

Sarah Blower

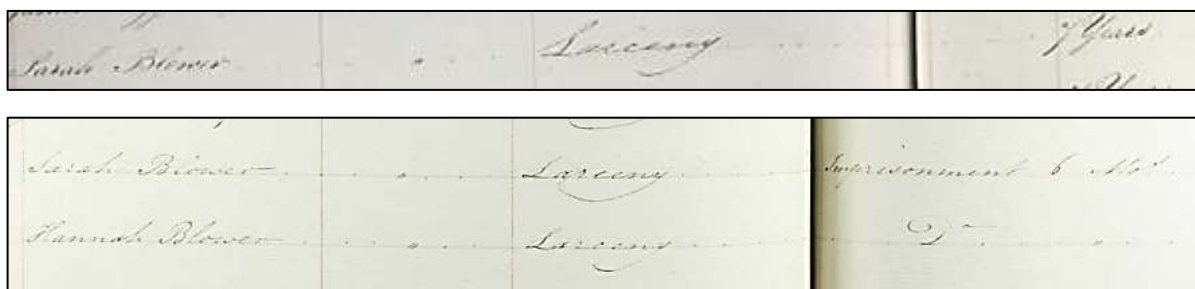
Date of Trial:	1 April 1817
Where Tried:	Warwick Assizes
Crime:	Larceny
Sentence:	7 years
Est YOB:	
Native Place:	
Occupation:	
Alias/AKA:	
Children on Board:	1 - Son – born during voyage
Surgeon's Remarks:	<i>Quiet. Dead.</i>

Seven of the *Friendship* women were tried in Warwickshire, four in August 1816 and the other three, one of whom was Sarah Blower, in April 1817, with the latter session being particularly busy, as noted in the press.

Warwick Assizes – The business of these Assizes commenced, at the Crown bar, on Monday se'nnight. The calendar, unprecedented in the point of number, exhibited a disgusting and dreadful catalogue of crimes.¹

Neither the English criminal registers nor the colonial transportation documents provide any information of Sarah Blower's personal details. However, and speculatively, she may have been the Sarah Blower, daughter of Joseph and Elizabeth Blower, baptised on 12 June 1788 at the parish church of Grendon, Warwickshire, or the Sarah, daughter of William and Catherine Blower, baptised on 22 December 1799.² Grendon is a small village just three miles west of Atherstone, and it was there that Sarah Blower committed her crime - 'stealing at Atherstone' - for which she was tried and transported.³ A look at the 1841 England census shows that families by the name of Blower were well represented in Grendon.⁴

Prior to being sent to being Deptford she was held at the Warwick Gaol.⁵ Interestingly, but not necessarily connected with 'our' Sarah Blower, a pair of felons was brought before the April 1809 Warwickshire Lent Assizes, found guilty of larceny and imprisoned for 6 months – Hannah and Sarah Blower.⁶



According to Peter Cosgreave, Sarah Blower was one of the better behaved women on board, being described as 'quiet'. Perhaps the fact that she was about six months pregnant when she embarked may have 'quietened' her down, although surprisingly the Surgeon made no reference to this 'interesting condition'. Thomas, son of Sarah, was born at sea on 10 October 1817.⁷ Sometime after the birth, and before the *Friendship* arrived at Port Jackson, Sarah Blower died, cause unknown.

Young Thomas was baptised on 22 February 1817 at St Philip's Church of England, Sydney (father's name unknown) and he died a few days later and was buried at Sydney on 28 February. He was just five months old.⁸ For his very short time in Sydney he had been cared for by the Female Orphan Institution, the cost for which - £2 15 0 - was itemised in the Institution's financial statement for the quarter ending 31 March 1817.⁹

¹ *Northampton Mercury*, 19 Apr 1817, p.3.

² Ancestry, Warwickshire, England, Church of England Baptisms, Marriage and Burials 1535-1812, Grendon, 1700-1812. Ancestry, Kirwan online family tree, <https://www.ancestry.co.uk/family-tree/person/tree/44772768/person/142016557971/facts>.



³ Wikipedia, "Old Grendon", https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Old_Grendon. *Northampton Mercury*, 19 Apr 1817, p.3.

⁴ Ancestry, 1841 England Census, Parish of Grendon.

⁵ Ancestry, England & Wales, Criminal Registers, 1791-1892, England, Warwickshire, 1817.

⁶ Ancestry, England & Wales, Criminal Registers, 1791-1892, England, Warwickshire, 1809.

⁷ Biographical Database of Australia (BDA), Biographical report for Sarah Blower.

⁸ BDA, Biographical report for Thomas Blower.

⁹ Government and General Orders, 13 June 1818, Ancestry, New South Wales, Australia, Colonial Secretary's Papers, 1788-1856, Special Bundles, 1794-1825.



SELECTED SOURCES

Genealogy Websites

Ancestry

1841 England Census

England & Wales, Criminal Registers, 1791-1892

New South Wales, Australia, Colonial Secretary's Papers, 1788-1856

Online Family Trees

Warwickshire, England, Church of England Baptisms, Marriage and Burials 1535-1812

Other Websites

Biographical Database of Australia (BDA), <http://www.bda-online.org.au/>

Wikipedia, <https://en.wikipedia.org/>

Online Newspapers

British Newspapers (Findmypast)

Northampton Mercury

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