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<td>Australian Council for Educational Research</td>
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<tr>
<td>ADB</td>
<td><em>Australian Dictionary of Biography</em></td>
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<td>BT</td>
<td>Bonwick Transcripts</td>
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<tr>
<td>CSLC</td>
<td>Clergy and School Lands Corporation</td>
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<tr>
<td>CSIL</td>
<td>Colonial Secretary In Letters</td>
</tr>
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<td>CSOL</td>
<td>Colonial Secretary Out Letters</td>
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<td>FOS</td>
<td>Female Orphan School</td>
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<td>HRA</td>
<td><em>Historical Records of Australia</em></td>
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<td>HRNSW</td>
<td><em>Historical Records of New South Wales</em></td>
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<td>JRAHS</td>
<td><em>Journal of the Royal Australian Historical Society</em></td>
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<td>London Missionary Society</td>
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<td>ML</td>
<td>Mitchell Library</td>
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<td>MOS</td>
<td>Male Orphan School</td>
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<td>SG</td>
<td><em>Sydney Gazette</em></td>
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<td>SPCK</td>
<td>Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPG</td>
<td>Society for the Propagation of the Gospel</td>
</tr>
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<td>SRNSW</td>
<td>State Records of New South Wales</td>
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Declaration

This is to certify that:

I this thesis comprises only my original work towards the Doctor of Philosophy Degree

II due acknowledgement has been made in the text to all other material used

III the thesis does not exceed the word length for this degree

IV no part of this work has been used for the award of another degree

V this thesis meets the University of Sydney’s Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC) requirements for the conduct of research.

Signature ........................................................................................................................................

Name ...........................................................................................................................................

Date ...............................................................................................................................................
Acknowledgements

I express my sincere gratitude to Associate Professor Craig Campbell for his willingness to supervise the preparation of my thesis. I have appreciated his encouragement, his guidance, his constructive comments, and the level of supervision he has provided.

Professor Geoffrey Sherington, as my assistant supervisor, has made very helpful comments as he has read draft chapters. I am appreciative of his interest, and his contributions to this work.

The staffs at the State Records New South Wales offices at Sydney and Kingswood, have been very responsive to my needs. In the Sydney Office I am grateful to Lindsay Allen for his helpful advice, as I have searched for relevant material, whilst Fabian Lo Schiavo’s skills in deciphering handwriting in archival materials have been invaluable to me.

Kathy Curran, librarian at the Royal Australian Historical Society, has been most helpful in directing me to various resources held by that library. I sincerely acknowledge her ready assistance, and I have valued her genuine interest in the progress of my thesis.

The Office Manager Michael Nandan, at Casula Power House Arts Centre and Liverpool Regional Museum, has made material on the Male Orphan School available to me. This has been of great value in my research. I thank Mr. Nandan for his ready co-operation, and for enabling me to have facilities for recording this material at the museum.

I thank the members of the Mitchell Library staff, who have responded in a positive way to my many enquiries. The assistance given in particular with the photographic collection held by the Library is appreciated, and has been of much value.

Daphne Kingston has graciously given permission for her drawing of the Master’s Residence at the Male Orphan School to be included in the thesis. I thank her very sincerely for her kind gesture.

I remain indebted to my neighbours Esther Meehan and Frank Smith. They have willingly shared their computer knowledge and skills with me. The generous manner, in which they have given their time as this project has proceeded, is very much appreciated.
Abstract of thesis

This thesis is concerned with an examination and re-assessment of the establishment, operation and management of the Female and Male Orphan Schools, in the first half of the nineteenth century in New South Wales. The chaplains and governors in the early penal settlement were faced with a dilemma, as they beheld the number of children who were ‘orphaned’, neglected, abandoned and destitute. In order to understand the reasons why these children were in necessitous circumstances, the thesis seeks to examine the situations of the convict women, who were the mothers of these children.

Governors Philip Gidley King and Lachlan Macquarie respectively in 1801 and 1819 established the Schools, which provided elementary education, training and residential care within a religious setting. Researching the motives underlying the actions of these men has been an important part of the thesis.

An examination of the social backgrounds of some of the children admitted to these Schools has been undertaken, in order to provide a greater understanding of the conditions under which the children were living prior to their admissions. Information about family situations, and the social problems encountered by parents that led them to place their children in the Schools, have been explored.

The avenues open to the girls and boys when they left the Schools, has formed part of the study. Some children were able to be reunited with family members, but the majority of them were apprenticed. A study of the nature of these apprenticeships, has led to a greater understanding of employment opportunities for girls and boys at that time.

In 1850 the Schools were amalgamated into the Protestant Orphan School at Parramatta. By examining the governance and operation of the Schools during their last two decades as separate entities, we have more knowledge about and understanding of these two colonial institutions.

It is the conclusion of this thesis that some of the harsher judgements of revisionist social historians need to be modified. It was the perception that more social disorder would occur if action was not taken to ‘rescue’ the ‘orphaned’ children, usually of convict parentage. However genuine charity, philanthropy and concern was displayed for the children in grave physical and moral danger. The goals of the founders were not always reached in the Orphan Schools, nevertheless they performed an invaluable service in the lives of many children.
### Structure of thesis

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INTRODUCTION

The Orphan Schools were established for girls in 1801, and for boys in 1819, to provide educational, residential facilities and training for children in necessitous circumstances in the penal colony of New South Wales, and were of significance in the lives of hundreds of girls and boys.

The Female Orphan School holds a unique place in the history of education on the mainland of Australia. It was the first school established using public funds, and furthermore, as a residential school to provide care for ‘orphan’, destitute, neglected and abandoned girls, it was the initial provider of child welfare provisions for children in need of ‘care’.

Although over time, beginning in the 1880s in New South Wales¹ alternative methods of care were provided through the process of ‘boarding out’ children, and in the establishment of ‘children’s homes’, the type of institutional care provided by the Female Orphan School was still in existence in Australia in the 1950s and 1960s. This type of care was provided by both government, church, and other philanthropic instrumentalities. The features and outcomes of some of these establishments have been described by Joanne Penglase who was ‘in care’ during the 1940s.² Some of these later institutions were of a ‘closed’ nature like the Orphan Schools, whilst others provided residential care and the children attended schools in the local communities.

Other historians have made a study of the Orphan Schools, as we shall read in the second literature review. The significance of this thesis is that it seeks to contribute further to our knowledge about, and understanding of the Female and Male Orphan Schools. Five main areas of investigation have been undertaken to enhance such knowledge and understanding. They are:

1. the backgrounds of the convict women for whose children the Female Orphan School was initially established, and which impinged on the establishment of the Male Orphan School;

2. the motivations of the Governors, Philip Gidley King and Lachlan Macquarie as they sought to establish the Female and later the Male Orphan Schools;

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3. the family circumstances and social backgrounds of the children who were admitted to the Schools;
4. the avenues of apprenticeship open to girls and boys on leaving the Schools;
5. the study of the governance and operation of the Schools in their last two decades as separate entities.

The Female Orphan School was opened in 1801, and in addressing the question why this School was established, we find that grave social problems existed as far as many of the children were concerned. There were many destitute children in need of care in the penal settlement of New South Wales. They were living in miserable conditions and were neglected, some were orphans, and others had been abandoned. To understand the reasons for the plight of these children, our attention is drawn to the convict women who were their mothers. Why were some of these women unable to provide adequate care for their children? To answer this question we shall examine the situations in which they were placed, and further consider the problems they encountered.

A re-assessment of the motives of the officials leading to the establishment of both Schools, is an important aspect of this thesis. Both Governors Phillip and Hunter who were humane men, were concerned about the plight of many of the colony’s children. Governor Phillip attempted to make ‘boarding out’ provisions for their care, and Governor Hunter was in favour of the establishment of an orphanage. Did these early Governors and chaplain, who were essentially from the respectable class, seek to provide care for the destitute children because they wanted an orderly society, or were there other considerations behind their actions? Were Governor King and Governor Macquarie who established the Female and Male Orphan Schools respectively, philanthropic men who were moved with pity when they witnessed the state of the children in the streets, or did they wish to exercise ‘social control’ over these children?

A study of some of the children who were admitted to the Schools has been included, because it is of significance to understand the social backgrounds and family circumstances of these children. Were the adult members of families acting in an irresponsible manner in not providing adequate care for their children, or were there other factors responsible for the admission of girls and boys to the Orphan Schools? When the children were due to leave the institutions what avenues were open to them? The study of such avenues either to return to a family unit, or to be
placed in further training as apprentices, provides us with information and an understanding about social conditions and employment opportunities for young people at that time.

The Orphan Schools were managed by Committees whose members were responsible for the oversight of the institutions. This pattern was in place from the establishment of the Female Orphan School in 1801, and the Male Orphan School in 1819 until late 1823. Governor Brisbane then appointed an interim committee of three men to manage the Schools. The control of the Schools passed to the Clergy and School Lands Corporation in 1825, until its revocation in 1832. Who assumed responsibility for the Schools at that time? An examination of the governance and operation of the Schools in their last two decades as separate entities, has significance in the study of the Orphan Schools. In this period the control of the Schools passed to the colonial administration, and this accession of government control of the Schools enables us to have a fuller understanding of the Schools’ operations prior to their amalgamation as the Protestant Orphan School in 1850.

This thesis is concerned with the way in which the penal colony of New South Wales sought to provide care for the ‘orphan’, abandoned, neglected and destitute children. The provision of care was initially through the establishment of the Female and Male Orphan Schools. However care was not limited to these institutions. Without social and administrative structures, such as those which existed in Britain in place in the colony, the administrators had to develop their own strategies to cope with the presenting problems. The provisions made in the early settlements were adaptations of the British ‘models’, and by including recent interpretations of the history of the social administration of care/education for such children firstly in Britain in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, and secondly in New South Wales in the early nineteenth century, we are better placed to understand the operation of the Orphan Schools in New South Wales.
Recent literature concerning the provisions and social administration of care/education for the very poor, destitute children in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries in Britain will be reviewed.

In their consideration of the Poor Law provisions for apprenticing the ‘parish’ children, which had their origins in the Elizabethan Act of 1601, Pinchbeck and Hewitt write that ‘it was the high hopes of Elizabethan paternalism to abolish the evils of poverty by securing the proper training of poor children to some honest trade in life’. Mary George is in partial agreement with this statement. In her words ‘apprenticeship was an Elizabethan device for the industrial training of poor children’. Hugh Cunningham however views the Poor Law provisions in another light, and he comments ‘the Poor Laws provided the legal and administrative framework within which the lives of the poor could be controlled’.

