
‘The law must take its course’¹: Serving Dr Halloran’s time

JENNIFER BROOKES

NEWGATE; or Sketches Descriptive of the Interior of that Prison; with other Poems. By LAWRENCE HALLORAN, DD now under Sentence of Transportation for seven years for Counterfeiting a Frank.

‘It is not for us at present to canvas the justice of Dr H’s sentence; but we can assure our readers, that the person who is thus lost to his country is a man of taste and genius and displays in the work before us much of the true Poet. “The secrets of the Prison House” he has painted with striking and frightful fidelity, and occasionally with touches of genuine pathos.’—Vide Monthly Mag Jan.

Printed for the Author’s numerous Young Family, and sold by Whitmore and Fenn, Charing Cross.²

Lydia Ann’s position during the winter of 1819 was precarious. Any income from sales of *Newgate* was essential if she were to survive her ‘most afflicting reverse’ of circumstances.³ Her distress was caused by the arrest, imprisonment, conviction for forgery, and sentencing to seven years’ transportation of her children’s father, Laurence Hynes Halloran (1765–1831). The case was notorious, and the conviction calamitous. In 1816, to add credence to his application for the vacant curacy at Broseley in Shropshire, Halloran had forged the frank of an eminent barrister, using the alias ‘WC Gregory’.⁴ An argument with his rector, Townsend Forester, led Forester to refer to his clerical agents in London. It was soon proven that Halloran was an imposter with a long record.⁵ Government and ecclesiastical files were thick with damning detail, commencing with a murder charge in 1783 while a young naval apprentice (for which he was acquitted), failed attempts at ordination, exposure at Bath in 1806 after supplying bogus clerical credentials, the circumstances of his

1 Laurence Hynes Halloran, *Newgate; or, Desultory Sketches in a Prison: A Poem* ([London]: printed by E Howlett, 1818), 66.

2 ‘Dr Halloran’s Poems’, *Morning Chronicle* (London), 16 February 1819, 1.

3 ‘Old Bailey’, *Examiner* (London), 13 September 1818, 590.

4 Sir William Garrow (1760–1840) was an established criminal defence counsel with 15 years’ experience at assizes. Halloran was charged under the 1802 Act of Parliament (42 Geo III, c63): ‘Forging the handwriting of any person ... to avoid payment of postage ... shall be deemed guilty of Felony ... transported for seven years’. Garrow chose to attend the trial.

5 ‘The full story is to be found in the General Post Office records under reference E 296 M/1818’ stated Marcus Samuel in ‘Halloran’s Forged Frank’, *The Great Britain Philatelist* (London), vol. 4 (1964): 1. Extended email correspondence with a London Postal Museum archivist, between January and July 2021, reveals that a large proportion of these files are now too fragile to handle.

appointment as chaplain to the forces at the Cape in 1808, and subsequent behaviour causing exile from there in 1811. From that moment to further damage his reputation, he was known to have abandoned his wife. With Lydia now his partner, he had used aliases and forged credentials to gain clerical appointments throughout the country, concurrently supplementing his meagre income with published poems and sermons, until his arrest in mid-1818. When he sailed on the convict ship *Baring* seven months later, authorities were pleased to be rid of him. He had embarrassed the Church by causing confusion in marriages, such that 'it was his bad character and not his crime which transported him to Botany Bay'.⁶

Halloran has the distinction of entries in both the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* and *Australian Dictionary of Biography*. Much appears elsewhere;⁷ some marred by errors or attitude. Most give scant reference to the women in his life: his four sisters; his wife Mary Boutcher and daughters Mary and Theresa; and his long-term partner, Lydia Ann Hall—this writer's great-great-grandmother—known as 'Anna'.⁸ While Halloran's conviction was a calamity, this forced separation was disastrous, worse than the previous 14 months Anna had suffered prior to following him to Table Bay in March 1809, or the 16 months alone with their three children after Halloran's exile from the Cape in March 1811. Now, the scandal of his shameless and immoral behaviour had caused immediate isolation. Without their father's presence, Anna had no social status and her children's expectations were compromised. She was not a spinster, nor was she a widow; she was not even an estranged or deserted wife. Instead, she was a single, pregnant woman solely responsible for seven young bastard children, all threatened with destitution because of their association with 'this most profligate character'.⁹ While Halloran was to be housed and fed at government expense for the duration, the family was abandoned to survive unsupported.

Baptised in March 1778 at St Clement Danes on the Strand, Anna was the first child of Susanna Snowden and John Hall.¹⁰ Her first appearance in the Halloran family record is inferred from a notice of the death at The Hague, in January 1803, of Laurence Henry Halloran, aged 10 weeks.¹¹ Whether Anna accompanied (or followed) Halloran and his family in September 1802 when they sailed from Harwich to begin a school near the Great Church is not known. Perhaps she was an

6 Sir James Mackintosh, 'Doctor Halloran and the Prison Ships', *Morning Chronicle* (London), 26 January 1819, 2.

7 Useful examples include Marcus Samuel, 'Halloran's Forged Frank', *The Great Britain Philatelist* (London), vol. 4 (1964) and vol. 5 (1965); Laurence Halloran, comp., *Laurence Hynes Halloran: Genealogical Surrounds, West Indies—England—Ireland, Gathered Fragments* (Sydney, 1990); Laurence Halloran, comp., *Five Halloran Branches: Gleanings* (Sydney, 1997); Patrick Comerford, 'Thomas Lewis O'Beirne and Laurence Hynes Halloran: The Bishop of Ossory and a Clerical Imposter', *Old Kilkenny Review* (2000): 1–10.

8 Halloran addressed poems to 'Anna'. She is listed as 'Ann' on the 1822 Muster, 1822, HO 10/19, The National Archives, Kew (hereafter TNA).

9 'Imperial Parliament of Great Britain and Ireland', *Morning Chronicle* (London), 19 February 1819, 3. Bathurst's view of Halloran's character influenced the direction of his life until the end.

10 Baptism record of Lydia Ann Hall, daughter of John and Susanna Hall, 22 March 1778, STC/PR/7/12, City of Westminster Archives Centre, London.

11 Information from Kelvin Grose, cited in Halloran, *Laurence Hynes Halloran*, 120.

employee. They likely met earlier, in London, when he was desperate for financial security. The school he had been running for 12 years in Exeter with Mary had failed, and he had renounced the Catholicism he had adopted on their marriage in 1784. Attempts to be ordained as an Anglican priest had been unsuccessful, and in 1796 he realised that the inheritance he believed had been conserved by his guardian had in fact been appropriated by him. Subsequent efforts to provide for his first family included a chaplaincy on *Le Pompee* in 1797, publication of verse and sermons, an application in January 1799 for employment as mathematics master at the Royal Mathematical School of Christ's Hospital, his alma mater,¹² and an 18-month sojourn at Elm in Cambridgeshire, during which time he was awarded an academic qualification from Kings College, Aberdeen, in July 1800—as doctor of divinity. The death of the child at The Hague suggests he met Anna in 1801 or 1802 while he was running a Naval Academy in Little Scotland Yard under the patronage of Sir John Jervis and before he embarked for Holland. He may have been a client of her father, whose occupation was a hairdresser operating from the Inner Temple. Halloran was 12 years her senior.

