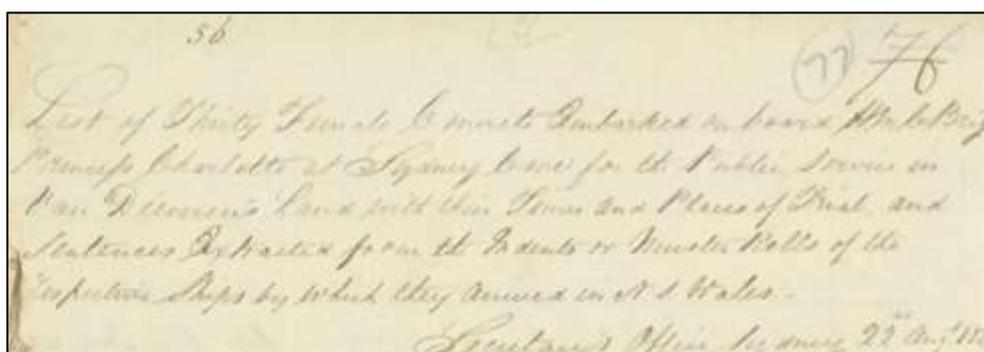


Elizabeth Quantrell

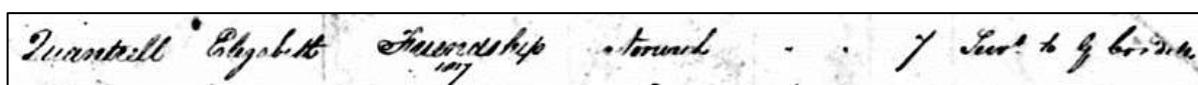
Date of Trial:	15 October 1816
Where Tried:	Norfolk, Norwich City Quarter Session
Crime:	Larceny
Sentence:	7 years
Est YOB:	1769
Stated Age on Arrival:	50
Native Place:	
Occupation:	
Alias/AKA:	Elizabeth Quantrill
Marital Status (UK):	
Children on Board:	
Surgeon's Remarks:	An idiot, very filthy
Assigned NSW or VDL	NSW & VDL

On 15 October 1816 Elizabeth Quantrell appeared before the bench of the Norwich City Quarter Session charged with, and found guilty of larceny. She had, in fact, been committed to the City Gaol on 6 September, 'charged on the oath of Hanah Howlett, of Saint Peter's Mancroft, with stealing linen belonging to her which were hanging to dry in Chapel-field'.¹ This was not her first appearance before the Bench. In June 1815 she had been committed to the City Gaol, charged with 'having stolen from out of the shop of Mr. John Oxley, of St. Andrew's a piece of printed cotton' for which she had been sentenced to six months' imprisonment.² The sentence for her second offence was seven years' transportation, pending which she was returned to the City Gaol. According to the *Norfolk Chronicle* of 7 June 1817, Elizabeth Quantrell [sic] had been removed from the Gaol the previous week and sent on her way 'to the Friendship, lying at Deptford, to be transported for seven years to New South Wales, according to her sentence in our City Sessions'.³

Along with the other *Friendship* girls, on arrival at Port Jackson Elizabeth Quantrell was mustered, but where she spent her first eighteen months has not been established. Was she assigned to someone, or did she spend that time in the Parramatta Female Factory? Nor do we know why she 'qualified' as one of the thirty female convicts who, in June 1820, were sent to Van Diemen's Land on the Colonial Brig *Princess Charlotte*. The brig was to call in first at Port Dalrymple to off-load part of its female convict cargo and then to proceed to Hobart.⁴



Elizabeth was at Port Dalrymple for the 1820 and 1821 musters, and for 1823 was recorded as being a servant to a G. Cordell at George Town.⁵



Free by servitude by October 1823, Elizabeth Quantrell's name was one of twelve listed in a schedule of convicts in Van Diemen's Land who were claiming their certificates of freedom. The document was dated 3 December 1824.⁶

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3

List of Twelve Convicts in Van Diemen's Land (Claiming their Certificates of Freedom) with their Names, Places of trial, ^{whereby} extracted from the Inventories of the respective Ships by which they arrived in the Colony: And also their Descriptions as taken at Muster on arrival in Sydney Cove.

Names	Ships	Tried		Sentence	Age	Appn. Place	Trade	Height		Complexion
		When	where					ft	in	

Unfortunately, the entry for Elizabeth Quantrell did not include her description details, supposed to have been recorded when she was mustered on arrival at Sydney Cove.