Cunningham asserts that the children of the poor were perceived to be different from other children in that ‘they were destined to be workers’. Jan Kociumbas in her presentation of material about children in the eighteenth century in Britain draws the conclusion that:

the ideal childhood as detailed and defined by the theorists was confined to the sons of landed aristocrats and gentry, Anglican bishops, merchants and financiers, who were now joined by wealthy manufacturers. Most of the children of the dispossessed (agricultural workers) were forced to leave their homes early, and to make their own way in the world by their labours.

Here she agrees with Cunningham that the way of life of the children of the poor was indeed very different from the lives of the children of the aristocracy, middle and upper classes.

Education for children of the privileged classes was not confined to elementary education, and was provided in private schools, day and boarding schools or by private tuition in their homes. For the children of the poor the Charity Schools

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6 Ibid.
of the eighteenth century offered an elementary type of education. Mary Jones writes that ‘the eighteenth century in English history was the “age of benevolence”, and the Charity Schools were a favourite form of benevolence’. Pinchbeck and Hewitt concur with Jones’ description of the popularity of these schools in the general community. They write ‘the support of the charity schools was the favourite form of practical piety in London, and it was clear that the schools were objects of pride to the citizens’. Cunningham supports the idea that the Charity Schools had great appeal for their subscribers. ‘For the sake of publicity and fund-raising an annual day was found when the children could display before their benefactors due order and submission’.

Cunningham’s use of the term ‘due order and submission’ indicates that these were perceived as important aspects of the children’s behaviour. Mary Jones also refers ‘to the desire of the upper and middle classes to establish social discipline among the poor’, and the Charity Schools were the means of reaching that objective through their moral and religious education of the children. Pinchbeck and Hewitt agree that ‘the school would provide an essential form of social control and an agency for social discipline amongst a class conspicuously in need of both’.

In describing Leeds Charity School Simon Frith writes it was established ‘for the maintenance of forty poor children and their education in the doctrines of the Church of England, and in the necessary skills for “honest trades and professions”. Later 120 children were clothed and taught English and writing and to spin worsted’. Pamela and Harold Silver support this idea in their description of the schools:

The Charity Schools provided a basic education in reading and arithmetic, sometimes writing, and often relevant practical crafts and skills appropriate to the likely future occupations of the children. All this was...
provided within a framework of moral and religious education and worship.  

The eighteenth century also saw the establishment of Schools of Industry. It was intended that these schools would be self-supporting by training the children of the poor to contribute to their own upkeep by learning simple industrial skills. Furthermore the work habits so instilled would overcome any idleness. Mary George describes such a school which was established in St James Westminster parish in 1781. ‘The children learnt reading, writing and ciphering; the girls were taught housework and needlework; the boys learnt shoemaking, tailoring and pin-heading’. Cunningham also notes the aim of self-sufficiency, and refers to the pupils’ activities in straw plaiting at Finchen School of Industry in Norfolk, early in the nineteenth century. He also indicates the main aim of the school was ‘to solve the problem of disorder by setting the children to work’. Jones considers that some Schools of Industry were established to ‘act as a deterrent to pauperism’, because the poverty of the lower class was perceived to be self-induced. Training in these schools would enable the poor to become ‘self-supporting and would accustom them from babyhood to “a civil and industrious course of life” ’. She argues that the children gained some skills as spinners in Firmin’s School of Industry. Thomas Firmin owned a spinning mill and his essential motive was to combat idleness and to exert control over what he perceived to be unruly behaviour.

Cunningham agrees with that concept and states:

in the rules and regulations of these Schools of Industry it is possible to see in them the embodiment of the search for order, there could be no greater contrast than that between the idle children on the street and those in Schools of Industry where every moment and every action had a stipulating regulation.

These schools were never very numerous, and in assessing their place in the education and training for the children of the poor, Pinchbeck and Hewitt agree that ‘with the heavy emphasis on industrial training this precluded anything but a scant attention to

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15 George, p. 249.
16 Cunningham, p. 28.
17 Jones, p. 31.
18 Cunningham, pp. 28-29.
the children’s formal education, and without exception excluded any attempt to educate children according to their individual abilities’. 19

We have noted that the Poor Law provided for the apprenticing of parish children, and many cases of the ill-treatment of ‘parish’ apprentices were reported from the mid-seventeenth century. Pinchbeck and Hewitt contend that the mechanisms to provide proper oversight were not available; more than local supervision was required. 20 Thomas Jordan agrees with this conclusion, and points to remedies offered by ‘Acts’: ‘the more flagrant abuses of child workers were prevalent in the earlier decades of the nineteenth century before reforming laws slowly improved their conditions through piecemeal legislation’. 21 Mary George concurs with this statement. Subsequent action taken by reformers and philanthropists brought about changes in Poor Law Acts:

In 1802 came Sir Robert Peel’s Act ‘for protecting parish apprentices in cotton mills, who were for the most part children from the London Workhouses’. This is almost the last of the series of acts for the protection of parish children. 22

The emphasis here was placed on training ‘parish’ children rather than on educating them.

The changing industrial face of England in the late eighteenth century was accompanied by an increase in the number of children employed in the factories full time. To reach these children who were denied elementary education, Sunday Schools were established. Writers such as Pinchbeck and Hewitt, Cunningham and Pamela and Harold Silver all agree that the aim of the Sunday Schools was to bring order into the lives of these young factory workers. Criticisms of these unruly children by respectable people such as Robert Raikes were many, they were: ‘roaming the streets on Sundays’; on Sundays the children exhibited ‘wild and mischievous behaviour’; and were ‘prowling the streets in the shape of wolves and tigers’. 23

19 Pinchbeck and Hewitt, p. 416.
20 ibid., p. 258.
22 George, p. 242.
23 Pinchbeck and Hewitt, p. 296; Cunningham, p. 37; Silver and Silver, p. 7.
The main function of these schools was to provide religious instruction, because it was the considered opinion that this was the best means of bringing order into the lives of the lower classes. Phillip McCann writes that teaching reading was mainly the means of achieving this end, ‘that is, to be able to read the Bible’.24 Jordan, and Pinchbeck and Hewitt agree with McCann’s assessment. Pinchbeck and Hewitt also consider that the religious training provided was with the intent of ‘instructing them in the plain duties of the Christian Religion, with a particular view as to their future careers as labourers and servants’.25 Brian Simon argues in a similar vein, that the Sunday Schools sought ‘to educate the poor in the principles of religion and the duties of their lowly station in life as labourers and servants’.26 Jordan writes from another perspective about the Sunday Schools, and considers that the pupils received ‘moral training which conveyed a set of principles which were the core of character development for the great mass of ordinary people’.27

Later a number of secular Sunday Schools were developed by reformers, and their aim was ‘to replace the religious indoctrination of children with rational education’.28 Brian Simon argued that in order to achieve this aim, the curriculum was broadened to include writing, listening to reports, general discussions of a political nature and the preparation of talks and reports.29 Simon Frith cites the work of the Zion Sunday School established in Leeds in 1832 ‘with pupils aged from seven to thirty. There was no obligatory curriculum, and the flexibility of the system (for teachers and students) gave the school an atmosphere of independence and community control’.30 This outcome of community control was in contrast to the religiously based Sunday Schools, which were established to bring order into the lives of the poor.

The development of the monitorial systems of education by Joseph Lancaster and Dr Andrew Bell, in time gave rise respectively to the British and Foreign School Society (a non-conformist organisation), and the National Society which was the educational agency of the Church of England. James Walvin considers that the

25 Pinchbeck and Hewitt, p. 296.
28 Simon, p. 187.
29 ibid., pp. 188-189.
30 Frith, pp. 82-83.
provisions for the education of the poor during the greater part of the nineteenth century, were under the control of the National Society and the British and Foreign School Society.  

31 J. M. Goldstrom argued that these ‘two religious societies were to dominate the field of education for the poor until 1870’.  

32 Pamela and Harold Silver state that in the National Society the ‘Church of England in 1811 was responding to the successful initiative sponsored mainly by Non-Conformist churches. The Church of England was unwilling to allow the emergence of a system of popular education over which it did not exercise control’.  

33 Frith concurs with that assessment, and comments ‘the National Schools reflected Anglicanism’s new found aggression’.  

34 Walvin claims that from the monitorial schools upward social mobility was not intended. He writes that: ‘just as powerful as the emphasis given in education to social stability was the all pervasive ethos of religion. Boys and girls were taught to know their place within the wider social order’.  

35 Frith agrees that the provision of a sound religious education was the primary purpose of these schools: ‘secular education had to be accompanied by religious instruction’.  

36 Richard Johnson also makes his assessment of the purpose of these schools when he writes, ‘The school was to raise a new race of working people - respectful, cheerful, hard-working, loyal, pacific and religious’.  

37 Harold Silver makes a general observation about the impact of the monitorial system and, he writes, this system ‘dominated English popular education for half a century. It is arguable that it was the most influential innovation in the history of English education’.  

38 Another provision of care and education for the very poor, outcast children was made by the Ragged School Movement. Thomas Jordan considers that ‘the Ragged Schools went to the hard core of the problems of child welfare by seeking out street arabs and abandoned children’.  

39 This assessment about the destitute nature of the children is borne out by Walvin in his description of the children of the Hungate

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33 Silver and Silver, p. 11.  
34 Frith, p. 74.  
35 Walvin, p. 115.  
36 Frith, p. 78.  
Mission School in York: ‘the children were ragged and dirty, and some of them revoltingly so’.\textsuperscript{40} Harold Silver writes in a positive vein about the outcomes of the Ragged School Movement, writing that ‘between the creation of the ragged school movement in the 1840s and 1851, it is estimated the London schools had ‘rescued’ some 300,000 children’.\textsuperscript{41} The ‘rescue’ nature of these schools is taken up by Hugh Cunningham who cites the work of Thomas Guthrie in Edinburgh:

\begin{quote}
these creatures gradually lose their savage air; features of starvation are rounded with food; put on flesh; healthy blooms on many cheeks; hang dog, cunning, low suspicious looks give way to an honest bearing and an open, cheerful countenance.\textsuperscript{42}
\end{quote}

Although this description of transformation is couched in dramatic terms, it probably reflects the very positive changes which occurred in many of these young lives.