Although I grew up aware of the salient facts of Halloran's life and remembered the portrait by the staircase at my paternal grandparents' house,¹³ I knew little of the woman portrayed in the image alongside it. Had I asked at the age of eight, the response may have been: 'She was his wife'. I began to imagine her experience; her direct and confident gaze, her youth and her intelligence remained with me. At the same time, I grew increasingly aware of the depth of my father's interest in the family's genealogy. Also named Laurence, his interest was quiet, understated and rarely explained—apparent from snippets of telephone conversations, prodigious correspondence, visits to cemeteries with camera in hand, visitors whose significance I did not understand, and obscure but enticing offhand comments. Then came his unpublished compilations in the 1990s, including 'Laurence Hynes Halloran, Genealogical Surrounds', where Anna's origins are explored.¹⁴ My father chose to focus on the origins and life of his namesake before Halloran was transported. He tested the veracity of Halloran's claims, explored the gaps left by his omissions, and sought to determine the validity or otherwise of historical family stories; all before the internet. Methodical and meticulous, he began with his father's sketchy notes, letters between English and Australian descendants around the centenary of Trafalgar, Halloran's published poems and sermons, and items from English newspapers. He befriended credible researchers and interested descendants, always acknowledging contributions. Not given to surmises or interpretation, there was no room for imagining because provenance was all.

12 Clifford Jones, *The Sea and the Sky* (Horsham, West Sussex: Christ's Hospital, 2015), 188. Halloran ranked second after William Dawes, an experienced astronomer (including four years at Port Jackson) who attracted the most votes. It is a shame Halloran lost. Dawes only stayed a year, and the opportunity might have been the saving of him.

13 Augustus Earle, *Laurence Halloran*, ca 1825–27/Oil Painting Possibly by Augustus Earle, 1825, Mitchell Library, State Library of NSW. The image? Perhaps made as a keepsake for Halloran to take to the Cape.

14 See also Halloran, *Five Halloran Branches*. Generations of descendants of the seven families he worked on will value the foundation and scaffolding embedded in these compilations. That is Laurence's legacy.

Nevertheless, growing up on the other side of the world, it was only through the life and art of Jane Austen that I could picture Anna's life with Halloran, at least until the devastating moment of his imprisonment. Jane's acute observations exposed the pomposities and double standards then prevailing when dissent or resistance against accepted behavioural codes was discouraged. The push for Catholic emancipation, the shock of the revolutionary mob, the threat of French invasion; all rattled the security and authority of the aristocracy and the Established Church. Even after peace in 1815, local unrest continued to undermine control. These events and their own responses to them shaped Anna's and Halloran's lives. Elements explored in Austen's fiction were their reality: the power of patronage and 'friends'; duelling; school and parsonage life; naval officers and chaplains; the pulpit and sermons; 'franking' and forgery; wealth from the West Indies and India (or the lack of it); infidelity, bigamy, desertion; and loss of 'character'. Given the obsequious, and ridiculous, Mr Collins, what might she have made of Halloran as one of her characters? She may have known of his sermonising in Bath, and her family likely read of his trial and sentencing, together with the concurrent parliamentary debates concerning transportation. Georgian society as reflected by Austen is the fabric into which Anna's and Halloran's lives were woven.

Once Halloran was sentenced, however, Anna's predicament overtook these imaginings. Alone in the winter of 1819 she had nowhere to turn. Neither she nor Halloran had any financial security, hence the advertisements for *Newgate*, so there was no question of buying a passage to join him. Could she turn to her own family? She was the eldest, but there is little evidence of contact with any of her six siblings. When her father died in 1811, his will named three family members only: her first brother John as a beneficiary of some valuables; her brother-in-law John West (who had married her sister Elizabeth Mary); and her youngest brother Robert, as the holder in trust of his father's goods and chattels for the benefit of their mother Susannah.¹⁵ Presumably, Robert carried on the business at the Temple until at least January 1814, when Susannah's burial was registered at St Clement Danes, with Crown Office Row given as her address; the same address Susannah had used since her marriage in 1787. It is difficult to identify the whereabouts of her siblings because Hall is a common English surname, with many carriers of the surname recorded in Middlesex and Westminster. Most siblings did not apparently move far from the centre of London with the relevant exceptions of John West in Richmond, Surrey, and her younger brother, Richard, of whom more will be said later. As for Anna, she was at the Cape when her father died, and when her mother was buried, she was living 76 miles from London at Lechlade in Gloucestershire and using the surname Blakeney. Her itinerant life kept her away from London and, apart from moments such as the visit to Doctors' Commons in 1816 disguised as 'Mrs Lewis', there was little opportunity to connect with family members.

¹⁵ Jan Worthington, *Scholarly Scoundrel* (Sydney: Halstead Press, 2007), 211.

There was truth in Halloran's impassioned claim the previous October to the home secretary, Henry Addington (Viscount Sidmouth), that his family 'had not a friend on earth capable of affording them protection or support'.¹⁶ Yet there were some capable of assisting Anna. For personal comfort, there was Halloran's sister, Catherine Browne, and her husband William, together with their Boswood cousins, who all lived at Dyer's Buildings, adjacent to Barnard's Inn and across from the White Horse; situated between Fetter Lane and Castle Street in Holborn.¹⁷ Halloran's elder son, Boutcher Halloran, often stayed with the Boswoods, and while there is no evidence that he ever supported Anna, he continued to support his father.

It was to be near the children's aunt Catherine that, in late April, Anna moved to Cursitor Street, just off Chancery Lane and only an alley or two from Dyer's Buildings, close to St Clement Danes, the parish of her birth. She was there in June when, in the church of St Andrew, she recorded her newborn daughter as 'Catherine Halloran' in the baptism register.¹⁸ The names were chosen intentionally to honour Catherine Browne and acknowledge the child's father. As my father Laurence noted in 1997, this registration was 'the only one truly recorded'.¹⁹

These relatives offered practical help, but they had little influence. William Browne was merely a clerk at the White Horse Inn. For influence with power, Anna had to look elsewhere—to Edward Nicolls (1779–1865), now Brevet Colonel Nicolls, the older brother of William Burke Nicolls, one of Halloran's allies at the Cape.²⁰ It is not clear who sought out who during this dreadful time, but it is certain that Edward Nicolls lent his name for her advantage. His influence derived from fame and notoriety acquired during his long career in the Royal Marines, especially while posted to Spanish Florida in the War of 1812. Known as a supporter of abolition and as 'fighting' Nicolls, he was remembered for allying with and arming freed and escaped slaves together with native Seminole and other Creek people to strengthen British numbers against American forces. In December 1815 he was awarded an annual pension of £250 for 24 serious battle wounds including the eye he lost at Pensacola.²¹ Was it he who had suggested that Halloran should plea for exile to America in 1818?

16 Halloran, *Newgate*, 64.

17 'Mr Brown is Clerk in the Coach Office at the White Hart [*sic*], Fetter Lane, and resides at No 2 Barnard Inn and married the sister of the prisoner'. Halloran File, E296M/1818, Post Office Archives, London; The King against Halloran, margin note on WT Brown, cited in Halloran, *Laurence Hynes Halloran*, 107. Charles Dickens gave us Pip's impression of Barnard's Inn of Chancery: 'his inn the dingiest collection of shabby buildings ever squeezed together ... all the silent rots that rot in neglected roof and cellar—rot of rat and mouse and bug and coaching stables near at hand besides', published 1861 but set nearly 40 years earlier. *Great Expectations*, vol. 2 (London: Chapman and Hall, 1861), 22–23.

18 Baptism record of Catherine Halloran, daughter of Laurence and Lydia Ann Halloran, 22 June 1820, P69/And2/A/01/Ms 6667/20, London Metropolitan Archives, London.

19 Halloran, *Laurence Hynes Halloran*, 127.

20 Halloran baptised one of Nicolls's daughters, Emily Jane, in 1810 in South Africa and in 1812 Nicolls named a son, Willoughby Halloran, after him. Peter Philip, *British Residents at the Cape* (Capetown: David Philip, 1981), 304; 'Lt-Col William Burke Nicolls', Ancestry.com, accessed 22 July 2022, www.ancestry.com.au/genealogy/records/lt-col-william-burke-nicolls-24-1prjt.

21 'Edward Nicolls', Military Wiki, accessed 22 July 2022, military-history.fandom.com/wiki/Edward_Nicolls.

