



**PARRAMATTA FEMALE FACTORY FRIENDS INC.
NEWSLETTER – ISSUE NO: 44 MARCH-APRIL 2022**



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Female Penitentiary or Factory, Paramatta [i.e. Parramatta] - watercolour Augustus Earle 1826 – nla.pic-an 2818460 National Library of Australia (NLA)

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Next Meeting: Friday 22 April 2022. **Guest Speaker:** 1.00pm
 followed by PFFF General Meeting at 2:00pm.
VENUE: PFFF Rooms, Gipps Yard, 5 Fleet Street, North Parramatta 2151.

Content	Page
President.....	2
Noticeboard.....	3
History Corner.....	3
'Our Girls'.....	4
Research Muster.....	6
Guest Speaker.....	9
Out & About.....	9
Serendipity.....	10

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Dear Friends,

Welcome to the autumn 2022 issue of the Newsletter.

Firstly, thoughts go out to our members and all who are in the flood affected areas in Northern NSW, Queensland, the Hawkesbury and Nepean Rivers region, Richmond, Windsor and Sydney. It has been rare recently to see sunshine, although looking out my window today I see a little peeping through...a little hope on the horizon!



At this time any visit to the Female Factory site will include vistas of temporary fencing, removal of bitumen and massive conservation work. The old inappropriate additions are being removed and for the first time some features that have not been seen for many years are peeping through. One item I am pleased to see go is the roller shutter door that was inserted in the original hospital external wall by an unthinking heritage vandal many years ago.

The licence for our new location on site has been signed and when the major removals of the late 20th century additions and conservation work are done, we will be able to move in.

For our World Heritage status push, we are continuing dialogue with the relevant politicians as we may have conservation assured but we do not have World Heritage or future use signed off yet. However it is looking hopeful there will be a museum.

We continue promoting our aims and our group. Our latest has been inclusion in the Linnwood House Open Day. Thank you to Anne Mathews, Wayne Mathews, Kerima-Gae Topp and Ronda Gaffey for implementing this.

An exciting initiative is the 4th book in our publications which looks at women's stories unpublished by us and looking beyond the factory, such as assignment and other connections, like Elizabeth Fry. As you can see there are always things happening.

One activity to look forward to is our Australian Heritage Festival (National Trust) event. Our guest speaker, is Christine Yeats whose CV includes many years as senior Archivist at NSW State Records and immediate past President of the Royal Australian Historical Society, just to mention a couple. She has written on convict subjects and has expertise in Colonial life in its many forms. Her expertise in research is apparent every time she presents a topic. This time it is on Colonial Military with her talk titled: *Do You Have a Soldier in Your Family?* Be sure not to miss this. Spaces are limited.

All the best

Gay Hendriksen
President



Current construction at the Female Factory site - the Greenway Hospital.
Photograph courtesy: Judith Dunn

NOTICEBOARD

A very warm welcome to new PFFF member, Janelle Luckey.

* **THE AUSTRALIAN HERITAGE FESTIVAL, 'Curiosity'** begins on 1 April and there are lots of talks, tours and exhibitions especially in the Parramatta area. For details: <https://www.nationaltrust.org.au>nsw>

* **NEXT GENERAL MEETING: FRIDAY 22 APRIL 2022. GUEST SPEAKER** at 1pm: Christine Yeats - topic: *Do You Have a Soldier in the Family?* This will be followed by the General Meeting at 2pm. Venue: 5 Fleet Street, North Parramatta (please note this is the 4th Friday of the month - due to Easter). This talk is an Australian Heritage Festival (National Trust) event. **BOOKINGS:** You can use the quicklink: **eventbrite: soldier** or <https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/do-you-have-a-soldier-in-the-family-tickets-305143591697>

* **A PARRAMATTA BICENTENARY** - Brislington House was 200 years old in 2021. Congratulations to the Brislington Committee for all their hard work and advocacy for one of the last colonial houses still in Parramatta. [Brislington House Medical Museum is open Tuesdays and Thursdays 10.30am - 2.00pm, now we are out of 'lockdown'](#).

* **THE PARRAMATTA VISITOR INFORMATION CENTRE - Research & Collections Services** is holding an exhibition highlighting different aspects of the Parramatta Light Rail Project and including some archaeological finds. These will be on display in the lower ground floor area, [from late April until the week ending 27 May 2022](#).