In his school John Pounds (the founder of the Ragged Schools) not only taught the boys and girls reading and writing, but the boys were taught cobbling, and the girls were taught to cook. The dual role of the schools is described by Pamela and Harold Silver, who state they aimed to reach ‘the most destitute and vagrant children frequently offering them food and shelter as much as any kind of education’.\textsuperscript{43} Jordan shares this conception of the Schools and writes that they ‘provided an alternative to life on the streets’, and must be seen as a ‘social response to the needs of children’.\textsuperscript{44}

This brief literature review of the situation in England in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries enables us to interpret the social administration of the provisions for the care and education of the children of the poor during the period under study. The Poor Law provisions for the apprenticing of ‘parish’ children, were established with the intention of providing children with training. This would lead to future occupations and would allow these ‘parish’ children to avoid a life of poverty. The thinking behind the apprenticeship schemes appears to have been of a practical nature.

\begin{tabular}{ll}
\textsuperscript{40} & Walvin, p. 118. \\
\textsuperscript{41} & Silver, p. 20. \\
\textsuperscript{42} & Cunningham, p. 107. \\
\textsuperscript{43} & Silver and Silver, p. 76. \\
\textsuperscript{44} & Jordan, p. 168. \\
\end{tabular}
The later establishment of workhouses, whilst based on humanitarian grounds of providing the basic needs of food, clothing and shelter for the destitute, were to lead to problems inherent in all large institutions. Fictional literature has made us aware of the appalling conditions endured by the inmates in many workhouses.

In the eighteenth and early part of the nineteenth century, respectable class perceptions about the children of the poor being different from other children, led to the establishment of different types of schools for their education. Preservation of the prevailing social structure and the need to bring order into the lives of the children of the poor, appear to be the overriding considerations for the establishment of the Charity Schools. These schools were commenced in 1699 through the Anglican agency, the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge. These boarding or residential schools provided religious instruction based on the doctrines of the Church of England. Elementary education which was considered relevant to their station in life was provided. Reading, writing and arithmetic formed part of the curriculum, and instruction in sewing, domestic skills, spinning, carpentry and gardening was provided in some of these schools.

Within the Charity Schools the children’s lives were regimented, and their uniforms distinguished the ‘charity’ children from others. These were the means employed to bring order into their lives and to condition them to their ‘appointed’ place in society as workers. Although many subscribers to these schools were prompted to make donations in a desire to help or benefit these destitute or outcast children, the motivation behind the aims of the schools was to achieve other outcomes.

The founder of the Schools of Industry was an advocate of the necessity to exercise social control over the children of the poor, and to bring order into their lives. The perceived wayward behaviour of the children of the poor prompted Thomas Firmin to establish a school within his spinning mill. Whilst the children could learn the rudiments of education for a few hours during the day, the emphasis was on industry, and work habits were instilled. The idleness and lack of order which were perceived to be such a problem, were to be surmounted through industry.

In 1780 Robert Raikes commended the establishment of Sunday Schools. From his contacts with prisoners in Gloucester gaols, he formed the opinion that there was a direct connection between ignorance and crime. His motivation to provide some form of education for the children of the poor, stemmed from a reformer’s zeal.
to attack the cause of poor behaviour, which he observed in young people on Sundays, and which he perceived stemmed from ignorance. Raikes held the conservative view of the day that religious instruction was the means of rescuing children from ungodliness, and great attention was placed on the teaching of reading in the Sunday Schools. This reading instruction was preparatory to reading the Bible, and within the Biblical teachings the children could also be instructed about the station in life in which ‘God had placed them’. Coupled with Raikes’ attempts to understand the children’s poor behaviour, was the desire to bring about a change in that behaviour, that is social order was perceived to be important.45

John Pounds, who was an evangelical shoemaker, was moved with compassion in 1818 when he observed the destitute, outcast children of the streets in his hometown Portsmouth. He used part of his workshop as a school, to provide a very basic education in reading and writing. Basic living skills such as cobbbling and cooking were taught, and food and shelter was provided to the homeless children. Later as the Ragged Schools Movement gained momentum a wider curriculum was introduced where religious instruction was given, as well as tuition in arithmetic. Training was provided to enable these street children to acquire employable skills. Pounds’ approach to the children does not appear to fall so easily within the perimeters of social control, social order, or maintaining a certain social structure, but rather from an acceptance of these poor children as they were, ragged dirty outcasts, and a genuine desire to improve their lot in life. The home visits paid by the teachers, in order to understand the children’s backgrounds is indicative of a caring attitude. Parents and children alike were supported and encouraged to recognise their circumstances, and if possible to triumph over them.

This brief review provides us with necessary British background and historiography relating to the educational provisions for the children of the poor. It will assist us in understanding the origin of the ideas about children in need, and what might be done for them, that were brought to the colony of New South Wales.

45 Simon, p. 183; Silver and Silver, p. 7.
A review of recent literature about the provisions for and the social administration of care of the very poor, destitute children in early nineteenth century New South Wales.

In contrast to Britain with its well established social, governmental and religious structures; its well developed agricultural sector; its rapidly developing infrastructure of roads, railways and communications, and its growing industrial power, the colony of New South Wales was unique, it was a penal settlement. There was an overwhelming need for active government control, because all members of the community were dependent on the Governor for food, clothing, shelter and employment.46

Within the young settlement it soon became evident that there were many destitute children who were in need of care. They were living in miserable conditions and were neglected. Many had been abandoned or were orphaned, and social problems were evident.

Governor Phillip, who was a humane man, formulated a ‘plan’ whereby extra rations were offered to approved couples to provide board for neglected children. Both John Cleverley and Brian Dickey consider that Phillip was motivated solely by the need to secure care for these children, but both concur that problems were experienced with the ‘plan’ and it was not a success.47

In attempting to understand the reasons for the plight of these children, attention must be paid to the convict women who were their mothers. The contemporary male authority figures of the day, who were essentially from the gentry and middle class, usually formed the perception ‘that these women were not fit to care for their children’.48 Feminist writers and others have contributed to the discussion about the convict women and their children. They have interpreted the situations facing these women, and, as a consequence we are in a better position to understand the problems which they encountered, and the prejudices of the contemporary male perceptions held about them.

Prior to transportation many of these women experienced harsh living conditions and both Deborah Oxley and Mollie Gillen agree about the struggles these

women endured often to survive. Joy Damousi has described the problem of sexual advances or abuses which many women encountered on the transports, and the House of Commons Report of 1838 on Transportation validates Damousi’s description. Many of the women were assigned to men as servants and some of them experienced basic ill-treatment according to Helen Heney, and Kay Daniels.

Dianne Snow draws our attention to the limited employment opportunities available to these convict women to support themselves and their children. Kay Daniels also writes that the convict women did not have the same opportunities for retaining employment, as did the male convicts, and she makes the further point that their many skills were not utilised. Another problem faced by these women was the desertion by the fathers of their children, and Robert van Krieken writes about this in a critical manner. In this assessment he is supported by Kay Daniels who writes ‘what we observe in this period is the beginning of the great Australian male habit of wife desertion’.

In addition twentieth century historians wrote about the perceptions of these convict women who were branded as immoral and prostitutes, because their behaviour fell short of contemporary male thinking about ‘ideal’ women. John Hirst writes about this ‘branding’, and Deborah Oxley considers the women received, what is known today as ‘bad press’.

We have noted Governor Phillip’s ‘plan’ to provide care for the neglected and destitute children. The Rev. Richard Johnson, the colony’s first chaplain, was a compassionate man, who considered that the children were under the adverse

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52 Helen Heney, Australia’s Founding Mothers, Nelson, Melbourne, 1978, p. 3.
55 Daniels, p. 35.
59 Oxley, pp. 199, 206.
influence of their parents as well as being destitute, and that these problems could be overcome by the provision of an orphanage.\(^\text{60}\) The Rev. Samuel Marsden also supported the establishment of an orphanage.\(^\text{61}\)

Governor Philip Gidley King, soon after his return to the colony in April 1800, ‘was appalled that so many children’ were living in unsatisfactory conditions.\(^\text{62}\) He took steps to purchase a large residence on Sydney Cove to house the ‘orphan’, abandoned, and neglected girls, and the Female Orphan School was opened on 17 August 1801. This event is seen as the beginning of child welfare provisions in New South Wales. In 1819 the Male Orphan School was opened. This occurred during Lachlan Macquarie’s governorship, and the role of the state in child welfare provisions was extended.\(^\text{63}\)

John Ramsland provides an analysis of the Female and Male Orphan Schools in *Children of the Backlanes: Destitute and Neglected Children in Colonial New South Wales*. He considers that these institutions, whilst providing some elementary education and training, were places in which children were completely separated from their parents, and in which their lives were regimented by rules and regulations. He argued that the curriculum of the Female Orphan School ‘had the underlying purpose of providing domestic servants for the colonial elite’.\(^\text{64}\) In his discussion about the Orphan Schools Robert van Krieken states that they ‘combined the functions of child welfare, asylum, school and prison’.\(^\text{65}\) van Krieken concurs with Ramsland’s view that the aim of these institutions was the preparation of children for work. Dianne Snow is in agreement and contends that it was never intended that the orphans become middle class, and she writes that the Orphan Schools attempted to create a respectable working class.\(^\text{66}\)

The Orphan Schools have engaged the attention of other historians such as K. M. Riordan who presented a B.A. Honours thesis at the University of New England in 1958 entitled the Sydney Orphan Schools 1800-1830 A Study. Barry J. Bridges


\(^{63}\) Ramsland, p. 12.

\(^{64}\) ibid., p. 6.

