



**PARRAMATTA FEMALE FACTORY FRIENDS INC.
NEWSLETTER – ISSUE NO: 53 SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER 2023**



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The Parramatta Female Factory - Augustus Earle 1826 – nla.pic-an 2818460 National Library of Australia (NLA)

Patrons: Meg Keneally & Thomas Michael Keneally AO
President: Gay Hendriksen **Vice President:** Frank Williams
Treasurer/Public Officer: Kerima-Gae Topp **General Secretary:** Kevin Dodds
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Minutes Secretary/Guest Speaker Co-Coordinator: Lyn Watkins, **Guest Speaker Co-Coordinator:** Janice Ruse Huntington

Next Meeting: **Friday 20th October 2023. Guest Speaker at 1pm** followed by afternoon tea at 2pm. **General Meeting: 2.15pm**
Venue: PFFF Rooms, 5 Fleet Street, North Parramatta.

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Factory Friends,

Spring with a taste of summer is upon us. Welcome to our spring-summer edition of the Parramatta Female Factory Friends Newsletter. As always, it is great information shared.



First of all, an introduction to our new Committee: General Committee members: Janice Ruse-Huntington, Anne Mathews, Ronda Gaffey, Judith Dunn OAM; Vice President – Frank Williams; Treasurer – Kerima-Gae Topp, General Secretary – Kevin Dodds; Minute Secretary - Lyn Watkins; Membership Secretary – Lorraine Henshaw and President is still my good self.

Our World Heritage work is beginning to show great results with the first step of real commitment to World Heritage by the NSW State Government. I mentioned in the last newsletter that representatives from the Parramatta Female Factory Friends attended a stakeholders' forum. This went very well and started with acknowledgement by State Government representatives from Heritage NSW of the great work done by the Friends. The application for Tentative Listing has been submitted to UNESCO. This is the very exciting initial move in the government process and the Parramatta Female Factory Friends contributed to this through the stakeholders' forum.

Stop Press... I have to add breaking news! Last Thursday (28/9/23), was a red letter day when the Honourable Tanya Plibersek MP announced that the Parramatta Female Factory has made it to the UNESCO Tentative List. So this means it has been accepted by UNESCO for consideration for World Heritage listing. It also means that the application has full Australian Government support with an outcome expected in 2027 or 2028. We have come a long way with our aims for the Factory but there is a way to go. We still need to advocate until it yields a result, just as we are doing for the idea of a museum.

Regarding PFFF Programs: Our workshop, *Come and Find Me...* was fully booked - thank you everyone for your support. The tours at the Factory are getting more frequent also and are a testament to the growing demand for the great site and its history.

'It's a Riot' Day is not far away. It is already looking great in the planning. As members you will have received an email asking for you to volunteer, please do. Kevin Dodds and Ronda Gaffey are doing a great job coordinating but we really need your support on the day to ensure it is the best kind of event. Of course, everyone is welcome to come and celebrate the day as well which is also essential!! This year it is on the actual date, 27th October. Deputy Head of Mission, Lorraine Healy (Consulate General of Ireland NSW) will open the event and the Annual Thomas Keneally Lecture will be delivered by the Sisters of Charity, Sister Margaret Fitzgerald and Sister Genevieve Walsh. The Sisters of Charity were strong advocates for the Factory women and still do great humanitarian work.

See you at the Female Factory!
All the best
Gay Hendriksen,
President

A warm welcome to new members: *Michelle Thomson, Sharon Shelley, Mary Shelley, Patrick McCallum, James Coppins, Anthony Michael McKenna, Kristen Slight Taggart and Marilyn Wood.*

Final Reminder for 2023-2024 membership renewals - \$10 per annum pp. Please note - on 30th September all 2022-2023 PFFF memberships lapse. Please pay by cheque - payable to Parramatta Female Factory Friends Inc. PO BOX 1358, Parramatta 2124 or EFT to **BSB: 633 000 ACCOUNT: 151 276 763** Thank you for your ongoing support - Kerima-Gae, Treasurer.

A SPECIAL MOMENT!

It's important that we remember all of our history, including the dark and difficult parts. The Parramatta Female Factory was brutal, particularly for the poor, the lonely and the powerless.

There's a thread that runs through these buildings. It's the way we've sought to control and discipline young women who became institutionalised and traumatised....

We want the memory of these women and children to live on which is why we are adding the Parramatta Female Factory to Australia's World Heritage Tentative List.

Quote attributed to the Hon. Tanya Plibersek MP.



Left to right: Gerry Constantinou (PFFF), Lyn Watkins (PFFF), Gary Carter (PFFF), Andrew Charlton MP (Federal Member -Parramatta), Judith Dunn OAM (PFFF), Kevin Dodds (PFFF), Gay Hendriksen (President PFFF), the Hon. Tanya Plibersek MP, and Donna Davis MP (State Member for Parramatta).



Thursday, 28th September, 2023 - representatives of Federal and State Government, Department of Planning & Environment, Museums of History NSW, Heritage NSW and the Parramatta Female Factory & Institutions Precinct community members including PFFF members and members of the Stolen Generation - at the National Heritage Parramatta Female Factory & Institutions site for the Hon. Tanya Plibersek's announcement.