<i>Elizabeth Quantrell</i>	<i>Bond of Friendship</i>	<i>Age 24</i>	<i>1830</i>	<i>1860</i>	<i>18 years</i>					
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By January 1825 Elizabeth had been granted her certificate of freedom, as advised through the pages of the *Hobart Town Gazette*.⁷

The scant documentation for Elizabeth does not record whether she could read or write, but for whatever reason – illiteracy and/or perhaps the cost involved, she failed to collect her certificate when it became due. Thus the *Tasmanian and Port Dalrymple Advertiser* of 18 May 1825 advised a list of convicts that their certificates of freedom or tickets of leave were available for collection from the Inspector's Office, Launceston, and that 'such Convicts as neglect to obtain their Certificates on or before the 30th Instant will be treated as Absentees'.⁸ Hopefully this time Elizabeth made sure that she obtained her certificate by the deadline.

Only two incidents are recorded in Elizabeth Quantrells' conduct record.⁹ On 24 August 1830 she was charged, but the case was dismissed, of violently assaulting Henry Roney, a barber. On 1 December 1830 she was charged and found guilty of being drunk and disorderly and fined 5 shillings.¹⁰

<i>Quantrell Elith</i>	<i>Friendship 1818 P. Charlotte 1820</i>	<i>Norwich Oct 15th 1816 - 7</i>
<i>Arrested 24. 1830 for violently assaulting & beating Henry Roney. Charge dismissed (Magistrate) Dec. 1. 1830. P. of D. 1834. 5. W. Luffelton.</i>		

The next and final record located for Elizabeth is her death, registered at Launceston. She died in mid-February 1836, at Bellmount, Tamar, at the stated age of 50 (the same age given on her arrival in 1818!) and as an 'Object of Charity', and was buried on 15 February at the Cypress Street Cemetery.¹¹

<i>✓ Elizabeth Quantrell</i>	<i>Bellmount Tamar.</i>	<i>15th February</i>	<i>50.</i>	<i>Object of Charity.</i>	<i>W. Brown Chaplain</i>
<i>No. 245</i>		<i>1836.</i>			

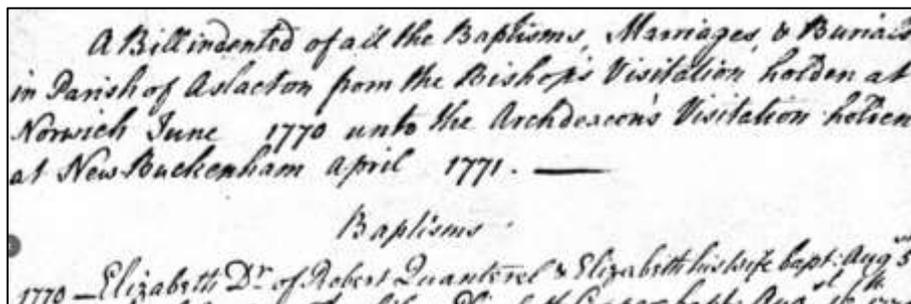
With no relatives to mourn her passing, Elizabeth departed this life having made no discernible imprint on the place to which she had been transported, and where she lived for almost twenty years.

Postscript

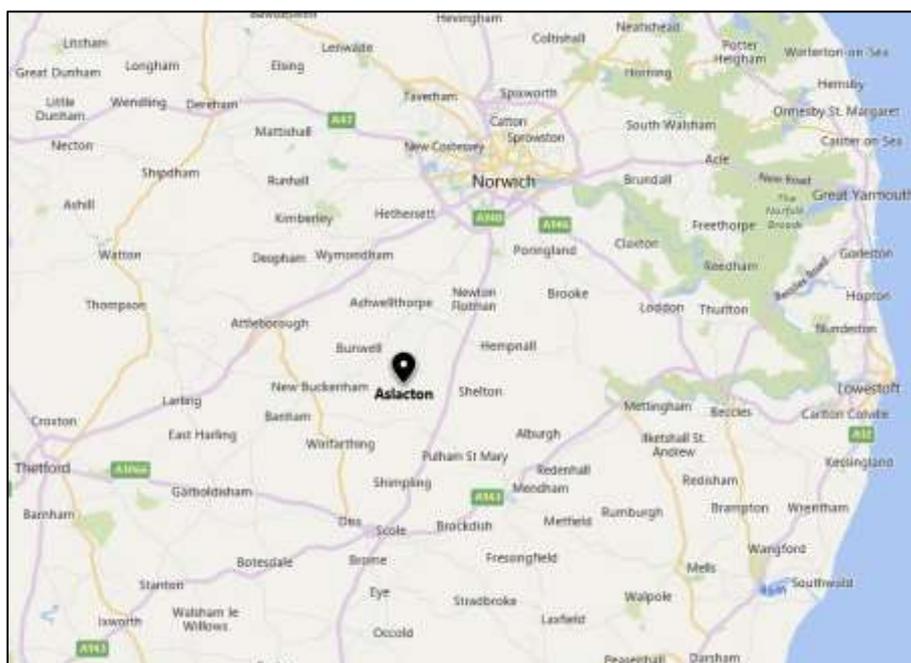
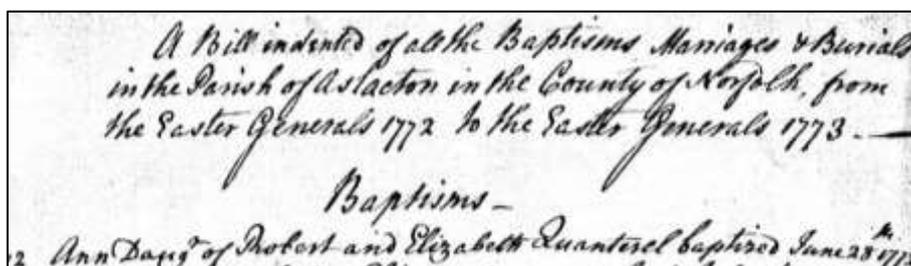
Compared with the exploits of the two other Norfolk *Friendship* 'girls', Hannah Jarvis and Amelia Lightharness, Elizabeth Quantrell, and her crime, pale into insignificance and this was reflected in the scant attention afforded her in the local press of the day – no mention of her age and occupation; no reference to any family members who might lament her departure, and nothing to suggest whether she was Mrs/Widow Quantrell. The only description we have for her is Surgeon Cosgreave's heartless observation, that she was 'an idiot and very filthy'. But was she tall or short, stout or slim, healthy or frail, etc? Indeed, while it is likely that she committed her crimes in Norfolk, there is nothing to prove that this was the case.

