



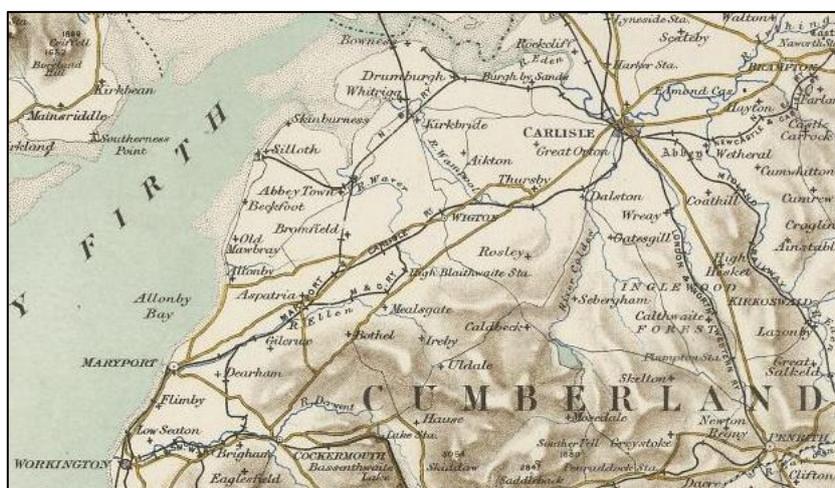
Margaret Sellairs¹

Date of Trial:	21 August 1816
Where Tried:	Cumberland Gaol Delivery
Crime:	Uttering forged bank notes
Sentence:	Life
Est YOB:	1782
Stated Age on Arrival:	36
Native Place:	
Occupation:	Flax Spinner
Alias/AKA:	Margaret Wilson, Margaret Sellars
Marital Status (UK):	Widow
Children on Board:	2 –daughters (came as free passengers)
Surgeon’s Remarks:	<i>Inoffensive</i>
Assigned NSW or VDL	NSW

There had been something of a blitz in the city and surrounding areas of Carlisle in early 1816 to counter the increasing incidence of villains uttering forged bank notes. The *Carlisle Patriot* was pleased to be able to report that one cluster of offenders, operating in the Seaton area near Workington, had been successfully rounded up and were currently ensconced in the Carlisle Gaol awaiting trial.²

The Magistrates and Peace Officers of this City and neighbourhood, have been extremely active during the last five or six days, in search of persons suspected to be guilty of uttering forged notes. The suspicion was well grounded, for the following persons from Seaton, near Workington, have been committed to our gaol by Humphry Senhouse and John Christian, Esqrs. :— *Margaret Wilson alias Sellers, Mary Sellers, Susannah Sellers, and William Green.* Sixty-five notes were found in their possession, and on their premises.

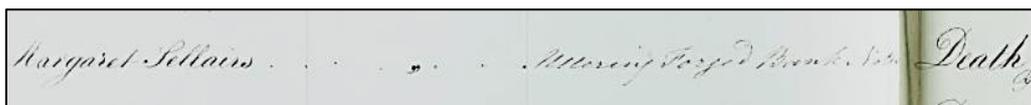
By the early 18th century Workington was an important port. Equally, and dependent upon the port, Seaton, to the north-east, had a long history of mining and farming, with the Seaton Iron Works established in 1762 being a major concern, the establishment of which led to a considerable population increase.³



Extract of map of Cumberland⁴

However, according to a report in the *Lancaster Gazette*, only Margaret Sellairs [sic] and William Green were convicted at the Cumberland Assizes for feloniously passing forged notes, and sentenced to death.⁵ From the

prison registers we find that Mary and her sister Susannah were acquitted due 'no prosecution'.⁶



Subsequently, and as reported in the *Cumberland Pacquet* in November 1816, Margaret Sellairs, capitally convicted at Carlisle for forging and uttering base Bank of England notes, had her sentence commuted to transportation for life.⁷ It was not until May the following year that Margaret (together with Sarah Armstrong, another *Friendship* candidate who had been tried at Cumberland) was transferred from the Carlisle gaol to London, the first stage of her overseas journey.⁸

Margaret Sellairs and Sarah Armstrong, two female convicts, were sent from our gaol on Monday morning, in order to be transported to Botany Bay for life, a ship being about to sail for that settlement.

It was while on board the transport vessel *Friendship* at Deptford, pending the departure date, that Margaret was one of four women who on 4 June 1817 petitioned the Bank of England for some respite of her desperate circumstances as highlighted below. The original spelling has been retained in the following transcript.⁹

268. [F25/4/42-3] *Mary Davis, Mary Lenny, Margaret Sellars, and Barbara Oliver, Friendship transport ship, Deptford, 4 June 1817*

Honored Sir the Humble Pertition of Mary Davice who was tride at the County Gaol Notingham and Cast for Death But now Going to Leave my Country Leaveing 9 Children and quite Destetute therfor hopes you will Be So Kind as to take into Concerderation my pitifull Case Likewise Mary Lenny who was tride at the Winchester Last March and was Sentence to 14 years and as Left 6 Children fatherless and Destetute likewise **Margrate Selars** who was tride at Carlile Last August widow Sentense for Life Likewise Barbery Oliver who was tride in the City of Drurumn Sentence for 14 years Tranceporttation the Smallides Danation will Be Gratefully Received By your Humbly Pertitioners Being all quite Destetute.

In response, the Bank provided Margaret with what by then was the 'standard' pecuniary relief. It is interesting to note that the four petitioners had all been tried outside London.

