

## Ann Ross

Date of Trial:	22 January 1817
Where Tried:	Lancaster Quarter Session
Crime:	Larceny
Sentence:	7 years
Est YOB:	1792 (based on age at marriage)
Stated Age on Arrival:	
Native Place:	
Occupation:	
Alias/AKA:	
Marital Status (UK):	
Children on Board:	
Surgeon's Remarks:	<i>Lazy, scrophulous, and epileptic and very bad temper</i>
Assigned NSW or VDL	NSW

Prosecutor Mr. John Owen tendered an account for just under £9 to the court authorities for his services in the case of George Oldham against Ann Ross.<sup>1</sup> The accused was found guilty at the Salford Quarter Sessions of having stolen handkerchiefs from one S. Oldham, for which she was sentenced to be transported for seven years.<sup>2</sup> She may also have been the Ann Ross who had appeared before the 1812 Salford Easter Session on a charge of larceny, but who got off relatively lightly, being sentenced to six months hard labour, to be served in the Salford New Bailey prison where the Governor was required to receive and keep her in safe custody.<sup>3</sup>

While awaiting transportation Ann was held in the Lancaster Gaol from where, on 19 May 1817, the Governor sent to the Secretary of State the Order of Transportation for fifteen convicts, all of whom were destined for the *Friendship* and one of whom was Ann Ross. Eight days later eleven of these female convicts, including Ann Ross, were removed from the Gaol and sent on their way to Deptford per Harrison and Donaldson.<sup>4</sup>

The ship's indent for Ann Ross is particularly unhelpful. It provides her name, place and date of trial, and sentence. The columns for recording her age and trade were left blank. While there are no "ditto" marks under the corresponding columns for Mary Sharpe, some transcribers have also ascribed 'Servant | 22' to Ann Ross.<sup>5</sup>

Mary Sharpe				Servant 22
Ann Ross				
Margaret Lang				

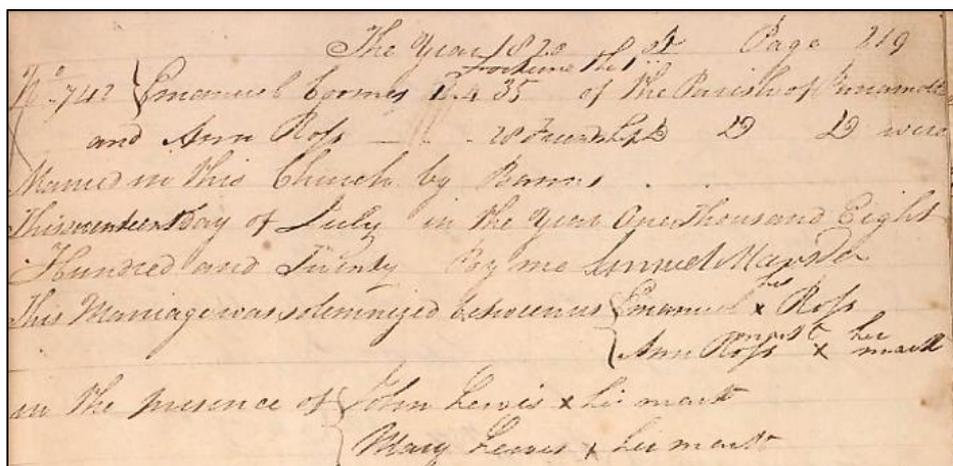
Surgeon Superintendent did not have a kindly word to say when describing his charge Ann Ross. She was denounced as a lazy, scrophulous, epileptic and very bad tempered woman.<sup>6</sup> Where and to whom Ann was disposed of when she disembarked from the *Friendship* on 30 January 1818 is uncertain. There is no reference to her being married at the time so we can discount her as one of the 16 who were to join husbands already in the colony. She was therefore likely to have been one of the 12 who were assigned to various families, or one of the 13 who were initially sent to the General Hospital.<sup>7</sup>

But we 'catch up' with Ann in mid-1820 when she and a man, whose name has been deciphered as Emanuel Cooney, were included in a list, compiled by G.A. Middleton Assistant Chaplain, of people seeking permission to marry at Parramatta.<sup>8</sup>