\(^{65}\) van Krieken, p. 5.

presented a lengthy and detailed two volume thesis entitled The Sydney Orphan Schools 1800-1830 for a M.Ed. Honours degree at the University of Sydney in 1973. Both these writers examined the operation of the Orphan Schools over a thirty year period. In 1951 Elizabeth S. L. Govan presented a thesis entitled Public and Private Responsibility in Child Welfare in New South Wales 1788-1887, for her doctorate at the University of Chicago. Reference is made to the Orphan Schools but the general thrust of her study is about the wider provisions of child welfare facilities.\(^6^7\)

In Australian history the situation of the Aborigines, the original inhabitants, posed (and still presents) grave problems. In 1815 attention was paid to the welfare and training of Aboriginal children through the establishment of the Native Institution at Parramatta. This endeavour was essentially the work of William Shelley, a former missionary who had worked in Tonga.\(^6^8\) Kociumbas states that one of the reasons for the establishment of the Native Institution ‘was to gather up young survivors [Aborigines] and incarcerate them in a separate institution’.\(^6^9\) This institution was not unlike the Orphan Schools in that it was a place which provided shelter, food, clothing, education and training. Both Kociumbas and Kyle agree that the purpose of the Native Institution ‘was to remove the children from their environment, and to effect changes in their social behaviour. On occasions this removal was by force or deception’.\(^7^0\) Brian Dickey considers that the main change envisaged in their social behaviour was that they would become ‘active economic units in ‘white’ colonial society, preferably also Christian’.\(^7^1\) He supports the claims made by Kociumbas and Kyle about the intended aims of the Native Institution.

By 1802 it was evident that over 2,600 people were receiving support from the Crown because they were in necessitous circumstances. This number increased over the years and a couple of voluntary societies were established by philanthropic men, some with an evangelical background, to provide material aid to the needy.\(^7^2\) These

\(^6^7\) E. S. L. Govan’s thesis, comprises ten chapters, of which two chapters are devoted to the development and administration of the Orphan Schools, and their internal organization. The remaining eight chapters are concerned with aspects of other institutions and changes in government policy over time to 1887.

\(^6^8\) Cleverley, p. 105.

\(^6^9\) Kociumbas, p. 12.

\(^7^0\) Kyle, p. 4.

\(^7^1\) Dickey, p. 12.

societies merged to form the Benevolent Society of New South Wales in 1818. This Society, funded by private subscriptions, initially carried out relief work of an outdoor type. In 1821, when there was a marked increase in the number of homeless people in Sydney, the Society acquired with Governor Macquarie’s assistance, an Asylum near the current Central Railway Station. Both outdoor and indoor relief was then provided.

In his work on the Benevolent Society Brian Dickey states that prior to the merger in 1818, seven founders of an earlier society wanted to work to relieve distress by helping the poor, and by giving instruction in religion and welfare. In the merger ‘the original desire to link evangelism and social welfare together was by-passed’. The concept of providing relief to the needy was considered in terms of ‘the deserving poor’. Margaret Conley agrees with Brian Dickey’s assessment, and points to the work of the Society’s ‘visitors’, who made their judgements about the suitability of recipients, to determine whether or not they were deserving of relief. Within the Society’s Asylum it was expected that the able-bodied develop regular work habits. Both writers agree that life for the inmates was ordered and institutionalised. In his article Michael Horsburgh concentrates on the financial arrangements between the Society and the government. He states that the Society became the ‘Government Almoner’: the acknowledged colonial substitute for the Poor Law, and a major instrument of government policy.

The Female School of Industry was established in 1826, and Eliza Darling the ardent evangelical wife of Governor Ralph Darling was the Patroness, and is credited with establishing this institution. This school, unlike the Female Orphan School, was a privately run charity which relied on subscribers’ donations, the fees from parents, and fund-raising for its financial support. Furthermore it was managed solely by women, and had been established to provide training for girls of poor parents to equip them with the necessary skills to be domestic servants. There was an

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75 Dickey, p. 23.
76 Conley, p. 283.
77 Horsburgh, p. 77.
increasing ‘demand for servants of good character, at a time when few were available’. Ramsland states that the curriculum provided for instruction in ‘reading, writing and the four first rules of arithmetic, every branch of household work, plain needlework, knitting and spinning’. The girls lived in an enclosed environment with restricted family contact, until they reached the age of eighteen years, according to Elizabeth Windschuttle. Ramsland agrees with Windschuttle about the custodial situation in which the girls lived. Brian Fletcher, Anita Selzer and Elizabeth Windschuttle write about the religious ideals which formed part of the girls’ education. The school was organised on Dr Bell’s System of Education, and the girls were instructed in the doctrines of the Church of England. The monitorial system used in the school meant that the girls ‘experienced a regime in which all their activities in their waking hours were directed by those in authority’. A daily program entitled ‘The Order of Occupation for the Children in the School of Industry’, adopted in 1828-29, was implemented, and every minute from six o’clock to 30 minutes past 8 was accounted for in some activity on the children’s part.

The Society for the Relief of Destitute Children was founded in 1852 by conservative middle class men of substance, ‘and high ranking churchmen representing the major Christian denominations of Sydney’. It was an attempt to provide housing for children who were living in deplorable conditions in inner city areas in the 1840s and 1850s. Elizabeth Mellor’s consideration of the founders’ motives in forming this Society agrees with Ramsland’s assessment certainly as far as some of the founders were concerned. She writes that: ‘the values stemmed from a nineteenth century interpretation of Christianity. Christ’s clear teaching placed an obligation on the wealthy to help the poor’. The Society removed the children from their ‘corrupting’ outside influences, and incarcerated them in a dormitory-style very

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81 Ramsland, p. 21.
83 Ramsland, p. 21.
85 Windschuttle, p. 22.
86 ibid., p. 21.
Ramsland, Mellor, Dickey and Peyser agree that although on the surface this type of nineteenth century asylum was efficient in its organisation and management, it was in effect a ‘self contained and segregated colony’. Life within the institution was ‘by modern standards, an inhumane machine-like existence’. Size was another problem, it was like a ‘barrack system’; living conditions were not always satisfactory; there was a lack of privacy, and no expression of individuality by the children. On a final note there is pathos in the following statement by one child: ‘they do not call me Henry, they call me 367’.

Over time, the way in which historians have interpreted educational and social changes, has altered. Thus, it is important that we briefly review the changes which have occurred in the historiography of welfare and educational developments.

As one attempts to interpret the reasons which motivated individuals or groups to act in response to what they perceived were the needs of the very poor and destitute, and also the reasons why a particular course of action was taken, one faces a complex task. John Tosh argues that ‘because social values change it follows that historical interpretation is subject to constant revision. Historical interpretation is a matter of value judgements, moulded to a greater or lesser degree by moral and political attitudes’.

Two of the recognised schools of history which provide frameworks for interpreting social welfare developments are the ‘liberal/Whig view of history’, and the ‘social history’ approach. The ‘Whig’ view considered that attempts to provide for the care of the poor or outcasts, stemmed from people who were reformers seeking to improve the lot of the underprivileged. This view was ‘based on the hypothesis that all welfare represents benevolent intentions, so that more welfare is invariably a good thing’. This view of welfare was generally accepted until the late 1960s.

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90 ibid., p. 206.
91 Mellor, p. 17.
92 Brian Dickey, Charity in New South Wales 1850-1914. A Study in Public Private and State Provisions for the Poor, Ph.D. Thesis, Australian National University, Canberra, 1966, p. 120.
93 Peyser, p. 182.
In the 1970s, Anthony Platt’s work *The Child Savers* examined what some reformers, particularly women, had said about their motivation for being involved in the juvenile justice system, and in child welfare. Platt saw child saving as the result of a number of other factors such as a middle class movement ‘on behalf of those less fortunately placed in the social order’; a move from middle class professionals working in areas to improve their status and scope of work, and the desire of middle class women to widen their sphere of influence. This analysis of child welfare reformers complemented the ‘“social control” approach; or “revisionist” approach to history and sociology’. Richard Johnson in 1970, writing from an educational perspective, discussed the great interest and concern which was displayed in the education of the poor in the 1830s and 1840s in England. Johnson considered that this concern stemmed from the desire to use educational means to determine ‘the patterns of thought, sentiment and behaviour of the working class’. In other words the educational interest and concern was really ‘about authority, about power, about the assertion (or the re-assertion?) of control’.

From the late 1970s in Australia we also have the influence of feminist writers, who have tended to push theory in new directions. For these writers it is the ‘elaboration of gender as a structuring principle which is fundamental to all historical analysis’.

In attempting to interpret the motives for the actions taken in the early penal colony of New South Wales, to respond to the needs of the very poor, ‘orphaned’, abandoned and neglected children, neither of the schools of interpretation is entirely satisfactory. It is certainly true that social change, improvement or reform was seen as necessary in the penal settlement, and it was considered especially by the chaplains, the Rev. Johnson and the Rev. Marsden, that the convict adults were not able to effect this change. The hopes for the future of the colony were seen to lie in the children, the ‘rising generation’. This thesis seeks to find a middle way, which not only recognises

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97 ibid., pp. 76-83.
98 van Krieken, p. 18.
99 Johnson, p. 119.
100 Tosh, p. 155.
the truths of both interpretations, but which especially re-assesses and respects the motivations or intentions of the early Governors and clergy.

In this regard one is mindful of Mark Peel’s observation in a later context about those who make decisions in welfare work, and the recipients of those decisions. He comments:

yet in straining to hear the words of the weak, it’s important not to ignore the strong; in exploring the arts of resistance, it’s important to examine the arts of dominance as well, especially when we consider its difficulties and dilemmas.\(^{101}\)

In the colony of New South Wales the first chaplain the Rev. Richard Johnson, has been described as a compassionate, caring man, and he was moved with pity when he observed poor, ‘orphan’, abandoned and neglected children. He considered they needed to be ‘rescued’ from their undesirable situations.\(^{102}\) His motivation to have an orphanage established arose from his sincere desire to ‘rescue’ the ‘rising generation’.

Governor King was appalled at the conditions under which many of the colony’s children were living and it was his opinion that some of the girls were exposed to moral danger. With a social conscience, he decided that public revenue would be used to care for these girls, because their living conditions were not conducive to their welfare. A better way of life could be experienced by them within the confines of an institution to be called the Female Orphan School. The moral welfare of the girls was one of the motivating reasons for their admission to the School. The type of elementary education; the religious instruction; and the training provided, was geared to providing opportunities for them to obtain employable skills, which were in demand in the colony.

Governor Macquarie expressed the ‘regret and compassion’ he felt when he saw boys who were neglected.\(^{103}\) His efforts to provide accommodation, care, education and training for the boys in the Male Orphan School stemmed from his enlightened patriarchal values which recognised and responded to the boys’


circumstances. The attention he paid to fulfilling the needs of the children is reflected in his Rules and Regulations for both the Female and Male Orphan Schools.