In addition ... there was usually a payment of £5 (in a few cases rather more) to virtually all women as they embarked on the transport ships. This embarkation money would also be paid to women from prisons outside London if they applied, having met up with women from London and learnt what might be on offer. It is worth remembering the high cost to the Bank of the prosecutions of these prisoners and the fact that they had faced charges of uttering notes of £1 or £2 value.¹⁰

Described as 'inoffensive' by the *Friendship's* Surgeon, when Margaret Sellers arrived at Port Jackson on 14 January 1818 she was recorded as being a 36 year old widow, a flax spinner by calling, and destined to serve out a life sentence, although from the 1822 musters the sentence was mis-recorded as being fourteen years.¹¹ The convict lists of 1820 and 1821 place Margaret Sellers as an assigned servant to Mr. Boulton(?).¹² However, separate 1821 listings for the Parramatta Female Factory register Margaret as an inmate on two occasions.

Margaret Sells (or Margaret Sellairs), *Friendship* (1818), William Minchin Esq., Factory 12 months hard labour, 27 February 1821; and

Margaret Sellers, [per] *Friendship*, [committed by] D.W. Esq., 26 December 1821, Factory 6 calendar months, [discharged to] John Matthews, 29 Dec 1821.¹³

She was still at the Factory for the 1822 General Muster, but the circumstances of her presence there are not clarified. It was quite clear, however, why she found herself back there in September 1823. She had appeared before the magistrates for being a 'drunken worthless and disorderly Character wholly unfit to be at large' and

sentenced to hard labour at the Factory, where she was again mustered in 1825.¹⁴

TICKET OF LEAVE.
 No. *31/036* *19 November 1831.*
 Prisoner's No. — *Sellairs*
 Name, — *Margaret Sellairs*
 Ship, — *Friendship*
 Master, — *Armit*
 Year, — *1818*
 Native Place, —
 Trade or Calling, —
 Offence, —
 Place of Trial, — *Cumberland Forge*
 Date of Trial, — *21 August 1818*
 Sentence, — *Life*
 Year of Birth, —
 Height, —
 Complexion, —
 Hair, —
 Eyes, —
 General Remarks, —

Allowed to remain in the District of *Parramatta*
 On recommendation of *D* Bench,
 Dated *30 June 1831*

It was not until 1831 that Margaret Sellers was granted a Ticket of Leave, as confirmed in the *Sydney Gazette* of 15 October. Unfortunately only the briefest biographic details have been filled in.¹⁵

On 19 November 1831 Margaret's name [transcribed as Margt Sillars] was added to the Government Labour Exemption Register.¹⁶ The death of Margaret Sellars was recorded in the Convict Death Register. She died on 29 April 1835 at Sydney. Whoever completed the entry made a mistake in recording the age at death as 35.¹⁷

During her time in New South Wales Margaret Sellers became involved with at least four men, two of whom she married. In choosing to associate with these men was she motivated by romance, hoping to enjoy some time as a respectably married woman, or were the men regarded as her 'get out of jail' cards, freeing her for a time from the Female Factory?

The first of these men was John Fielding. At the age of 57 he had been tried at Lancaster on 1 September 1819, found guilty of having in his possession forged Bank of England banknotes and also procuring base coin at Manchester with

intent to utter the same, and sentenced to 14 years transportation.¹⁸ He arrived at Sydney on the *Coromandel* on 4 April 1820 and was sent to Parramatta to be employed at the Government Factory at Parramatta and where and by 1823 he was the Overseer of the Male Factory.¹⁹ In 1826 he and Margaret Sellers applied for permission to marry, but they were advised on 7 December that permission was not granted, both being 'Prisoners of the Crown'.²⁰

57	John Fielding,	55	Coromandel	14 yrs	"	"	Both Prisoners of the Crown	"	"
	Margt Sellers	54	Friendship	"	"	"	"	"	"

Margaret had better luck with the application to marry James Williams, which was approved on 17 April 1827. It is interesting to note that for this second application Margaret's age was stated to be 46, the same age as the prospective groom.²¹

299	James Williams	46	General Hewitt	14 years Free
	Margt Sellaris	46	Friendship (3)	Life Bond

James Williams, widower and a blacksmith and Margaret Sellars, widow, were married on 7 May 1827 at St. Philips, Sydney. The Reverend William Cowper officiated and one of the witnesses was Margaret's son-in-law, Thomas Scarr, husband of daughter Mary Sellers.²²

James Williams had been 35 when he was brought up before the Berkshire Assizes on 1 March 1813, indicted and found guilty of uttering counterfeit notes, and sentenced to 14 years transportation.²³ He had arrived in the colony on board the *General Hewitt* on 7 February 1814 and in April 1817 was selected as one of the persons to

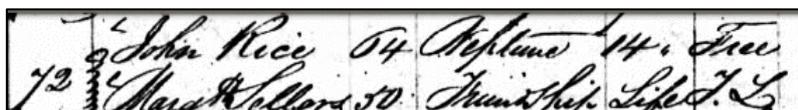


accompany John Oxley on his expeditions to explore and survey the course of the Lachlan River. For services rendered James Williams was one of the party who was granted an Absolute Pardon.²⁴

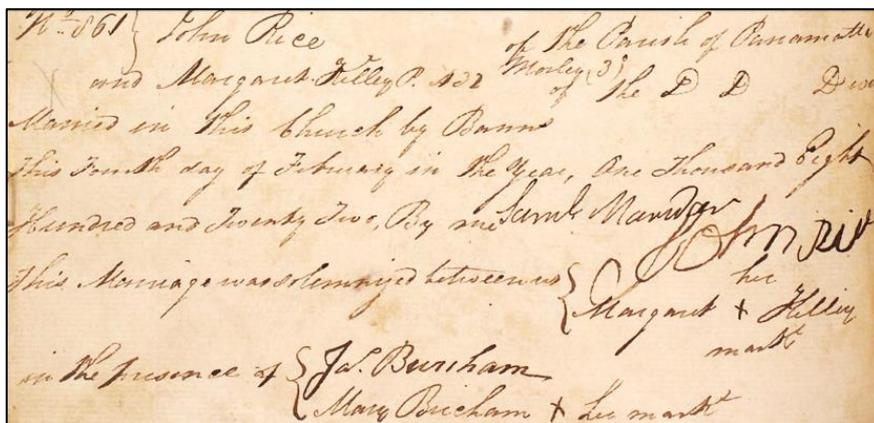
His Excellency the Governor has received, with much Satisfaction, the very favourable Report made by John Oxley, Esq. relative to the Conduct of the twelve Convicts assigned to attend that Gentleman on his late Tour of Discovery in the Interior; and ever anxious to encourage and reward such faithful Exertions and meritorious Services, performed under Circumstances of peculiar Difficulties, Privations, and Perils, encountered with Cheerfulness [sic] and surmounted with Patience. His Excellency hereby notifies his Purpose of granting them Mitigations of the respective Sentences, and also of giving them Grants of Land, in Reward for their exemplary Zeal and Fidelity.