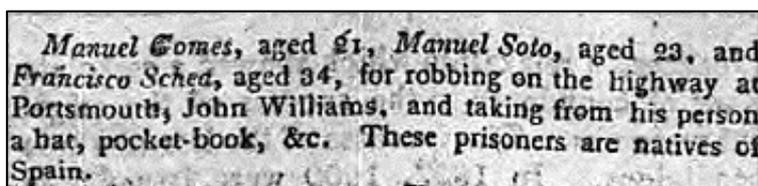
{ Emanuel Cooney	Prisoner	Per Ship Fortune (1 <sup>st</sup> )
{ Ann Ross	Prisoner	Per Ship Friendship (3 <sup>d</sup> )

Permission was granted and the couple was married on 17 July 1820, at St. John's Church, Parramatta, the Reverend Samuel Marsden officiating. It is this record that provides us with an age for Ann. She stated that she

was 28 on her wedding day and, incidentally, the groom was said to be 35. None of the wedding party was able to sign their name. Perhaps none of them could read either because the groom's surname was incorrectly recorded as Ross!<sup>9</sup>



It was as Manuel Gomes that Ann's future husband was tried at the Southampton Assizes on 2 March 1812.<sup>10</sup>



Found guilty of highway robbery, the trio was sentenced to death, but subsequently 'a respite until further orders was received by the Sheriff' in respect of the three condemned men. On 16 April 1812 a letter from Whitehall to the Justices of Assizes for the Western Circuit advised that the sentences of Manuel and his accomplices had been commuted by Royal Pardon. They were to be transported for the term of their respective natural lives 'to the Coast of New South Wales or some one or other of the Islands adjacent'.<sup>11</sup> They remained together on the Hulk *Laurel* moored at Portsmouth, where they were received on 28 May, and again when they embarked on the convict transport *Fortune*, which was making its second voyage as a convict carrier and which this time sailed from England in November 1812 and arrived at New South Wales on 11 June 1813. The prisoners were mustered on 18 June before being assigned to their respective places.<sup>12</sup> Apparently the prisoners were of fine health appearance, and spoke highly of their treatment from the ship's Commander on the passage.<sup>13</sup>

From the indents we find that Manuel Gomes was a sailor, aged 27, who was a native of Portugal (not Spain?), was 5' 5" tall, with a dark complexion, brown eyes and brown hair.<sup>14</sup> In accordance with a directive from the Colonial Secretary to Lieutenant Thompson, Commandant at Newcastle, Manuel Gomes (written as El Gonny) was one of six convicts to be sent to Newcastle on 8 April 1815 aboard the *Lady Nelson*. Having re-offended, in what manner is not stated, he had been convicted by Hannibal McArthur on 18 March and sentenced to serve two years at the secondary punishment settlement. He was still at Newcastle five years later according to an 1820 listing.<sup>15</sup> By 1821 he was back in Sydney attached to the Government Store at Parramatta.<sup>16</sup>

Emanuel [sic] Gomes appeared before the Parramatta Magistrates Court, comprising Hannibal McArthur and Henry Grattan Douglass 15 February 1822, charged with "Drunken and Disorderly Conduct in the Streets of Parramatta" for which he was to be placed in a cell for one week on bread and water. A month later, on 11 March and this time in front of a bench of four magistrates, Emmanuel Gomez [sic] answered to a charge of gambling on the Sabbath Day, for which crime he was 'To be worked in the Gaol Gang on Half Ration for a Fortnight'.<sup>17</sup> Interestingly, and again as Emanuel, we find him in 1822 him as a government servant assigned to H.G. Douglass Esq. at Parramatta. At the time, apart from duties as a magistrate, Dr. Henry Grattan Douglass was in charge of

  
the general hospital at Parramatta and also superintendent of the Female Factory.<sup>18</sup>

On 10 April 1824, John Maxwell, Superintendent of Government Stock at the Government's Establishment at Bathurst, sent to the Colonial Secretary, Frederick Goulburn, 'A Return of Men of the Establishment at Bathurst whose Original Sentences had not been transmitted'. There were 208 on the list, Manuel Gomey [sic] being number 39. An article in the *Sydney Gazette* described how the Commandant, Major James Morisset, had made considerable improvements during his tenure, a prime consideration being 'the comfort of the unfortunate but deserving prisoner of the Crown' whom he kept diligently employed, but at the same time looked to their necessities.<sup>19</sup> The Returns for the remainder of the year show that Emanuel Gomey was variously employed in splitting wood for fencing, building a huts, erecting stockyards, cleaning yards and as a night-watchman.<sup>20</sup>

Indeed, the need for vigilance, day and night, over the government stock dispersed across a number of outstations, was one of John Maxwell's major concerns, and to this end in December 1824 he put in a request to Major Morisset for assistance, preferably in the form of a military detachment. The Major was less than obliging.