Within the Rules and Regulations is found provision for the basic needs of children - food, clothing and shelter, and in addition, for the Orphan School children, education and training within a framework of religion. This thinking is typical of the period; later knowledge about the emotional and psychological needs of children was not available to the early Governors and the Orphan School Committees.

The children’s lives within the Orphan Schools were regimented and closely supervised. The training provided was a preparation for work, and it was anticipated by committee members that the children would later contribute to the colony by being useful, loyal, well-trained, obedient workers.

William Shelley formulated a plan for the education and training of Aboriginal children, because unlike some of his contemporaries he considered these children were capable of being instructed, and of becoming ‘civilized’. Shelley thought it was preferable for Aborigines to be part of the ‘white’ community rather than ‘fringe dwellers’. The education and training of Aboriginal children was perceived as the way in which this transformation could take place. The Native Institution was therefore established to provide the mechanism whereby their ‘transition’ into colonial society as workers, servants, labourers or small land-holders could be accomplished.

The administrators of the Benevolent Society which was formed in 1818 faced a moral problem. On one hand there was an obvious need to provide relief for Sydney’s growing numbers of destitute, impoverished adults; on the other hand there was reluctance to have a situation where the needy relied on ‘charity’. This dichotomy was resolved when action was taken to formulate the basis on which relief would be given. Relief was to be provided to the ‘deserving poor’. This resolution meant that discrimination was practised as the Society’s ‘visitors’ assessed the applicants’ eligibility for assistance. Some of these Society’s founders were middle class men with evangelical backgrounds and they were initially motivated to follow the Christian precept of caring for their ‘brothers’ in need. Sadly this precept was not followed when determining the eligibility criteria, and many of Sydney’s destitute people were stigmatised and denied assistance.

The Female School of Industry was established to achieve two outcomes: a supply of well-trained obedient servants, and to bring about changes in the girls’
behaviour. Mrs Eliza Darling, the founder of this establishment, with her conservative respectable background and her evangelical convictions, perceived that moral disorder was posing a threat to society in general. A thorough training was provided in domestic ‘arts’, and the girls were conditioned to know and accept their place in society. Great stress was placed on the girls’ spiritual ‘enlightenment’ which would ensure their salvation. Mrs Darling prepared a book setting out Rules which applied not only within the school, but also to the girls’ parents. The coercive influence of the school was therefore extended to the outside community of parents, and it appears that the exercise of social control was the motivation for the establishment of this institution.

The Society for the Relief of Destitute Children was founded in 1852. The conservative middle class philanthropic men who also formed the Society, held the attitude that the lower classes lacked the capacity or the will to effect changes in their lives, which would improve their lot. The children were removed from their ‘unsavoury’ environments and placed initially in Juniper Hall Paddington, and later in the Randwick Asylum, where it was thought relief could be provided for them. The expressed motivation for the founding of this organisation was to care for these destitute children. Within the Asylum rigorous training in moral and work habits was provided. The nature of this institution meant that the children were conditioned to future lower class employment opportunities, in an atmosphere which was oppressive, harsh and inhumane.

The research and writing approach of this thesis is to present a chronological, historiographically-based and narrative account of the Orphan Schools. Central to the research method is the reading and interpretation of the archival material, original documents pertaining to the establishment, organisation and administration of the Orphan Schools. Such material is housed in the State Records of New South Wales and in the Mitchell Library. Attention is paid to printed material such as the *Historical Records of New South Wales* and the *Historical Records of Australia*.

Secondary sources such as books, reports and journal articles are consulted to provide historical accounts of British and New South Wales institutions or movements, which sought to provide care/education for the poor. These materials will also be used to enable us to develop new interpretations of the history of various
institutions and movements in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries relevant to the social administration of destitute or neglected children.

The thesis is structured in four parts, and the basis for this arrangement is the chronological narrative account of the Orphan Schools. There are two chapters in each part.

Part 1 contains chapters 1 and 2. The first chapter is concerned with the arrival of the First Fleet and the ensuing problems which faced many of the convict women and their children. The chaplain’s attempt to provide some form of education for the children is examined. The growing concern which the chaplains and early Governors experienced about the grave social problems exhibited by abandoned, neglected, orphaned and destitute children is explored.

With the return of Philip Gidley King to the colony as Governor-elect in 1800, he expressed his dismay at the conditions under which some of the children were living. With his social conscience he acted to provide care, education and training for some of the girls through the establishment of the Female Orphan School in 1801. The work of the Committee appointed by King, and the roles of Anna King and Elizabeth Paterson in exercising influence in the School are important features in chapter 2. The difficulties of securing suitable staff, and the problems encountered during Governor Bligh’s administration, enable us to understand the fluctuating fortunes of the School.

In part 2 there are two chapters both of which are concerned with Macquarie’s involvement in the provision and extension of care and education for the colony’s destitute children. Chapter 3 enables us to consider the development of the Female Orphan School and its relocation to Parramatta in 1818. Mrs Macquarie’s involvement and leadership role as Patroness of the School engages our attention.

In chapter 4 the establishment of the Male Orphan School at Sydney and the development of trade subjects for the boys is examined. In both chapters the ‘hands on’ approach to the administration of both Schools is displayed by Governor Macquarie.

Part 3 is concerned with the Schools in the period after Macquarie’s departure, and in chapter 5 Governor Brisbane’s administrative style is contrasted with that displayed by Macquarie. The changes and problems which both Schools experienced
are explored. The transfer of the boys to the Female Orphan School estate at Cabramatta, and an outline of the management of that estate are both considered.

Chapter 6 is devoted to the children of the Orphan Schools in respect of their social and family circumstances which led to their admission to the institutions. Extant records for the period 1818-1832 are available, and have provided us with greater understanding about the children’s backgrounds. The avenues open to them when leaving the Schools have been examined. As a result our knowledge about family situations, apprenticeships and work opportunities for boys and girls has increased.

The control of the Schools underwent changes and part 4 is devoted to the later management and operation of the establishments. In chapter 7 a re-assessment of the Clergy and School Lands Corporation’s control of the Orphan Schools is undertaken. The changes and problems encountered within the Schools and with the Corporation form the basis of this chapter.

Lastly in chapter 8, the colonial administration’s control of the Schools is surveyed. A study of this era adds to our knowledge and understanding of the Orphan Schools in their last eighteen years as separate entities.

This thesis examines and re-assesses the ways in which the chaplains and early Governors sought to solve the social problem presented by destitute children. The action taken in New south Wales stems from its unique position as a penal settlement.

In establishing the basis for the thesis a discussion of the research aims has occurred; literature reviews have been undertaken; the research methodology and writing approach has been described; and finally a plan of the thesis structure has been presented.
CHAPTER 1

THE BACKGROUND LEADING TO THE FOUNDATION OF THE FEMALE ORPHAN SCHOOL

In this opening chapter our attention will be focussed on children. First will be a discussion regarding the Rev. Richard Johnson (the first Anglican chaplain) and his attempts to provide some elementary education for them. Second we shall note the growing number of neglected, abandoned, orphaned and destitute children in the colony, and the recognition that they would present a grave social problem needing attention. To understand the plight of these children attention will be paid to their convict mothers. As a result of studying the problems some of these women faced, we shall be better placed to appreciate why some of them were unable to adequately care for their offspring.

The dilemma facing the early chaplains and Governors as they witnessed the plight of the children will be examined. In the penal settlement attempts would have to be made to provide care for the destitute children.

It is intended to survey the British Charity School Movement because in the decision to provide residential care for the children, adaptations of the British model were later to be made. The relevance of the British schools which had been established for the children of the poor will therefore be of significance to our understanding about the establishment and operation of the Orphan Schools in New South Wales.

It has been estimated when the First Fleeters sailed from Portsmouth Harbour on 13 May 1787, that approximately 1530 persons were included, with a total of 1420 persons actually identified as being part of the First Fleet.1 These people consisted of officials and their wives, marines and their wives, the ships’ crews, male and female convicts, and children.

The number of children who landed at Sydney Cove in 1788, has been calculated as forty-five. These were the sons and daughters who had accompanied

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their parents on board the ships at Portsmouth, or who were born during the voyage. Twenty-three were the children of marines, of whom ten were born during the voyage. The remaining twenty-two were the children of women convicts, and eleven of these children were born during the voyage to Australia.\(^2\) The fact that some convict mothers had made a decision to take their children with them indicates a maternal attachment to these children. This very positive feature has not, however, received attention in official accounts.

Despite the presence of these children no thought had been given to their educational needs by the British authorities responsible for the organisation of the First Fleet, and no provision had been made for educational facilities in terms of personnel and accommodation. Education was not a recognised function of the British government. Lord Sydney, the Secretary of State for Home and Colonial Affairs, saw no necessity for including a teacher, among the officials, when he drafted the plans for the penal settlement in New South Wales. There was no government official who landed in 1788, who had the appointment of ‘school teacher’:

Members of Pitt’s first ministry saw no reason to meddle in the upbringing of other people’s children, and no reason to suppose that the governor they were despatching to New South Wales, would be presumptuous enough to dispute their opinion.\(^3\)

In England in the late eighteenth century the provision of elementary education for the ‘children of the poor’ was left to private, religious or philanthropic endeavours. The outcome of this attitude meant that many children of the poor were denied a rudimentary education, and were growing up with limited literacy skills. They were more likely to possess knowledge about family occupations in rural industries, or spinning skills for example in cottage industries. With the advent of the industrial revolution many children would have acquired skills as workers, however ‘schooling was not universally available’ to the children of the poor.\(^4\)

There were individuals who had a belief in the value of education to the lesser orders in society. William Wilberforce, who was associated with both the Rev.

\(^2\) ibid., pp. 426, 445.
Richard Johnson the colony’s first chaplain, and the assistant chaplain the Rev. Samuel Marsden, expressed his faith in education when he wrote: ‘The expense of settling schools … and of establishing a superintendent will … be very trifling compared with the advantages which may follow - even the pecuniary advantages, for the more decent, and orderly the country will be maintained’.\(^5\) This extract provides us with an insight into Wilberforce’s attitude about the possible outcomes of education, with his use of the terms ‘decent and orderly’, as a desirable outcome from this effort. Education was perceived as being one of the means whereby desirable social changes could be effected in children’s lives, thus benefitting society generally.

