



Mary Eginton

Date of Trial:	1 April 1817
Where Tried:	Warwick Assizes
Crime:	Larceny
Sentence:	7 years
Est YOB:	1788 (from age at death)
Stated Age on Arrival:	
Native Place:	
Occupation:	
Alias/AKA:	Mary Smith, Mary Egerton
Marital Status (UK):	Married – William Smith ('wife of' – at trial)
Children on Board:	
Surgeon's Remarks:	<i>A thief and prostitute</i>
Assigned NSW or VDL	NSW

Mary Eginton was one of the three *Friendship* women who were tried at Warwick in April 1817, the other two being Catherine Osborne, and the unfortunate Sarah Blower who did not survive the voyage. In reporting on the proceedings, the *Northampton Mercury* observed -

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

[and continued]

The business continued without interruption until Saturday afternoon, when the whole of the trials having been concluded, his Lordship, and Mr. Clarke, King's Counsel, who presided at the second bar, proceeded to pass sentence on the numerous prisoners found guilty.

Mary Eginton, alias Mary the wife of William Smith, was convicted and sentenced to seven years transportation for privately stealing in Warwick from the shop of William Kenyon.¹

It was as Mary Egerton that she was referred to in Surgeon Cosgreave's listing of the *Friendship* women, and he was decidedly unimpressed with his charge, declaring her to be a 'Thief & Prostitute' – the only description we have for this woman.² We know that she arrived at Port Jackson on 14 January 1818, but the indent documents do not include her estimated YoB/age, or her calling.³

But while it may be interesting to know these details, in the telling of Mary's story they would not have been very helpful and, in fact, we do get some idea of her age from the record of her death – three months after her arrival in the colony. Mary Egerton died on 16 April 1818 aged 30. She was buried on 17 April, as registered at St Philips Church of England.⁴ Perhaps she had been one of the thirteen *Friendship* women who, on arrival, were diagnosed with scorbutic diseases and were sent to the General Hospital?

NOTES

¹ *Northampton Mercury*, 19 Apr 1817, p3.

² Ancestry, New South Wales, Australia, Colonial Secretary's Papers, 1788-1856, Series: *NRS 897*; Reel or Fiche Numbers: *Reels 6041-6064, 6071-6072*, p.64.

³ Ancestry, New South Wales, Australia, Convict Indents, 1788-1842, Bound Indentures, 1814-1818.

⁴ Ancestry, Australia Death Index, 1787-1985, V1818741 7. Biographical Database of Australia (BDA), Person ID: 10013636801, citing Church Register, NSW Sydney St Philip CE Burial.



SELECTED SOURCES

Genealogy Websites

Ancestry

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

New South Wales, Australia, Convict Indents, 1788-1842

Other Websites

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

Online Newspapers

British Newspapers (Findmypast)

Northampton Mercury

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