NOTICEBOARD

- **NEXT MEETING: Friday 20th October 2023 with Guest Speaker Dr. Jillian Comber at 1pm followed by General Meeting at 2.15pm and afternoon tea. Topic: *Aboriginal History and Archaeology at the North Parramatta Precinct*.** Dr. Jillian Comber (BA., Litt.B., PhD, and JP) is an archaeologist, cultural heritage specialist, university lecturer and researcher with over 30 years' experience. Jillian has a detailed knowledge and understanding of the Aboriginal archaeology and heritage of Parramatta, having undertaken an extensive number of assessments and excavations within Parramatta.

Bookings open early October.

- **It's A Riot! A special event held each year is Annual Riot Day when we commemorate the Factory riot which took place on the morning of Saturday 27th October 1827! Riot Day is Friday 27th October** and is an event not to be missed! The PFFF Rooms will be open; there is a raffle with fabulous prizes including a beautifully crafted quilt made and donated by Carole Bowles; there are Factories model displays, sales, tours, and a ceremony at the Commemorative Wall with a lone piper playing and the laying of floral tributes in honour of the women. The Annual Thomas Keneally Lecture will be delivered this year by Sister Genevieve Walsh RSC and Sister Margaret Fitzgerald RSC - Topic: *The Story of the Sisters of Charity and their work at the Factory*.

Bookings are essential for tours and the Talk - watch for a bookings alert in early October.

HISTORY CORNER Celebrating 200 years - 1823

Ronda Gaffey

The three Colonial period Parramatta Female Factory buildings never cease to amaze and impress visitors - they have survived. One of these buildings is more intact and never fails to move anyone who steps inside. It is a 'sacred place' - a place of extraordinary stories of resilience and survival. It was a place of harsh punishment. Here the women worked at breaking rocks for the macadamising of roads and picking oakum*. It was here that the women suffered the humiliating and much loathed head shaving or hair cutting. It is the iconic 3rd Class Sleeping Quarters and Penitentiary c1823-1826.

The building was commissioned by Governor Brisbane (1821-1825) to accommodate a 'new' class of convict women - the 3rd Class or criminal or refractory class, that is, those women who had committed a secondary or 'colonial' offence. This included women with repeated misdemeanours within the Factory system.



The first image we have of 3rd Class is in the Augustus Earle watercolour (c1826). In the far right corner, the 3rd Class building sits in a separate yard, as it does today. Earle has captured one of the defining features - the distinctive upper storey portholes of the Sleeping Quarters, many of which remain. The portholes would have let in little light - they are wooden slatted and open to the elements.

Originally, the sandstone building had a wood shingled roof. The veranda is a later addition. The sandstone has also been rendered at some stage.



Parramatta Female Factory - Augustus Earle c1826 - NLA

3rd class today - PFFF Collection

3rd class Model by Wayne Mathews and Terry Fitzell - photograph courtesy Anne Mathews.

Extracts from research notes - courtesy Anne Mathews

*picking oakum - picking tar from old rope that was used for 'caulking' ships - i.e., to make a ship watertight.

In recent years, rare access has been granted to PFFF on various open days and festivals and it is an amazing experience. As you enter the building, there is a room on either side. In the left-hand side room there is evidence of a staircase to the upper floor, now removed. The other room on the right was a 'turnkey' room which had a peephole for checking on the women.

When visitors enter the main building, there is an audible intake of breath - the sandstone walls, the fireplaces and sense of space are quite overwhelming. There is also a definite 'chill' in the air - you can feel the women's presence. These walls speak and if you listen carefully, you can hear the women's chatter amid the echoes of the hammer blows as they work, breaking rocks...



On Riot Day this year, access to 3rd Class is by booked tour. Watch for the bookings alert.



Images: 3rd Class Sleeping Quarters and Penitentiary - PFFF Collection
Photograph - Parramatta Psychiatric Centre, records storage room (formerly 3rd class Sleeping Quarters & Penitentiary) - 1975, Kerr, S. James, *Design for Convicts - an account of design for convict establishments in the Australian Colonies during the transportation era*; published in association with the National Trust of Australia and the Australian Society for Historical Archaeology; Library of Australian History, Sydney, 1984, page 74.

The voices of convict women of the Parramatta Female Factory are heard in the numerous riots where they reacted to their conditions, their deprivations and harsh treatment. They protested their incarceration and looked for freedom, either finding a way 'over the wall' or simply escaping once 'outside' on assignment. There are multiple 'crimes' of absconding recorded against many individuals. One fascinating woman is **Eliza Grivell** (aka Greville per Diana) whose numerous assignments gave her the opportunity to be free.

Eliza Grivell was born in Worcestershire, England on 30 May 1813. On 11 August 1832 at the age of 19, she was tried at the Gloucester Assizes, charged with stealing two silk dresses¹. She received a sentence of seven years transportation. Along with 99 other convict women, Eliza embarked the ship *Diana* which departed Woolwich on 11 December 1832. The women had been brought from various county gaols².

1.