With the death of James in 1831 Margaret was again a widow. He had been buried on 3 April, his death registered at St. Philips, Sydney.²⁵

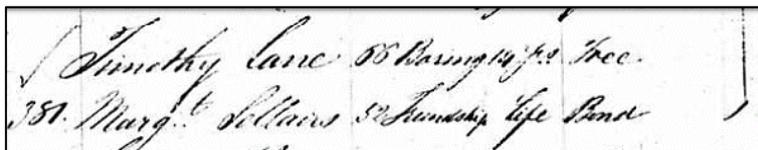
It was as Margt Sellers that Margaret, listed as a 50 year old ticket of leave holder, was party to a successful application to marry free man 64 year old John Rice, approval being granted on 19 March 1832.



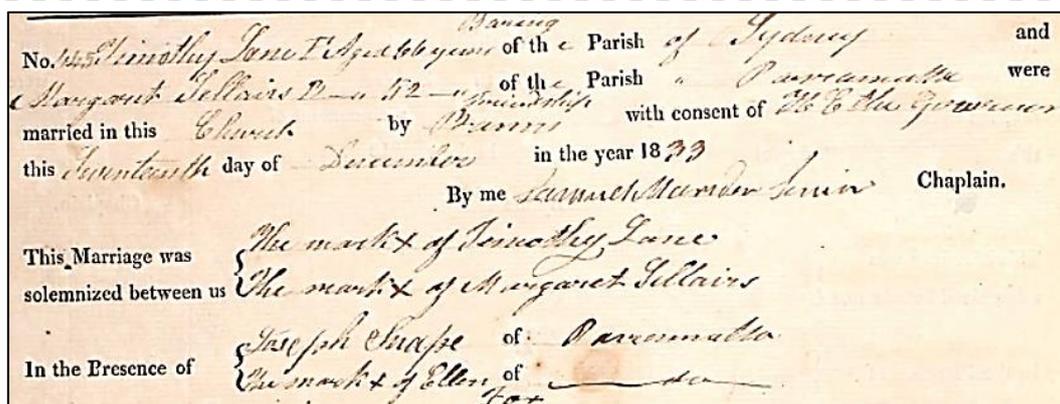
The prospective groom, born in Devon and a barber by calling, had been tried on 16 March 1812 at Exeter.²⁶ Convicted of uttering forged and counterfeit notes, he was sentenced to 14 years transportation and, on board the *Fortune*, had arrived at Sydney on 11 June 1813. In October 1814 he had married one Mary Miller, who died on 29 January 1821.²⁷ John Rice remarried on 4 February 1822 at Parramatta, his new wife being Margaret Kell(e)y.²⁸



Nothing further has been found for this couple, although there is a death registration (not checked) for a Margaret Rice at Sydney, for 1828.²⁹ Whatever the circumstances, the marriage between Margaret Sellers and John did not proceed. However, the marriage between Margaret Sellairs, and Timothy Lane, the fourth 'man of interest' did proceed, their application having been granted on 6 December 1833.³⁰



Timothy Lane, of the Parish of Sydney, was 66 and Margaret, of the Parish of Parramatta, claimed to be 52 when they married on 17 December at St. John's Parramatta.³¹



Timothy Lane, born in Cork, Ireland, was 52 years old when, together with 22 others, he was tried at the Old Bailey on 9 September 1818, 'severally and separately indicted for feloniously and unlawfully having in their custody and possession forged bank notes, they well knowing them to be forged'. All pleaded guilty and were sentenced to be transported for 14 years.³² One of the convicts on board the *Baring*, Timothy Lane, arrived at Sydney on 16 June 1819 and was indented as a bricklayer and fireworker.³³ Employed on Government works in 1820, he was a patient at the Parramatta hospital in 1822.³⁴ He spent some time at Emu Plains before being transferred to Bathurst in October 1823.³⁵ It was at Bathurst that he was issued with a Ticket of Leave on 30 April 1827.³⁶ He gained his Certificate of Freedom on 30 October 1832. For the record, he was then 5' 2" tall, with a sallow wrinkled complexion, grey hair and eyes, and had lost two front teeth in his upper jaw.³⁷

With Margaret's death occurring in April 1835 she and Timothy only had a short time together as a married couple. Indeed, with Margaret restricted to Parramatta, and Timothy living at Bathurst, calls into question how satisfactory was their relationship. Timothy Lane was probably the subject of an 1842 death registered at Bathurst, Kelso (Country of Bathurst), New South Wales.³⁸

What is striking is that all four men with whom Margaret Sellers who entered into some form of relationship had one thing in common with each other and with her. All were convicted of possession and uttering counterfeited Bank of England notes.

Post Script

Mary and Susan(nah) Sellers

Mary would have been about 17 and Susannah about 14 when, as free passengers, they arrived at Port Jackson on the *Friendship*, accompanying their convict mother Margaret Sellars.³⁹ They had been arrested with her and tried at the Cumberland Summer Assizes in August 1816, but both girls had been acquitted.⁴⁰

Mary, or Mary Ann as she was sometimes called, married twice – to Thomas Scarr in 1821 and, following his death in 1830, to Joseph Thompson. It was as Mrs. Mary Ann Thompson that she was tried at the Sydney Supreme Court in May 1834, and was sentenced to 7 years transportation to Van Diemen's Land. Her story is recounted in *Bond of Friendship*, Part 3b.

