January 1833 to 7 September 1848 Genealogical Society of Queensland, Inc.* by Deborah Oakley, A3/23/38 (Book)
- *The girl who stole stockings: the true story of Susannah Noon and the women of the convict ship Friends* by Elsbeth Hardie, A3/23/75 (Book)
- *Convict women: an index to the profiles of female convicts, 1788-1822* compiled and edited by Jan Barber, B7/40/5 (Book)

- *Notorious strumpets and dangerous girls: convict women in Van Diemen's Land, 1803-1829* by Phillip Tardif, D3/23/8 (Book)
- *The tin ticket: the heroic journey of Australia's convict women* by Deborah J. Swiss, D3/23/19 (Book)
- *Abandoned women: Scottish convicts exiled beyond the seas* by Lucy Frost, D3/23/20 (Book)

Children and Convict children:

- *Convict Orphans* by Lucy Frost, B3/23/18 (Book)
- *Orphans of history: the forgotten children of the First Fleet /* by Robert Holden, B3/30/25 (Book)
- *Criminal children: Researching juvenile offenders 1820-1920* by Emma Watkins, M2/10/161 (Book)

Spotlight on: Irish Convicts:

- *Irish workhouse orphan emigration to Australia 1848-1850* by Dr Perry McIntyre & Dr Richard Reid, A3/20/Pam.24 (Pamphlet)
- *A drift of 'Derwent Ducks': lives of the 200 female Irish convicts transported on the Australasia from Dublin to Hobart in 1849* by Trudy Mae Cowley, A3/23/56 (Book)
- *Unnamed Irish boys on convict ships 1841-1843 sent to Queen's Orphanage, Hobart, Van Diemen's Land* by Joyce Purtscher, D4.000/2/Pam.2
- *Voices from the tomb: a biographical dictionary of the 62 Fenians transported to Western Australia* by Liam Barry, F5/35/2 (Book)

LIBRARY UPDATES

BY KARLIE FRELINGOS

This is a selection of books, pamphlets and other format items accessioned from November 2023 to January 2024.

The information provided is the title of the record, library classification number, format and donor's name.

All items are in our Research Centre & Library at 2/3790 Kent Street unless otherwise noted. Consult the Library Catalogue at **sag.org.au** and click on the 'Using our Collections' button to locate full details of the items included in this list.

AUSTRALIA

The Bates family of Ballyshonog, Askinvillar and Janeville by Alastair Bates. (2021) A6/BAT/Pam.3 (Pamphlet) [Donated by the author]

The Bechly family in Australia by Paul Lorin Bechly. (2020) A6/BEC/5 (Book) [Donated by the author]

"An intolerable burden": the intriguing story of Rev. James Clarke by Jean Jehan. (2010) A6/CLA/Pam.7 (Pamphlet) [Donated by Carmel Bollard]

Family pathways to new beginnings: from UK to Australia, the families of the union of Flew and Palmer by Robert Flew. (2021) A6/FLE/7 (Book) [Donated by the author]

A family history: Joseph James Smith & Agnes Thompson Brown by Carolyn Irvine. (2021) A6/GRE/Pam.9 (Pamphlet) [Donated by the author]

The leaving of Loughrea: An Irish family in the Great Famine by Stephen Lally. (2013) A6/LAL/5 (Book)

John and Mary (Connor) McGuiness: Early Settlers on the Sofala, Grenfell and Parkes Goldfields by Catherine Tisdell. (2023) A6/McG/16 (Book) [Donated by the author]

The Mohrs of Fitzbek: Ancestors and Descendants of Joachim Mohr born 1804 Fitzbek, and Maria Margaretha Voss born 1812 Ridders by Catherine Tisdell. (2013) A6/MOH/1 (Book) [Donated by the author].