TRANSPORTS.				
NAME.	AGE.	CRIME CONVICTED OF.	DATE OF CONVICTION.	SENTENCE OF TRANSPORTATION.
Maria Jones	24	Stealing 43 sovereigns, &c.	Summer Assizes, Aug. 11, 1832	Transported for life
Eliza Grivell	19	Ditto two silk dresses, &c.	Ditto	Ditto for seven years

The ship *Diana* arrived in Sydney on 25 May 1833 after a voyage of 165 days. The women were mustered on board on 30 May and then dispersed. The women with children would have gone to the Parramatta Female Factory; others were assigned from the ship. Records show Eliza was assigned to E. Manning at Ultimo³.

In the ship's indent, Eliza is described as a dressmaker and housemaid by occupation; she was a Protestant and could read and write; she was 5ft 0¾ tall; with a ruddy complexion; broad featured; auburn hair and chestnut eyes; a scar on back of left hand. Eliza would have been quite striking in looks with auburn hair and chestnut eyes and easy to apprehend as a runaway, as stated in this absconding notice dated 20 June 1838⁴.

4.

Grivell Eliza, Diana, 25, Worcestershire, dressmaker, 5 feet 0¾ inch, fair ruddy comp, auburn hair, chestnut eyes, broad featured, scar back of left hand, from H Dissbury, Windsor, since June 7.

From July 1834, there are 14 offences recorded for Eliza including seven instances of absconding and a number of other Colonial crimes such as dishonesty, forging papers, larceny and pregnancy⁵.

Each 'crime' attracted a punishment so between July 1835 and April 1840, Eliza had a further 54 months added to her seven year transportation sentence.

Eliza found herself back in 3rd Class at the Factory on numerous occasions.

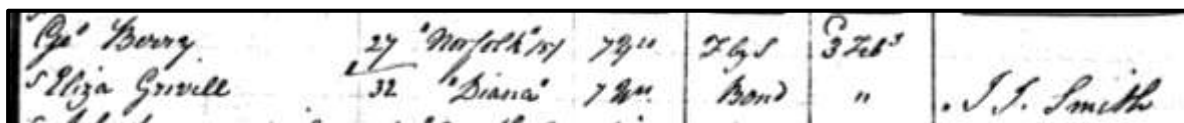
In 1842, Eliza received her Ticket of Leave, however this was cancelled due to her 'dishonesty'.

5.

List of all Sentences on Record at the Female Factory against the undersigned Female Prisoners

Date	Name	Ship	Offence	Station	Punishment
July 1834	Eliza Grivell	Diana	Forgery papers, bonds, &c.	Ultimo	12 Months
Aug 1834	"	"	absconding	"	6 Months
Sept 1834	"	"	absconding	"	6 Months
Oct 1834	"	"	absconding	"	6 Months
Nov 1834	"	"	absconding	"	6 Months
Dec 1834	"	"	absconding	"	6 Months
Jan 1835	"	"	absconding	"	6 Months
Feb 1835	"	"	absconding	"	6 Months
Mar 1835	"	"	absconding	"	6 Months
Apr 1835	"	"	absconding	"	6 Months
May 1835	"	"	absconding	"	6 Months
June 1835	"	"	absconding	"	6 Months
July 1835	"	"	absconding	"	6 Months
Aug 1835	"	"	absconding	"	6 Months
Sept 1835	"	"	absconding	"	6 Months
Oct 1835	"	"	absconding	"	6 Months
Nov 1835	"	"	absconding	"	6 Months
Dec 1835	"	"	absconding	"	6 Months
Jan 1836	"	"	absconding	"	6 Months
Feb 1836	"	"	absconding	"	6 Months
Mar 1836	"	"	absconding	"	6 Months
Apr 1836	"	"	absconding	"	6 Months
May 1836	"	"	absconding	"	6 Months
June 1836	"	"	absconding	"	6 Months
July 1836	"	"	absconding	"	6 Months
Aug 1836	"	"	absconding	"	6 Months
Sept 1836	"	"	absconding	"	6 Months
Oct 1836	"	"	absconding	"	6 Months
Nov 1836	"	"	absconding	"	6 Months
Dec 1836	"	"	absconding	"	6 Months
Jan 1837	"	"	absconding	"	6 Months
Feb 1837	"	"	absconding	"	6 Months
Mar 1837	"	"	absconding	"	6 Months
Apr 1837	"	"	absconding	"	6 Months
May 1837	"	"	absconding	"	6 Months
June 1837	"	"	absconding	"	6 Months
July 1837	"	"	absconding	"	6 Months
Aug 1837	"	"	absconding	"	6 Months
Sept 1837	"	"	absconding	"	6 Months
Oct 1837	"	"	absconding	"	6 Months
Nov 1837	"	"	absconding	"	6 Months
Dec 1837	"	"	absconding	"	6 Months
Jan 1838	"	"	absconding	"	6 Months
Feb 1838	"	"	absconding	"	6 Months
Mar 1838	"	"	absconding	"	6 Months
Apr 1838	"	"	absconding	"	6 Months
May 1838	"	"	absconding	"	6 Months
June 1838	"	"	absconding	"	6 Months
July 1838	"	"	absconding	"	6 Months
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Mar 1839	"	"	absconding	"	6 Months
Apr 1839	"	"	absconding	"	6 Months
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Mar 1840	"	"	absconding	"	6 Months
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Mar 1851	"	"	absconding	"	6 Months
Apr 1851	"	"	abscond		