HISTORY CORNER - A BRIDGE FOR SYDNEY HARBOUR

Ronda Gaffey

In 1825, the Australian newspaper published a letter written by Francis Greenway who was suggesting that a bridge be built across the Sydney Harbour¹.

It seems that this idea was put to Governor Macquarie by Greenway as early as 1815, however it was some 100 years later that the idea of a bridge joining the northern and southern shores of the harbour, at the shortest points, was to become a reality².



Even earlier, the concept of a harbour bridge was envisaged - in 1789 natural philosopher Erasmus Darwin (grandfather of Charles Darwin), wrote rather eloquently of his vision of the future Port Jackson colony:

*There, ray'd from cities o'er the cultur'd lands/ Shall bright canals and solid roads expand/
There the proud arch, colossus-like bestride/ Yon glistening streams and bound the chasing tide/...*³

In 1916 a design for a bridge was sent to engineer J.J.C. Bradfield. The bridge was commenced in 1923 and opened 19 March 1932. Today, the Sydney Harbour Bridge is truly that imagined 'colossus' and its arch, a 'proud' achievement indeed.



Sydney from the North Shore, 1827 Joseph Lycett. Dixon Galleries, State Library New South Wales

References:

¹Lennon, Troy, ON THIS DAY, Daily Telegraph, Wednesday 28 April 2021 [dailytelegraph.com.au/news/today-in-history](https://www.dailytelegraph.com.au/news/today-in-history)

²National Heritage Places: <https://www.awe.gov.au/parks/heritage/places/national-sydney-harbour-bridge> accessed 10/3/22

³Darwin, Erasmus, *Visit of Hope to Sydney-Cove. Near Botany Bay [poem]*, published in *The Voyage of Governor Phillip with an account of the Establishment of the Colonies of Port Jackson and Norfolk Island*, London, John Stockdale 1789.

Thank you to member Pauline Garmonsway for sharing her 'find' in the Daily Telegraph which has led me to many interesting finds too! Ed.

Elizabeth Craig was a 38 year old mother when she was tried at the Old Bailey in 1801 for stealing goods to the value of six shillings and six pence. Her story is one of hardship and we hear her anguish as she pleads for clemency from the dock...

It was the first time I was ever guilty of anything. I have got 4 fatherless children; 1 in St Bartholomew's with a broken arm, two in the workhouse and my biggest girl, I don't know where she is; I hope you show mercy for the sake of my children...¹

The indictment reads: *Elizabeth Craig feloniously stealing on 15th February, a pewter quart pot, value 2 shillings 6d and six pewter pots value of 5s., the property of William Dickenson...publican of the Bald Faced Stag in Worship Square. He told the court that he saw Elizabeth and a woman running away, he gave chase - she said she was a pot girl, he recognised his pots and took her to an officer².*



Criminal Court, the Old Bailey c1809.

Elizabeth was found guilty and sentenced to seven years' transportation. She languished in Newgate, for another two years before she left England. She embarked the ship *Experiment* departing Cowes on 2 January 1804. After a voyage of 174 days, the ship arrived in Sydney Cove on 24 June 1804³.

Elizabeth had two children with her, a boy and a girl (Ann) and was assigned to the Parramatta Female Factory above the Gaol. Another child was born in 1805. It is thought he was fathered by John Hanlon.

Records show that Elizabeth married John Hanlon/Hanlan on 29 July 1806. He was a political prisoner, possibly a United Irishman and as such, he was transported for life. He arrived per *Minerva* 11 January 1800 - his occupation was given as plasterer. Their daughter Mary was born 9 July and baptised 10 June 1810.

Following her marriage, it would seem that life was settled for Elizabeth - she was granted a Certificate of Freedom in 1810. The 1814 General Muster of NSW shows Elizabeth Craig, *Experiment 1*, living *on stores* with two children *off stores*, wife of John Hindle (Hanlon misspelt). In the Musters of 1823, 1824, and 1825, Elizabeth and John were living with their family in their own house at 20 George Street, Parramatta⁴.

In the 1828 Census, John aged 60 and Elizabeth aged 66, are lodging with Joseph Bennett, Parramatta⁵.

Elizabeth Hanlon died sometime after 1828. No death has been found thus far. John Hanlon died on 31 May 1830, aged 69. He is buried in St. Patrick's Cemetery, Parramatta. There is a headstone⁶.

Ann, who had been in the Female Factory with her mother and brother, married three times and was mother to ten children all of whom were born in Parramatta. Ann died 20 November and is buried with William Monks her second husband, in St. John's Cemetery, Parramatta⁷.