It is possible that Nicolls encouraged Anna to move the family south of the Thames to Deptford, four miles east of London Bridge and within the ancient parishes of St Nicholas and St Paul. By 1820, as the Thames silted downstream, the focus of the local economy had shifted from large shipbuilding around the Royal and private dockyards to fitting out and victualling. James Cook's vessels were surveyed and fitted out at the Royal Dockyard as was the *Bounty* for the voyage to Tahiti.²² The *Baring* was launched from Barnards' private docks in 1801 and fitted out and supplied there in 1818 before taking on its 'complement' at Sheerness. Deptford also housed barracks for military guards employed on male transports.

Anna's address at 5 Providence Row, Butt Lane, off Charles Street, was within a line of single-storey cottages located south of the church of St Nicholas (patron saint of mariners) and not far from St Paul's, both on the western side of Deptford Creek. Although it was not her parish, and there is no evidence of her falling to the mercy of parish officials, the threat was real. Moreover, the rent was likely cheap, and she had boys to educate. She may have been attracted by the presence of the Stanhope School, a Bluecoat School, which took in both boys and girls, was financed by endowments, and similar in ideals to Christ's Hospital School, which Halloran had attended. Otherwise, there was the Naval College across the creek at Greenwich, where an uncle of Nicolls had trained.

From Butt Lane, almost two years after Halloran's arrest, Anna acted. She directly approached Earl Bathurst at the Colonial Office with a request to join Halloran in New South Wales. Yet this was not the first petition to be submitted in his interest. In January 1820 Boutcher Halloran petitioned at length, apologising for his father's 'rash and inconsiderate conduct' the previous winter. He had 'lately heard' of his father's safe arrival in the colony and ventured 'to entreat ... permission' for his father to become 'a free settler' after two years' servitude or, failing promising 'prospects', be allowed to 'remove to America'.²³ He had a poor grasp of the details of transportation policy and, somewhat wearily, was acting as the mouthpiece of his father out of filial duty. His tone reflected the humiliation he suffered from his father's disgraceful desertion of his mother and sister Theresa, both of whom he was now obliged to support.²⁴ Boutcher made no mention of Anna or her circumstances.²⁵ His petition became just another addition to the Halloran record bundled among Colonial Office files for 1820.

22 Henry William Downes, 'Illustrated log of the whaling barque *TERROR*', 17 September 1846 – 12 July 1847, object number 00038301, Australian National Maritime Museum.

23 Petition of Boutcher Halloran, 8 January 1820, PC 1/68, TNA.

24 Extract from Boutcher Halloran's 1819 diary, quoted in Halloran, *Laurence Hynes Halloran*, 141.

25 The disgrace still rankled. In 1925, when Halloran's Australian great-grandson Henry and his wife Amy visited Boutcher's descendants in Somerset: 'My Aunt Gladys must have been present at your parents' visit (so was I, not quite aged two!), but she stoutly denies that they could be a relation and so does ... Aunt Sybil and both maintain "that we should have no dealings with them". Nevertheless, I am quite certain that we are related and look forward ...' Personal correspondence between Laurence Halloran and Tony King, 11 January 1974.

When Anna posted her first petition in early June, she was struggling to survive. Perhaps she was emboldened by press reports of Halloran's intention to establish a literary career in the colony:

In the Sydney Gazette a Quarterly Magazine is advertised ... the first undertaking of the kind in New South Wales ... attributed to the arrival of Halloran, who has commenced his literary career ... [with] a copy of verses to the Moon inserted ... price a dollar.²⁶

This was 'To the Full Moon', composed on board only weeks away from Port Jackson and published in the *Sydney Gazette* just days after Halloran's arrival.²⁷ This early attempt to begin a newspaper came to nothing, but his verse served to promote his literary talents and publicly expressed his attachment to Anna. It may have given her confidence to tackle the authorities.

The bureaucratic hurdles encountered while submitting applications for a family reunion were complex, and the effort required to surmount them was implicit in the punishment. First, there was the time factor. Had the convict served an acceptable proportion of the sentence? Had that length of suffering caused any reformation of character? Add to these the time lapses in communication between the bureaucracy and individuals, compounded by the months it took for letters to traverse the oceans: witness the length of the three separate voyages undertaken by Halloran on the *Baring*, Laurence Henry on the *Medway* and Anna on the *Providence*.²⁸

The policy itself presented a formidable barrier. By 1820, it had gradually and intermittently shifted from accepting applications for family reunions from individuals in England for consideration by the Colonial Office to requiring the convict to apply through the colonial governor, thus laying the onus on the governor to vet the legitimacy of the claim of being able to support family members. As gazetted in the colony, applicants were compelled to supply specific details of:

Names and places of residence of their wives and children, which must be very minutely described, and demonstrate with 'the most satisfactory proof' that they have the means to support their families. Family members must not become a burden on the Commissariat by incurring any charge or expense after arrival.²⁹

Petitions initiated in England would not be authorised at the Colonial Office unless and until they were supported by an approved application from the colony.

²⁶ 'Madras Papers', *St James's Chronicle* (London), 11 May 1820, 4.

²⁷ *Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser*, 3 July 1819, 4. Published above an advertisement from Jacob Josephson whom he grew to know well. This was the first of many poems contributed to the 'public print'.

²⁸ Respectively, 150, 120 and 208 days.

²⁹ Bathurst to Macquarie, 11 May 1816, in Frederick Watson, ed., *Historical Records of Australia*, Series I (henceforth *HRA I*), vol. 9 (Sydney: Library Committee of the Commonwealth Parliament, 1917), 120; *Sydney Gazette*, 1 and 8 March 1817.

Anna did not yet understand this important shift in policy, but she knew that other women had been granted permission such as those on the female ship *Morley*, which sailed only weeks before she submitted her first application. As no personal correspondence survives, it is difficult to determine what communication she might have had with Halloran after his arrival about how to effect their reunion but her petitions suggest a shift in strategy away from Halloran's appeals to Sidmouth in 1818 for exile to America, and his subsequent request via Boutcher to become a settler in New South Wales. Anna became proactive.

The files of both departments are thick with petitions from women in England and Ireland requesting reunion, many endorsed by parish officers or clergymen. Few of these petitioners, however, were in Anna's exact predicament as a lone woman with numerous illegitimate children, few wrote independently, and few petitioned four times.³⁰ But all wrote from a subordinate position. In her case, the clerks knew Halloran's official record, and his frantic and reckless letters to the home secretary prior to his departure in 1819 had not advanced his case. Officials were not obligated to comply with requests from the woman who had been by his side for the greater part of his notorious career.

The procedure demanded convoluted negotiations with arguments expressed in formal language and employing conventional phrases. The heading of Anna's first petition was to the point: 'The humble petition of Dr Halloran's distressed infant family'.³¹ Since she was not married to Halloran she could not appeal on her own behalf. She appreciated Earl Bathurst's 'known humane disposition' and explained her reasons for presuming to approach him: the children were 'an innocent unoffending orphan family', who suffered 'the severest trials of want and distress', wished to 'escape from famine and despair', and avoid becoming 'burthensome to their parish'.³² She begged their permission to 'rejoin their exiled parent' by 'the next female ship'.³³ Here, she expressed humility, applied flattery, and begged for the innocence of Halloran's children; she emphasised their hunger and desperation, together with her desire to avoid the costs of parish support. She understood how poor rates were applied from her past parish experiences. Interestingly, the reason for the sentence, the crime itself, was never mentioned, nor was any suggestion of her own guilt or innocence. Finally, unlike other petitioners, she did not argue that her presence might have a positive moral effect on Halloran's behaviour; she was in no position to do so. But she did sign as 'LA Halloran'.³⁴

30 'Applications from a few single women for their illegitimate children ... were outside the written parameters of the regulations.' Perry McIntyre, *Free Passage: Convict Family Reunion in Australia, 1788–1802*, 2nd ed. (Australia: Anchor Books, 2018), 1.