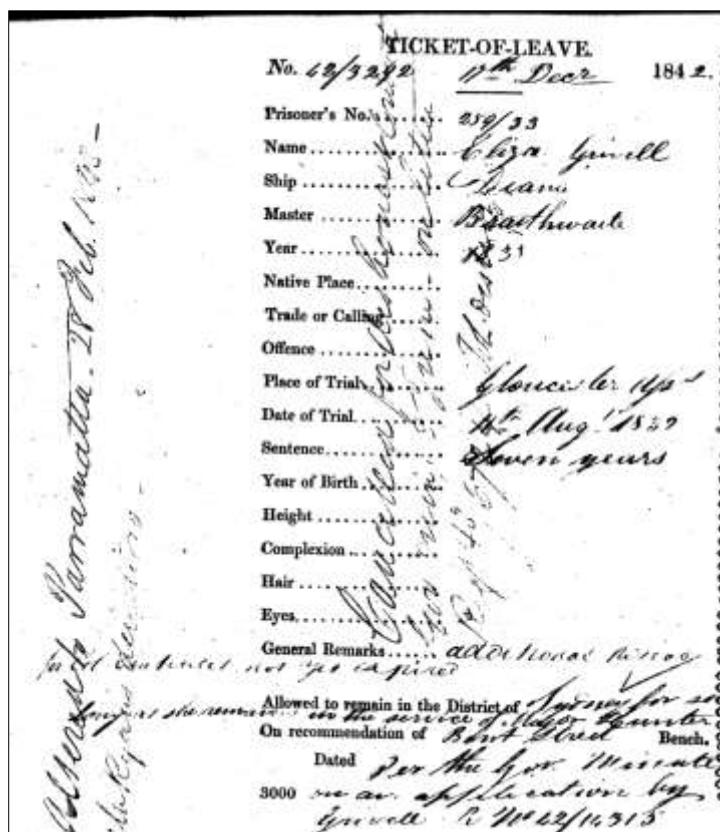
Three years later, in 1845, Eliza's life took another direction. There is an application to marry recorded for Eliza now aged 32 and George Berry, aged 27, at Paterson. Permission was granted on 3 February 1845. George Berry was a convict per *Norfolk*, 1837⁶. He is noted as *Free by Servitude* (F by S) and Eliza is noted as *bond* - she was still serving her sentence extended by the colonial offences she committed. She had been in the Colony 12 years.



Eliza and George were married in Houghton, in the District of Maitland in 1845. Between 1845 and 1855, they had five children - three sons and two daughters⁷. One child was born in Houghton and the others were born in Armidale. One child remains a mystery. In 1838, Eliza was in the Factory, having been returned as 'pregnant', however no record has been found so far of the birth or death of that child. One can only wonder as to what might have happened.

From turbulent beginnings and after years of repeated incarceration, Eliza's life appears to have been a settled one. In subsequent years, as she moved to the Maitland area, to Armidale and finally to Walcha. She has been found by her many descendants and is recorded on 177 family trees on ancestry. She is well remembered.

Eliza aka Louise Berry died in Walcha, NSW in 1890. She was aged 77⁸.



Gloucester City Gaol c1792.



The Old Windsor Gaol (NSW) where Eliza was held in June 1838.

Ticket of Leave for Eliza Grivell, 11 December, 1842 SARNSW.

References

- ¹ Gloucestershire England - Prison Records 1728-1914
 - ² Willetts, Jenni, *Free Settler or Felon? Journey of the convict ship Diana 1833*
 - ³ New South Wales, Australia, Convict Indents Settler & Convict Lists 1788-1842
 - ⁴ The Sydney Gazette & New South Wales Advertiser (1803-1842), Wednesday 20 June, 1838, entry for Eliza Grivell
 - ⁵ Colonial Secretary's Papers, 1840 Bundle 4/24921, SARNSW
 - ⁶ New South Wales, Australia, Register of Convicts Applications to Marry 1826 - 1851; entry for Eliza Grivell and George Berry 1845
 - ⁷ NSW BDM - Baptism Records - various entries for children of Eliza and George Berry
 - ⁸ NSW BDM - Death Records - entry for death Eliza Grivell: Registration number: 2936/1890
- Mathews, Anne, Mathews Beth, - *Our Girls*, unpublished work sourced from original papers SARNSW
 Additional research - John Gaffey

The Research Centre is going from strength to strength. From our most recent grant we have a microfilm reader and this will be followed by relevant microfilm. A new scanner is soon to be installed.

Our book and magazine collection listing is well on the way to being completed. Once this is done, we can order the book aspect of our research collection and it will be close to being able to be used as a focused Female Factory and Family History resource. We have 3,285 books by 1,631 authors.

This year our Research Centre workshops have been fully booked. As our workshops have limited numbers, it is always a good idea to book early to avoid missing out as spaces are limited.