One cannot but wonder about the children Elizabeth left behind. They are lost in time...

References:

¹Proceedings of the Old Bailey, www.britonline.ac.uk/oldbailey

²Parramatta & District Historical Society, (PD&HS) Parramatta Pioneer Register, Vol. 1 2000.

³Bateson, Charles, Convict Ships 1787-1868, 1974.

⁴Baxter, Carol, Muster & Lists of NSW and Norfolk Island and Van Diemen's Land 1800/1802, 1805/1806, 1811, 1814, 1822, 1822, 23, 24, 25, 1837.

⁵Saintly & Johnson, Census NSW 1828 - Library of Australian History 1985.

⁶P&DHS, St. Patrick's Cemetery, 1988.

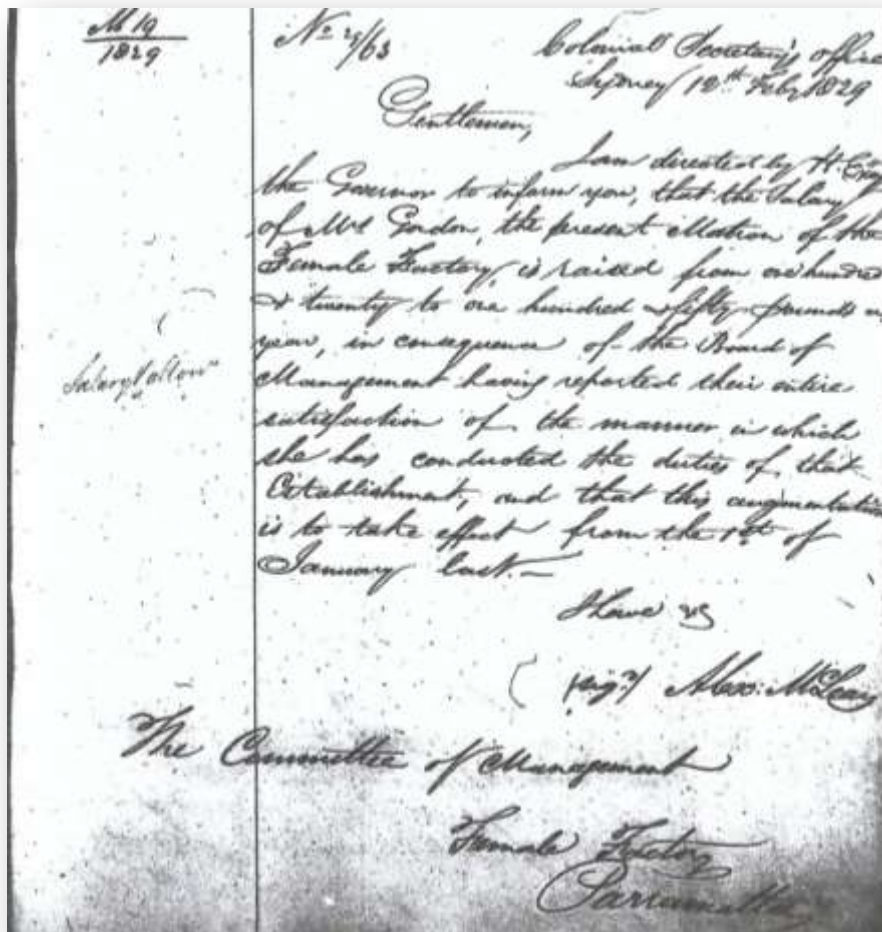
⁷P&DHS, St. John's Cemetery, 1991.

AFTER TWO YEARS, A REPORT CARD FROM THE BOARD & A SALARY RAISE!
Anne Mathews

The Colonial Secretary's Correspondence is quite 'a bundle' of information and intrigue. In flicking through some files recently, I came across the following letter where a raise in salary for Matron Ann Gordon is recommended¹.

Mrs. Gordon's salary was raised from £125 per annum to £150 - and it was back-dated. It is clear that the Board of Management was *entirely satisfied* with the way the Factory was being managed and the Governor supported the recommendation.

Interestingly, her husband Robert Gordon who was employed as Storekeeper at the Factory at some stage, would have been earning £107.7s².



¹ Letter dated 15 February 1829. Colonial Secretary Alexander McLeay to the Committee of Management, Colonial Secretary's Correspondence, Reel 1036, SRNSW.