31 'The humble petition of Dr Halloran's distressed infant family', 2 June 1820, CO 201/101, TNA.

32 'The humble petition', CO 201/101, TNA.

33 'The humble petition', CO 201/101, TNA.

34 'The humble petition', CO 201/101, TNA.

The file note was terse:

Acknowledge receipt and acquaint her that the general rule to which L^d B feels himself compelled to adhere in this as in other instances prevents his complying with her request unless he shall previously receive from the Governor an assurance that Dr H's conduct is such as to entitle him to this indulgence and that he has the means of maintaining them on their arrival ...³⁵

The Colonial Office required official proof from the governor.

At this moment, as if she did not have enough to suffer, she learned of the arrest of her younger brother Richard for the serious crime of housebreaking. His committal for trial was announced on 18 June and, four weeks later, the public press reported that at Abingdon, just south of Reading:

Richard Hall, aged 31, and Edward Macarty, aged 16, charged with having on Monday the 5th of June last, in the daytime, broken open the dwelling house of William Simonds ... feloniously stealing ... of the value of five shillings and upwards, his property; and Sarah Price, aged 28, charged with receiving the same ... Richard Hall and Edward Macarty, Death.³⁶

Had Richard stolen before? Two months later, with the sentences transmuted to 14 years, both men were removed from the Reading County Gaol to 'the York Hulks' at Gosport.³⁷

Despite this disaster, Anna could not afford to be distracted. She wrote again on 25 June, this time through Bathurst's under-secretary, Henry Goulburn, who had worked on the policy of family reunion since 1812 and was familiar with Halloran's record. She presumed to 'trespass upon Lord Bathurst's attention as the desired returns have, I am informed, reached his Lordship ... Dr H. is capable of maintaining his family and deserving the indulgence of educating and protecting his children'.³⁸ As she saw it, the necessary proof was publicly available: 'the [Sydney] *Gazette* of 8 January contains an advertisement from the noted Dr O'Halloran [*sic*], who has opened a school at Sydney'.³⁹

A few months earlier, the *Admiral Cockburn* had sailed for England carrying two dispatches relevant to Anna's cause:

35 'The humble petition', CO 201/101, TNA.

36 *Oxford University and City Herald*, 15 July 1820, 3.

37 *Windsor and Eton Express*, 17 September 1820, 4.

38 Anna Halloran to Henry Goulburn, 25 June 1820, CO 201/101, TNA.

39 'Friday's Post', *Hereford Journal*, 5 July 1820, 1.

This day sailed from Port Jackson for England the Private Merchant Ship the *Admiral Cockburn* ... (direct from England) with wool & other colonial Produce ... and Mr. Alexander Berry Merchant of Sydney—To the latter Gentleman I gave charge of my Despatches for His Majesty's ministers.⁴⁰

Unfortunately, the enclosure containing 'lists ... of prisoners ... who have solicited to get their wives and families ... sent out to them at the expense of Government, being able to support them on arrival'⁴¹ cannot be located among the files of either department responsible for convict affairs. But while there may be no tangible evidence of Halloran's name being included, it is well understood that Macquarie was keen to keep as many people as possible off the stores and recognised the practicality of Halloran's skills. Further proof of Halloran's efforts to reunite his family lies in the fact that when Commissioner Bigge sailed for England in February 1821, he took 100 petitions with him, including, by his own account, one from Halloran. Bigge's displeasure that reunion had already been permitted without his influence was manifest in his report tabled in June 1822:

Halloran has forwarded through me, an application ... for permission for his family to join him ... I have since learned that this permission has already been granted, but I cannot help ... my opinion that no further indulgence should be extended to Halloran than that which he at present enjoys.⁴²

When Anna wrote again in late June, she was quick to understand the significance of the *Admiral Coburn's* despatches. But the Colonial Office clerks, while they may have read the public press, had not yet absorbed the official detail, so Anna's second petition also failed, and the file note was equally terse.

A week later, Colonial Office clerks *had* digested the contents of these returns. The gazettes containing the school advertisements,⁴³ and the inclusion of Halloran's name resulted in a vehement response from Bathurst on 14 July. Believing Halloran had been pardoned, Bathurst expressed his 'surprise and regret' that Halloran had been 'relieved of the effect of his previous misconduct' and was 'permitted to exercise the profession of schoolmaster, ... in which ... he will have the means of disseminating the evil principles'.⁴⁴ To permit a family to reunite was a gift of government, not

40 '1820: March', Lachlan and Elizabeth Macquarie Archive, accessed 22 July 2022, www.mq.edu.au/macquarie-archive/lema/1820/1820march.html.

41 Macquarie to Bathurst, Despatch no. 13, *HRA I*, vol. 10, 288.

42 John Thomas Bigge, *Report of the Commissioner of Inquiry into the State of the Colony of New South Wales*, facs. ed. (Adelaide: Libraries Board of South Australia, 1966), 126–27. Bigge's secretary requested from Governor Brisbane 'a list [of names] and dates of application'; Return of applications for wives and families to join convicts required by Commissioner of Enquiry (Bigge Report), 3 January 1821, NRS-897 [4/1749] pp. 263–64, Museums of History NSW—State Archives Collection (hereafter MHNSW-StAC). In early July, Bigge 'forwarded these with a covering letter to Wilmot Horton (Colonial Undersecretary), who, on Bathurst's instructions, forwarded the entire correspondence to Henry Hobhouse', then Home Office Undersecretary. Christina J. V. Picton Phillipps, 'Convicts, Communication and Authority: Britain and New South Wales, 1810–1830' (PhD thesis, University of Edinburgh, January 2002), 277–78.

43 Macquarie to Bathurst, Despatch no. 17, *HRA I*, vol. 10, 290.

44 Bathurst to Macquarie, Despatch no. 11, *HRA I*, vol. 10, 312–13.

a right, and Bathurst was outraged. Halloran's sentence had been remitted 'before an opportunity had been afforded him of proving, by subsequent good conduct, his contrition for past offences or his disposition to reform'.⁴⁵ 'Contrition' is the operative word. Halloran had not reformed, and their separation was to continue.

Entrusted in transit to the care of Frederick Goulburn, this and other despatches of July were received by Macquarie with a mixture of relief and personal humiliation:

Sund 31 Decr. 1820!

... the newly appointed Colonial Secretary has arrived Passenger on board the ship *Hebe*—he has brought me Despatches ... all of a very unpleasant and mortifying nature. I am however rejoiced ... that my Resignation of this Government, sent home on 1 March last per ship *Admiral Cockburn*, has at last been accepted.⁴⁶

He had first applied to resign three years previously. Since then, his governorship had suffered increasing criticism compounded throughout 1820 by the presence and shadow of the commissioner's relentless interference in matters of administration. Macquarie was tired and his health had suffered. There is a view that Bathurst intentionally deferred submitting Macquarie's request to the Prince Regent in 1818: 'he couldn't be allowed to resign until Bigge was sent to lay the blame of the perceived poor administration squarely on Macquarie's shoulders'.⁴⁷ Whatever the case, Goulburn's appointment in March was just one of a 'new guard' sent out by Whitehall with the responsibility of implementing Bigge's recommendations—specifically, those regarding land grants for emancipated convicts.

Unaware of these political machinations and still without permission from the Colonial Office, Anna changed tactics. Her greater appreciation of the intricacies of bureaucratic procedure meant she now understood that it was the Home Office that implemented policy regarding convict family reunion. In September she twice petitioned the home secretary, the second via his clerk, John Henry Capper, who kept a desk at Whitehall. Ever the supplicant, she again employed stock phrases. In the first, she declared that she knew Halloran had been personally assured, possibly by Bennett in late 1818, and 'also thro' the medium of his friend Colonel Nicoll [*sic*] and his brother-in-law William Browne' that, once the proof that he had the capacity to protect his family had 'reached this Government' permission for the family to travel would be granted.⁴⁸ She knew the requirements had been met and she could not

45 Bathurst to Macquarie, Despatch no. 11, *HRA I*, vol. 10, 312–13.

46 '1820: December', Lachlan and Elizabeth Macquarie Archive, accessed 22 July 2022, www.mq.edu.au/macquarie-archive/lema/1820/1820dec.html.

