



## Mary Bridge

Date of Trial:	31 August 1816
Where Tried:	Lancaster Assizes
Crime:	Having in possession forged bank notes
Sentence:	14 years
Est YOB:	1766
Stated Age on Arrival:	47
Native Place:	
Occupation:	Country Servant & Cotton Weaver
Alias/AKA:	
Marital Status (UK):	Married – Charles Bridge (de facto?)
Children on Board:	
Surgeon's Remarks:	Inoffensive, deviant old woman
Assigned NSW or VDL	NSW

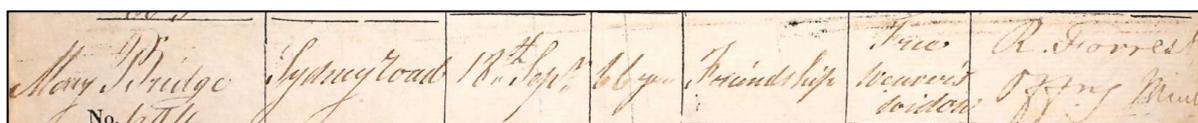
Mary Bridge was tried at the Lancaster Assizes on 31 August 1816.<sup>1</sup> She was found guilty of 'uttering to Samuel Hemming, at Manchester, four forged Bank of England notes, knowing them to be forged', and sentenced to fourteen years' transportation. She was one of five others, all charged with offences relating to forgery who, on the advice of the court, opted to plead guilty to the charge of possessing forged notes, thus escaping the possibility of a death sentence.<sup>2</sup>

Having spent nearly a year in prison, Mary was taken aboard the *Friendship*, where she was to spend another long period of captivity during which, in the opinion of the Surgeon Superintendent she caused no problems, he describing her as an 'inoffensive and deviant old woman'. This reference to 'old' woman is of note, because Mary Bridge is one of the woman whose age has been particularly difficult to determine. The Bound Indenture records that on arrival at Port Jackson Mary Bridge was a 47 year old servant and cotton weaver. This would suggest an estimated year of birth of 1771.<sup>3</sup> Subsequent records, however, clearly indicate that Mary was born in the mid-1760s.

For the 1822 muster Mary Bridge is found at Parramatta (where she may have been sent on arrival), as the wife of Charles Bridge. Also included in the household was their daughter Sarah Bridge.<sup>4</sup> Up to then there had been no mention that Mary Bridge was a married woman – no reference to '*Ux Charles Bridge*' in the indents. So perhaps Mary was one of those *Friendship* women who was to meet up with her husband on arrival? If so, this still leaves open to question as to when and how the daughter arrived. In fact, in this instance, there had been something of a role reversal. Mary Bridge had arrived in the colony before both Charles and Sarah, and they too, had come out courtesy of His Majesty. As we will see, law-breaking was a 'family business'.

For the 1825 muster Mary Bridge was listed as the wife of Charles Bridge, and living at Parramatta. But circumstances had changed by the time of the 1828 census when, stated to be aged 60, Mary Bridge was a widow. As an assigned servant she was included in the household of John Bell Bridge, a weaver by trade, living at Herings Farm, Botany Bay. John was another member of the Bridge family, who in fact had arrived in 1816.<sup>5</sup>

On 1 October 1830 Mary Bridge was issued with Certificate of Freedom number 30/0679. Nearly two years later she died at Parramatta on 18 August 1832, at the age of 66, where she was buried at St John's Cemetery.<sup>6</sup>



Mary Bridge had been in the colony for ten months or so when Charles Bridge was committed to Lancaster Castle in November 1818, accused of uttering base coin at Manchester.<sup>7</sup> The resources of the April 1819 Lancaster

Assizes were stretched to the limits – the bar being much too small to contain at one time ‘all the wretched men who had incurred this dreadful [capital] penalty of the law’. Thus they were dealt with in four groups, one of which included Charles Bridge who had been found guilty of uttering counterfeit coin, this being his second conviction. Charles was also one of those addressed by Judge.

His Lordship, in addressing the above prisoners, very briefly commented upon the nature of their respective offences, but added, that as none of them were accompanied with circumstances of atrocious cruelty, he should probably recommend them as proper objects of the Royal mercy.<sup>8</sup>

For the record, Charles was a serial offender. As alluded to above, he had previously been brought up before the Lancaster Assizes during the 1817 July session, and sentenced to one year in gaol for uttering counterfeit money. But he had also been charged in August 1812 at the Cumberland Assizes, again for uttering counterfeit money, but was lucky that time in that the ruling was *No Bill*.<sup>9</sup>

This ‘proper object’ was reprieved, and sentenced to transportation for life.<sup>10</sup> From Lancaster Gaol Charles was transferred, on 17 July 1819, to the hulk *Retribution*, moored at Woolwich.<sup>11</sup> Subsequently he, together with 159 other male convicts, was taken on board the *Prince Regent* which sailed for Port Jackson on 17 September 1819. After a voyage of just over three months, the vessel arrived on 27 January 1820, as reported by *Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser*.

Thursday arrived from England, with 160 male prisoners, the ship Prince Regent, Captain William Anderson Commander, the prisoners all in a fine state of health. Surgeon Superintendent Dr. Hunter. R.N. who cannot receive a greater congratulation than is due to him on the healthy appearance of the persons committed to his charge.<sup>12</sup>

On arrival the convicts were mustered. The Bound Indentures describe Charles Bridge as having been born in Manchester and a grocer by occupation. He was 5ft 6¾ in height, with a fair pale complexion, brown hair and hazel eyes. His age was given as 41.<sup>13</sup> As with his wife Mary, Charles Bridge was another for whom age was problematic. His arrival age was recorded as being 41. However, the first official mention of his age appeared in the record of his reception on board the *Retribution* where his age and that of the next man on the list overlapped. The two ages actually given were 49 and 18. This would translate into an estimated birth year of 1770, and further records suggest that he was actually born before then.