Bush Constable Emanuel Gomez will be until further orders at your disposal, and you will select from the Government men attached to the Stock department, two or three on whom you can depend, to assist in apprehending the Bush Rangers you make mention of in your letter to me of yesterday's date.<sup>21</sup>

The offer, in which Major Morisset also mentioned some apparent irregularities within the department, incensed the Stock Superintendent. His response was set out in a lengthy, rambling letter to the Colonial Secretary, of which the following is an extract.

I therefore can assert that I do not know that irregularities do exist save that where Emanuel Gomez, the Bush Constable who was appointed by the Commandant yesterday, is placed; which alone have arisen from this man and his wife, both of whom are notorious characters – previous to this man receiving his appointment, on the 28<sup>th</sup> inst. I reported the acts of impropriety committed by this man and his wife to Major Morisset, who was also well aware of his character, which it will be necessary for me to elucidate to prove my assertion – Gomez was sent to this Settlement as a punishment by the Magistrates at Parramatta about 8 months past at which place he was formerly a labourer in His Majesty's Store; and in May last the Commandant ordered him to be received into the Stock Establishment as a further punishment or repeated acts of irregularities in this Settlement, with directions for him to be sent to a distant out-station; as he showed himself a resolute character by apprehending some Runaways from Wellington Valley, I placed him at a station named "No.2 King's Plains", distant about 25 miles from Bathurst on the high road to "Wellington" for the express purpose of protecting the Sheep stationed there, and intercepting men who were in the constant habit of absconding from the before-named Settlement. Gomez had an opportunity of being as useful as any other man in this situation, but in defiance of the Commandant's and my own special orders forbidding the harbouring or encouraging Strangers at the Stock Station, this man, with his wife, have been in the constant practice of encouraging the late Judge Advocate's Stockmen for purposes which for the sake of delicacy I refrain from naming, and this has been carried to so great an extent that their Overseer Andrew Dunn has made a complaint of this circumstance. I apprized Major Morisset prior to this appointment and I have further to add I am confident Gomez is also a corrupt [?] character therefore under every circumstance very unfit for the duties required from him as a Bush Constable, for he will now have the power to roam about the country, and no doubt but that he will very soon renew his acquaintance with the former bad companions to break [?] him from which was the sole cause why the Commandant transferred him to the Stock Establishment.<sup>22</sup>

John Maxwell held Mr and Mrs Manuel Gomez in low esteem. The colonial convict records were, almost without exception, non-judgemental. Both husband and wife are included in the 1825 general muster.<sup>23</sup>

Ross Ann 1790 c Friendship 1817 7 wife of Emanuel Gomez of Parramatta  
D.D. 10 - 10 D.D. 10

Gomey Emanuel c Fortune 1819 wife of Morisset Bathurst



Of note is that Ann was not yet classified as free by servitude. This might be a clerical error, but nothing has been found in the records or the newspapers announcing that, as might have been expected by the 1824 at the latest, she had officially completed her seven year term. Manuel was still at Bathurst and, by implication, his wife Ann was still there also.

Ironically, the Bush Constable himself appeared in court in 1826, the apparent victim of a highway robbery on 2 June at Bathurst.<sup>24</sup> However the two accused men were acquitted. However, he was back in court in August of the same year, having been admitted to the Sydney Gaol on 12 August.<sup>25</sup> *The Australian* entertained its readers with an account of the trial.