47 McIntyre, *Free Passage*, 42.

48 Anna Halloran to Home Secretary, September 1820, PC 1/68, TNA.

understand the denial of permission. Her desperation was palpable: 'Oh my Lord! Could you be aware of our trials and sufferings ... affliction and poverty ... an almost state of starvation'.⁴⁹

Home Office silence was deafening but Anna persisted. She took herself to Whitehall. She had no appointment. His Lordship was apparently absent. In the corridor or perhaps at the office door she met Henry Capper, who may have suggested she next write through him. So, understanding his influence, on 22 September, she did. He had been a witness to the 1812 Parliamentary Select Committee on Transportation and had commenced his current tenure in the summer of 1815. In his reports to government, he was described as 'Superintendent of Ships and Vessels Employed for the Confinement of offenders under Sentence of Transportation'.⁵⁰ As such, he was to implement reforms recommended by parliament, some of which included: the division of the hulks and prison ships into cells of certain dimensions capable of holding a prescribed number of male convicts; improving ventilation below decks; and, ineffectually, addressing the problem of the corrupting effects of 'association' on younger offenders. Finally, he was to attend to convict discipline for which he designed an imperfect system of classifications based on observed behaviour—'good', 'suspicious', 'bad', 'very bad'—to be recorded on each convict record quarterly. It was Capper whom Sidmouth sent to accompany Bennett to the *Baring* in late December 1818 to investigate Halloran's complaints and observations. Capper compiled the name lists of who came to the hulks and who was then transferred to the transports, including the list of prisoners carried from Reading County Gaol to the York Hulks on 17 September. He knew when the next transport would sail and was responsible for who was on it. He supervised the compilation of the bound indents and inspected the vessels before they sailed. When he resigned in 1847 after a 53-year career, the lives of thousands of convicts and their families had passed under his increasingly corrupt and complacent influence: 'After his promising beginning, John Capper's long reign was an era of neglect, nepotism, mismanagement and self-deception'.⁵¹

In this, her fourth petition, Anna explained to Sidmouth that she had tried to see him (demonstrated initiative); she referred again to Colonel Nicolls (an influential friend); she exhibited knowledge of the process (the favourable returns); and, because of her 'inability to procure bread', she appealed on behalf of her eight 'unprotected orphans' in 'extremest want' who were denied their 'former comfortable competency'.⁵² She was exhausted and she feared the advancing winter. At last, officials registered Halloran's

49 Halloran to Home Secretary, September 1820, PC 1/68, TNA.

50 John Henry Capper, *Report of John Henry Capper, Esq., Superintendent of ships and vessels employed for the confinement of offenders under sentence of transportation: relating to the convict establishments at Portsmouth, Chatham, Woolwich and at Bermuda* (London: The House of Commons, 1844).

51 Charles Campbell, *The Intolerable Hulks: British Shipboard Confinement 1776–1857*, 2nd ed. (Maryland: Heritage Books, 1994), 116; W. Johnson, *The English Prison Hulks*, rev. ed. (Chichester, Sussex: Phillimore, 1970), 92–97.

52 Anna Halloran to Viscount Sidmouth, 22 September 1820, PC 1/68, TNA.

name from the despatches and were satisfied that her pleas were backed by authority. After four months of negotiating the mazes of bureaucracy, permission was granted. Anna's tenacity and strength of purpose prevailed.

Events moved quickly. Although permission to travel was granted, when the next female ship would sail was anybody's guess. Somehow it was arranged to send her eldest son to join his father ahead of them. At 13 he was considered too old to travel with a load of female convicts but because he was over 10, he was deemed old enough to travel unaccompanied. Thus, two months later, he was aboard the *Medway*, which sailed from Portsmouth in mid-November. Under Captain Wright, she carried members of the 53rd Regiment, sundry free passengers, and government officials. Among the 156 male convicts was one Richard Hall from the Portsmouth hulks, brother to Anna and uncle to Laurence Henry.⁵³

It is fair to assume that Anna arranged for the accommodation of Laurence Henry on this vessel, with influence from Nicolls and the full knowledge of Capper. One wonders about the level of the boy's supervision and with whom he fraternised. There were few free passengers, and if conditions on board were anything like those described by his father for the *Baring*, one can only imagine the behaviours he was exposed to—the depravities, the alcohol, the language—the immorality. Yet these are twenty-first-century concerns. For the past three years Laurence Henry had roamed the lanes and alleys of Holborn and Deptford, and he may have already met some of the members of the military guard, loaded from the Deptford Barracks. Anna was pragmatic. He was to travel at government expense and would join his father who could provide for him. Perhaps she also knew that the passage was to be direct, sailing mostly during summer weather. The *Medway* arrived in Hobart on 13 March 1821.⁵⁴

Records indicate that Richard Hall's behaviour set no good example for his nephew. Within days of the *Medway's* arrival on the Derwent, the ship's muster noted that Hall had 'absconded'.⁵⁵ The principal superintendent of convicts also recorded that prisoner 277 received 25 lashes on two occasions: for being drunk and disorderly after eight o'clock at night, and, for 'being afloat on the Derwent without a pass also taking Major Bell's boat without leave'.⁵⁶ Hall's bravado suggests he was weary of shipboard confinement and was testing authority. Did Laurence Henry witness these floggings? The record further relates that Richard stated to authorities that he had a

53 Charles Bateson, *The Convict Ships* (Sydney: Library of Australian History, 2004), 356; Jen Willets, 'Convict Ship Medway 1821', accessed 22 July 2022, freesettlororfelon.com/convict_ship_medway_1821.htm.

54 'Hobart Town', *Hobart Town Gazette and Van Diemen's Land Advertiser*, 17 March 1821, 2.

55 List of convicts (incomplete), 1841, HO 10/51, TNA.

56 Richard Hall, Conduct Register, CON31/1/18, Tasmanian Archives (hereafter TA).

‘...Wife at Yeovil, Surrey ... brother-in-law at Sydney, Dr Halloran’.⁵⁷ I wonder if local authorities planned to keep him at Hobart but changed their intention once he announced the location of his brother-in-law?

Without these meticulous records, we would not know that on arrival at Port Jackson, Richard Hall was 32, claimed he was a seaman, measured five feet four-and-a-half inches, with light grey eyes and brown hair.⁵⁸ Nor would we know that he was assigned to Richard Read, a portrait artist, possibly with Halloran’s influence. Read had arrived in 1813 under a sentence of 14 years for having knowingly possessed forged banknotes. Soon granted a ticket-of-leave, he was followed by his wife who travelled on the *Kangaroo* with other convict wives.⁵⁹ In February 1821 Read, now with a conditional pardon, was operating ‘a drawing room for young ladies and gentlemen’ at 6 Hunter Street before moving to 25 Upper Pitt Street in April.⁶⁰ Read and Halloran shared experiences; both born in 1765, transported for forgery-related crimes, and granted tickets-of-leave very soon after arrival. Given Richard Hall’s record, I wonder how Read utilised this assigned servant. Did he assist with the move to Pitt Street?