Charles Bridge	49
Thos Williamson	18

The muster having been completed, the convicts were ready to be assigned. In accordance with a directive, dated 8 February 1820, from the Colonial Secretary to Hannibal McArthur, J.P., Parramatta, Charles Bridge was one of twelve to be sent to Parramatta.<sup>14</sup> Charles was ‘to work under Mr. Rouse having a wife and two children’.<sup>15</sup> We have noted that Charles, together with Mary and daughter Sarah, were at Parramatta for the 1822 Muster. We learn something more about the Bridge family from a memorial Charles Bridge addressed to Governor Brisbane. It was dated 6 June 1824, by which time Charles had served four and a half years in the colony.<sup>16</sup>

To His Excellency Sir Thomas Brisbane, KCB  
 Captain General, Governor and Commander in Chief

The respectful memorial of Charles Bridge  
 Sheweth –

That Memorialist came to this Colony by the Ship Prince Regent, Anderson Master, has a wife and three children in this Colony, and is now in the Service of John Harris Esq. at his Estate near Parramatta.

That Memorialist left behind him a Son, now eleven years of age, by the name of William Sloane – “Bridge”, who was Christened by the Rev<sup>d</sup> Mr Dallas at St John’s Church, Manchester, and [is] at present with “Morecroft”,



Carpenter, residing in Deans Gate, Manchester.

That Memorialist, being anxious to have his Son in the Colony, and Memorialist being exiled for Life, humbly solicits your Excellency to be graciously pleased to recommend to His Majesty's Ministers to be pleased to allow a Passage, at the expense of the Crown, for his said Son to this Colony, which will be the means of making Memorialist and Family happy, and for such act of Humanity -

Memorialist as in Duty Bound will Pray

New South Wales

6<sup>th</sup> June 1824

J Harris, J.P

Samuel Marsden, Senior Chaplain.

No doubt in anticipation of a favourable reply Charles had added along the side of memorial the notation that young Master William Sloan Bridge was currently living with George Morecroft at 12 Little Quay Street, Deans Gate, Manchester. Dr. John Harris and the Reverend John Dunmore Lang, Parramatta notables, had been prepared to put their names to the memorial, but any weight Charles anticipated this endorsement might lend to his plea was negated by administrative policy and procedures, as stated in the reply.

Charles Bridge

Your Memorial having been submitted to the Governor, I have been honored with this Instruction - that it is not customary to solicit of the British Government a passage to this Colony for the Sons of Prisoners of the Crown.

By his Excellency's Command

(Signed) F. Goulburn

Colonial Secretary's Office

22<sup>nd</sup> September 1824

Undeterred Charles Bridge forwarded a second memorial, dated 18 October 1824, in which he reiterated his request and acknowledged the discouraging reply. In further prosecution of his plea, Charles Bridge put forward the following justification.

That Memorialist, most humbly begs leave to represent to your Excellency, that the youth above named, being the only Branch of the Family residing in England (the remainder of Memorialist's Family being in this Colony), Memorialist is under the most strong apprehension, that should his said Son not be allowed a Free Passage to this Colony, he may be induced from his Strong attachment to his Parents and Relatives, to do something contrary to the Laws of his Country, to cause him to be sent out a Crown Prisoner to this Colony, which Memorialist trusts your Excellency will prevent, by granting the above recommendation, and for such act of Humanity –

Memorialist as in Duty Bound will Pray.

Parramatta

18<sup>th</sup> Oct 1824

If the authorities were not already fully aware of the irony of the argument put forward by Charles in wishing to protect his youngest son from falling foul of the law, a check of the records would reveal that all the members of the lovingly close-knit Bridge family then in the colony had arrived as convicts – all having arrived at the expense of the Crown. Regardless, Charles never received the reply from the Colonial Secretary's office, dated 16 January 1827, to his follow up memorial.

Charles Bridge

In reply to your application of 18<sup>th</sup> October 1824 for your son to be sent to this Colony at the expense of the Crown, I am directed to inform you that your request, not coming within the intention of Government cannot be complied with. By Command of His Excellency the Governor.

(For the Col Secy) H. Harington

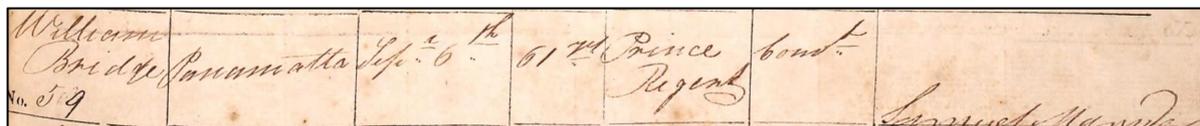
The long delay in responding would suggest that there had been an administrative bungle – that Charles Bridge's memorial had been temporarily 'lost' or mis-filed. Whatever the reason, at the top of the reply letter was a handwritten instruction to Mr. Newcombe which effectively closed off the matter.<sup>17</sup>



Mr Newcombe

Be pleased to note Bridge's death on the list then give this to Mr. Nye to be put up with the original application.

We know that Charles Bridge was alive for the 1825 muster for which he was recorded as a Government Servant, assigned to Dr. Harris, the same man who supported his first memorial.<sup>18</sup> We now also know that he had died before 16 February 1827. No death record has been located for Charles Bridge. However, the Biographical Database of Australia (BDA) has an entry for a William Bridge, born about 1765, who arrived in the colony as a convict on the *Prince Regent* and who was buried at Parramatta in September 1826.



A check shows that there was no-one by the name of William Bridge on board the *Prince Regent*. Either Charles was occasionally known as William, or there was a clerical error, but I am sure that it was 61 year old Charles Bridge who was buried at St. John's Church, Parramatta, on 6 September 1827, the Reverend Samuel Marsden officiating.<sup>19</sup>

We are given to understand by their father's petition that in 1824 three Bridge offspring were in New South Wales and that another, the youngest, William Sloane Bridge aged twelve, was still in England. From the muster/census returns we can identify a daughter Sarah Bridge (1822 muster) and a son John Bell Bridge (1828 census). So who was the third child who had come to the colony?

It is reasonably certain that Mary Bridge was born about 1866 and Charles Bridge about 1865, which could suggest a marriage year from around 1785. A check on the English records has not identified any which might indicate where, when and/or if Mary and Charles were married. However there are a number of baptisms found for "Bridge" children with the parents listed as Charles and Mary – the older ones born and/or baptised in Manchester, and the youngest two in Cumberland. The 1807 record is the only one to give the mother's maiden name – Campbell.

From the names given to the known children of 'our' Charles and Mary Bridge, the following baptisms have been identified as possible 'candidates'.