In 1826 a Board of Management was established by Governor Darling following an inquiry into the Parramatta Female Factory. Members included eight men, three of whom were government officials and the Governor's private secretary; four Parramatta men - the police magistrate Edward Lockyer, local magistrate G.L Palmer, magistrate and clergyman, the Reverend Samuel Marsden and Dr. Mathew Anderson³ whose 'practice' included the Parramatta Female Factory and the Parramatta Female Orphan School⁴.

References:

² Gordon of Limerick, Ireland, Australia, New Zealand, sites.rootsweb.com retrieved 25/3/22

³Liston, Carol, 'The Female Factory Board of Management', *Women Transported Life in Australia's Convict Female Factories*, Gay Hendriksen, Carol Liston, Judy Cowley, Parramatta Heritage Centre 2008.

⁴Caring for Convicts and the Community a History of Parramatta Hospital, Cumberland Area Health Service 1988, 2nd edition 2016.

The Parramatta Female Factory Research Centre is growing with more resources coming in every month. I would like to thank Kaye Weaver for her donation and the City of Parramatta Local Studies Library for their great family history donations. There have been five trips by the research centre group, Janice Ruse Huntington, Lyn Watkins and Kevin Dodds with six car loads of mostly books and a small number of costumes. There was also a load of books and a number of costumes from Anne Mathews - thank you Anne. The costumes will be used for a range of things - display, education and public programs. Other items include books and microfiche related to family history, the 18th and 19th century, convict life, early Parramatta with relevance to the Factory, pioneer registers and Female Factory specific books.

We continue to do book sorting, work on digital files for our computers and records and sorting the physical books and magazines. We continue to respond to current research inquiries and entries for the newsletter and Facebook and Instagram.

MUSTER FOCUS STORY - A FAMILY TORN APART

Kevin Dodds Researcher - Research Centre Group

My story is about Sarah Wiggins and how her entire family was torn apart by petty crime.

Sarah Wiggins was born 1803 in County Longford, Ireland. Her father William Wiggins was born in 1775 in Ireland; however, he moved the family to Liverpool, Lancashire, England, no doubt for work. William appears to have survived poverty-stricken England and died in Thurlow Street, Liverpool at the age of 72 on 31 March 1847 and is buried at St Mary's Parochial Cemetery.

Sarah appears to have left the family to work as a house servant and was in Wigan, Lancashire when she fell pregnant at 16 to Paul Taylor and named her son James Taylor. James was born 6 Jan 1819 in Wigan.

A year later, Sarah fell pregnant to Paul Straney who was born 1786 in Downpatrick, County Down, Northern Ireland, who had also come to Lancashire for work as a *soap boiler*. Paul was convicted in 1819 of *Larceny* in Lancaster, Lancashire and received three months. When he was released, he moved to Liverpool where he obviously met Sarah. They had a daughter Jane who was born on 3 December 1820.

Sarah and Paul stayed together as a couple and Paul took on raising James as his own along with their new daughter Jane.

Two years later, on 13 May 1822, Sarah married Paul at St. Peter's, Liverpool. They were both literate and had signed their names on the Marriage Certificate. Sarah and Paul had another nine children, all of whom were born in Liverpool, Lancashire, England with the exception of Henry, who was born in Wigan, Lancashire.

1. John Straney born 5 October 1822.
2. Henry Straney was born 1823.
3. Sarah Straney was born on 6 February 1825.
4. Rose Ann (Rosannah) Straney was born on 8 November 1826 and died in August 1827 aged nine months.
5. Roseanna Teresa Straney was born on 13 June 1828.
6. Francis Straney was born on 17 March 1830.
7. Paul Francis Straney was born on 2 March 1833.
8. William Straney was born 1 April 1835.
9. Robert Straney was born on 1 May 1837.

Sarah Straney (sometimes recorded as Strayne) was still a house servant when she was caught with stolen goods and was charged with receiving those goods knowing them to be stolen (sometimes this is a charge used by police

when they cannot prove who stole the goods, but the thief would have known by the value of the goods, type of goods and or identifying marks that they were stolen). A Margaret Johnson was her co-offender and they appeared at Liverpool Quarter Sessions on 23 October 1837. Both received 14 years.

This was obviously devastating for the family as she had six children under 12 years of age with the youngest Robert, only five months old.

On 25 April 1838, Sarah now 35, sailed on the female convict ship, *John Renwick*, arriving in Sydney on 27 August 1838 with Sarah 12 years old, Rosanna 10, Francis 7, Paul Francis 5, William 2 and Robert, nearly a year old.