Was Halloran surprised to see Laurence Henry? At least three other transports had sailed following the date of Anna’s fourth petition, including the *Lord Sidmouth*, which arrived in Sydney only days before the *Medway*. What exquisite irony if news had arrived via this vessel! Regardless, Halloran was now certain he should expect Anna and the decision to remain in the colony was settled for the moment. The following day he dashed off an application for ‘permission to remain in the colony as a Settlor and the grant of some land’.⁶¹

This he composed with grandiloquent optimism. Since first operating classes out of Simeon Lord’s two-storey house in Macquarie Place, he had settled into premises at 53 Phillip Street.⁶² *Gazette* advertisements record his growing reputation as he

57 Richard Hall, CON31/1/18, TA. Major Bell was the inspector of public works in Hobart Town and an engineer. If Richard Hall had a wife, she did not live in Surrey—Yeovil is in Somerset. Perhaps the error occurred when details were transcribed from originals sent to Sydney in 1824, after Lieutenant-Governor Arthur undertook to compile a set of records for local use. This accounts for the discrepancies and different coloured inks in different hands. Original conduct records noted the offence, the statements on arrival, and any offences committed in the colony. Information from Tasmanian Library and Archives Service, 28 March 2021.

58 The only known physical description of any Hall family member. Richard Hall, Convict Ship Muster Roll of the *Medway* (1), NRS-1155 [2/8270] pp. 116–17, MHNSW-StAC. For Hall’s assignment to Read, see: Convicts and Settlers List, 1822, HO 10/18, TNA.

59 McIntyre, *Free Passage*, 31–32; Jocelyn Gray, ‘Read, Richard (1765–1829)’, *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, National Centre of Biography, The Australian National University, adb.anu.edu.au/biography/read-richard-2577/text3527, published first in hardcopy 1967, accessed online 2 December 2022.

60 *Sydney Gazette*, 14 April 1821, 2.

61 ‘Seeking permission to remain in the colony as a settler and the grant of some land’. Return of applications, NRS-897 [4/1749] pp. 263–64, MHNSW-StAC.

62 Halloran was encouraged by the attention of Simeon Lord and Samuel Terry; by their advice and example of how to get ahead. Macquarie recognised Lord’s hospitality ‘to those who were in distress’ in his January 1820 ‘Letter to the Right Honourable Viscount Sidmouth in Refutation of Statements made by The Right Honourable Henry Grey Bennett, MP’ (London: Richard Rees, 1821), nla.gov.au/nla.obj-496385303.

explored how to balance the realities of the regulations regarding his sentence with the opportunity to regain his status as a gentleman and scholar. And there was competition: from Isaac Wood's Sydney Academy, and from Reverend Reddall who had begun implementing Bell's system of education at the Male Orphan School in George Street. Halloran's point of difference was to offer the benefits of a 'liberal education' to 'a select number of young gentlemen in the various departments of Classical, Mathematical and Commercial learning and the *belles lettres*' at 20 guineas per annum for day students or 60 for boarders.⁶³ Building on his own experience as a student of the Royal Mathematical School, the years at Alphington Academy as a teacher and his early success at the Cape, Halloran appealed directly to the needs of the sons of officers, judicial and civil administrators, merchants (importers, whalers) and emancipists of every variety, by sparing them the anxiety, expense and inconvenience of sending their sons away for years of schooling in England or at Calcutta. As one parent explained to a friend, he had chosen to keep his son at home because 'we have a most excellent man (Dr Halleran) [*sic*] lately arrived in this country'.⁶⁴

After three months' adventure at sea, Laurence Henry resumed his studies. He may have found it difficult to settle into school routine under his father's authority, but he joined an interesting cohort. James Chisholm, Robert Jenkins, Henry and George Robinson, John Wild, Simeon Lord, Robert Campbell and Thomas Underwood;⁶⁵ all sons of ambitious and relatively wealthy parents, some emancipated, seemingly unconcerned about the details of Halloran's crime—convicted forgers, emancipated or not, were common in the colony.⁶⁶

Just as he had at the Cape, from the moment Halloran stepped ashore in June 1819, he demonstrated a remarkable talent for self-promotion and connecting with local men of influence.⁶⁷ But his position as a convict was vulnerable, and he was no longer young. While his ticket-of-leave allowed him to support himself and prepare for Anna's arrival, he was still under sentence and had no right to such privileges as family reunion, mitigation of sentence or land grants. Nevertheless, his personality would not allow him to lie low. He could not or would not accept that simply because he was well-educated and had served at Trafalgar, he was not above or outside the rules; after all, the frank had only been worth tenpence!

63 A copy of an original flyer for his school, dated 10 August 1819, was among the documents enclosed by Halloran in his letter to Lord Bathurst dated 27 January 1825, attempting to refute 'the calumnies and misrepresentations of Commissioner Bigge', CO 201/127, TNA.

64 In Cris Maxwell and Alex Pugh, *The Merchant of Sydney: James Chisholm 1772–1837* (North Melbourne: Australian Scholarly Publishing, 2017), 130; enrolment records for 1820–21 suggest at least 21 boys.

65 *Sydney Gazette*, 30 June 1821, 3.

66 Few parents were aware of Halloran's 1784 acquittal of the charge of murder. As for forgers, Halloran counted many, including Samuel Clayton and Joseph Josephson, as friends. It was Clayton who produced the 1819 flyer, and engraved the school medals, including the silver medal awarded to Robert Campbell. See '1819 Sydney Halloran School Prize Silver Medal', Downies Collectables, accessed 18 August 2021, www.downies.com/1819-sydney-halloran-school-prize-silver-medal.

67 He had known Secretary Campbell at the Cape and soon discovered that John Macarthur was also a Devon man.

Characteristically undaunted by the negative decision of the bench of magistrates in July 1819, and the suspension of his ticket-of-leave, he used the *Gazette* to promote his experience as an educator, and private letters to attract endorsement. Three months before Laurence Henry's arrival, he invited Secretary Campbell to join Judge Advocate Wylde to attend and inspect the final exams ahead of the Christmas break.⁶⁸ The commissioner, too, was invited on this occasion, but chose to defer, then taking with him the assistant chaplain, Mr Cowper, to ensure spiritual sanction. Although they approved of the curriculum, they disapproved of its secular nature—there were no Bibles in sight.⁶⁹

Halloran chose this moment to test the regulations by pleading with Bigge for mitigation of his sentence—but it was too soon; he was over-anxious, and Bigge was well-briefed. Two similar formal appeals to Macquarie also failed as 'it was out of his power to comply'.⁷⁰ Yet, while the governor could not help him, he could still utilise his skills and saw no reason to revise his initial view of Halloran's potential as an educator. Just days before Laurence Henry's arrival, Macquarie explained to Bathurst:

Mr Halloran, since my giving him a Ticket of Leave, ... still continues as much a convict as he was before he received it ... has uniformly conducted himself with the strictest propriety and is by far the best and most admired instructor of youth in the colony.⁷¹

Sixteen months later, again, Halloran appealed for sentence mitigation through Governor Brisbane, and was again refused.⁷² These repeated appeals for privileges did not help his family's cause and he had limited satisfaction—in August 1823, Brisbane confirmed a land grant to Laurence Henry initially authorised by Macquarie and, only after Anna's persistence and Macquarie's authorisation, was family reunion achieved in early 1822.⁷³

A grandson of Boutcher Halloran once confided to Australian descendants: 'I think Dr Halloran ... being very clever with his pen ... aggravated matters by his bitter and satirical writings'.⁷⁴ This was understatement. Halloran's complaint against Reverend Richard Hill in April 1821 was an exquisite example. Keen to regain respectability,

68 Inviting John Thomas Campbell to attend examination of pupils, 20 December 1820, NRS-897 [4/1747] pp. 285–86, MHNSW-StAC.

69 Bigge, *Report of the Commissioner of Inquiry*, 126.

70 Macquarie to Halloran, 5 December 1821, CO 201/127, TNA.

71 Responding to Bathurst's earlier rebuke, in *HRA I*, vol. 10, 478–79.

72 He tried again through Brisbane on 9 April 1822, after the departure of Bigge but before the first report was tabled in parliament. Petition of Laurence Hynes Halloran to Governor Brisbane, 9 April 1822, NRS-900 [4/1865] 97d–g, MHNSW-StAC.

73 Reply from Goulburn to Laurence Henry Halloran regarding his Memorial to Macquarie, 26 August 1823, NRS-937 [4/3509] p. 124, MHNSW-StAC.