Name	Parents	Born	Baptised	Place
John Bridge	Chas Bridge Mary	2 Sep 1793	25 Sep 1793	Manchester, Lancashire
Sarah Jane Bridge	Charles Bridge Mary Bridge	10 Apr 1797	30 May 1797	Manchester, Lancashire
William Sloan [sic] Bridge	Charles Bridge Mary		28 Feb 1813	Carlisle, Cumberland

'Our' Charles and Mary may also have been the parents of the following children.

Name	Parents	Born	Baptised	Place	Buried
Ellenor Bridge	Chas Bridge Mary Bridge		10 Jun 1792	Manchester, Lancashire	
Margaret Bridge	Charles Bridge Mary Bridge	Abt Feb 1802		Manchester, Lancashire	11 Dec 1802 age 10 months

Charlotte Bridge	Charles Bridge Mary Campbell		11 Feb 1807	Carlisle, Cumberland	24 Dec 1807
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(Note: An online Ancestry family tree includes another daughter – Elizabeth Bridge (1803-1874), for whom I have not located a birth/baptism record. This tree also records that the eldest child, Ellenor, died in 1792. Again no record has been found to confirm this death.)<sup>20</sup>

### Sarah Jane Bridge

Referring again to the 1822 September muster, one Sarah Bridge is cited as 'Daughter to Charles Bridge'. According to the BDA, and under the name Jane Bridge, this young woman had arrived four months earlier, on the convict vessel *Mary Anne (2)* which had departed from Portsmouth on Christmas Day 1821 with a complement of 108 female prisoners (one of whom died on board). According to a Mrs. Pryor, a companion of Mrs. Elizabeth Fry, who had visited the *Mary Anne* prior to departure :

... the prisoners from Lancaster Castle arrived, not merely cuffed, but with heavy irons on their legs, which had occasioned considerable swelling, and in one instance, serious inflammation.<sup>21</sup>

Included in the sixteen women who had been sent down from Lancaster Castle was Jane Bridge who had been charged on 24 March 1821 with uttering forged notes at Manchester and Preston. As had her mother, Jane opted to plead guilty to having forged notes in her possession, thus avoiding a possible death/life sentence, but in consequence received a fourteen year sentence.<sup>22</sup> Having landed forty-five women at Van Diemen's Land, the *Mary Anne* arrived at Port Jackson on 20 May 1822 and the women were disembarked on 23 May. According to the Bound Indenture, Jane Bridge was a native of Manchester, a cotton weaver and a nurse, aged 22, stood at 5ft 2ins and had a fair complexion, brown hair and hazel eyes.<sup>23</sup> Once again, assuming that Jane was the same person as Sarah Jane Bridge, baptised in 1797, there is a discrepancy in her stated age, understated by some three years.

In August 1823 Matthew Finnegan, then aged about 49, who had arrived per the *Providence* in July 1811, but who was by this time a free man, living and working at the Toll Gate, Parramatta, sought permission to marry Sarah Jane Bridge, 'Convict per Mary Ann'.<sup>24</sup> There is nothing found to confirm whether this marriage took place, and Matthew Finnegan had died by 1825.<sup>25</sup>

It was under the name Sarah Bridge that the daughter of Charles and Mary Bridge, and servant to Mr. Grose, faced the Bench of Magistrates in September 1824 on a charge of 'drunkenness in her service' and was ordered to be sent to the Factory.<sup>26</sup> She was still there when the 1825 muster was conducted.<sup>27</sup>

DISTRICT of <i>Lancaster</i>		NEW SOUTH WALES.							
No. <i>10</i>		Census for the Year 1828.							
Proprietor or Occupier of Lands, shall refuse or neglect to answer, or shall answer falsely or untruly, any of the Questions authorised by the said Act to be put relative to the Population, Cattle, and Occupied Land in the Colony, the Person so offending shall be fined, at the discretion of two or more Magistrates, in a Sum not exceeding Ten Pounds.									
HOUSEHOLDER'S NAME		RESIDENCE							
Name of Family and Servants.		Age.	Class.	Arrival.		Business.	Employment.	Religion.	Religion.
				Ship.	Year.				
<i>James Howarth</i>		<i>41</i>	<i>C.</i>	<i>July 1822</i>	<i>1822</i>	<i>7 years</i>	<i>Labour</i>	<i>Sydney Road</i>	<i>Protestant</i>
<i>Jane Howarth</i>		<i>26</i>	<i>C.</i>	<i>March 1822</i>	<i>1822</i>	<i>14 years</i>	<i>Labour</i>	<i>do</i>	<i>do</i>
<i>Edward Hooge</i>		<i>5</i>	<i>B.C.</i>				<i>Infant</i>	<i>do</i>	<i>do</i>
<i>Mr. M. Siffard</i>		<i>40</i>	<i>C.S.</i>	<i>July 1822</i>	<i>1822</i>		<i>Labour</i>	<i>do</i>	<i>do</i>
<i>Wm. Ocker</i>		<i>21</i>	<i>B.C.</i>	<i>July 1822</i>	<i>1822</i>	<i>7 years</i>	<i>Labour</i>	<i>do</i>	<i>do</i>

Included in the 1828 census was one Jane Howarth, age 26, Protestant, arrived per *Mary Ann* 1822, a convict serving fourteen years. She was listed as the wife of James Howarth, and they were living on the Sydney Road,

in the district of Concord. Apart from two labourers, the household also included a young boy by the name of Edward Higgs, aged 5, born in the colony and stated to be the son of Jane Howarth.<sup>28</sup>

However, there was no-one by the name of Jane Howarth listed in the convict manifest of the *Mary Anne*. On the other hand, a woman by the name of Sarah Jane Bridge did marry a James Howarth in Sydney in 1825. The two were married on 15 September at St Philips Church, Sydney, by Banns with the Reverend William Cowper officiating. The groom was a 35 year old bachelor and coachman, and resident of Windsor.<sup>29</sup> The bride was a 25 year old spinster of Sydney who signed with an 'X'. The two witnesses were M. Hudson and Eliza Wood.<sup>30</sup>

This James Ho(a)worth had been born in Lancashire about 1780 and was a wagoner by trade.<sup>31</sup> On 5 March 1814 he was tried at the Lancaster Assizes and found guilty of stealing a black gelding, the property of John Camplin, at Manchester, and sentenced to death, which was commuted to life. He then spent some time on the prison hulk *Justitia*, earning the label of 'bad character and disposition' before being put aboard the convict transport. He was one of 198 male convicts who arrived on 26 April 1815 per the *Indefatigable* (2) (two having not survived the journey). After being mustered on board, the convicts were disembarked on 29 April and distributed to various employments.<sup>32</sup>

James had only been in the colony for a few years when, on 10 August 1818 through Henry Fulton, Assistant Chaplain at Castlereagh, he made application to have banns read in anticipation of being married.<sup>33</sup> There is no evidence that the marriage went ahead.