Gomez, a prisoner of the crown, was next brought up by warrant on the complaint of a man named Cooper, which charged the aforesaid Gomez with having obtained money under false pretences. It was stated, that about four months ago, Gomez and the complainant happened to be at Bathurst together; the former intimated his being in possession of a horse, a good generous animal. Then at Stoney Beach, and which he felt inclined to sell – being just them ‘summut’ in want of money; any person inclined to purchase the animal, would meet with a real bargain. Complainant heard all this attentively, and imagining it would be a shame to let such an opportunity of making money “slip through his fingers,” closed with the seller’s offers; but to be further assured, that no trickery was intended, a government overseer was appealed to, who assured the wavering purchaser of his being “all right,” and that such a bargain was not to be met with every day. Complainant, upon hearing those fine representations, felt anxious to complete his purchase; agreed to the seller’s terms of 6 dollars, being paid down beforehand as earnest and the purchaser’s promissory note for the remaining £35, at three months after date – these preliminaries being settled, to the temporary satisfaction of all parties, complainant posted off for Stoney Beach which was pointed out as the next place of meeting; but who can paint (this excellent bargain maker) as he stood “speechless and fixed in all the death of woe,” and disappointment, when, upon arriving at Stoney Beach, to find there neither the dealer nor his Pegasus; nor were any such animals ever known to the inhabitants of that portion of the Country. With a melancholy visage, and a purse somewhat lightened by his late purchase, the disappointed Cooper was even forced to retrace his footsteps, and see what could be accomplished for the recovery of his six dollars; which it now clearly appeared he had been designedly tricked out of. With this view, “the victim of credulity” proceeded directly for Sydney, made certain of the police authorities acquainted with the loss of his money, as well as his reputation for shrewdness, and by luck and perseverance, happening to get another sight of the deceitful horse dealer, put a period to his further operations, by lodging his person in safe custody. The charge being thus drawn out against the prisoner and nothing appearing on the other hand to justify his deeds, the bench thought fit to order his being worked in irons for six months.<sup>26</sup>

His sentence barely completed, Manuel was again in the news. On 12 March 1827 he had attended the court at Parramatta, as reported in the *Sydney Gazette*.

Emanuel Gomes, a runaway from Sydney, an old man, before the magistrates, who states that he came to Parramatta to see his woman – order to Sydney, to be dealt with.<sup>27</sup>

If the record of Emanuel Gomez being admitted to Sydney Gaol on 5 October 1827 for ‘Absconding from his service and stealing his fellow prisoner’s victuals’ refers to the March incident, the authorities were in no great hurry to deal with him, but when they did they sentenced him to six weeks in the iron gang.<sup>28</sup> How he behaved between the time he was released after his time in the iron gang and April 1832 is not known, but what we do know is that he had been a patient at the Liverpool Hospital when the decision was made to transfer him to the hulk *Phoenix* on 11 April in readiness for being taken on board the government schooner *Isabella*, which was due to sail a week later on 18 April for Port Macquarie. The *Phoenix*, capable of housing up to 260 prisoners at any one time, was moored in Lavender Bay between 1825 and 1835. Those who called it ‘home’, albeit temporarily, included people awaiting trial – as the accused or as witnesses, those under sentence of re-transportation, and invalid prisoners awaiting passage to Port Macquarie. And it was in this last category that Emmanuel Gomez belonged, along with a majority of his fellow *Isabella* shipmates who had been transferred from hospitals – Liverpool or Sydney General - and from the Liverpool Lunatic Asylum.<sup>29</sup> Indeed this ‘fragile’ cargo caused the

shipping schedules to be altered.<sup>30</sup>

**The order for the sailing of the *Isabella*, to Moreton Bay, was suddenly countermanded on Saturday week, and her cargo discharged, for the purpose of conveying invalids to Port Macquarie.**

Manuel Gomez spent nearly four years at Port Macquarie. The recapitulation page for the 31 March 1836 Monthly Return states, in the Discharged column '20 | Emanuel Gomez | Fortune | Died'. He was buried on 25 March, but the Port Macquarie records give no cause of death, nor his age at death.<sup>31</sup> However, the death registration gives his age at death, improbably as 70.