The Population Muster conducted on 11 November 1819 records Susan as Susan Edwards, husband of B. Edwards.⁴¹ Having received approval on 8 June 1819 for permission to marry, Benjamin Edwards, a gunsmith, and Susannah Sinners [sic] were married on 7 September 1819, the event being registered at St. Phillip's Church, Sydney. Bachelor Benjamin's age was given as 28; his wife was said to be 20, and she was a spinster. One of the witnesses was her sister Mary Sellairs, and the other was Thomas Vaughan. The only members of the wedding party who were unable to sign their names were the groom and bride.⁴²

Benjamin Edwards had been born in Worcestershire (or possibly Gloucestershire).⁴³ A month or so after Susan embarked on the *Friendship*, her future husband was facing the Warwick Assizes, charged on 2 August 1817 with forging and uttering counterfeit Bank of England notes, to which he pleaded guilty and was duly sentenced to

 death, subsequently commuted to transportation for life.⁴⁴ He did not have too long to wait before he embarked on the convict transport *Neptune* which departed on 20 December 1817 and arrived at Port Jackson on 5 May 1818.⁴⁵ Mustered on arrival, he was described as aged 26, a native of Worcestershire and a gunsmith by trade. He was 5' 8" tall, with a sallow pockmarked complexion, brown hair and hazel eyes.⁴⁶

Two months after the wedding Benjamin Edwards was on his way to Newcastle, per the *Lady Nelson*, as set out in a memorandum from the Colonial Secretary's office to Captain Morisset, Commandant at Newcastle. Benjamin had been convicted on 30 November 1819 by D. Wentworth, Esq., and sentenced to one year's banishment.⁴⁷ For Susan Edwards the absence of her husband was something of a relief, judging from the 'Humble petition' dated 13 March 1822 that, as Susan Selina Sellars, she forwarded to His Excellency, Sir Thomas Brisbane. At the time she was living at 38 Castlereagh Street, Sydney. Some of the details contradict other records, e.g. her age on marriage and the date that Benjamin left for Newcastle. The petition does, however, make some reference to Susan's mother and sister, and reveals that the marriage was definitely not working out.

The Humble petition of Susan Selina Sellars
Respectfully Sheweth

That your Excellency's Petitioner came to this Colony free at the age of fourteen years accompanying her Mother a Prisoner of the Crown for fourteen Years.

That at the age of fifteen she intermarried with Benjamin Edwards, a Prisoner of the Crown for Life.

That three months after her marriage Benjamin Edwards was sent to the Coal River for having in his possession Government Stores which were stolen.

That during that short interval of only three months the said Benjamin Edwards pledged nearly all your Petitioner's Clothes to Mr. Thos. Rose of this Town and repeatedly beat, and treated her most brutally as can be testified by Capt. Antill and several other respectable Witnesses.

That on the said Benjamin Edwards' return from the Coal River he was remanded to the Barracks; and as your Petitioner was then in service on that account, and having ascertained that he had a wife in England as well as from his barbarous Treatment of her, your Petitioner refused ever again to cohabit with him.

That the said Benjamin Edwards was lately released from the Barracks by Mr. Wentworth but was again remanded for disorderly Conduct on the following day.

That your Petitioner is at this time suffering under serious Indisposition as will be testified by Dr. Bland.

Your Petitioner humbly implores from Your Excellency's Justice and Humanity that you will direct enquiry to be made into the Respective Character of Benjamin Edwards and herself. Mr. Wm. Hutchinson, Principal Superintendent of Prisoners lately represented in public Court to the Police Magistrates that Benjⁿ Edwards is a dangerous and desperate Character very unfit to be at large and can also speak to your Petitioner's generally inoffensive, and orderly conduct, as can also several other respectable Inhabitants.

Your Excellency's Petitioner contemplated an early Embarkation for Hobart Town, where a respectable service has been provided for her, but has this day been informed that there is an order for sending her into the Factory at Parramatta, into Confinement, without any charge or Offence alledged, or found against her and on what legal, or sentence she is utterly ignorant.

Your Petitioner therefore earnestly entreats that your Excellency will be graciously pleased to direct Enquiry into the facts here stated and on their being established will order that her Freedom be not abridged but that she may be permitted to proceed to Hobart Town to the service to which she has been recommended.⁴⁸

In response, Benjamin submitted the following account, explaining in a somewhat muddled style his side of the story.

I Benjamin Edwards was married to Susannah Sellairs on the 7th day of September 1819. When I had been married to her about one month I then found that she was not well satisfied with me. I then asked her the reason. She informed me that her mother had told her if she would leave me that she could get a gentleman that would keep her better than I could. N.B. Sir, before I was sent to Newcastle I had two young men that lodged with me and one of them I learned to work or to make nails and after I have learned him he bought some hoop iron and