Although Governor Phillip made no attempt to establish a school, he was later directed by Additional Instructions in August 1789, ‘to set aside, in marking out each township, four hundred acres for the maintenance of a clergyman, and two hundred acres for the maintenance of a schoolmaster’.\(^6\) Phillip acted with administrative promptness in making the reservations.

Despite the lack of government provisions for educational facilities, the Rev. Richard Johnson who was committed to the evangelical cause in the Church of England, saw the need for providing some form of elementary education for the young people in the colony, to whom he referred as the ‘rising generation’. The Rev. Johnson would have considered that it was necessary for reading to be taught, so that the children would be able to read the Bible, and follow its precepts. Johnson requested that he be allowed to use convicts to teach the children. Governor Phillip was agreeable to this suggestion, and Johnson was instructed to select teachers for appointment, and then to supervise their work.\(^7\)

However, when the Rev. Johnson tried to obtain male school teachers from among the convicts, he was thwarted in his attempts. All able bodied men in this group were engaged in matters of top priority, that is public works. Johnson therefore had to make his choice from among the women convicts. His first two appointees were Isabella Rosson, and Mary Johnson.\(^8\) Rosson had been transported for seven years for pawning items of her employer’s clothing, when she was in financial

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\(^8\) ibid., p. 768.
distress. It is not known exactly where in Sydney Rosson commenced her ‘dame school’.

Dame schools, which were conducted by women from the early eighteenth century in England and Wales in their own homes, ranged from ‘child-minding’ places where the education provided was extremely rudimentary, to places where ‘despite little or no equipment and a shortage of books some of these schools evidently achieved remarkable results’.9 Children aged from three or four years attended these schools which were found in towns and villages, and usually left them at seven or eight years of age. The general expectation of parents who paid a small fee of a few pence per week was that their children would be taught to read. Biographies of adults who attended these schools indicate that the majority of their experiences were ‘more favourable than critical’. One such biographer, William Essam, began his education in a ‘dame school’. He wrote of his ‘school dame’ as follows: ‘she taught me well for I could read the New Testament at four years old, and knew something of ciphering [arithmetic] and writing’.10 This brief description of ‘dame schools’ provides us with a glimpse into the operation of these schools, and the divergences found in them.

Rosson probably conducted her ‘dame school’ in one of the mud huts, which had been constructed for women convicts on the slopes of Sydney Cove. In this school the children of convicts were taught free of charge, and the children of military personnel were taught for a small payment. Rosson provided instruction in spelling and reading, and books which were given by the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge (SPCK) an Anglican Society, were used in this school. It is thought that the children in attendance would have numbered no more than twenty. In the growing centre at Parramatta, Mary Johnson, who had arrived in the colony in July 1791, having been transported for seven years for theft, conducted her school along similar lines to the one in Sydney. Both the children of convicts and the children of military personnel attended this school.11

The Rev. Richard Johnson supervised the conduct of both schools. He gave lectures on religious matters on a periodic basis. This behaviour was consistent with

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10 ibid., p. 141.
11 Meeting SPG, 15 March 1793, in Bonwick Transcripts, Biography Vol. 3, p. 768.
the role of a clergyman in the parish system in England. We see the chaplain endeavouring to replicate the ideas and practices concerning education, with which he was familiar, to the unique situation in which he found himself, that is a penal settlement. Richard Johnson was a pioneer of education in the colony.

Johnson perceived that if reformation was to occur in the lives of people, it had to begin with young people. It was this perception which motivated his endeavours to provide rudimentary education and moral instruction for the children. He conveyed these thoughts to the Secretary of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel (SPG) in November 1794. He wrote:

> If any Hopes are to be formed of any Reformation being affected in the Colony, I believe it must begin amongst those of the rising generation, and no steps I think can be better adopted, and pursued for this Purpose than close attention being paid to the Instruction and Morals.12

In 1793 the first church building also doubled as the first school. It was the Rev. Johnson who undertook the construction of this building, and he had the use of some convict labour.

Two members of the New South Wales Corps William Richardson and William Webster, were appointed to two schools in 1794. The subjects reading, writing and arithmetic were taught.13 Problems arose from Webster’s drunkenness, and the children were moved into Richardson’s school, and Richard Johnson acted as superintendent14

In 1796 Richard Johnson placed all the pupils, who now numbered between one hundred and fifty and two hundred in his ‘school house’. This provided better accommodation for the pupils, and facilitated both his supervision and assistance to the teachers. This school was able to function satisfactorily, and the arrangements worked well. However, in November 1798 Governor John Hunter wrote to the Duke of Portland and advised him that:

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Some wicked and disaffected person or persons … took an opportunity of a windy and dark evening, and set fire to the church. This building which also served during the week-days as a school-house, in which one hundred and fifty to two hundred children were educated under the immediate superintendence of the clergyman.\textsuperscript{15}

The school was subsequently moved to the courthouse, but court proceedings caused constant interruptions. The school moved to a storehouse, but the building was unsuitable and uncomfortable. Attendances dropped dramatically.\textsuperscript{16}

Whilst Richard Johnson may have derived satisfaction from his promising attempts to establish some kind of elementary education for the rising generation, it was the plight of the deserted and orphan children in the colony which distressed him. Towards the end of the eighteenth century the number of destitute children had increased, and the clergy and officials perceived that this was a problem of some magnitude.

Various factors had contributed to this problem. There was a large percentage of illegitimate children born in the colony, many of whom had been deserted. This situation arose from the disproportion between the numbers of convict men and women, and this state of affairs had existed from the establishment of the colony. Over the period 1788 to 1799 4776 male convicts arrived in New South Wales, compared with 1250 female convicts. (See the table showing the yearly break down of numbers on following page).

The British Government was fully aware of this situation, and had suggested to Governor Phillip that women from the South Sea Islands be brought to the colony to make up for the imbalance which existed between the sexes, but the officers were not to ‘exercise any compulsive measures’.\textsuperscript{17} Phillip decided not to implement this suggestion, and his humanitarian reason is given in his reply: ‘I am certain your Lordship will think that to send for women from the islands, in our present situation, would answer no other purpose than that of bringing them to pine away in misery’.\textsuperscript{18}

\textsuperscript{15} Hunter to Portland, 1 November 1798, in \textit{HRA}, Vol. II, p. 236.
\textsuperscript{16} Johnson to Rev. Morris SPG, 21 September 1799, in George Mackaness, Part 2, p. 42.
\textsuperscript{17} Lord Sydney to Phillip, 25 April 1787, in \textit{HRNSW}, Vol. I, p. 90.
## CONVICTS TRANSPORTED TO AUSTRALIA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year of Ships' Arrival</th>
<th>Convicts sailed in ships arriving in year specified</th>
<th>Deaths</th>
<th>Convicts arrived from UK</th>
<th>Convicts from other colonies</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>From GB</td>
<td>From Ireland</td>
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<td>1790</td>
<td>953</td>
<td>304</td>
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<td>261</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>150</td>
<td>133</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>173</td>
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<td>1793</td>
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<td>235</td>
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<td>1794</td>
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<td>168</td>
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<td>151</td>
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<td>1799</td>
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The imbalance of sexes, and the lack of means and accommodation for many of the convict women meant that they became mistresses or de facto wives, particularly when they were assigned to settlers as servants. Kay Daniels’ research has indicated that: ‘Little concern was paid by the authorities to either the intention or behaviour of the master with an assigned female convict servant in the early days of the settlement’. Daniels also makes a comment about convict women’s work as servants being almost indistinguishable from their responsibilities as wives.

In addition to the illegitimate children who had been deserted or neglected by one or both parents, there were children who were in need of care and support because of the death of their parents. Some of the colony’s children were clearly destitute, and in need of food, clothing and shelter. Many of these children were living in misery and ‘even if the governors had wished to ignore the condition of the colony’s children they could not have done so, for the children were under their very feet’. It was the plight of these destitute children which provided the impetus for the colony’s first approach in social welfare, to ‘rescue’ the rising generation.

Before considering the work which was undertaken as far as the children were concerned, it is necessary to pay attention to the convict women, who were the mothers of these children. From this examination it may be possible to understand why it was considered necessary for their children to be ‘rescued’.

What were the English backgrounds of these convict mothers? These women were usually perceived by male contemporaries from the respectable classes, as being the very antithesis of all the qualities or attributes which they expected of women from their classes. The men presumably had little understanding of the grinding poverty which faced many of these women. Poverty was certainly not a new situation, but the economic and social changes which occurred in some regions of Britain and Ireland in the eighteenth century, aggravated poverty. The privileged who saw the outcome of this poverty had no real conception about the struggle for survival which was a daily challenge for many of the poor. As Deborah Oxley argues:

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20 ibid., p. 75.
21 Austin, p. 4.
Convict experience prior to their transportation was one of poverty, unemployment, starvation, filth, sickness, poor wages, the struggle to support dependents, and other forms of economic and social distress heightened by society’s failure to provide sufficient welfare.  

When one considers the living conditions in England of many of the convict women, we can appreciate this statement:

Life had taught the poor nothing about providence or prudence, or the need for plan or orderliness. Decisions were forced on them, order hardly existed. Immediate comfort was as far as they could see. Children, abandoned, often did not know at waking where they might find to sleep that night, or what food, if any.

Officers of the First Fleet came from a social class and a background which ‘immediately distanced them from the convict women’. This was also true in the colony of New South Wales. Contemporary male authority figures, who were essentially gentry or from the middle-classes, came from relatively privileged educational and socio-economic backgrounds which influenced their interpretation of these lower class convict women. These men usually perceived or reported the convict women as being ‘immoral, promiscuous, lazy, thriftless, and unfit as parents’. Their judgements and perceptions of these women had an influence on the course of action taken in regard to their children. The two Anglican chaplains, the Rev. Richard Johnson and the Rev. Samuel Marsden, also influenced the perceptions held about convict women. The sanctity of marriage and women’s purity were concepts which were important to these clerics. The convict women whose behaviour fell short of their ideal, were therefore branded as immoral and prostitutes.