The Pascoes: a family saga by Trevor Pascoe. (2015) A6/PAS/1 (Book)

Born in Glebe: mothers, midwives & medical men by Lesley Evelyn Potter. (2020) B4.037/12/1 (Book) [Donated by the author]

The tumult and the shouting dies...: World War 1 ancestors of Hurstville Family History Society members by Hurstville Family History Society. (2015) B4.220/70/Pam.1 (Pamphlet)

Lochinvar: a history of the township and local district by Lindsay Wood. (2005) B4.321/1/6 (Book)

The big history of little Stanwell Park by Michael Adams. (2019) B4.508/1/1 (Book)

Protecting the community: police in Wellington New South Wales 1830s to 1950s by Dorothy Blake. (2023) B4.820/83/Pam.1 (Pamphlet) [Donated by the author]

High in the sunlit silence: the story of fifty trainee pilots: RAAF Narromine NSW, December 1941 by Anthony J Vine. (2017) B4.821/73/1 (Book) [Donated by the author]

Repression, reform & resilience: a history of the Cascades Female Factory by Alison Alexander. (2016) D4.004/12/1 (Book)

Convict lives at the Cascades Female Factory. Volume 2 by Alison Alexander & Alice Meredith Hodgson. (2018) D4.009/12/1 (Book)

ENGLAND

Manorial records: an introduction to their transcription and translation by Denis Stuart. (2004) M2/6/1 (Book) [Donated by Peter Trist]

Widworthy manorial court rolls, 1453-1617 edited by Edwin S. Haydon and John H. Harrop. (1997) M2/6/2 (Book) [Donated by Peter Trist]

King George's army: British regiments and the men who led them 1793-1815. Volume 1, Administration and cavalry by Steve Brown. (2023) M7/73/1 (Book)

English local administration in the Middle Ages by Helen M. Jewell (1972) N3/80/1 (Book) [Donated by Peter Trist]

The old farm: a history of farming life in the West Country by Robin Stanes. (1990) N4.10/12/1 (Book) [Donated by Peter Trist]

SCOTLAND

Perth: a short history by Marion L. Stavert. (1991) P4.25/1/Pam.1 (Pamphlet) [Donated by Peter Trist]

USA

The Bechly family in North America by Paul Lorin Bechly. (2018) U6/BEC/1 (Book) [Donated by the author]

Women of Colonial Australia Creative Writing Project

by Danielle Tebb

The Society of Australian Genealogists ran an extended creative writing program in 2022-3, facilitated by Rose Cutts. 20 members joined the program in November 2022 and I'm very pleased to say that all 20 finished and submitted their final draft in September 2023. Due to the number of participants, the single book originally planned turned into a three-volume set, capturing stories of women travelling from England, Scotland, Jersey and Ireland to Australia by assisted or unassisted passage in volumes one and two respectively and those travelling to Australia as convicts as well as daughters born in the colony to convict or free settlers, often referred to as currency lasses, in the third volume.

Each participant crafted a 4,000 to 5,000 word short story based on a female ancestor in colonial Australia. Each story is a work of fiction, inspired by the research each participant conducted into the life of their chosen ancestor, each carefully positioned within an environment of historical settings and events.

Over eight Zoom sessions and three draft milestones, not to mention one-on-one mentoring, facilitator and SAG member, Rose Cutts, encouraged, motivated, reassured, supported, nurtured and prodded us on our journey. Her program factored in practical and achievable writing skills and broke down the planning, plotting and researching of our female ancestors into manageable pieces. Support and encouragement was also built into the course through the feedback participants gave and received from each other. Every element was designed to broaden and enhance our individual writing skills.

Our launch on Thursday, 14 December, was a great success, attended by 15 of the 20 participants, with some coming from regional areas and interstate. A follow-up Zoom launch was held the following week for those who couldn't make it in person.

Rose plans to run another program for new participants with a new topic in the second half of 2024, which will be advertised once the details are finalised. As someone who entered the program with some degree of trepidation, not really knowing what to expect and whether I could realistically allocate enough time to the project, I can honestly say that it is something I'm thrilled to have participated in and so thankful I decided to take the plunge. While we all had various times when we questioned what we were doing, each of us has produced a piece of creative writing we're

incredibly proud of, and many in the group have embraced the impetus the program has given us and embarked on other writing projects in the months since.

Our stories are available for all to read when visiting the SAG Library and Research Centre and are also available for $20 per volume or $50 for the set of three, plus p/h, via our website

Participants attending the launch with Rose Cutts at the front holding the three volumes.

ABOUT US

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To make a booking: (02) 9247 3953

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