A handwritten document snippet showing two lines of text. The first line reads 'James Howarth' followed by a horizontal line and 'Pass: Per Ship Indefatigable'. The second line reads 'Mary Bell' followed by a horizontal line and 'Jus. -'. The text is written in cursive and is enclosed in a rectangular border.

By 1821 James had acquired a ticket of leave and, in July, was one of three men employed by one William Holden of Pitt Street who was authorised to procure two thousand feet of cedar in the district of Illawarra. James was to be the carrier and the other two men were sawyers. In November he was similarly employed by James Chisholm and Robert Cooper.<sup>34</sup> In April 1823 he was one of those listed in a return of allotments in the town of Parramatta – at 16 Airds Street.<sup>35</sup>

In August 1823 the Commissariat Office notified the public as follows.

LAND CARRIAGE – the following Tenders for the Conveyance of Stores &c. by Land, being the lowest Rates offered, are accepted and published for the Information of all concerned ...Between Sydney and Parramatta  
Jas. Howarth, 9d. per 112lbs. or 8d. when there is back Carriage.<sup>36</sup>

In December 1831 Messrs Bedford and Howarth announced the commencement of a new daily pair-horse coach service to run from the Cottage Inn, Pitt-Street, Sydney to Parramatta and return, and the following year placed a notice in the paper, thanking the public for the liberal support they had received since they started their Coach, "The Perseverance", and begged to inform them:

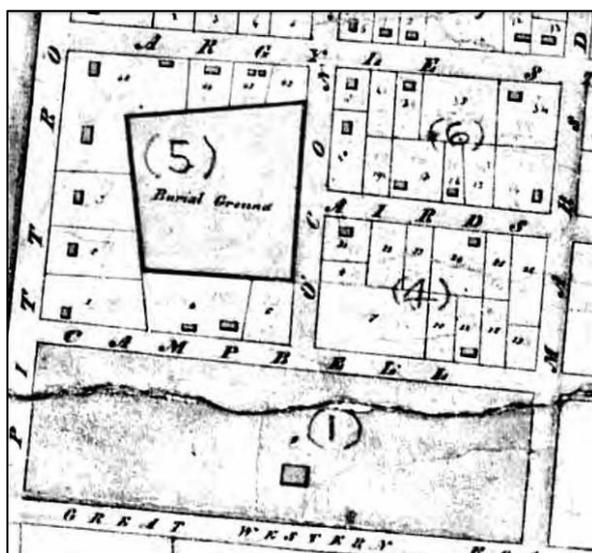
... that every attention and civility will be paid to the Passengers, and every care taken of Luggage, Goods, and Parcels, committed to their care. All Parcels to be booked, and all Parcels above the value of £5 to be paid for extra, or B. & H. cannot be accountable for more than that sum.<sup>37</sup>

By July 1838 "The Perseverance" had been taken over by a Mr. Robert Willing, operating a daily coach between Liverpool and Parramatta.<sup>38</sup>

I have not found evidence of any children born to Sarah and James Haworth nor when and where they died. We can be reasonably sure, however, from the following notice in the 9 May 1854 *New South Wales Government Gazette* referring to a land lease, that James Howarth died sometime before that date.<sup>39</sup>

Thirty-three and one half perches, in the county of Cumberland, parish of St. John, town of Parramatta, being allotment No. 23; on the south side of Airds-street, in section No. 4; bounded on the west by a line 2 chains and 27 links; on the south by a line 93 links; on the east by a line to Airds-street, 2 chains 27 links; and on the north by that street 91 links.

*This allotment was leased by Sir Thomas Brisbane for 21 years from the 30th June, 1823, to James Howarth, deceased, who it is alleged disposed of his interest to George Rose, through whom Mr. Flood claims.*



Similarly, nothing more has been found for Edward Higgs, Sarah Jane's purported son, who would have been born about 1823 (father unknown).

#### John Bell [Bridge]

John was actually tried, convicted and transported under the name John Bell. It will come as no surprise to learn that, when he faced the Lancaster Assizes on 23 March 1816, John Bell, in the family tradition, was found guilty of having forged Bank notes in his possession. And like the other family members he was sentenced to 14 years transportation.<sup>40</sup> He did not have long to wait before he was embarked on the convict transport *Elizabeth* which sailed from England on 4 June 1816 and arrived at Port Jackson on 5 October.<sup>41</sup>

By 11 October 1816 the Colonial Secretary had drawn up a list of how 99 convicts from the *Elizabeth* were to be distributed among settlers in the three districts of Parramatta (31), Windsor (53), and Liverpool (15). The three Justices of the Peace were to be responsible for the actual allocation and were to advise the Secretary to whom the convicts were assigned. John Bell was number 31 on the list was destined for Parramatta.<sup>42</sup>

Having served just over three years, by a petition dated 6 December 1819 and addressed to His Excellency Lachlan Macquarie Esquire, John Bell sought some mitigation of his sentence.

The humble Petition of John Bell

Herewith - That Petitioner came to the Colony by the ship *Elizabeth*, Ostler Master, in the year 1816 under sentence of Transportation for fourteen years.

That Petitioner has continued in the service of the Government as a labourer at the Lumber Yard Parramatta upwards of two years, and has maintained a Character of the strictest integrity and diligence up to the present period.

Petitioner having an aged mother in the Colony chiefly dependent upon him for support, humbly prayeth that your Excellency will be pleased to assist his endeavours by allowing him a Ticket of Leave.

And Petitioner as in duty bound will ever pray.