brought it into my shop and a young man by the name of Pugh(?) went and informed the Constables that I had got some stolen iron in my shop. When the constables came and found the iron they asked me who it belonged to. I informed them that it belonged to Brock House. He then said that he knew nothing of the matter. They then asked me who rented the house. I informed them that I did. They then took me before Mr. Wentworth and my Ticket of Leave taken from me and received 25 lashes and 12 months to Newcastle. When I went to Newcastle I parted with my Wife in good terms and during the time that I was at Newcastle I never heard from her but when I returned to Sydney I found that she lived with Dr. Aleran. I then went to her to ask what had become of my property that I left behind. I met with her and her sister in the street. I went up to her and asked her if she would come to her mother's house as I would wish to speak to her. She consented. Her Mother lived the next door to Dr. Aleran. When we came to Dr. Aleran's her sister left and went into Dr. Aleran's. I had not been in her mother's house more than one minute before a constable came in and took hold of me and I asked him what I had done. He informed me that he did not know but the gentleman next door had gave charge of me and I was taken to the Watch-house and the following morning brought before Captain Piper and he asked me what charge was against me and he was informed by the Constable that Dr. Aleran had given me in charge to him but for what he did not know. Then he sent for Dr. Aleran and he came and the charge he gave against me was that I had stopped his servant in the street and had forced her back into a person's house and had locked her up in a room. Then Captⁿ Piper asked Aleran if he would wish to have me punished. He said that he would wish to have me to be kept in Barracks and not to molest his servant any more. During the time that I was in Barracks it was reported that Dr. Aleran's windows were broke and as I was coming from the Lumber-yard one night I met a man by the name of Watt(?) and he asked me how I was and said to me I understand that your wife lived at Dr. Aleran's and I said she does but I durst not go nigh for he would put me in the Watch-house. He said to me that he understood that Dr. Aleran had had his windows broke lately and I informed him that it was a good thing that I was in Barrack or else he would blame me for it. After I came from Newcastle I remained in Barracks 5 months and 14 days and then my Father got me out. Then I took a lodging at the top of Pitt-street and I worked for the man that I lodged with and during the time that I lodged there it was reported that Dr. Aleran's servant had been beat in the street and he told the woman that it must be me and sent her husband after me and his husband came to me and enquired the reason that I had beat his wife and I informed him that I not done so and that he might go to my lodgings and enquire if I was out that night and he found that what I said was true. They informed him that I was at work until eleven o'clock that night and he not being satisfied he said that his wife would know the man that had beat her and we appointed a plan to meet at Mr. Franks's at the White Hart and when the woman saw me she said that I was not the man that beat her before all in the house and moreover she told me to mind myself for Dr. Aleran was determining to send me away. Some time after this the woman left Dr. Aleran's and three weeks after this Dr. Aleran brought me to Court and said that I was the man that had broke his windows and beat his servant and I was ordered into Barracks and during the time that I have been in Barracks this time Mrs. Aleran arrived. My wife was sent away from Dr. Aleran's and went to live with her sister in York Street and during the time that I have been with the Water Carts I have seen Dr. Aleran often at the house where my Wife was and one day found him and my wife of the bed together. He then took me by the collar and told me that if I did not go away that he would put me in the Watch-house for an insult. I then left the place and went to Mr. Wentworth but he was not in the way. I then informed the Constable my business. Some time after I saw my wife and asked her if she intended to do anything for me as she well knew what had been sworn against was false and she said that she would do all that was in her power for me. I then asked her where she lived. She informed me that she live at Mrs. Cooley's. I then went with her to the house and during the time we were talking Dr. Aleran came up to me and my wife and asked my wife what business I had with and she informed him that it was about getting him out of Barracks and he informed me that my wife should do nothing for me. That I had been put in by a Magistrate and that I should not come out. Some time afterwards I stated my case to Mr. Wentworth and he desired my wife to go home with me and conduct herself well. Then Mr. Wentworth let me out of Barracks. I then informed him that I had no place for her at present but if Mrs. Cooley would let her stop there I would pay her. My wife informed me that she had money to pay her way and was sell satisfied with what had passed. Some time after I went to Mr. Cooley's to see my wife at Mrs. Cooley's and she forbid me coming any more but any one else might come if they pleased. They should have her consent. I have very often seen Dr. Aleran with my wife since.⁴⁹

Furthermore, it seems that Benjamin had enlisted the support of the Reverend Richard Hill, Assistant Chaplain, who wrote to the Colonial Secretary on 30 April 1822 on behalf of the 'wronged' husband, enclosing a copy of Benjamin's rebuttal.

Sir

A man named Benjamin Edwards having made several applications to me to interfere on his behalf to enable him to recover his wife who has been unlawfully harboured, and kept from him, had, a few days since, sent me the accompanying statement, which I now beg leave to hand to you as it is out of my power to afford him the relief which his case seems to merit, and, should it prove to be true, I hope that some measures will be taken to prevent a repetition of conduct so oppressive and dangerously immoral.⁵⁰

It should be noted that nothing further has been found to establish Susan Edwards' whereabouts after she was sent to the Female Factory at Parramatta in 1822. She has not been located for the 1825 general muster nor the 1828 census. Only one death record has been found for a Susannah Edwards – registered at Parramatta in 1841.⁵¹ However, a corresponding entry in the St. John's register states that the deceased was 50 years old. The fact that Benjamin remarried in 1832 (see below) suggests that, one way or another, wife Susan was no longer around by then.⁵²

<i>Susannah Edwards</i> No. 538	<i>Parramatta</i>	<i>November</i> 1 st	<i>November</i> 3 ^d	<i>50</i> yrs		<i>W. West. Simpson</i>
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The two petitions above give rise to a number of points that provide and/or call for clarification.

- What was Susan Sellars' age on marriage?
- What proof is there that Benjamin still had a wife in England at the time of his marriage to Susan?
- To whom had Susan arranged to work in Hobart Town?
- How long did Susan spend at the Female Factory at Parramatta?
- Did she relocate to Van Diemen's Land?
- Margaret Sellers had encouraged Susan to leave her husband.
- Margaret Sellers lived next door to Dr. 'Aleran'.
- Who was Benjamin Edwards' father?
- Did Susan work as a servant to Dr. 'Aleran' or was she in fact his mistress?
- Who were Mr. and Mrs. Cooley?
- Who was Dr. "Aleran"?

The answer to the last question is that Benjamin Edwards had mis-spelt the name of Susan's self-appointed 'protector', Dr. Halloran, whose full name was Lawrence Hynes Halloran, a somewhat controversial man, who had arrived at Port Jackson on the convict transport *Baring* on 26 June 1819.

