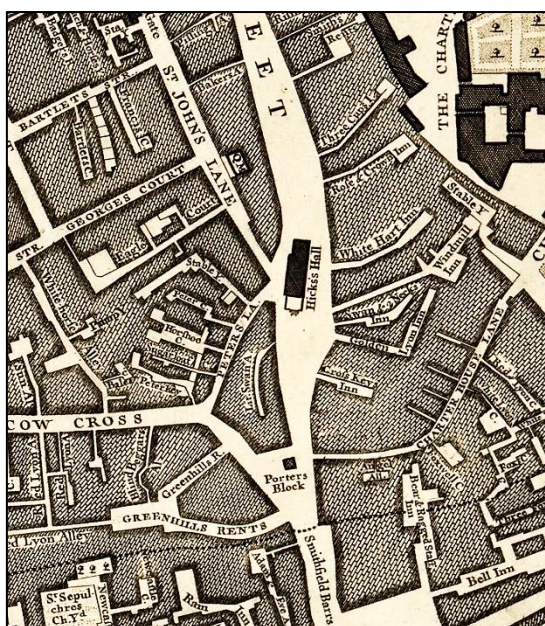


Jane Barnes

Date of Trial:	13 July 1817
Where Tried:	Clerkenwell Quarter Session of the Peace
Crime:	Larceny
Sentence:	7 years
Est YOB:	1795
Stated Age on Arrival:	23
Native Place:	London
Occupation:	Laundress
Alias/AKA:	Jane Barnes
Marital Status (UK):	
Children on Board:	
Surgeon's Remarks:	<i>A character unworthy of any trust except what concerns her profession (a thief)</i>
Assigned NSW or VDL	NSW

The fate of transportee Jane Barnes, deemed by the ship's Surgeon a thief by profession and unworthy of any trust, is unknown, her presence in the colony unremarked, with the exception of a smattering of convict records. Incidentally, John Gyles, Missionary and a free passenger on board the *Friendship*, did not share Surgeon Cosgreave's opinion of Jane Barnes. According to the Missionary she had been well behaved during the voyage.¹

What we do know, however, is that she was tried on 13 July 1816 at the Quarter Session of the Peace, at Clerkenwell, and found guilty of larceny, but the details of her trial are not divulged in either the prison records or the newspapers of the day. The Newgate Prison Register of Prisoners confirms the date of her trial, the verdict – guilty – and the sentence – to be transported for 7 years - and states her age as 23. It also tells us that on 5 June 1817, nearly a year after her conviction, that she was removed and delivered to the convict ship *Friendship*.² Other records refer to her place of trial as Surry, and Hicks Hall. The latter, originally established in the time of King James 1, and financed by Sir Baptist Hicks, stood in the middle of St. John Street, Clerkenwell. It was closed and demolished in 1778, and replaced by the Middlesex Sessions House, on Camberwell Green but, as a mark of continuity, was referred to as Hicks Hall.³

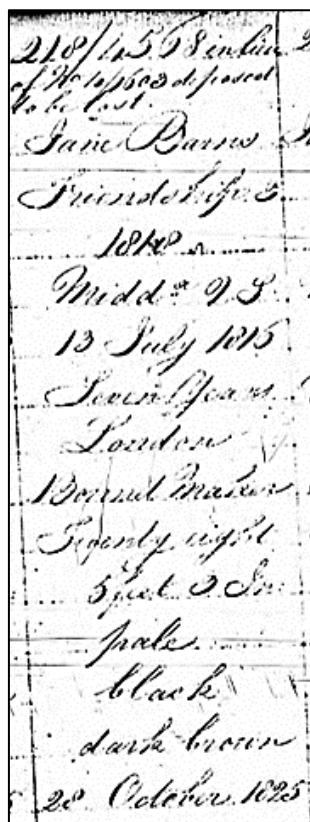


Location of original Hicks Hall⁴

As with so many convicts, there is conflicting information regarding age and estimated year of birth. As noted above, the prison registers record Jane Barnes as being 23 when committed in 1816. The Convict Index gives her

age in 1818 as 23 and birth year as 1795, and yet another, from the Biographical Database of Australia (BDA) – Convict Indents and Musters, suggests that on arrival she was 24 years of age, born in 1794.⁵

To add to the confusion, Jane's surname was sometimes recorded as Barnes, as it was for the 1818 and the 1788-1819 Settler and Convict Lists, the latter recording her as being at Emu Plains.⁶ A further 1819 record for 1819, the Population Muster, lists Jane Barnes, per *Friendship*, as an inmate of the Parramatta Factory, but without any notation as to whether she was there as a Class 1, 2, or 3 inmate.⁷ The notation for the 1821 Settler and Convict List records Jane Barnes as being at Port Dalrymple, Van Diemen's Land. No record of her having been sent to/resident of Van Diemen's Land has been found.⁸ But regardless of where, and in what circumstances Jane Barnes spent her life between arriving at Port Jackson on 14 January 1818 and late 1823, we know that she was granted her certificate of freedom (4/1603), this milestone being reported in the *Sydney Gazette* on 13 November 1823.⁹ Her original ticket having been lost, she was issued with a replacement on 28 October 1825.¹⁰



This replacement ticket is useful as it gives a description of Jane Barnes. Standing at 5' 3", she was relatively tall. She had a pale complexion, black hair and dark brown eyes. Her age was stated as 28. Interestingly, while the convict indent listed her as a laundress, by 1825 she was described as a bonnet-maker.