Our Factory women's list is growing so please keep those names and stories coming in. You can give directly to one of our researchers – Lyn, Lorraine, Kevin, Janice or me or else email it to: parramattafemalefactoryfriends@gmail.com and put 'Research Centre' in the subject field. That way we can ensure they are shared with all Australians.

Don't forget as a member you are entitled to one-hour free research each year which is valued at \$25. All research inquiries are responded to by appointment. You can either request a booking through our gmail or ask a volunteer to book you in when you come to the next Friends' meeting. If you don't live in Sydney you can contact us and we can provide an hour of research on an agreed direction.

Looking forward to seeing you at the Research Centre.

Absent Without Leave - Mary Ann Chandler
Kevin Dodds, Researcher - PFFF Research Centre

Mary Ann Chandler was born 24 October 1813 in Compton, Berkshire, England. Mary was educated and could read and write, yet her first jobs are recorded as *farm servant*. Mary Ann was described as 5'3" tall with a ruddy complexion, brown hair, blue grey eyes, with several warts on the back of her right hand.

Mary Ann found herself in London and during an interaction with a male, robbed him of some coins equivalent to 80c. On 16 October 1831, Mary Ann was convicted at the Old Bailey and sentenced to seven years transportation. On 31 December 1831, Mary Ann boarded the convict ship *Burrell* arriving in Sydney Cove on 20 May 1832. She was 20 years old.



Mary Ann Chandler

In May 1832, Mary Ann was admitted to the Parramatta Female Factory and was immediately assigned to a Mr. E. H. Cliffe, as his servant. Soon after this assignment, Mary Ann made known her feelings and in the next five years she absconded on numerous occasions.

On 30 May 1832, Mary Ann was *absent without leave*. She had told Mr. Cliffe that she was marrying a publican so he let her go into Sydney town for that purpose. At St. James' Church she asked the clerk, a Mr. Vincent Williams to publish her Banns of Marriage and to record her name as Ann Lee, spinster. When confronted, she told authorities that she was in fact married. The Sydney Court sentenced her to two months in 3rd Class at the Parramatta Female Factory and then she was returned to her master.

By July 1832, Mary Ann had left Mr. E. H. Cliffe and was reassigned to Captain Hunter of Sydney. This assignment did not last long as she was absent without leave and re-arrested in Sydney in the same month and returned, after punishment, to Captain Hunter.

On 14 November 1832, Mary Ann was assigned to a Mr. John Skinner at the Sydney Post Office. Mary Ann appears to have served her time in John's employ as she managed to stay for about four years.

On 20 Jan 1836, Mary Ann was assigned to a Mr. E. Hallan at Prospect as a farm servant and was again absent without leave.

Later that year, in October 1836, after nine months on the run, Mary Ann was re-arrested for being absent without leave, punished at the Female Factory and reassigned to her master. Mary Ann had assumed an alias of Kickman to prevent arrest, but without a ticket of leave made her time on the run precarious, knowing she could have been arrested at any time.

On 7 January 1837, Mary Ann was admitted to Newcastle Female Factory and was returned to Government service being assigned to Mr. John Kingsmill of Maitland. She did not last long with Mr. Kingsmill as she left within 30 days.

For the fourth time, on 2 February 1837, Mary Ann was absent without leave and using the alias Hickman. After two months on the run, on 1 April 1837 Mary Ann was re-admitted to Newcastle Female Factory and sentenced to 14 days solitary confinement on bread and water. On 25 April 1837 she was re-assigned to Mr. John Kingsmill.

On 15 June 1837 Mary Ann although assigned, was now an employed servant working in Maitland.

A few months later, on 7 October 1837, Mary Ann was re-admitted to Newcastle Female Factory for accouchement and was discharged some five days later on the 11 October 1837, with a baby. It is believed that it was her master's child, Mr. John Kingsmill.

In January 1838, someone had been writing to Mary Ann for there was an unclaimed letter at the Sydney Post Office as reported in the newspapers on 21 February 1838. Who could it have been? Was it family from England? Was it a friend or admirer in Sydney? Could it have been Mr. Kingsmill enquiring about their child?

On 25 March 1839, Mary Ann was issued a Certificate of Freedom. Two years later, in 1841, Mary made *an Application to Marry* which was granted. She married James Hall at St. Laurence's Anglican Church, Sydney. Mary Ann was 28 years old.

On 5 February 1853, whilst in Maitland, Mary Ann was arrested and fined five shillings for assaulting a John Mortimer whilst also being called as a witness by Sarah Peckham for another assault case.

On 11 February 1857, still in Maitland, Mary Ann was apprehended and appeared before the Maitland Quarter Sessions for a serious crime of *Wilfully and Maliciously cutting Anne Carrol*. An argument had arisen between one of Mary Ann's children and Anne. It appears that Mary Ann intervened and in a rage, picked up a glass tumbler. She threw it at Anne hitting her in the jaw thus smashing the glass.

Apparently Mary Ann and Anne resolved their differences with both content to leave it there until Anne's wound became infected and her doctor convinced her to see the police. Mary Ann was arrested and did not deny the offence. The jury, despite the violent attack, sought leniency. She was given three months gaol at Maitland after transfer from Newcastle.