74 Canon Joseph Halloran, an English great-grandson, in private correspondence with George Norton Halloran, an Australian grandson of Halloran, 22 August 1905. This was around the centenary of Trafalgar when English descendants were beginning to celebrate Halloran's participation in the battle rather than regret their descent from 'this most profligate man'.

he had answered a public appeal for more funds from the secretary of the Benevolent Society with a subscription of two guineas. He took umbrage when his name was published among the donors as simply 'Mr'.⁷⁵ He was relying on his qualification as doctor of divinity to advance the reputation of his school and insisted his title deserved respect. He suggested to Hill that the use of 'Mr' was 'a public denigration of his name, divested of his University Degree ... he who wantonly insults misfortune' abused the sacred office of assistant chaplain.⁷⁶ Equally sensitive, Hill complained to Macquarie who required that Halloran apologise, which he did in August. The colonial secretary suggested that had this apology not been satisfactory to Hill, 'the Governor will have no objection to refer the subject to ... the consideration of a public tribunal'.⁷⁷ Such behaviour with attitude did not bode well for Anna's future on arrival. Who would befriend her?

For her sake, Halloran may have been wiser to ignore the slight. His vexatious complaint undid the goodwill of his subscription to the ideals of the Benevolent Society, and by keeping his complaint in the public eye, he denied Anna any possibility of acceptance by members of the associated Ladies Committee. Established with the purpose of attending poor married women during their confinement, this committee regularly met at the home of their secretary, Phoebe Sapphira Hill. Among the attendees were wives and daughters of respectable citizens whom Anna may have wished to meet. In the colony, as in Georgian society in general, women's characters were judged by the actions of their men.

This incident was aggravated by the sensitivities of both identities. Halloran was over-anxious. Hill, employed as an assistant chaplain under Samuel Marsden, had arrived a mere 10 days before Halloran. Perhaps he resented Halloran's academic qualification. Maybe he was simply careless. But did he not know his parishioners' names? He later claimed: 'I published the name as I found it in the Treasurer's book'.⁷⁸ Alternatively, he *did* know Halloran's background and was aware of his present private affairs; including whispers of an improper relationship with one of his servants, the married daughter of a neighbour.⁷⁹

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75 *Sydney Gazette*, 14 April 1821, 1.

76 Envelope addressed to the Reverend Richard Hill, 4 September 1821, NRS-897 [4/1750] p. 110, MHNSW-StAC.

77 Frederick Goulburn to Reverend Hill, 4 September 1821, NRS-897 [4/1750] pp. 107–10, MHNSW-StAC. Halloran chose not to sign the apology as DD.

78 Hill tried to blame Antill, the treasurer, an ally of Macquarie and once his aide-de-camp. Goulburn to Hill, 4 September 1821, NRS-897 [4/1750] p. 107, MHNSW-StAC.

79 Accused of living with Susannah Edwards and causing her husband to be kept in the Barracks, 1822, NRS-897 [4/1808] pp. 389–91, MHNSW-StAC. Susannah's mother 'encouraged' her daughter by suggesting better opportunities with Halloran.

Anna, meanwhile, having farewelled Laurence Henry, remained stranded to face a third punishing winter in Deptford. At least the wait allowed time to prepare. Perhaps she consulted contemporary accounts of life in the colony such as that of William Charles Wentworth, with its illustration of the harbour at Port Jackson and its fulsome description of supplies suitable for such journeys.⁸⁰ If she did read this, however, she likely dismissed it as hardly relevant to her circumstances; it assumed a degree of wealth and agency she did not possess. Her own experience of shipboard conditions was more useful. She had travelled by sea twice before, knew something of the routine, and was aware that her journey was to be double the distance to the Cape.

David Reid was appointed surgeon superintendent to the *Providence*, coincidentally the same surgeon who had accompanied the *Baring* in 1819, and whose journal of that voyage remains. Unfortunately, there is no surviving journal from the *Providence*, but there is a separate account from the passage of the *Morley*, superintended by one Thomas Reid. Much can be inferred about Anna's journey from both these journals.⁸¹ It was David Reid's third voyage. His previous report contained valuable advice concerning the freshness of food—there were no deaths from scurvy—the quality of water, the choice of route and the ports of call. He also knew the background of his passengers, with cause to remember the name Halloran. When called before the Sydney bench of magistrates in July 1819 as a witness to Halloran's complaints against Captain Lamb on the *Baring*, Reid testified: 'I think he had greater indulgence allowed him, than I ever saw given to a convict during the two voyages I have made to this country!'⁸² Thomas Reid was similarly experienced. He had supervised the male transport, *Neptune*, and in 1817 was appointed to the *Morley* with the influence of Elizabeth Fry; commissioned specifically to foster the virtues of Christian morality and to discourage 'connections' between the women and the crew. This last proved a difficult task as the sailors, emboldened by the gender imbalance, were intent on doing the exact opposite.

Prior to the departure of female transports, members of Elizabeth Fry's Ladies' Society, and often Elizabeth herself, came aboard, as did Capper from the Home Office; each to monitor preparations and inspect prisoners' conditions below decks. With 'benevolent zeal' the ladies intoned the virtues of docility and, in the interest of 'character reformation', distributed bibles and moral tracts and 'alleviations' such

80 W. C. Wentworth, *Statistical, historical, and political description of the colony of New South Wales, and its dependent settlements in Van Diemen's Land*, 2nd ed. (London: Printed for G. and W. B. Whittaker, 1820).

81 David Reid, Medical journal of the *Baring* convict ship sailing to New South Wales, 31 October 1818–July 1820, ADM 101/7/4, TNA; Thomas Reid, *Two Voyages to New South Wales and Van Diemen's Land: with a description of the present condition of that interesting colony: Including facts and observations relative to the state and management of convicts of both sexes: Also reflections on seduction and its general consequences* (London: Longman, Hurst, 1822).

82 David Reid testimony in 'Charges made against Captain John Lamb by Laurence Halloran found by Bench of Magistrates to be malicious and groundless', 10 July 1819, NRS-897 [4/1742] pp. 126–37, MHNSW-StAC. Halloran travelled in greater comfort than Anna.

as needles, thread, fabric, and straw for plaiting; all designed to occupy idle hands.⁸³ Their moral purpose was to dispel ignorance by learning to read and comprehend the Bible's Christian messages. Only then could character be reformed.

Aboard the *Providence*, as on the *Morley*:

The liberality of Government had allowed a free passage to a number of females who were permitted to join their husbands and relatives in New South Wales, and these, according to order from the office of the Home Department were all on board within a certain day appointed.⁸⁴

And so it was that Anna, having at last received notice of the next available transport, walked the children up the gangway of the *Providence*. Perhaps the family boarded at Deptford as the vessel was loading supplies, and before she collected over 100 female convicts downriver. They were to travel with 16 other convict families at government expense, 10 of whom were destined for Port Jackson. There are few descriptions of how or where such passengers were accommodated, but without the need of a military guard for female convicts, it is possible that space was made available under one of the decks; albeit space confined by thin partitions.⁸⁵ As for luggage, Anna certainly included unsold copies of *Newgate*.

No figure survives for how many were on board the *Providence* as she was piloted downriver on 13 June. Assuming a crew of around 40, 17 'wives' of convicts with, say, 50 children, an unknown number of free passengers, and the 100 female convicts of all ages, there were over 200. Wherever accommodated, each passenger knew precisely what they had left behind, and had little idea of what lay ahead or the likelihood of their ever returning. One can only imagine Anna's mixed feelings. Her relief that she could proceed, at last, undermined by anxiety about the risks of the journey and hope that her previous 'competency' might be attainable counterbalanced by fear that all her struggles could come to nothing. Thirteen years before, she had travelled with optimism to the Cape, and that experience had ended in abandonment.