Ann Ross plays a virtually imperceptible role in the foregoing account. Apart from her marriage in 1820, the reference to her in the 1825 general muster, and the fact that John Maxwell, echoing Surgeon Cosgreave's comments, bracketed her with her husband as a most unsavoury character, we know nothing about her. We can guess that she was illiterate, but what did she look like? When had she been born?<sup>32</sup> What was her trade prior to and on arrival in the colony? Did she have any children, and if so who and when. What was she up to while Manuel was serving his various sentences? If she was the woman he went to see when he absconded in 1827, she was then still alive and living in Parramatta. If not, or if so, where and when did she die? She was not the Ann Ross whose death was registered in 1828 as this record referred to a woman of the same name who had arrived per *Midas*.<sup>33</sup>

Could she possibly have been the Ann Ross who is recorded in the Bathurst Gaol Entrance Book for the period 1837-1844? The Ship this person arrived on is recorded as 'unknown'. The entry in the Age column reads 'Says 46, appears to be 80'. There are six separate Register Numbers.<sup>34</sup>

Ross Ann	unknown	Says 46 appears to be 80	9/11/260	9/11/321	9/11/330	9/11/331	9/11/342
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#### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Ancestry, Lancashire, England, Quarter Session Records and Petitions, 1648-1908, Salford, Petitions, 1817 Epiphany.

<sup>2</sup> *Manchester Mercury*, 4 Feb 1817, p.2.

<sup>3</sup> Ancestry, Lancashire, England, Quarter Session Records and Petitions, 1648-1908, Lancashire, Order Books, 1812.

<sup>4</sup> FindmyPast (FMP), England & Wales, Crime, Prisons & Punishment, 1770-1935, Prison Registers, Lancaster Gaol, Lancashire Governor's Journals, PCOM2/442.

<sup>5</sup> FMP, Australia Convict Ships 1786-1849, Indents 1788-1842 (NRS 12188)/394. Note – the same problem regarding age and occupation applies to Margaret Lang.

<sup>6</sup> Ancestry, New South Wales, Australia, Colonial Secretary's Papers, 1788-1856, Series *NRS 897*; Reel or Fiche Numbers: *Reels 6041-6064, 6071-6072*, p.62.

<sup>7</sup> Free Settler or Felon? Convict Ship Friendship 1818, [https://www.jenwilletts.com/convict\\_ship\\_friendship\\_1818.htm](https://www.jenwilletts.com/convict_ship_friendship_1818.htm).

<sup>8</sup> Ancestry, New South Wales, Australia, Colonial Secretary's Papers, 1788-1856, Series *NRS 937*; Reel or Fiche Numbers: *Reels 6004-6016*, p.59.

<sup>9</sup> Ancestry, New South Wales, Australia, St. John's Parramatta, Marriages, 1790-1966, Vol 01, Baptisms, 1790-1825; Marriages 1789-1823; Burials, 1790-1825.

<sup>10</sup> *Hampshire Chronicle*, 2 Mar 1812, p.7.

<sup>11</sup> *Hampshire Chronicle*, 16 Mar 1812, p.4. FMP, England & Wales, Crime, Prisons & Punishment, 1770-1935, Prison Registers, Correspondence And Warrants, HO13, Piece 23, pp.6-9.

<sup>12</sup> Convict Records, Fortune Voyages to Australia, <https://convictrecords.com.au/ships/fortune/1812>. Free Settler or Felon? Convict Ship Fortune 1813, [https://www.jenwilletts.com/convict\\_ship\\_fortune\\_1813.htm](https://www.jenwilletts.com/convict_ship_fortune_1813.htm).

<sup>13</sup> *The Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser*, 19 Jun 1813, p.2.

<sup>14</sup> FMP, Australia Convict Ships 1786-1849, Indents 1788-1842 (NRS 12188)/393.

<sup>15</sup> Ancestry, New South Wales, Australia, Colonial Secretary's Papers, 1788-1856, Series *NRS 937*; Reel or Fiche Numbers: *Reels 6004-6016*, p.12. Ancestry, New South Wales, Australia, Settler and Convict Lists, 1787-1834, New South Wales, Male A-K, 1820.

<sup>16</sup> Ancestry, New South Wales, Australia, Settler and Convict Lists, 1787-1834, New South Wales, Male A-J, 1821.



<sup>17</sup> Ancestry, New South Wales, Australia, Colonial Secretary's Papers, 1788-1856, Series *NRS 898*; Reel or Fiche Numbers: *Reels 6020-6040, 6070, Fiche 3260-3312*, p.3b. Ancestry, New South Wales, Australia, Colonial Secretary's Papers, 1788-1856, Series *NRS 898*; Reel or Fiche Numbers: *Reels 6020-6040, 6070, Fiche 3260-3312*, p.4b. The four magistrates were Hannibal McArthur, Henry Grattan Douglass, William Howe, and Reverend Samuel Marsden.