The Newspapers do not make it clear, but Mary Ann was obviously outraged by whatever Anne Carrol had said or done to one of her children. This appears to be the case on the earlier assault charge where she was a witness to an assault whilst she was being charged with assault on John Mortimer. Mary seemed to have a protective character following these incidents and lived a full life.

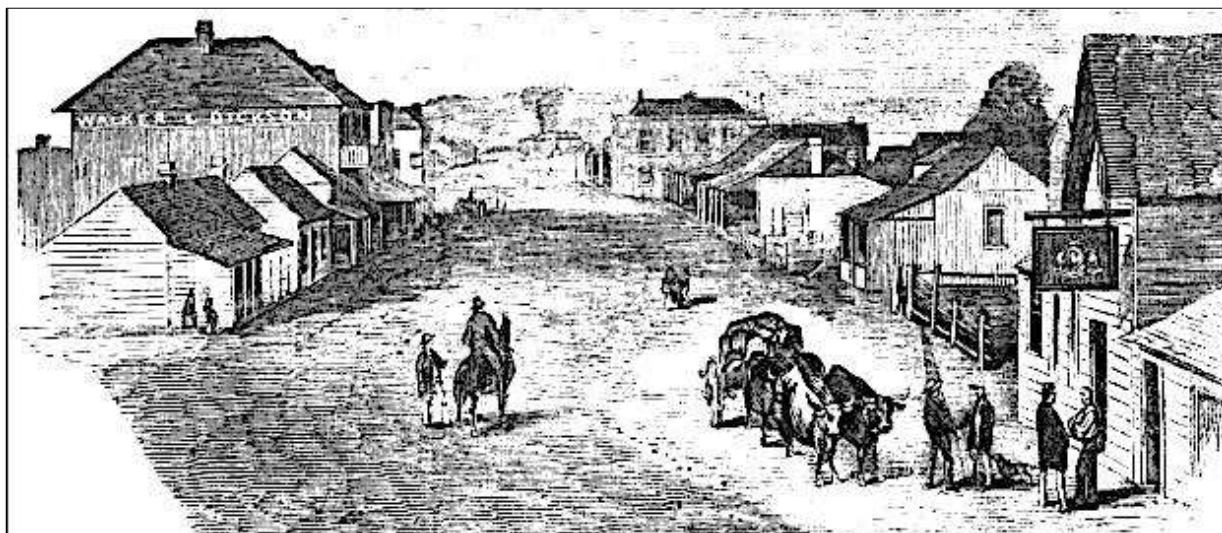
Mary Ann had assumed the alias names of Hickman, Kickman and Lee whilst on the run (*Absent Without Leave*). She had lived in Sydney, Prospect, Hunter Valley, Maitland, Kiama and Broughton Creek.

One cannot imagine what it must have been like for Mary Ann, to be arrested over 80c worth of change, transported to the Colony and immediately assigned as a servant. She would rather be her own master, to go about her life as she showed with the stability of raising eight children with a year or two apart.

On 10 June 1880, aged 67, Mary Ann Hall née Chandler died of senile decay which she had been suffering for about five months. She was living with her daughter at the time.

James Hall died in 1882, in Queensland where he and his sons often went tin and gold mining.

Mary and James Hall had eight children: *Caroline Watts* née Hall (1842 - 1925), *Rebecca Taylor* née Hall (1843 - 1912), *Jane Elizabeth Haddon* née Hall (1844 - 1871), *James William* Hall (1846 - 1930), *William Augustus* Hall (1848 - 1922), *Richard Hall* (1850 - 1932), *Joseph Hall* (1852 - 1931) and *Annie Stuart* née Hall (1854 - 1905).



High Street, West Maitland c1840.

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Trove online on 21 July 2021 - <https://trove.nla.gov.au/>.

NSW Government Gazette (Sydney, NSW: 1832 - 1900)

Maitland Mercury and Hunter River General Advertiser (NSW: 1843 - 1893) Tuesday 10 February 1857 p2.

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NSW BIRTHS, DEATHS AND MARRIAGES

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PARRAMATTA FEMALE FACTORY FRIENDS DATABASE

Punishment Records collated from a number of records including Joan Reese – *Colonial Secretary's Papers* 1826 – 1895 and other records, SRNSW.

A significant historical event occurred at the Parramatta Female Factory in 1827 which has been described either as a riot or the earliest identified workers' action in Australia. It was the first of six similar actions occurring between 1821 and 1848. The action described by authorities as a 'riot', had its origins in life in the Factory over the previous twelve months and was a culmination of distress over working and living conditions.

Origins of the Action

In 1824 Matron Raine (Fulloon) started work at the Female Factory. While her time as Matron included her attempts at ensuring the orderly running of the Factory, it was marred by corruption and inappropriate activities by her family.

In February 1826 a convict woman, Mary Ann Hamilton, died of starvation at the Factory. At this time the women were getting about half of the men's rations. Following this, a Grand Jury visited the Factory and found the rations unsatisfactory - 253 women and their children had no access to water supply, the bread was inferior and there was a shortage of clothing and shoes.