The Superintendent of Government Works plus one other (illegible – Hassall?) supported the petition by stating that they considered the memorialist to be a well conducted man and deserving of the indulgence.<sup>43</sup>

John Bell came to the attention of the authorities again in February 1822 when, on the recommendation of the Reverend Samuel Marsden, John's name and that of Mary Orr were forwarded to His Excellency for approval for their marriage. The application was successful and the wedding was conducted on 4 March 1822 at Parramatta. Was the witness Thomas Robert Bridge related in some way to the groom?<sup>44</sup>

*John Bell — do Elizabeth  
Mary Orr — do James*

*W. 1822 John Bell of the Parish of Parramatta  
and Mary Orr ...  
Married in this Church by ...  
this fourth day of March in the presence of ...  
Witnessed and solemnized by ...  
his marriage was solemnized between us } John Bell  
Mary Orr  
in the presence of } Thomas Robert Bridge  
Elizabeth Wood*

It is from the *Carlisle Patriot*, reporting on the proceedings of the Cumberland Assizes, that we find out how, on 1 April 1819, Mary Orr found herself so far away from her previous home at Whitehaven, Cumberland.

*MARY ORR, the wife of William Orr, late of Carlisle, labourer, charged upon oath with feloniously stealing in the shop of George Buckham, of Whitehaven, on the 27th of March last, ten pair of leather gloves.*

Mr Courtenay, on the part of the part of the prosecution, detailed the facts of the case. The prisoner, he said, was indicted for the capital offence, known by the familiar term of shoplifting. She resided at Whitehaven, and was or is a milliner or dress-maker. On the 27th of March she went to the shop of the prosecutor, accompanied by her mother and a young man, and asked to look at some gloves. They were shewn accordingly, the young man purchased a pair, and went away, leaving the prisoner and her mother in the shop. – Mr. Westray, Mr. Buckham's apprentice, in opening the gloves, found a pair in a parcel which did not belong to that lot, and in the mean time he laid them on the outside of the proper parcel intending to put them into it as soon as disengaged. The prisoner now asked to see some blankets, which, most probably, she knew the young man would have to fetch down stairs. He brought her a pair, but these would not do; she now would have a single blanket, and the shopman was again sent off to the wareroom. She at last bought a blanket and a small piece of calico which were formed into a parcel, and the prisoner took it away with her. Sometime after she was gone, the parcel of gloves on which the pair had been laid, was missing. Mr. Westray went to the prisoner's house in Tangier-street and enquired if the gloves had not been sent there in the parcel; he was sure that they had not, but he wanted to see if he could meet with them. The prisoner denied that the gloves were there. Jackson the constable was sent for, and he requested to search the house without a search warrant; this the prisoner resolutely refused, and Jackson was about to leave the house for the purpose of getting the requisite warrant when the prisoner's brother, with an honest feeling, insisted that Jackson should search. There was a locked box in the room belonging to the prisoner; the constable requested the key, which she declined yielding up. Her brother then got a hammer, determined to break open the box; on which the prisoner produced the key and suffered the box to be opened; in it the lost parcel of gloves was found. The prisoner then said that she found the parcel on the shop floor, and brought it away. – These facts were proved in the clearest manner by Mr. Westray, Mr. Buckham's apprentice. But the capital charge fell on the ground, on account that three other young men who were in the



shop refrained to come forward and swear that they did not see the prisoner take the parcel; this, in point of law, was necessary to render the offence *privately stealing*. The Jury, under the direction of his Lordship, found the prisoner *Guilty of stealing, but not privately in a shop*. After an impressive admonition she was sentenced to be *transported for seven years*.

The prisoner bewailed her fate in a loud and most heart-rending manner. She is pregnant, but it appeared that her husband had not lived with her for some time.<sup>45</sup>

Was she really pregnant, or did she falsely 'plead the belly' to gain the court's sympathy? If she was pregnant there is no further reference to the birth of the child, the father of whom was probably not William Orr.<sup>46</sup>

Mary was to spend just over six months in prison before the departure from Woolwich of the convict ship Janus, which set sail on 23 October 1819, calling in at Cork to embark the Irish contingent of female convicts, and arrived at Port Jackson on 3 May 1820.<sup>47</sup> The convict lists show that for 1820 she was assigned to Mrs. Thompson and for 1821 to Mrs. Armytage.<sup>48</sup> The muster for 1822 lists her as wife of J. Bell, Sydney (now holding a ticket of leave) and, according to the 1822 Population Book, they were living in Upper Pitt Street.<sup>49</sup> For 1825 as Mary Orr was listed as, wife to Bell, Liverpool.<sup>50</sup>

Three years later, for the 1828 census, we find this Bridge family residing at Herings Farm in the Botany Bay district. John Bell Bridge, as he was by then styling himself, and still holding a ticket of leave, was the head of the household. His wife Mary was now free by servitude, and two children had been added to the family – Elizabeth, aged 5, and William aged 1. Included in the household was John's mother, now widowed, and listed as an assigned servant.<sup>51</sup>

61	@	John Bell	30	P.L. Elizabeth	1816	14 1/2		
62	@	Mary	30	P.L. Janus	1820	7		
63	@	Elizabeth	5	P.C.				Mary
64	@	William	1					
65		Die August 1837	60	P.L. Friendship	1817	17 1/2		Polony

It was not until 1830, at the completion of his 14 year sentence, that John was granted his certificate of freedom.<sup>52</sup>

CERTIFICATE OF FREEDOM.

No. <sup>30/138</sup> 30/138

Date, 25 March 1830

Prisoner's No. —

Name, — John Bell

Ship, — Elizabeth (11)

Master, — Otley

Year, — 1816

Native Place, — Preston

Trade or Calling, — Cotton Weaver

Offence, —

Place of Trial, — Lancaster Ass

Date of Trial, — 23 March 1816

Sentence, — fourteen years

Year of Birth, — 1796

Height, — 5 feet 3 1/2 inches

Complexion, — Ruddy & freckled

Hair, — Dark brown

Eyes, — Dark hazel

General Remarks, Sickly looking —

Had a Ticket of Leave  
 Feb 27/193 Date nullified  
 1834 now surrendered and  
 Cancelled



Of note is the comment that John Bell was 'sickly looking'. However, one more item has been found for John which shows that he was still alive in May 1846.