One of the most notorious convicts on the *Baring* was Dr. Lawrence Halloran a bogus clergyman, schoolmaster and journalist, who was born on 29 December 1765 in County Meath, Ireland. In 1818 Dr. Halloran was indicted on a charge of counterfeiting a tenpenny frank in the name of Sir William Garrow, M.P., allegedly for the purpose of accrediting himself as a curate; when he was found guilty he was sentenced to transportation for seven years.⁵³

Even before the *Baring* sailed Lawrence Halloran had presented a petition to Parliament regarding the severity of his punishment, the crowded conditions on the *Baring*, and, more particularly, the treatment meted out to him, an elderly gentleman who, contrary to Lord Sidmouth's assurances, was forced to associate with common felons.⁵⁴ He was granted a Ticket of Leave on arrival, he opened a private school in January 1820 and was subsequently appointed headmaster of the new Sydney Free Public Grammar School. In April 1822, by which time he was living in Phillip Street with his wife and family who had joined him, Lawrence applied for mitigation of his sentence. This, together with a further petition in 1824 was apparently disregarded.



Returning to Benjamin Edwards, the 1825 general muster finds him as a government employee at Sydney and for the 1828 census he was at the Hyde Park Barracks in Sydney, by which time he had regained a Ticket of Leave, issued with the proviso that he remain in the District of Sydney.⁵⁵ There are three other instances of Tickets of Leave issued to Benjamin, gunsmith per *Neptune* - 29/0131, 31/0468 and 36/0158. It was as a Ticket of Leave man that he was mustered as Sydney in 1837.⁵⁶ In July 1837, nearly twenty years after his arrival in the colony and at the age of 45, Benjamin Edwards was granted a Conditional Pardon. Effectively he was a free man, eligible to go anywhere except to the United Kingdom or Ireland. Ten years later he was one of ten convicts listed as having gained an extended Pardon as promulgated in the *Sydney Chronicle* of 14 August 1847.

His Excellency the Governor directs it to be notified that, in accordance with the regulation dated 2nd December last, the conditional pardons granted to the undermentioned persons have been so far enlarged, as to permit the holders to proceed to all parts of the world, except the country or colony from which they were respectively transported.⁵⁷

Through Father John Joseph Therry, Benjamin applied in May 1830 for the publication of banns, at the Roman Catholic Chapel, Sydney. He stated that he was a widower, a blacksmith by trade who was then residing in Kent Street. His prospective bride was Mary Ann Hales (alias Miles), a spinster who had arrived per *Competitor* in 1828. As 22 year old Mary Ann Hale, she had been indicted on 24 February of that year at the Old Bailey for stealing 1 bonnet, value 2s.; 1 veil, value 6d.; 1 handkerchief, value 6d.; 2 pairs of shoes, value 2s.; 8 pairs of stockings, value 2s.; 1 pair of sheets, value 25s., and 1 cap, value 5s., the goods of Thomas Yarrow, her master. She was found guilty and sentenced to 14 years transportation.⁵⁸ At the time the publication of banns application was lodged she was assigned to Mr. Walker at Concord, who had given his consent to the intended marriage. However, this application was not approved.⁵⁹ But another attempt in 1832, under the auspices of the Reverend Cowper, was successful and the marriage of the couple was registered at Sydney in 1832.⁶⁰

1836	Benj ^r Edwards	40	Neptune	Life & L.	27 Sept ^r
	Mary Ann Hales for Miles	24	Competitor	14 Yrs Bond	

No children have been recorded for Benjamin and Susan – unsurprisingly given the state of their relationship. However, at least two children were born to Benjamin and Mary Ann - Rosanna Ann Edwards, born 19 November 1832, and Benjamin George Edwards, born 11 May 1833 – who were baptised together by Rev. William Cowper at St Phillip’s Church on 26 May 1833.⁶¹ Records suggest that, six years after his marriage to Mary Ann, Benjamin was again a ‘widower’. An inquest, recorded on 1 December 1838, into the death of M.A. Edwards at Windsor determined that she died of natural causes. Mrs. Mary Ann Edwards, wife of Benjamin Edwards, was buried on 28 November at St. Matthews Church, Windsor by the Reverend Henry Stiles.⁶²

In 1839 Benjamin once again submitted, this time through the Rev. H.H. Bobart of Parramatta, an application to marry. He was listed as now 47 years of age, a ‘lifer’ but one who had by then obtained a conditional pardon. His intended bride was Christian Gale (alias Gra(i)nger), a 29 year old convict, a thief of ‘habit and repute’, who had arrived on the *Numa* to serve out a sentence of 14 years on a charge of violent assault.⁶³ While permission was granted on 6 March, a notation at the bottom of the list of names reads ‘The consent of the assignee of Gale must be obtained before the ceremony can be performed’.⁶⁴

Name	Age	Ship	Sentence	Condition	Date of Permission
Benj ^r Edwards	47	Neptune	Life	6 Pardon	6 March 1839
Christian Gale for Grainger	29	Numa	14 Yrs Bond		



No record of marriage has been located for Benjamin and Christian. However, there are records for an application for, and celebration of a marriage, in 1847, between Christian Gale and Thomas Ross.⁶⁵ Nothing further has been found for Benjamin Edwards.



One intriguing piece of correspondence dated 15 February 1825 concerning some documents left with Laurence Hynes Halloran by Mrs. Edwards is found in the Colonial Secretary's Papers. The following letter was written from Port Macquarie and addressed to Major Goulburn, Chief Secretary.⁶⁶

Sir

A little misunderstanding having arisen between myself and Mr. Bigge owing to a note inc^d (inclosed?) from ... (Boy?) step brother at the time I was labouring under considerable mental suffering from the fear of a separation with my wife. I have felt it due to that Gentleman and myself to enter into a fitting explanation by the inclosed letter.

As many opportunities will offer to you that will never occur to me of forwarding the correspondence via Mauritius I presume to beg you will do me the favor of sending this and it shall be the last time I will intrude on you. Indeed I shod not now take this liberty if I did not feel justified by the recollection of the times in which the Commissioner spoke to me of his friendship with you.