Sarah was described as a Protestant of sallow complexion, brown hair, dark chestnut eyes with a slight scar on her right cheek and angular scar on back of right wrist and a scar on the palm of her left hand near the third finger.

Paul had to then take care of Jane and Henry as they were now 16 and 15 years old and most probably already working in Liverpool. However, Sarah's first child James Taylor had been an errand boy at 15 and was caught pickpocketing and convicted on 24 October 1836 at Liverpool and sentenced to seven years transportation. He was placed in a prison hulk, the *Fortitude* on 25 November 1836. A year later, James was transported to Australia on the *Lloyds* leaving on 25 March 1837, arriving in Sydney on 17 July 1837.

Another twist of fate is that her husband Paul Straney was convicted of stealing and sentenced to seven years and left Liverpool on the *Moffatt* on 7 November 1837 and arrived in Port Arthur, Tasmania on 1 April 1838, never to see his wife again. So, the children Jane and Henry had to fend for themselves in England. Paul Straney served his sentence and upon release, created a life in Yass, New South Wales and died of exhaustion on 8 July 1865 aged 79 years old and is buried at the Yass Anglican Cemetery.

It gets even worse; Sarah aged 12, Rosanna 10, Francis 7, Paul 5, William 2 and Robert 5 months old were admitted with Sarah to the Parramatta Female Factory however soon after, they were removed to Orphan Schools.



Waverley House was an Orphan School during the 1830s © unknown – Photograph taken late 1890s.



Parramatta Female Orphan School © NSW SL. Photograph taken c1890s.

The girls, Sarah and Rosanna were admitted to the Female Orphan School and Francis, Paul, William and Robert were admitted to Waverley House, an orphanage in the eastern suburbs of Sydney in the 1830s.

This is unusual as the younger infants William and Robert, would have normally stayed with their mother until weaned. My view is that Sarah was not well after arrival and all the children were removed from her including William and Robert as the next official record for Sarah is 12 months later where she is admitted to Sydney Hospital.

In October 1839, Sarah was taken from the Parramatta Female Factory to the Sydney Hospital (being transferred from the Female Factory Hospital) as she was gravely ill and on 27 October 1839 at the age of 37, Sarah died at the Hospital and was buried at the Old Sydney Burial Ground.

So, what happened to her children?

- James Taylor, after receiving a Ticket of Leave and Pardon became a shepherd, had ten children with two wives and died at Queanbeyan, aged 43 years old.
- Jane Straney – no records aid in what happened to Jane.
- John Straney, survived, yet records are inconclusive whether he married, had children or, his date of death.
- Sarah Straney was sent to the Female Orphan School, Rydalmere and in 1844 at 19 years old married Thomas Simpson at Marsfield, New South Wales. They moved to Yass. I have not been able to find any children, but a coroner's inquest says she died by drowning in a temporary fit of insanity on 7 July 1864 at Baber's Mill, north of Yass at 39 years old. Coincidentally, her father appears to have been in contact with his daughter after his release from Port Arthur for he lived nearby as a farm labourer. Her father died eight months later after his daughter's suicide on 8 July 1865 at Baber's Mill, the same spot as her place of death.
- Henry Straney stayed in Liverpool but moved to Bethnal Green, London working as a *fitter and turner* and that is where he married Emma Whelpdale on 16 April 1854. They had six children. Henry died in 1890 in London, England aged 67 years old.
- Rose Ann (Rosannah) Straney had died in 1829 as an infant in England.
- Rosanna Teresa Straney after spending time at the Female Orphan School, Rydalmere, travelled to Tasmania and later married a Mr. John Joseph Hughes. They had four children. She died on 18 September 1864 at Taradale, in Victoria, aged 36 years old.
- Francis Straney was seven when he was sent to Waverley House. He died at the orphanage after being struck by lightning. He was eleven years old.
- Paul Francis Straney after being sent to Waverley House, left, and travelled to Condobolin where he married Elizabeth Mead. They had four children and moved to Forbes. Paul fell ill and was transferred to R.P.A. Hospital at Camperdown, where he died on 27 January 1885, aged 51 years old.
- William Straney - there do not appear to be any further records after he was admitted to Waverley House. It is quite possible that he died as an infant.
- Robert Straney was only five months old upon his arrival in Australia and there do not appear to be any further records after he was admitted to Waverley House. It is quite possible that he died as an infant too.