The majority of the women had been transported for crimes of larceny, and theft of wearing apparel. Many of these women were petty thieves, possibly driven by poverty to commit the offences. These women were not hardened criminals:

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23 Gillen, p. xviii.
Two-thirds were first offenders, and a further twenty eight percent had only one short-term sentence previously recorded against their names. The vast majority were not murderers nor violent desperados, but thieves. Ninety four percent of women were guilty of property crimes committed without violence.\(^{27}\)

In Robson’s statistical sample, an estimate is given that 80 percent of convicts received sentences for larceny of various kinds and were transported.\(^{28}\) However there is no doubt that many of the convict women were prostitutes. This was considered as work, being one of the economic options open to them. One possibly needs to be circumspect when using the term ‘prostitute’. Deborah Oxley considers that: ‘prostitution was judged to be evidence of immorality. It was seen as proof of convict women’s depravity. More attention was devoted to labelling convict women as prostitutes than in exploring any other aspect of their lives’.\(^{29}\) The convicts with perhaps a few exceptions, ‘were guilty of the crime for which they were transported, often under a softer name “loitering” instead of “soliciting” ’.\(^{30}\)

On board the transports the women had to cope with the sexual advances or abuses of soldiers, officers, members of the crew, and possibly fellow male convicts. It was not until after 1811 that women convicts travelled on separate transports from male convicts.\(^{31}\) We do not know with any degree of accuracy from existing sources the extent to which convict women may have been pressured into a sexual relationship, or whether they willingly entered into such relationships. However, there is evidence that problems existed on the transports and after the women arrived in the colony. After hearing evidence the 1838 Select Committee on Transportation concluded that the female convict was often ‘an object of constant pursuit and solicitation, she is generally obliged to select one man, as a paramour, to defend her from the importunities of the rest’.\(^{32}\)


\(^{29}\) Oxley, *Convict Maids*, p. 7.


It is quite possible that a number of the women would have accepted this situation, to be ‘under the protection’ of one male, rather than experience the situation of advances or abuse by a number of males. Esther Abrahams of the First Fleet may have been one such woman. She became the common law wife of ‘First Lieutenant George Johnston (of the Lady Penrhyn), to whom she bore a son George (baptised 4 March, 1790).’

When the women convicts reached the colony they discovered that they were assigned to men as servants. If a woman convict desired to choose another way of life, she was soon disappointed. In writing about this situation Helen Heney considered that the women experienced basic ill-treatment: ‘This was seldom mentioned, except to lament the depravity of women prisoners, there was never a word about what made them what they were.’

By 1826 it was estimated that only 42 percent of the women who had been transported had married, although approximately two thirds of the women convicts were single at the time of sentencing. Some women had left husbands in England, and so were not legally ‘free’ to remarry.

However, even when a convict woman had formed a permanent relationship with one man, that is when she became a concubine to one man, she was still considered by contemporary male respectable class commentators of the time to be promiscuous. The Rev. Samuel Marsden was loud in his condemnation of the unmarried relationships which took place in the colony. Marsden prepared a ‘Female Register’ in 1806 in which he listed women as being either ‘W or C’ (married or concubine) while W seems where used to mean widow. For the Rev. Marsden only those women whose marriage ceremony had been performed by an Anglican clergymen were considered to be ‘married’. This flawed thinking by the chaplain influenced the attitude of some people towards these women. Also, the reality that for many lower class people in England de facto relationships or common law marriages were common, is a factor which the respectable contemporaries failed to recognise. This failure led to much of the confusion over the term ‘prostitution’.

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33 Gillen, p. 1.
34 Heney, p. 3.
35 Robson, p. 142.
In addition to these factors, from her research, Deborah Oxley has formed the opinion that convict women received, what is today known as ‘bad press’. She states that this occurred from the time that the First Fleet set sail. She quotes a number of comments which were made by contemporary male authority figures: surgeons on the transports, colonial clergymen, early colonial Governors and employers of female convicts, which lends support to her conclusions.

Oxley considers that the terms ‘whore’ and ‘prostitute’ were used as terms of debasement. Many women so labelled were not engaged in situations of a sexually promiscuous nature. This labelling and judging arose from the gulf or divide which separated convict women and the male commentators. This gulf was based on factors such as class, biases associated with gender and of course vastly different cultural practices:  

Women who were labelled as whores had, in their own way, offended by stepping outside the sphere defined for them by the dominant ideology. In breaking the legal code convict women had offended morally, and were at once beyond redemption, all of them, with scarcely an exception being considered abandoned prostitutes.  

The assertion that the convict women were lazy or idle needs to be related to the employment opportunities which were available to them in the young colony. The majority of convict women were unskilled or semi-skilled urban workers. On the transport *Lady Penrhyn* it was estimated that:

65% of the women had been domestic servants. On board there were also milliners, dressmakers, lace and silk weavers, needleworkers and dealers. In addition there were pedlars, a glove-maker, an artificial flower maker, a nurse and a maker of child-bed linen.

All convicts were expected to labour to earn their rations:

but whilst men were allocated to over forty different occupations, the women were delegated to a limited range of employment opportunities. This range covered

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37 Oxley, *Convict Maids*, pp. 199, 206.
38 ibid., p. 219.
domestic service, laundry work, flax/wool manufacturing. There was little if any demand for the skills the women possessed. They were denied the opportunity of learning or acquiring marketable skills, and hence they were unable to be employed in what was perceived as useful labour.40

Further argument that the convict women did not have the same opportunities for retaining employment as did the convict men, is provided by Kay Daniels who writes that:

women are recorded as assisting in the building of the first settlement by making pegs for tiles, and collecting shells from the beaches and Aboriginal middens to be burnt to make mortar - a work later taken over by the male ‘shell gang’.41

Although the majority of male convicts were employed in public labour, in order to build the growing colony, women convicts did not have these same opportunities. Employment for the women was confined mainly to domestic tasks. They were employed as cleaners and laundresses, and as the colony grew, many of them were employed as government servants. Governor Hunter wrote in 1796 as follows: ‘there is scarcely any way of employing convict women, and even if employment was available, many women were taken up with nursing infants (the charming children with which they have filled the colony)’.42

Kay Daniels considers that the many skills which the convict women brought to the colony were not utilised. These skills were undervalued and were not used for the development of the colony. She concludes that women’s skills were ‘squandered to the detriment of the economy … and they remained underemployed in the colony’.43

There was also the problem which a woman in domestic service faced if she had the care of a child. Her employer had the right to dispense with her services, and this meant that the mother was not only deprived of employment, but she also found herself without accommodation. Desertion was a problem faced by many of the

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41 Daniels, p. 72.
43 Daniels, Convict Women, p. 35.
convict mothers. They were often deserted by the fathers of the children, and they were left to care for their children on their own. There was:

a marked reluctance on the part of sailor, soldier and convict fathers to support their offspring. The pay of a soldier in Governor Hunter’s day was insufficient to cover a legitimate, let alone an illegitimate child and free settlers were quick to disown parental responsibility when the mother was a convict.44

Robert van Krieken quotes from Kay Daniels’ work and he writes, ‘what we observe in this period is the beginning of the great Australian male habit of wife desertion. It was the women and children who were left in need of support’.45 It was this evasion of family responsibility by many of the fathers of these children which imposed heavy burdens on many of the convict women. These women were already socially and economically vulnerable, a situation which resulted from their transportation:

For many women the absence of kin meant a lack of protection afforded by fathers and brothers, an absence of the support offered by female relatives, and the assistance which came from wider kinship networks. It might also have meant severance from an economic unit as well as a social one.46

It was not until 1816 that the labour wage for convicts was established. Even then it was set at the rate of ten pounds per annum, which was a paltry amount. There were no serious attempts made by the authorities to compel fathers to either remain with the woman and to support their children. The fathers were thus protected from having to assume financial responsibility for their children.47 Because many of the convict mothers were usually unable to provide financially for their children’s needs, they were considered to be shiftless or unreliable, and unfit as parents. However, the responsibility for these mothers’ circumstances has to be seen to lie elsewhere.

46 Daniels, Convict Women, p. 94.
This detailed examination of the problems which confronted many of the convict mothers shed light on the very difficult situations in which they found themselves. The moral judgements made about them by male contemporaries in authority, indicate that many convict women were incorrectly labelled and stigmatised. The majority of these women despite their social and economic problems were able to nurture their children. Deborah Oxley states: ‘Convict women at least did not establish a cold and barren criminal sub-culture, but one based on families, intimacy and warmth, they made good mothers giving birth and successfully nurturing the first generation of native-born whites’.48 However some of the convict mothers were unable to adequately care for their children. They found for a variety of reasons - social, economic and emotional, that the task was too great for them, and they neglected or abandoned their offspring. It is these children whom the male authority figures of the day, considered to be in need of ‘rescuing’.

The authorities were faced with a dilemma as they sought solutions to the problem of caring for the destitute children. What were the motivations of these men, none of whom were trained to be charity workers, as they sought solutions? Were they far-sighted individuals who realised that the future development of the colony lay with the children, or were their reasons of a more pragmatic nature? Is A. G Austin correct when he describes the Rev. Richard Johns and some of the early Governors as humane men ‘who were moved by the misery of the convicts’ children’?49 Is it true that they desired to provide these children with a better way of life, and this in turn stemmed from their benevolent attitudes?

In Britain in this period of history it was not considered a function of the State to make provisions to care for children. The responsibility of caring for neglected, destitute or orphan children was left to parishes, church organisations and philanthropic people. In the penal colony such facilities and structures were not available and other alternatives had to be sought.

Governor Arthur Phillip who was by most accounts a just and humane man attempted to provide assistance for some of these ‘orphan’ children. His plan was to find suitable couples who were willing to provide ‘board’ for neglected children in

48 Oxley, Convict Maids, p. 108.
49 Austin, p. 4.
exchange for extra rations being provided from government stores. However, this plan was not successful because for many families instability was experienced, and supervision over the arrangements was difficult to establish and direct.

Phillip’s actions to assist these children were a reflection of the man. Governor Phillip has been described thus:

An outstanding feature of Phillip’s character was his regard for others, and this regard was tempered with tolerance, kindness and justice, so that everyone with whom Phillip came into contact, whether natives, convicts or his own colleagues, felt confident of receiving a fair even generous treatment from his Excellency.