Once the vessel encountered the swells of the English Channel, such thoughts were swamped by the wretched misery of sea sickness, endured while confined to cabin. The pitching and rolling of the heavy seas of the Bay of Biscay compounded this discomfort as bedding was saturated. It took time to gain their 'sea legs' and adapt to shipboard routine. The demands of hygiene were complex, and the logistics of managing wet washing were relentless. In dry weather, the women could use the rigging or the hammock netting, but during storms the hatches were closed and there was nothing to be done. The ramifications of the changes in climate were also challenging as they travelled from summer into autumn in the northern hemisphere;

83 T. Reid, *Two Voyages to New South Wales*, 97.

84 T. Reid, *Two Voyages to New South Wales*, 95.

85 As Elizabeth Macarthur noted in her diary during her voyage on the Second Fleet. Michelle Scott Tucker, *Elizabeth Macarthur* (Text: Melbourne, 2018), 27.

then, once through the tropics, into spring and summer of the southern hemisphere. There was no avoiding the heat of the equator or the high angle of the sun while dressed in inappropriate clothing, the prickly heat, the sunburn and the freckles, and the attendant debilitating bowel complaints of dysentery or diarrhoea. Further, there was a daily battle to maintain a reasonable standard of nutrition when supplies of fresh vegetables and meat dwindled and the monotonous ships' rations dominated. There was only so much ship's biscuit, salt pork, burgoo, canned rations and stale water that anyone could tolerate before illness and lethargy set in.

Once clear of the Bay of Biscay and the open North Atlantic, the route took them across the Tropic of Cancer to their first stop at Port Praya on the southern coast of the Portuguese island of Saint Jago in the Cape Verde group. My historical imagination wonders if, as free passengers, the family were rowed ashore to explore the town while the *Providence* took on fresh supplies. Most likely, they had to be satisfied with the view from on deck before the second stage of the journey took them south-south-west and across the equator. Here, the discomforts were relieved by the dark comic rites of Neptune, celebrated to recognise the change of hemisphere and to placate the god of the sea at whose mercy they were. By taking this route it was hoped to avoid the doldrums of the 'horse' latitudes; the same calms that had delayed the *Baring*.

Their second stop was Rio de Janeiro, also under Portuguese control, and only a year before Brazil gained independence. Passing the spectacular Sugarloaf, they anchored in that marvellous harbour in late September to take on water, fresh vegetables and lemon juice. Was it possible to purchase fresh provisions from one of the bumboats plying their wares to ships lying at anchor?

Their arrival was noticed by one James Dixon, who had travelled in the reverse direction, to England, via Cape Horn and up the east coast of South America. Dixon also observed at anchor the male convict transport *John Barry*, and the merchant ship *Royal George*.⁸⁶ It is ironic, in hindsight, that Anna 'crossed paths' at Rio with Sir Thomas Brisbane, sent to replace Macquarie, and commissioned to restrict indulgences and reduce opportunities for emancipated convicts. In 1819, Halloran, equally ironically, had arrived in the colony only three months ahead of Commissioner Bigge, the official whose reports had set these changes in motion.

'The passage from ... [Rio] ... can be made to Port Jackson in as little time as from England to Rio', advised the surgeon of the *Baring* in his journal of 1819.⁸⁷ But, although the southern spring season favoured smooth sailing south-east from Rio to connect with the Roaring Forties above the Southern Indian Ocean, it was 10 weeks before they reached Hobart and was a further test of Anna's endurance. How to

86 James Dixon, *Narrative of the Voyage to New South Wales and Van Diemen's Land in the ship Skelton during the year 1820* (Edinburgh, 1822), 105, University of Tasmania Library Special and Rare Materials Collection, Australia, eprints.utas.edu.au/6259.

87 Reid, *Baring* medical journal, ADM 101/7/4, TNA.

alleviate boredom over these distances? Did Anna make connections with other women, convict or not? Could the children roam freely? Henry and Arthur were then aged 10 and eight, their four siblings younger, and Catherine just a toddler. Were they encouraged to observe the world they were traversing—the sea birds, the albatross, the pods of sperm and black whales, the orcas and porpoises, the flying fish and turtles, the waterspouts, the rare passing sails?

There was surely a school on the *Providence* as there had been on the *Morley*. There, Mrs Emma Josephson (1781–1868), also travelling 'free' with her small son Joshua to join her husband, was entrusted to impart 'the rudiments of spelling and reading'.⁸⁸ She, too, was known to Thomas Reid who had had charge of Jacob Josephson (1773–1845), transported on the *Neptune*. The evidence is circumstantial but was Anna similarly entrusted with the management of the school? Her literacy and previous experience during Halloran's curacies were useful attributes, and she had her eldest daughter to assist her.

Responsibility for school management served as a distraction from predatory sailors. Whereas there were sufficient convict wives on board to ensure a community of carers for the younger children—to prevent them from falling overboard—there was real cause for anxiety for the welfare of older girls such as Laura who was now 17. Reid's *Morley* journal records the stress he experienced preventing sailors from getting at the (often willing) convict women below. He found that the alcohol ration was abused by all onboard: 'the child's allowance helps to make the mother drunk' and recommended it be replaced with tea and sugar.⁸⁹ He proposed that accommodation on future vessels 'ought to be as firm at least as that for males', and security improved.⁹⁰ The locks were rusty, easily picked, and there were no spares. Door hinges were wrenched from their frames. The need to protect the women from the 'wicked daring' and 'evil designs' of the 'vile' sailors and their 'nocturnal annoyances' caused Reid, with his captain's approval, to spend 40 nights below 'keeping watch armed with a brace of pistols to repel intrusion'.⁹¹ James Dixon's reference to the *Providence* anchoring at Rio to 'correct some insubordination of the crew' hints at similar problems with crew discipline.⁹²

Six months since departure from the Thames, gannets and petrels wheeled overhead as the *Providence* approached the west coast of Van Diemen's Land. Then, after disembarking half the convict complement at the Derwent, she weighed anchor on New Year's Eve to complete the last leg of that seemingly endless journey. For Anna, it allowed a moment's reflection. She hoped the relentless struggle for food and shelter during three and a half years of cruel separation—the primary punishment—

88 T. Reid, *Two Voyages to New South Wales*, 127 and 249–50.

89 T. Reid, *Two Voyages to New South Wales*, 88.

90 T. Reid, *Two Voyages to New South Wales*, 298.

91 T. Reid, *Two Voyages to New South Wales*, 190.

92 Dixon, *Narrative of the Voyage to New South Wales*, 105.

was over. Six months' confinement in that small wooden world, where all decisions were made for her, and life was prescribed by routine, was an interval of relative security between the misery, impoverishment and precarious existence of life in London and Deptford, and the prospect of an uncertain future in an unknown environment. With the sole advantage of having provided a respite from pregnancy, the law had taken its course.

Southerly winds propelled the *Providence* north past the Furneaux Islands and through the Tasman Sea until, guided by the Macquarie Light on South Head, she sailed through the sandstone cliffs into the calm and safety of the harbour waters. To the left were sandy crescent beaches with forested fingers of land reaching the shoreline and small fishing craft navigating between bush-covered islands. Ahead was Rocky Pinchgut, and beyond was Garden Island, beside which her anchors rattled out for the last time on Sunday 7 January 1822.

With lengthy disembarkation procedures completed, the family was reunited. There was Catherine, the child Halloran had never seen, and William, last seen as a toddler; then the older children, some of whom barely remembered him; and Laura, who did. She and Laurence Henry had stories to share. Finally, there was Anna, the woman whose intelligent management and fierce determination had ensured their survival throughout years of forced humiliation. She had served time. I cannot imagine what they had to say to each other, each of them older and each with their own lived experience. I guess that it was Anna, rather than Halloran, who had developed the greater self-knowledge. For the moment, though, she was likely dumb with exhaustion. And she was soon pregnant.

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