Sources:

Ancestry.com, Biographical Database of Australia, Convict Records Australia, Australian Joint Copying Project. Microfilm Roll 90, Class and Piece Number HO11/11, Page Number 260 Monaro Pioneers Ref No MP258533 (prev. Australian Joint Copying Project. Microfilm Roll 90, Class and Piece Number HO11/11, Page Number 260), State Archives NSW, NRS 12189, Item X641, Microfiche 736. Ancestry.



GUEST SPEAKER - 18 FEBRUARY, GENERAL MEETING

Our first guest speaker for 2022 was Cate Whittaker. Cate is quite an expert on the life and times of Mrs. Elizabeth Fry. In her talk, Cate shared many insights into Fry's life and work in prison reform which were fascinating.

Elizabeth Fry was a tireless campaigner for justice for women and despite her many personal hardships, her husband's bankruptcy and being a mother of 10 children, she was relentless in her efforts to change attitudes and to improve conditions in gaols, for the women in Newgate, on the transport ships and in the factory system in the Colony.

Her legacy, as Cate pointed out, is formidable and wide-reaching. Her life, her ideas and her work are very much part of the Parramatta Female Factory women's narrative.

Thank you Cate for such insights and for sharing your research.

Cate is travelling to England in October this year and is determined to go to the Old Bailey Court where there is a statue of Elizabeth Fry. Cate says she will contact the the Australian High Commissioner in London, George Brandis and hopes to involve him in a special ceremony including the laying of a floral tribute. Ed.



Statue of Elizabeth Fry - The Old Bailey, London

OUT AND ABOUT

Ronda Gaffey

On Sunday 13 March, PFFF had a promotion and sales table at the Linnwood House Open Day. As always it was good to be out and about promoting 'the Friends', sharing our advocacy goals and making a sale or two.

It was a pleasure to meet so many enthusiastic history buffs and field enquiries about 'the Friends' and what was happening at the site! It was so good to *dust off the mould* and have a chance to meet up with a number of PFFF members who dropped by for a chat.



Linnwood House



PFFF Stall - Anne & Ronda, photograph courtesy: Kerima-Gae Topp

Many thanks to Anne Mathews for her great support and for a really attractive table display, to Wayne Mathews for helping with the all important 'bump in' and 'bump out' and to Kerima-Gae. Thank you also to Dorothy Warwick and Helen Olde of the Friends of Linnwood House for their invitation and support of PFFF.



And there are more surprises this month!

Please share your serendipity - email: parramattafemalefactoryfriends@gmail.com

John Gaffey writes: *Like many members, I started researching our family in the early 1980's and now, with so much being digitised, I keep going back to put more 'flesh on the bones' of the family tree. Recently I was looking at a paternal aunt's husband's tree and there she was - a girl in 3rd Class at the Parramatta Factory - the third Parramatta factory girl in the family! Ronda and I were chuffed.*

Ann Tomlinson was from Carlow, Ireland. She was tried in Dublin in March 1830 for stealing shoes and lace and was sentenced to seven years transportation. Ann aged 27, arrived per Forth, 12 October 1830 and was assigned from the ship to Mrs. Elizabeth Kelly of Sydney.

A few months later, on 18 March 1831 Ann was sent to 3rd Class - her crime, 'insolence to her mistress'. It was recommended that she 'not be assigned to anyone in Sydney again'. After 16 months at the factory, she was assigned to Michael Kearney of Parramatta on 18 July 1832. Then in October 1832, she was on the move again, and assigned to Richard Kippax in Windsor.

Ann never married but had one child with John Charlesworth - their daughter Harriet was baptised at St. James' Church in Sydney on 16 September 1839. Harriet married William Huxley Burge, the grandparents of my Aunt Bessie's husband, Charles Burge.

I can just hear our Aunt Bess, who was particularly straight-laced, tut-tutting about Ann as she did to us kids when we were 'misbehaving'. Also I wonder what Aunt Bess's reaction would have been if she had known she was a great granddaughter of convicts Joseph Jones per 'Hadlow' 1818 and Mary Ahern per 'Palambam' 1831!

Sources:

NSW, Australia, Settler & Convict Lists 1787-1834.

NSW, Australia, Gaol Description and Entrance Books, 1818-1930.

NSW, Australia, Convicts and Employers, 1828-1844.



Photograph: Asylum, Male Ward 1 (c1888) showing the Turret Clock, a relic from the Factory period c1821. and the Matron's Quarter's on the far right which will soon be the Friends' new home. The bowling green is in the foreground. Ed.