Anne Clarke was indicted for stealing a pair of shoes, the property of one John Bell Bridge. The Jury found the prisoner guilty, and she was sentenced to six months' imprisonment in the Female Factory.<sup>53</sup>

I have not found any records for the deaths of John and his wife Mary, nor have I followed up on their children whose births, incidentally, were registered under the surname Bell.<sup>54</sup>

<input type="checkbox"/>		BELL ELIZABETH	6200/1823 V18236200 1B	JOHN	MARY
<input type="checkbox"/>		BELL WILLIAM C	8188/1827 V18278188 1C	JOHN	MARY (BRIDGE)

### The Third Child

Referring back to Charles Bridge's claim that three of his children were in New South Wales in 1824, and having followed through on two of them – Sarah and John – is it possible to identify the third child? Was she possibly the Ellenor Bridge who was baptised on 10 June 1792 at the Collegiate Church of St Mary, St Denys and St George (Manchester Cathedral)?<sup>55</sup> Was she the convict woman who was known by various surnames – e.g. Barridge, Berridge, Burrige, Bridge, and by variations of her first name – e.g. Eleanor, Elinor, Elenor – who was tried at Northampton in 1814, sentenced to 7 years transportation, and arrived in the colony in June 1815 on the convict ship *Northampton* as 23 year old servant girl Eleanor Berridge?<sup>56</sup> Tracking her through the Settler and Convict Lists, in 1817 and 1818 she was in the Public Factory; in 1820 and 1821 she was listed as a Needle Woman.<sup>57</sup> In February 1817, following the arrival of the ship *Jupiter*, the Post Master announced that Eleanor Berridge was one of those lucky people who had a letter to collect from the Post Office.<sup>58</sup> No doubt she would have appreciated hearing from her family 'back home'. Eleanor's circumstances had changed by 1822 – she was now referred to as the wife of Edward Taylor, but it was as Elenor Bridge, that she was listed as such for the 1825 muster.<sup>59</sup> The 1828 census shows the Taylor family, now with four children, living at Castle Hill. Another son – John was born in 1830. Edward Taylor died on 20 September 1874, aged 82, at his residence at Castle Hill. Eleanor Taylor died aged 90 on 30 May, 1881, at Tumbi Umbi, New South Wales. Significantly, the father's surname on the death registration is recorded as Berridge.<sup>60</sup>

Apart from the 1825 reference to Elenor Bridge there is nothing in the colonial records that positively links her with the family of Charles and Mary Bridge. Furthermore, her stated native place of Northampton is problematic. As I should have done in the first place, I checked the baptism records for variations of Eleanor Berridge, born about 1792. On 21 August 1791 an Eleanor Berridge was baptised at St. James Clerkenwell, Islington, Middlesex, daughter of George and Ann Berridge.<sup>61</sup> As recorded by various family historians, this is the Eleanor who arrived on the *Northampton*, married Edward Taylor, lived a long life, and died in 1881.<sup>62</sup>

### William Sloan(e) "Bridge"

Did this young man stay in England or did he fulfil his father's dire prophecy, and commit a crime as means of gaining a 'passport' to the colony? Nothing further has been found for William Sloan Bridge, so at this stage we do not know what happened him. But, as advised by his father in his petition to have his son granted an indulgence passage to the colony, we do know where Master William Sloan Bridge was living in 1824. He was 'at present with "Morecroft", Carpenter, residing in Deans Gate, Manchester'. In fact, George Moorcroft was William's brother-in-law, and the husband of William's sister Elizabeth.

### Elizabeth Bridge

Reference has already been made to Elizabeth Bridge, for whom I have not been able to find a birth/baptism record, possibly being a daughter of Charles and Mary Bridge. I 'found' her when looking at the 1841 England

census to check whether William was by chance still living with George Moorcroft. He was not, but George was still living at 14 Little Quay Street Deans Gate, Manchester, with his wife and children. All members of this household had been born in Lancashire.<sup>63</sup>

George Moorcroft	45	Joiner
Elizabeth Moorcroft	40	
Charles Moorcroft	20	Butcher
Mary Moorcroft	9	
Francis Moorcroft	7	
Elizabeth Moorcroft	4	
Sarah Moorcroft	2	

The banns for George and Elizabeth had been posted in January 1819, but it was not until 14 November 1819 that this couple was married at St. Mary's Parish Church, Prestwich.<sup>64</sup>

<i>George Moorcroft</i> & <i>Elizabeth Bridge</i> of this		Parish
and		of
		Parish
were married in this	<i>October</i>	by <i>Banns</i> with Consent of
	this	<i>14<sup>th</sup></i> Day of
<i>November</i> in the Year One thousand eight hundred and <i>nineteen</i>		
By me	<i>J. T. Hickbank</i>	
This Marriage was solemnized between us	{ <i>George Moorcroft</i>	
In the Presence of	{ <i>Thos. Gurnishan</i> <i>Elij<sup>th</sup></i> <i>for Brides</i>	
No. 101.	{ <i>Edw. Medford</i>	

There was quite a gap between the birth of son Charles and the youngest child, Sarah. A check on Manchester baptisms for children of parents George and Elizabeth Moorcroft suggests that in addition to those listed in the 1841 census return the following children were born to the couple – Margaret (1832); Sarah Jane (1834); Ellen (1842); and Ann (1845).<sup>65</sup>

By the 1851 census Elizabeth, now a widow, was living at 11 Bartons Building, Manchester, and earning her living as a charwoman. With her were children Francis, a 'factory operative', and 'scholars' Helen and Ann. George's death had been registered at Manchester for the 1847 Jul-Sep quarter. The 1861 census finds only one child – Ann – at home with her charwoman mother at 4 Woodhouse Street, Manchester. No doubt lodger Patrick Graham helped with the household finances. It was Elizabeth who was a lodger for the 1871 census. With her age given as 70, she was living with her daughter Ellen and son-in-law William Gregory and their three young children in Regent Road, Salford. The Gregory's were also 'hosts' to Ellen's siblings Francis and Ann. Interestingly, both William Gregory and Francis Moorcroft were listed as musicians. This was to be the last census for Elizabeth. Her death (with aged incorrectly recorded as 64) was registered at Salford for the Apr-Jun quarter of 1874.<sup>66</sup>

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> *Lancaster Gazette*, 31 Aug 1816, p.3.