In 1827 there was corruption within the Factory over rations and Factory cloth and the Matron's son had liaisons with the women. These provided fuel for unrest amongst the convict women. In March Dr. Henry Douglass, the superintendent, was accosted by a number of women, one of whom wrestled him to the ground. Unrest continued which was reflected in some of the punishments throughout the year.

In September Matron Raine could no longer cope with the situation at the Female Factory and tendered her resignation to take effect on Friday 25th October.

The Moment Arrives

In the week starting 21st October, there was unrest in the Factory when a number of the women refused to work. Matron Raine responded in these last few days of office by reducing rations, cutting out the tea. The result was that the following day the women in 3rd Class rioted and took over the yard, expelling a constable.

On her last day in office, Friday 26th October, Matron Raine advised constables she expected unrest. She was then assaulted by some women but was rescued by the constables.

On Saturday 27th October Ann Gordon began as Matron and at 7am stopped the allowance of bread and sugar altogether. The women threatened to tear down the Factory if the rations were not reinstated immediately. They were not reinstated and the riot ensued.

The Factory women broke down the gates and ran through Parramatta, attacking bakers' shops. They were described in the newspapers of the time, not as ordinary women but '*Viragos*' and '*Amazonian Banditti*' who swarmed out of the factory like '*bees out of a hive*'.

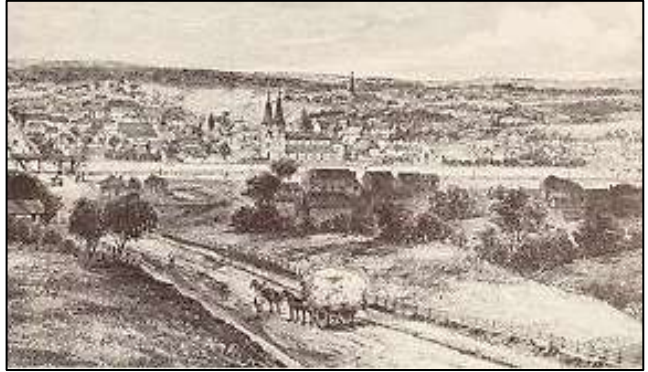
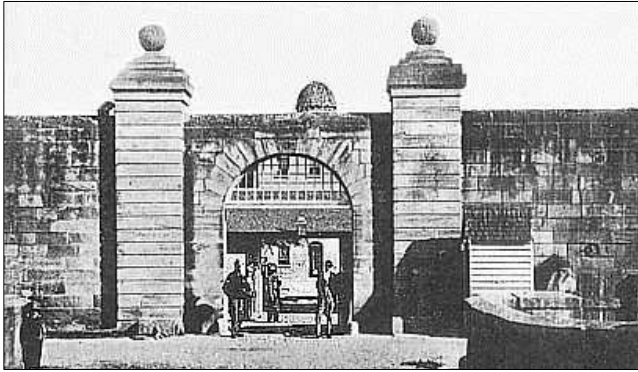


The Government response was that the magistrates enlist the police and military to find and arrest the women and quell the 'riot'. The constables were reported as running in all directions with bayonets; also a captain, a lieutenant and about 40 rank and file. Expectation was that the military would use their weapons if necessary.

The women escaped into the town and the surrounding bush. Many were captured and escorted back to the Factory where Major Lockyer, superintendent of police at Parramatta, directed the ringleaders to be selected and confined in the cells. The rioters banded together and declared if one suffered they all should suffer.

Retribution and Reward

Some days later there were still about a hundred women missing. The final two women were not apprehended until December 1827. After the action, ringleaders were transferred to Newcastle. Although retribution by punishment was administered, the women were successful in their action. The corrupting influence was removed, the women once again received their rations and the working and living conditions were restored to the regulated subsistence defined by the Colonial Government.



...they succeeded without observation in opening a passage through the outer wall....Parramatta was in uproar...

Sources:

Conviction - The 1827 Fight For Rights At Parramatta Female Factory, Gay Hendriksen

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Article, *It's A Riot or is it? Herstory - The Lives of Parramatta Female Factory Women*, Book 1, Pub., PFFF 2016, p.17

Photograph: Matron Ann Gordon

Photograph: The Parramatta Factory Gates c1870

Image:Old Parramatta - c1800s <http://www.willis.celebration.com>

It's A Riot!

Join us on Friday 27th October to commemorate the Riot of 1827

ELOPEMENT EXTRAORDINARY!!!
Early on Saturday morning, a *rush* was made by a number of the damsels domiciled within the walls of the Factory, at Parramatta. It appears that they succeeded without observation in opening a passage through the outer wall, and when, at breakfast time, the muster-roll was called, about two hundred, it is said, principally of the third class, were found wanting. A *civil* (to wit, a party of constables), and a military force was immediately called into action. Parramatta was in an uproar. Nothing was sacred from the prying eyes of the searchers. The very *sanctum sanctorum* of every dwelling-house in the town was invaded. Numbers were captured in the course of the day, but upwards of one hundred, we are informed, are missing at the moment we are writing.