The surname 'Quantrell' and its many variants is not a common name, but in England it is predominantly found in Norfolk.¹² We only have Elizabeth's word, as recorded, that she was 50 when she arrived at Sydney Cove in 1818 in which case she would have been born about 1769/1770. If we assume that she was born in Norfolk, and that she was transported under her birth surname, can a possible birth/baptism record be located for her?

Could she, for instance, have been the Elizabeth, daughter of Robert Quanterel and Elizabeth his wife, baptised 5 August 1770 at Aslacton, Norfolk?¹³



and Elizabeth, sister of Ann, baptised at Aslacton on 23 June 1772?



Of course, without any further clues, it is pointless proceeding any further.

NOTES

¹ Norfolk Chronicle, 7 Sep 1817, p.2.
² Bury and Norwich Post, 7 Jun 1815, p.3. Findmypast (FMP), Home Office: Criminal Registers, England and Wales, 1805-1892, HO27 Piece 12, p.623; HO27, Piece 11, p.278.
³ Norwich Chronicle, 7 Jun 1817, p.2.



⁴ Ancestry, Colonial Secretary's Papers, 1788-1856, Series: NRS 937; Reels 6004-6016.

⁵ Female Convict Research Centre (FCRC), Female Convicts in Van Diemen's Land database, Convict ID 3614. Ancestry, New South Wales and Tasmania, Australian Convict Musters, 1806-1849, Tasmania 1823. I have not found any G. Cordell in the TAHO Tasmanian Name Index (TNI). However there was a Joseph Cordell living in the Launceston district in the early 1820s. He was a seaman (2nd Mate) and subsequently a pilot, based in Georgetown – TNI, https://talis.ent.sirsidynix.net.au/client/en_AU/names/search/results?qu=Cordell, but nothing to indicate that Elizabeth Quantrell was assigned to him.

⁶ TAHO, Assignment List, CON13/1/3 Image 86.

⁷ *The Hobart Town Gazette and Van Diemen's Land Advertiser*, 14 Jan 1825, p.1.

⁸ *Tasmanian and Port Dalrymple Advertiser*, 18 May 1825, p.3.

⁹ TAHO, Conduct Record, CON40/1/7 Image 234.

¹⁰ TAHO, Conduct Register, CON40/1/7 p.2. Henry Roney, a convict per *Juliana*, and employed in Launceston as Government Barber, had a nasty fall in August 1831, and died the next month as a result – *The Independent*, 10 Sep 1831, p.3.

¹¹ TAHO, Launceston burials 1836, RGD34/1/1 no 4585.

¹² In 1891 there were 72 Quantrell families living in Norfolk, 56% of all the recorded Quantrells in the UK – Ancestry, Quantrell Family History, <https://www.ancestry.com.au/name-origin?surname=quantrell>.

¹³ Ancestry, Norfolk, England, Transcripts of Church of England Baptism, Marriage and Burial Registers, 1600-1935, Archdeacon Transcripts, Aslacton.



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TROVE

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The Independent

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