But was she also a mother? On 1 July 1831, a Jane Barnes, housekeeper of Clarence Street, wrote to the Trustees of the Church and School Lands as follows.

Gentlemen

With the feelings of a Mother I am inclined to take under my care and protection a Child of mine who has been an Inmate of the Orphan School now better than Six years, and I trust Gentlemen that my application will be attended to, as I can certify my ability to support and educate her is well known to many respectable Characters, her name is Mary Barnes aged Ten years, and I am much in want of her assistance in my domestic concerns.

I am Gentlemen with great respect Your very obed^t Humble Servant.¹¹

An annotation along the side of the letter confirmed that Mrs. Dorothy English Paty, wife of John Paty, Deputy Assistant Commissary General, and Mrs. Forbes (wife of Chief Justice Francis Forbes?), were of the view that



Jane Barns was able to support and educate her daughter Mary Barns. William Cowper added a note on 12 July stating that, insofar as he knew, Jane Barns was a sober and industrious woman.

The presence in the Orphan School of a young girl by the name of Mary Barns is confirmed by the BDA which records that Mary Barns, aged 5, born in the Colony, was included in the 1825 general muster.¹² Nothing further has so far been found for this child who, assuming her mother's application was successful, would have been about 11 years old on release from the Orphan School.

Assuming it was 'our' Jane Barns who required the assistance of her daughter in 1831, and unless she is the subject of the following newspaper notice, the letter to the Orphan School is the last confirmed sighting for Jane Barns.¹³

NOTICE

IF JANE BARNES does not call on Mrs. KELLY, Phillip-street, and settle the amount due for Board and Lodging with the expense of this Advertisement, her Property left at Mrs. KELLY's will be sold to liquidate the same.
March 23, 1833.

She does not appear in the 1828 census. No record of marriage or death has been located for this 'mystery' woman and to further confuse, there was another convict by the name of Jane Barnes at Sydney – aged 30, born at Glasgow, tried at Lancaster on 23 March 1816, sentenced to transportation for life and who arrived per *Lord Melville*, on 24 February, 1817. This Jane Barnes gained her conditional pardon on 20 July 1837.¹⁴

For the record, and with no certainty that this was 'our' Jane Barns, is the baptism of a girl by that name at Chatham, St Mary, Kent, on 6 November 1795, the parents being William and Susanna Barns (née Snip)¹⁵.

NOTES

¹ Free Settler or Felon? Convict Ship Friendship 1818, https://jenwillets.com/convict_ship_friendship_1818.htm.

² Findmypast (FMP), England & Wales, Crime, Prisons & Punishment, 1770-1935, Newgate Prison, London: Register of Prisoners, PCOM2/191. FMP England & Wales, Crime, Prisons & Punishment, 1770-1935, Home Office: Criminal Registers, Middlesex, 1791-1849, HO26.

³ Wikishire, Clerkenwell, <https://wikishire.co.uk/wiki/Clerkenwell>

⁴ By John Rocque (d.1762) - File:John Rocque 1746 1d.jpg, Public Domain, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=79987841>

⁵ Ancestry, Convict Index, 1788-1868. Biographical Database of Australia (BDA), Biographical record for Jane Barns.

⁶ Ancestry, New South Wales, Australia, Settler and Convict Lists, 1787-1834, 1818. Ancestry, New South Wales, Australia, Settler and Convict Lists, 1787-1834, 1788-1819. The experimental convict farm at Emu Plains was established in 1819, initially accommodating male convicts, and subsequently a small number of female convicts.

⁷ Ancestry, New South Wales, Census and Population Books, 1811-1825, Population Muster, 1819.

⁸ Ancestry, New South Wales, Australia, Settler and Convict Lists, 1787-1834, New South Wales, Female, 1821. Libraries Tasmania, Tasmanian Names Index, <https://libriaristas.ent.sirsidynix.net.au/>.

⁹ *The Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser*, 13 Nov 1823, p.1.

¹⁰ Ancestry, New South Wales, Australia, Register of Certificates of Freedom, 1810-1814, 1827-1867.

¹¹ Ancestry, New South Wales, Australia, Applications and Admissions to Orphan Schools, 1817-1833, Applications for Removal, 1831.

¹² BDA, Biographical Report for Mary Barns. Ancestry, New South Wales and Tasmania, Australia Convict Musters, 1806-1849, New South Wales, General Muster A-L, 1825.

¹³ *The Sydney Herald*, 25 Mar 1833, p.1.

¹⁴ BDA, Biographical report for Jane Barnes. Ancestry, New South Wales, Australia, Convict Register of Conditional and Absolute Pardons, 1788-1870.

¹⁵ Ancestry, Kent, England, Church of England Baptisms, Marriages and Burials, 1538-1914. FMP, England Marriages 1538-1973, Chatham, 1789.



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