<sup>2</sup> M. Cottu, *On the Administration of Criminal Justice in England; and the Spirit of the English Government*, translated from the French, London, 1822, pp.94-95, <https://archive.org/details/onadministratio00unkngoog/page/n112>. 'The law of England punishes with death the forging and uttering of bank-notes; but the possession of forged notes, with intent to utter, is visited by transportation only'.

<sup>3</sup> Ancestry, New South Wales, Australia, Convict Indents, 1788-1842, 1818-1819, Series: NRS 12188; Microfiche 638.

<sup>4</sup> Ancestry, New South Wales and Tasmania, Australia Convict Musters, 1806-1849.

<sup>5</sup> Ancestry, 1828 New South Wales, Australia Census, (TNA and Australian copies).

<sup>6</sup> According to the Ancestry, New South Wales, Australia, Convict Death Register, 1826-1879, Mary Bridge died on 18 August 1832. Her burial at Parramatta, as recorded in the Ancestry, New South Wales, Australia, St. John's Parramatta, Burials, 1790-1986, was held on



18 September, which seems to be a long time to await interment. If she was actually 66 years old when she died, her estimated year of birth would be c1766.

<sup>7</sup> The Manchester Mercury, 24 Nov 1818, p.4.

<sup>8</sup> *The Ipswich Journal*, 17 Apr 1819, p.3. He had been sentenced to one year imprisonment at the July 1817 Lancaster sessions for the same offence.

<sup>9</sup> Ancestry, England & Wales, Criminal Registers, 1791-1892. *Cumberland Pacquet, and Ware's Whitehaven Advertiser*, 25 Aug 1812, p.2

<sup>10</sup> *Lancaster Gazette*, 22 May 1819, p.3.

<sup>11</sup> Ancestry, UK, Prison Hulk Registers and Letter Books, 1802-1849.

<sup>12</sup> *The Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser*, 29 Jan 1820, p.3. James Hunter had also served as Surgeon Superintendent on the convict ships *Minerva* (1818) and *Princess Royal* (1823).

<sup>13</sup> Ancestry, New South Wales, Australia, Convict Indents, 1788-1842.

<sup>14</sup> Hannibal Hawkins Macarthur (1788-1861), pastoralist, politician and businessman, was one of the eminent Macarthur family, being the nephew of John Macarthur. Bede Nairn, 'Macarthur, Hannibal Hawkins (1788–1861)', Australian Dictionary of Biography, National Centre of Biography, Australian National University, <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/macarthur-hannibal-hawkins-2388/text3149>.

<sup>15</sup> Ancestry, New South Wales, Australia, Colonial Secretary's Papers, 1788-1856, Series: NRS 937; Reels 6004-6016. Richard Rouse, with his wife and two children, had arrived as a free settler in December 1801, per the *Nile*. He had developed land grants into successful farming ventures, the best known being Rouse Hill.

<sup>16</sup> Ancestry, New South Wales, Australia, Colonial Secretary's Papers, 1788-1856, Series: NRS 897; Reels 6041-6064, 6071-6072.

<sup>17</sup> Ancestry, New South Wales, Australia, Colonial Secretary's Papers, 1788-1856, Series: NRS 898; Reels 6020-6040, 6070.

<sup>18</sup> Ancestry, New South Wales and Tasmania, Australia Convict Musters, 1806-1849, 1825. John Harris (1754-1838), surgeon, public servant and landholder, arrived at Port Jackson in 1790 and was stationed at Parramatta. After a brief spell in England he returned to Port Jackson in 1814 and devoted his life thereafter to his farming and political interests. B. H. Fletcher, 'Harris, John (1754–1838)', Australian Dictionary of Biography, National Centre of Biography, Australian National University, <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/harris-john-2164/text2773>.

<sup>19</sup> BDA, Biographical report for William Bridge. Ancestry, New South Wales, Australia, St. John's Parramatta Burials, 1790-1986.

<sup>20</sup> Ancestry, Williamson online family tree, <https://www.ancestry.co.uk/family-tree/person/tree/106911350/person/260190085045/facts>.

<sup>21</sup> Cited in 'Free Settler or Felon?' Convict Ship Mary Ann 1822, [http://www.jenwillets.com/convict\\_ship\\_mary\\_anne\\_1822.htm](http://www.jenwillets.com/convict_ship_mary_anne_1822.htm).

<sup>22</sup> *Lancaster Gazette*, 24 Mar 1821, p.3 and 31 Mar 1821, p.3.

<sup>23</sup> Ancestry, New South Wales, Australia, Convict Indents, 1788-1842.

<sup>24</sup> Ancestry, New South Wales, Australia, Colonial Secretary's Papers, 1788-1856, Series: NRS 937; Reels 6004-6016.

<sup>25</sup> BDA, Biographical report for Matthew Finnegan.

<sup>26</sup> Ancestry, New South Wales, Australia, Colonial Secretary's Papers, 1788-1856, Series: NRS 898; Reels 6020-6040.

<sup>27</sup> Ancestry, New South Wales and Tasmania, Australian Convict Musters, 1806-1849.

<sup>28</sup> Ancestry, 1828 New South Wales, Australia Census (Australian Copy). BDA, Biographical report for Edward Higgs.

<sup>29</sup> If he was 35 at his marriage his estimated year of birth would have been 1790. An alternative estimated year of birth was given on arrival – 1780.

<sup>30</sup> Ancestry, Australia Marriage Index, 1788-1950, 1825/V; BDA, Biographical report for James Howarth. In 1818 James had applied for, and been granted approval to marry Mary Bell, a free woman, but it seems that the marriage did not proceed – Ancestry New South Wales, Australia, Colonial Secretary's Papers, 1788-1856, Series: NRS 937; Reels 6004-6016.

<sup>31</sup> BDA, Biographical report for James Howarth.

<sup>32</sup> BDA, Biographical report for James Howarth. *Chester Courant*, 29 Mar 1814, p.4. *Liverpool Mercury*, 11 Mar 1814, p.7. Ancestry, UK Prison Hulk Registers and Letter Books, 1802-1849, Justitia, Index, 1803-1836. Free Settler or Felon? Convict Ship Indefatigable 1815, [http://www.jenwillets.com/convict\\_ship\\_indefatigable\\_1815.htm](http://www.jenwillets.com/convict_ship_indefatigable_1815.htm)

<sup>33</sup> Ancestry, New South Wales, Australia, Colonial Secretary's Papers, 1788-1856, Series: NRS 937; Reels 6004-6016.