Permit me to acknowledge myself as I am Sir

Your very humble servant
E. Edwards.

P.S. Mrs. Edwards has left with Mr. Halloran some letters to be forwarded to her family and as I am sure Mr. Bigge will have the kindness to see them delivered I have more presumed on you by requesting Dr. Halloran to send them to our office and I hope you will forward them to Mr. Bigge with this to him.

While the letter makes reference Mr. Halloran, the letter was written by Mrs. Elizabeth Edwards, wife of William Edwards, also known as Alexander Lockaye.⁶⁷



NOTES

¹ 'Sellairs' was the name recorded in the Bound Indentures. The name is spelt variously in the records – e.g. Sellaers, Sellers, Sellars. Unless quoting directly from a reference, the surname Sellers has been used.

² *Carlisle Patriot*, 4 May 1816, p.3.

³ Cumbria County History Trust, Workington, <https://www.cumbriacountyhistory.org.uk/township/workington>. Seaton Parish Council, <https://www.seatonparishcouncil.org.uk/seaton-parish-council>.

⁴ A Vision of Britain, http://www.visionofbritain.org.uk/maps/sheet/os_medium_1904/1125_14_7_8.

⁵ *Lancaster Gazette*, 7 Sep 1816, p.3.

⁶ Ancestry, England & Wales, Criminal Registers, 1791-1892, England, Cumberland, 1816. At the time of their trial the two daughters were approximately 16 and 14, but their actual birth dates have not been definitively established. See also Note 39.

⁷ Cumberland Pacquet and Ware's Whitehaven Advertiser, 19 Nov 1816, p.3.

⁸ *Carlisle Patriot*, 31 May 1817, p.3.

⁹ "Letters, nos 201-300." Prisoners' Letters to the Bank of England, 1781-1827. Ed. Deirdre Palk. London: London Record Society, 2007. 65-92. British History Online. Web. 6 October 2018. <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/london-record-soc/vol42/pp65-92>. 268. [F25/4/42-3] Mary Davis, Mary Lenny, Margaret Sellars, and Barbara Oliver, Friendship transport ship, Deptford, 4 June 1817.

¹⁰ "Introduction." Prisoners' Letters to the Bank of England, 1781-1827. Ed. Deirdre Palk. London: London Record Society, 2007. vii-xxv. British History Online. Web. 6 October 2018. <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/london-record-soc/vol42/vii-xxv>.

¹¹ Ancestry, New South Wales, Australia, Convict Indents, 1788-1842, Bound Indentures, 1814-1818.

¹² Ancestry, New South Wales, Australia, Settler and Convict Lists, 1787-1834.

¹³ Parramatta Female Factory Online, <https://femalefactoryonline.org/search/>. Ancestry, New South Wales, Australia, Gaol Description and Entrance Books, 1818-1930.

¹⁴ Ancestry, New South Wales and Tasmania, Australia Convict Musters, 1806-1849, General Muster 1822. Ancestry, New South Wales, Australia, Gaol Description and Entrance Books, 1818-1930, Sydney, 1819-1833. Ancestry, New South Wales and Tasmania Convict Musters, 1806-1849, General Muster M-Z, 1825.