Sydney Gazette & New South Wales Advertiser (1803-1842), 30 October, 1827

PFFF WORKSHOP PROGRAM

The final PFFF Workshop for 2023, is Friday November 24 - *Focus on Colonial Craft 2* facilitated by the talented Lyn Watkins. More details soon.

SERENDIPITY - CONCEPT by Janice Ruse Huntington

And there are more intriguing encounters!

Gay Hendriksen writes: The cloth of life has some unexpected threads that shape in a way that surprises. My serendipity is a small moment but certainly one that made me smile! I was travelling on a train up to the recent NSW Family History Conference at Toukley hosted by the Wyong Family Historical Society to talk about the six Factory riots. I then had a delightful conversation with a woman named Anne.

Somehow our conversation wandered around the Sisters of Charity, their work with the Factory women (c1839) and a lovely tapestry that features the pioneer nuns, images of the Factory and the convict women. Anne had been a Sister of Charity!

Now as if the Sisters of Charity connection wasn't enough of a serendipitous moment, our conversation turned to the presentation I was giving on the riots...it turned out that Anne is a descendant of a Female Factory woman who came out in the year of the 27th October riot (1827)!

How life twists and turns to make the shape of the 'cloth' that is our lives!

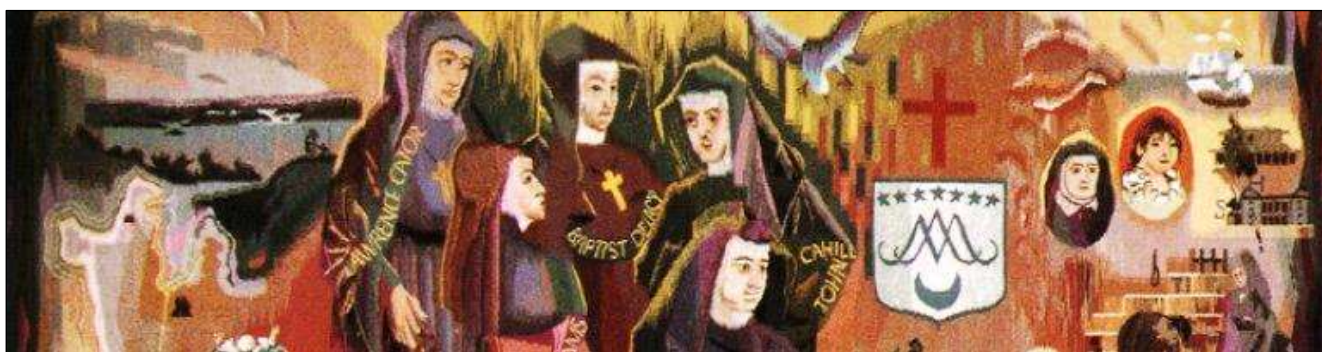


Image: A tapestry designed and hand-woven by Margaret Grafton in 1988 to mark the centenary of the Sisters of Charity's arrival in NSW - St. Vincent's Hospital Sydney.

Five Sisters of Charity arrived in NSW in December 1838 and in January 1839 began their mission in Parramatta and at the Parramatta Female Factory.

Postscript: There are two more serendipities arising from the Toukley Conference. Lyn Watkins and Anne Mathews, both stalwart family history researchers, also made discoveries!

Lyn discovered she shares a common ancestor with a colleague from the Queensland Genealogical Society, a group PFFF have been in contact for a number of years.

Lyn was attending a lecture on the day where an ancestor of hers was mentioned. Descendants were asked to identify themselves so when Lyn put up her hand, she heard a voice behind her - it was someone who also put up her hand! They both were descended from a Factory woman, Honora Harrington!

Anne Mathews attended another lecture and tells me she 'fell off her chair' when the presenter referred to his family which was also her family! Another shared ancestor has been discovered and connection with a fellow family history researcher. I believe Anne is still 'picking herself off the floor'!

Ed.

2023	PFFF MEETINGS - DATES &	EVENTS FOR YOUR DIARY
October	Friday 20 th Committee Meeting Guest Speaker General Meeting 27th RIOT DAY - 196th Anniversary/ the Annual Thomas Keneally Lecture	Riots: 27.10.1827; 11.10.1836
November	Newsletter 17th Committee Meeting <u>Workshop - Friday 24th November - 'Colonial Craft 2'</u>	Riot: 29.11.1831 Parramatta Foundation Day Festival event TBC
December	Friday 8th *(2nd Friday) Committee Meeting General Meeting	Christmas afternoon tea

REGULAR SITE TOURS - BY APPOINTMENT AND AT SPECIAL EVENTS. CONTACT THE PFFF TOUR COORDINATOR

parramattafemalefactoryfriends@gmail.com

COMMITTEE MEETINGS 11AM. BI-MONTHLY GUEST SPEAKER 1:00PM. FOLLOWED BY AFTERNOON TEA. GENERAL MEETINGS AT 2:15PM.

PFFF RESEARCH CENTRE IS OPEN 9am. 1st and 3rd Friday of the month and by appointment.



The Bicentenary Commemorative Wall c.2018



Photograph: The Wall with Matron's Quarters

& Hospital in the background: Gay Hendriksen