<sup>34</sup> Ancestry, New South Wales, Australia, Colonial Secretary's Papers, 1788-1856, Series: NRS 938; Reels 6016-6017.

<sup>35</sup> Ancestry, New South Wales, Australia, Colonial Secretary's Papers, 1788-1856, Series: NRS 898; Reels 6020-6040, 6070. He may also have been the James Howarth who had applied for two leases of land – 1160 acres and 860 acres – at Yerrilyong on the Shoalhaven – *The Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser*, 5 Apr 1836, p.4.

<sup>36</sup> *The Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser*, 21 Aug 1823, p.2.

<sup>37</sup> *The Sydney Herald*, 5 Dec 1831, p.4; *The Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser*, 6 Dec 1831, p.3; *The Sydney Monitor*, 1 Feb 1832, p.1.

<sup>38</sup> *The Sydney Herald*, 25 Jul 1838, p.1.

<sup>39</sup> *New South Wales Government Gazette*, 9 May 1854 [Issue No. 54], p.947. There is a death registered in 1852 in Geelong (Reg No 24525r) for a James Howarth but with no further biographical information provided - Births Deaths and Marriages Victoria, (VIC BDM).

<sup>40</sup> *Lancaster Gazette*, 13 Apr 1816, p.3.

<sup>41</sup> Convict Records, <https://convictrecords.com.au/convicts/bell/john/55737>.

<sup>42</sup> Ancestry, New South Wales, Australia, Colonial Secretary's Papers, 1788-1856, Series: NRS 937; Reels 6004-6016.



- <sup>43</sup> Ancestry, New South Wales, Australia, Colonial Secretary's Papers, 1788-1856, Series: NRS 900; Reels 3163-3243.
- <sup>44</sup> Ancestry, New South Wales, Australia, Colonial Secretary's Papers, 1788-1856, Series: NRS 937; Reels 6004-6016. Ancestry, New South Wales, Australia, St. John's Parramatta, Marriages, 1790-1966.
- <sup>45</sup> *Carlisle Patriot*, 10 Apr 1819, p.4.
- <sup>46</sup> There is a BDA reference to William Orr having arrived in the colony aboard the *Competitor*. This vessel made two voyages as a convict ship – in 1823 and 1828, the latter carrying female convicts. There is no listing for a convict named William Orr on the 1823 voyage – BDA, Biographical report for William Orr. Convict Records, <https://convictrecords.com.au/ships/competitor/1823>.
- <sup>47</sup> Free Settler or Felon? Convict Ship Janus, [https://www.jenwilletts.com/convict\\_ship\\_janus\\_1820.htm](https://www.jenwilletts.com/convict_ship_janus_1820.htm). Just as had occurred when the *Friendship* arrived at Port Jackson, questions were raised about the conduct of the Captain and crew. Governor Macquarie ordered an investigation to be held, the outcome of which was a finding that prostitution had prevailed on board the *Janus* throughout the voyage and that the charges against the Captain and Officers were found to be true.
- <sup>48</sup> Ancestry, New South Wales, Australia, Settler and Convict Lists, 1787-1834.
- <sup>49</sup> Ancestry, New South Wales and Tasmania, Australia Convict Musters, 1806-1849. Ancestry, New South Wales, Census and Population Books, 1811-1825.
- <sup>50</sup> Ancestry, New South Wales and Tasmania, Australia Convict Musters, 1806-1849.
- <sup>51</sup> Ancestry, 1828 New South Wales, Australia Census (TNA Copy). The name of the property may have been A'Herne Farm, and John Bell Bridge the tenant – BDA, Biographical report for John Bell Bridge, citing Land and Stock: NSW Land & Stock Census 1828.
- <sup>52</sup> Ancestry, New South Wales, Australia, Certificates of Freedom, 1810-1814-1827-1867.
- <sup>53</sup> *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 11 May 1846, p.2.
- <sup>54</sup> NSW Registry of Births Deaths & Marriages (NSW BDM), Birth registrations 1467/1823 V18231467 148 and 8188/1827 V18278188 1C.
- <sup>55</sup> Ancestry, Manchester, England, Baptisms, Marriages and Burials, 1573-1812.
- <sup>56</sup> *Stamford Mercury*, 28 Oct 1814, p.3. Free Settler or Felon? Convict Ship Northampton, [https://jenwilletts.com/convict\\_ship\\_northampton\\_1815.htm](https://jenwilletts.com/convict_ship_northampton_1815.htm). BDA, Biographical report for Eleanor Berridge.
- <sup>57</sup> Ancestry, New South Wales, Australia, Settler and Convict Lists, 1787-1834.
- <sup>58</sup> *The Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser*, 1 Feb 1817, p.4.
- <sup>59</sup> Ancestry, New South Wales and Tasmania, Australia Convict Musters, 1806-1849. No record has been located of a marriage.
- <sup>60</sup> BDA, Biographical report for Eleanor Berridge. *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 23 Sep 1874, p.1. NSW BDM, Gosford Death registration 11195/1881 – father's surname given as Berridge.
- <sup>61</sup> Ancestry, London, England, Church of England Baptisms, Marriages and Burials, 1538-1812.
- <sup>62</sup> For example, Ancestry, Michael Doyle family tree, <https://www.ancestry.co.uk/family-tree/person/tree/90777356/person/80018771144/facts>. Convict Records, Community contributions, <https://convictrecords.com.au/convicts/berridge/eleanor/93285>.
- <sup>63</sup> Ancestry, 1841 England Census, HO107/569/4.
- <sup>64</sup> Ancestry, Manchester, England, Church of England Marriages and Banns, 1754-1930, Prestwich, St Mary, 1819-1921.
- <sup>65</sup> Ancestry, Lancashire, England, Church of England Births and Baptisms, 1813-1911.
- <sup>66</sup> Ancestry, 1851 England Census, HO107/2229/732/36. Ancestry, 1861 England Census, RG9/2938/56/41. Ancestry, England & Wales Civil Registration Death Index 1837-1915, Vol 20, Page 985. Ancestry, 1871 England Census, RG10/4024/143/29. Ancestry, England & Wales Civil Registration Death Index 1837-1915, Vol 8d, Page 69.



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