- ¹⁵ Ancestry, New South Wales, Australia, Tickets of Leave, 1810-1869, Ticket of leave butts, Nov 1831-Mar 1832. *The Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser*, 15 Oct 1831, p.3.
- ¹⁶ Ancestry, New South Wales, Australia, Convict Records, 1810-1891, Assignment and Employment of Convicts, Government Labour Exemption Register, 1830-1832.
- ¹⁷ Ancestry, New South Wales, Australia, Convict Records, 1810-1891, Ancestry, New South Wales, Australia, Convict Death Register, 1826-1879.
- ¹⁸ *Westmoreland Gazette*, 18 Sep 1819, p.6. *Lancaster Gazette*, 11 Sep 1819, p.3.
- ¹⁹ Biographical Database of Australia (BDA), Biographical report for John Fielding.
- ²⁰ Ancestry, New South Wales, Australia, Registers of Convicts' Applications to Marry, 1826-1851. John Fielding married Ann Rolph on 30 Sep 1829 – Ancestry, New South Wales, Australia, St. John's Parramatta, Marriages, Vol 02, Marriages, 1826-1834.
- ²¹ Ancestry, New South Wales, Australia, Registers of Convicts' Applications to Marry, 1826-1851, Granted 1827.
- ²² BDA, Biographical record for Margaret Sellairs. Ancestry, Australia Marriage Index, 1788-1950.
- ²³ Oxford University and City Herald, 6 Mar 1813, p.3.
- ²⁴ The Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser, 19 Dec 1818, p.1.
- ²⁵ BDA, Biographical report for James Williams. Ancestry, Australia, Death Index, 1787-1985, V18311376 15.
- ²⁶ *Exeter Flying Post*, 12 Mar 1812, p.4. *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 21 Mar 1812, p.3.
- ²⁷ BDA, Biographical report for John Rice. BDA, Biographical report for Mary Miller.
- ²⁸ Ancestry, New South Wales, Australia, St. John's Parramatta Marriages, 1790-1966, Vol. 1, Marriages, 1789-1825.
- ²⁹ Ancestry, Australia Death Index, 1787-1985, V18281259 12.
- ³⁰ Ancestry, New South Wales, Australia, Registers of Convicts' Applications to Marry, 1826-1851.
- ³¹ Ancestry, New South Wales, Australia, St. John's Parramatta Marriages, 1790-1966, Vol 02, Marriages, 1826-1834. Ancestry, Australia Marriages, 1788-1935, V183352 17.
- ³² *Old Bailey Proceedings Online* (www.oldbaileyonline.org, version 8.0, 07 October 2018), September 1818, trial of JANE WILLIAMS MARY PENDLETON WILLIAM WILKS MARIA WILKS WILLIAM CHALKER CHARLES HANSCOMBE JOHN ANDERSON SARAH IRELAND HANNAH GILBERT TIMOTHY LANE JAMES YEOELL JAMES DALAS JOHN DUNN JOHN WATSON BENJAMIN TATHAN WILLIS THOMAS OWEN HENRY WAY JOSEPH TURNER THOMAS SEENEY WILLIAM QUIN JAMES WOOLE EDWARD NEW JOSEPH LONGWOOD (t18180909-46).
- ³³ Ancestry, New South Wales, Australia, Convict Indents, 1788-1842, Bound Indentures, 1818-1819.
- ³⁴ Ancestry, New South Wales, Australia, Settler and Convict Lists, 1787-1834.
- ³⁵ Ancestry, New South Wales, Australia, Colonial Secretary's Papers, 1788-1856.
- ³⁶ Ancestry, New South Wales, Australia, Tickets of Leave, Ticket of leave butts, Sep 1827-Aug 1828.
- ³⁷ Ancestry, New South Wales, Australia, Certificates of Freedom, 1827-1867, Butts of Certificates of Freedom, 1832, October.
- ³⁸ Ancestry, Australia Death Index, 1787-1985, V18423633 162B.
- ³⁹ As noted it has been difficult to determine the daughters' actual ages on arrival. One listing records them as 'aged 16 and 17' – Ancestry, New South Wales, Australia, Settler and Convict Lists, 1787-1834, New South Wales, Female, 1788-1834 - the elder of the two being Mary and the younger being Susannah.
- ⁴⁰ Ancestry, England & Wales, Criminal Registers, 1791-1892, England, Cumberland 1816.
- ⁴¹ Ancestry, New South Wales, Census and Population Books, 1811-1825, Population Muster, 1819.
- ⁴² Ancestry, Australia Marriage Index, V A. Church Register, NSW Sydney St Phillip, CE Marriage.
- ⁴³ According to his Ticket of Leave/Pardon records, 1831 and 1836, his birth place was stated to be Gloucestershire.
- ⁴⁴ *Northampton Mercury*, 16 Aug 1817, p.3. Ancestry, England & Wales, Criminal Registers, 1791-1894, England, Warwickshire, 1817. He knew his way around the courts, having appeared before the Worcestershire July 1817 session, charged with larceny, but let off for want of a Bill.
- ⁴⁵ Claim a Convict, <http://www.hawkesbury.net.au/claimaconvict/convictDetails.php?convictId=79834>.
- ⁴⁶ BDA, Biographical report for Benjamin Edwards, Convict Indents and Ship Musters, 1813-1828.
- ⁴⁷ Ancestry, New South Wales, Australia, Colonial Secretary's Papers, 1788-1856.
- ⁴⁸ Ancestry, New South Wales, Australia, Colonial Secretary's Papers, 1788-1856.
- ⁴⁹ Ancestry, New South Wales, Australia, Colonial Secretary's Papers, 1788-1856. The date of the account is barely legible, but it was probably written in March/April 1822.
- ⁵⁰ Ancestry, New South Wales, Australia, Colonial Secretary's Papers, 1788-1856.
- ⁵¹ Ancestry, Australia Death Index, 1787-1985.
- ⁵² Ancestry, New South Wales, Australia, St. John's Parramatta, Burials, 1790-1986, Vol 04, 1839-1889.
- ⁵³ Free Settler or Felon? Convict Ship Baring 1819, https://www.jenwilletts.com/convict_ship_baring_1819.htm. To his attributes can also be added bigamist, poet, newspaper editor and coroner – Wikipedia, Laurence Hynes Halloran, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Laurence_Hynes_Halloran. He died in Sydney on 7 March 1831. See also entries for Laurence Hynes Halloran in Ancestry, New South Wales, Australia, Colonial Secretary's Papers, 1788-1856.
- ⁵⁴ T.C. Hansard, The Parliamentary Debates from the Year 1803 to the Present Time, Volume 39, Parliament, Great Britain, 1819.



⁵⁵ Ancestry, New South Wales and Tasmania, Australia Convict Musters, 1806-1849, New South Wales, General Muster, A-L, 1825. Ancestry, 1828 New South Wales, Australia Census (TNA Copy), New South Wales, General Muster, 1828.

⁵⁶ BDA, Biographical report for Benjamin Edwards.

⁵⁷ Ancestry, New South Wales, Australia, Convict Registers of Conditional and Absolute Pardons, 1788-1870. Ancestry, New South Wales and Tasmania, Australia, Convict Pardons and Tickets of Leave, 1834-1859, New South Wales, Pardons, 1846-1949. *Sydney Chronicle*, 14 Aug 1847, p.3.

⁵⁸ *Old Bailey Proceedings Online* (www.oldbaileyonline.org, version 8.0, 12 October 2018), February 1828, trial of MARY ANN HALE (t18280221-79). BDA, Biographical report for Mary Ann Hales.

⁵⁹ Ancestry, New South Wales, Australia, Convict Applications for the Publication of Banns, 1828-1830, 1830.

⁶⁰ Ancestry, New South Wales, Australia, Registers of Convicts' Applications to Marry, 1826-1851, 1832. Ancestry, Australia, Marriage Index, 1788-1950, 1832/V.

⁶¹ BDA, Biographical report for Benjamin Edwards, Church Register: NSW Sydney St Phillip CE Baptisms 1832-1840.

⁶² Ancestry, New South Wales, Australia, Registers of Coroners' Inquests, 1821-1937. BDA, Biographical report for (Mrs) Mary Ann Edwards. Ancestry, Australia, Death Index, 1787-1895, V18382925 22.

⁶³ *Caledonian Mercury*, 18 Jul 1833, p.4.

⁶⁴ Ancestry, New South Wales, Australia, Registers of Convicts' Applications to Marry, 1826-1851, 1839.

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