<sup>18</sup> Ancestry, New South Wales, Australia, New South Wales, Convict Musters, 1806-1849, New South Wales, General Muster, 1822. Dr. Douglas subsequently became, justly or otherwise, in a scandal involving a convict girl taken into his household - K. B. Noad, 'Douglass, Henry Grattan (1790–1865)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, National Centre of Biography, Australian National University, <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/douglass-henry-grattan-1987/text2417>, published first in hardcopy 1966, accessed online 26 October 2019.

<sup>19</sup> Ancestry, New South Wales, Australia, Colonial Secretary's Papers, 1788-1856, Series *NRS 898*; Reel or Fiche Numbers: *Reels 6020-6040, 6070, Fiche 3260-3312*, p.100. *The Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser*, 26 Jan 1825, p.3. It would be interesting to know if the convicts shared this view.

<sup>20</sup> Ancestry, New South Wales, Australia, Colonial Secretary's Papers, 1788-1856, Series *NRS 898*; Reel or Fiche Numbers: *Reels 6020-6040, 6070, Fiche 3260-3312*, pp.124-92

<sup>21</sup> Ancestry, New South Wales, Australia, Colonial Secretary's Papers, 1788-1856, Series *NRS 987*; Reel or Fiche Numbers: *Reels 6041-6064, 6071-6072*, p.273.

<sup>22</sup> Ancestry, New South Wales, Australia, Colonial Secretary's Papers, 1788-1856, Series *NRS 987*; Reel or Fiche Numbers: *Reels 6041-6064, 6071-6072*, pp.257-8.

<sup>23</sup> Ancestry, New South Wales and Tasmania, Australia Convict Musters, 1806-1849, New South Wales, General Muster M- and A-L, 1825.

<sup>24</sup> *The Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser*, 12 Aug 1826, p.3.

<sup>25</sup> Ancestry, New South Wales, Australia, Gaol Description and Entrance Books, 1818-1930, Entrance Book, Sydney, 1825-1832.

<sup>26</sup> *The Australian*, 19 Aug 1826, p.4.

<sup>27</sup> *The Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser*, 22 Mar 1827, p.3. Ancestry, New South Wales, Australia, Gaol Description and Entrance Books, 1818-1930, Entrance Book, Sydney, 1819-1833.

<sup>28</sup> Ancestry, New South Wales, Australia, Gaol Description and Entrance Books, 1818-1930, Entrance Book, Sydney, 1819-1833.

<sup>29</sup> Ancestry, New South Wales, Convict Records, 1810-1891, Phoenix Hulk, Phoenix Hulk:Entrance Books, 1831-1833. From 1830, with the winding down of the Port Macquarie penal station, the more hardened criminals were removed to Moreton Bay and Norfolk Island. However, the phase-out was gradual, with the last prisoners removed in 1847.

<sup>30</sup> *The Sydney Herald*, 23 Apr 1832, p.3.

<sup>31</sup> Ancestry, New South Wales, Australia, Convict Records, 1810-1891, Port Macquarie Penal Settlement, Port Macquarie:Monthly Returns, 1835-1836. Ancestry, New South Wales, Australia, Convict Records, 1810-1891, Convict Deaths, Death Register, 1828-1879. FMP, New South Wales Deaths 1788-1945, 1836, Port Macquarie, St Thomas (Co. Ayr), V1836/1053 20.

<sup>32</sup> At least two estimated birth years have been suggested – 1790 and 1792 – Biographical Database of Australia (BDA), Person ID B#10013631801 and Person ID U#30013098602.

<sup>33</sup> New South Wales Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages (NSW BDM), Death registration 1162/1828 V18281162 12. This Ann Ross was aged 35 on death and had been assigned to the Reverend Elijah Smith – BDA Person ID U#30075045501.

<sup>34</sup> Ancestry, New South Wales, Australia, Gaol Description and Entrance Books, 1818-1930, Entrance Book, Bathurst, 1837-1844.



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Free Settler or Felon? <https://www.jenwillets.com/>  
New South Wales Registry of Births, Deaths, Marriages, <https://www.bdm.nsw.gov.au/>

### Online Newspapers

#### British Newspapers (Findmypast)

Hampshire Chronicle  
Manchester Mercury

#### TROVE

The Australian  
The Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser  
The Sydney Herald

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