Phillip’s motivation stemmed from his compassion and consideration for others, particularly the children who were in such dire circumstances. His humanity was coupled with a sense of duty, ‘and his ability to weigh up the practical needs of people under his control were qualities which Lord Sydney was bound to admire’.  

Another official who was concerned about the plight of many of the colony’s children was the Rev. Richard Johnson, whom we have already observed, had pioneered attempts to educate the children. It has been argued that: ‘Johnson’s preparation for ordination was of a high standard but it was preparation designed to equip a man for ministry to a settled congregation in England rather than to the unique “frontier” situation abroad’. This ‘frontier’ situation was even more unique than most foreign missionary enterprises or outreach. This ‘frontier’ was a penal settlement in a country not previously occupied by Europeans or European colonists.

Although no sermons of Johnson’s have survived, it can be assumed that he would have preached the Gospel, the good news of salvation. He would have encouraged his hearers to become reconciled to God through repentance and belief in the sacrifice of Christ. He would have placed great stress on the need for personal

salvation and the reformation of character. In the early days of his ministry in the colony he wrote to his friend, Henry Fricker and lamented:

Why the pity and concern I feel for these poor people with whom I am here connected. Happy would I be were I to live upon bread and water - a severe hardship, did I but see some of these poor souls begin to think about their end. Am sorry to see so little good yet done amongst them ... . They neither see nor will be persuaded to seek the hand of Mercy and the Compassion of God ... most of them will sell their souls for a Glass of Grogg, so blind, so foolish, so hardened are they.54

In 1791, in another letter to Mr Fricker, Richard Johnson expresses the hope that he may not have laboured in vain. In that same letter he writes that he has preached or 'spoken of the great, and inestimable Lord Jesus in dying for sinners, and in inviting them to come to him, to believe in and rest upon him for life and salvation'.55

Johnson was faithful in performing his duties as a clergyman. He visited newly arrived convicts whilst they were still on transports, speaking to them as he moved among them. He sat with the sick and dying and was greatly disturbed by their misery. He commiserated with the convicts in their trials and pitied them. He reported the wretched state of the sick convicts to the Governor. He read burial services for the dead and these amounted to considerable numbers. Testimony is paid to Richard Johnson by a convict observer whose name has not been recorded. He wrote in a letter: 'Few of the sick would recover if it were not for the kindness of the Rev. Mr Johnson, whose assistance out of his own stores makes him the physician both of soul and body'.56

Johnson was a ‘field’ preacher for a number of years and in all weathers conducted services for up to 800 convicts in the open air. He had to travel by horseback to services, and by the Parramatta River, a journey of four to six hours when he visited Parramatta on a fortnightly basis, as well as a settlement three miles to the west of Parramatta. (This was his pattern prior to the arrival of the Rev. Samuel Marsden in March 1794). He visited convicts in their huts and claimed that he found

55 Johnson to Fricker, 4 October 1791, in Mackaness, Part 1, p. 42.
more pleasure at times in this personal contact than he did preaching.\textsuperscript{57} (See photograph on following page).

Despite his faithfulness and labours, the Rev. Johnson did not see many ‘fruits’, or positive outcomes from his ministry. He considered that the convicts generally had not been reformed. Although his words and actions depict him as being kind, sympathetic, compassionate and caring, the failure of the convicts in any great number to embrace salvation, led him to make a judgement about their children, who were in need of care, support and even the necessities of life. Richard Johnson came to the conclusion that the only way in which the children could be ‘rescued’ was to remove them from the adverse influence of their parents.\textsuperscript{58} His motivation stemmed from his genuine concern about the physical well being of these destitute children, and his religious convictions about their spiritual welfare.

In March 1794 the Rev. Samuel Marsden arrived in the colony as Assistant Chaplain, and he like the Rev. Johnson was committed to the evangelical cause of the Church of England. His personality differed from that of Richard Johnson. The Rev. Marsden was a hard, dominant, on occasions cruel, outgoing, forthright type of man.\textsuperscript{59} The Rev. Johnson was tender-hearted, with a gentle, shy and retiring nature, and he was not a good social mixer.\textsuperscript{60} The Lieutenant-Governor Major Grose, welcomed Marsden’s arrival, and this was in contrast to the enmity Grose had displayed to the Rev. Johnson, over a number of years, and which had grieved Johnson.\textsuperscript{61}

It has been written of Samuel Marsden that ‘his thinking on morals, religion and the government of family and state had been set in the Puritan mould that marked the evangelical Anglicans’.\textsuperscript{62} It was his background and his thinking which probably influenced his attitude towards the convicts in general.

The Rev. Marsden had a similar experience to the Rev. Johnson as far as his ministry as a preacher was concerned; his hearers did not respond to the ‘call to

\textsuperscript{57} Johnson to Fricker, 4 October 1796, in Mackaness, Part 2, p. 42.
\textsuperscript{58} Johnson to Secretary SPG, 1 December 1796, in Mackaness Part 2, p. 19.
\textsuperscript{61} Yarwood, p. 20.
\textsuperscript{62} ibid., p. 7.
From an Illustration in the National Library of Australia

Rev. Richard Johnson 1755-1827
repent’. In October 1795 he wrote from his home base in Parramatta to an English friend:

To do my Duty here as a Minister is extremely hard and burdensome … . I do not know one person that wants the great physician of Souls. Preached for six months and … had not for that space of time two persons to preach to who ever made the enquiry ‘Where is God my Maker’ or had the smallest concern for their souls … . I know that this situation hath produced a very odd, and I add a very unpleasant effect upon mine. My religious feelings are very different from what they once were.63

As clerics in the penal colony both men felt isolated. They were aware of antagonism to their cause. They found themselves surrounded by scenes of misery, and they perceived that vice abounded in the colony. Also they received little if any encouragement from officials or soldiers in their ministry, although the Rev. Johnson found Governor John Hunter to be supportive. Both clerics appear to have experienced difficulties in holding on to their spiritual strength to preach the Gospel to their indifferent ‘flocks’. Marsden expressed his sentiments in February 1800:

I long to quit the Colony and retire from such scenes of ungodliness and wrong … . Our life is one continued scene of contention and opposition from the beginning to the end of the year. Besides, living where iniquity abounds so much and our civil connexion with the worst of men renders our souls dry and barren. We feel little of that vital Spirit of Life which is essential to the happiness and progress of the real Christian.64

The Rev. Johnson had formed the opinion that the convicts were unlikely to be reformed.65 This must have been a very difficult conclusion for him to reach. Did it mean that he had failed in his duties as chaplain in the colony? He considered that if the colony was to develop into a satisfactory society, then the children - the ‘rising generation’ - had to be ‘rescued’. For Johnson this ‘rescue’ was not confined to the provision of food, clothing, shelter care and education for the destitute children, but it

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64 Marsden to Mrs Stokes, 22 February 1800, in James S. Hassall, In Old Australia, R. S. Hews, Sydney, 1902, p. 143.
65 Johnson to Fricker, 5 November 1788, in Mackaness Part 1, p. 24.
included a spiritual or moral dimension. If the future of the colony was with the children, then these children had to be educated, guided and reformed.

The Rev. Samuel Marsden shared this view. The reformation of the children could not take place if they were left with their parents. The fear was expressed that the children would follow in the steps of their convict parents or convict mothers. The perceived ‘remedy’ therefore, was to remove these neglected children from the control and influence of their ‘immoral’ parents. They were to be removed from the ‘contamination’ of their parents and placed in a closed environment where education and moral training would be provided. The Rev. Johnson gave expression to these ideas in a letter written in 1796 to the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel (SPG). He formulated the reasons why an orphan school should be established:

It is much to be wished he (Marsden) says, that such a school had been established, as the principal hopes are from the rising generation. The miserable wretches sent out to that country being lost to all sense of virtue and religion, as long as their offspring continue with them he fears every method used for their instruction will be ineffectual.66

According to John Cleverley, in time, ‘the variety and weight of arguments presented for an orphanage became overwhelming’.67

The plan to establish an orphan school was both very ambitious and courageous. The plan was formulated by the chaplains and finally executed by an ex-naval officer and managed by a Committee comprising the leading personalities in the colony; namely the two chaplains, two surgeons and two ladies namely the wives of the Governor and Lieutenant-Governor, a group of people, who may have been considered very unlikely to establish a school, particularly one of a residential nature, whose aim was to ‘rescue the rising generation’.

The colony of New South Wales in the last decade of the eighteenth century was a penal settlement. There were a few free settlers, and some convicts whose sentences had been served, who were free to engage in independent economic activity. In fact some of these people became successful entrepreneurs. Land had been cultivated, livestock had been raised, businesses had been established and

trading was important. Houses had been built, families were being formed and the settlement had spread out and expanded from Sydney Town, and the colony was beginning to prosper. However, convicts were still being transported to New South Wales. There was not a vibrant philanthropic group of people, and the parish structures of church life, such as existed in England, were not yet evident in the colony. Despite these factors the Rev. Johnson began to collect subscriptions for a charitable fund to provide an orphan school.\footnote{King to Johnson and others, 7 August 1800, in \textit{HRA}, Vol. II, p. 535.} Governor John Hunter, who had replaced Major Grose in 1795 was a religious man. He was aware of, and distressed by the plight of many of the colony’s young people, and probably gave his support to the Chaplain’s fund.\footnote{Johnson to Secretary SPG, 1 December 1796, in Mackaness, Part 2, p. 18.} However, as many of the settlers were poor, and the soldiers were largely indifferent to the welfare of the children or the colony - they looked forward to their return to England - few subscriptions were forthcoming.

The ways in which provisions were made in Britain to provide care and education for very poor, destitute children, as addressed in the earlier literature review enable us to understand the early and later endeavours which were made in New South Wales, to care and educate children in necessitous circumstances. It is essential to our understanding of the different establishments which were described in the second section of the literature review in the Introduction. The early chaplains and later Governors were influenced by their knowledge of the Charity School Movement which operated in England, when they reached their decision to establish an orphan school. An examination of the Charity Schools Movement will provide us with the English background, and the history of its educational provisions which had been made for the children of the poor. This background material will assist us to interpret, with a greater degree of understanding, the early educational history of New South Wales, because the Orphan Schools were adaptations of the English model. Founded in 1698 the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge (SPCK), which was the oldest Anglican missionary society, took the initiative for the Charity School Movement, and from 1699 it became the governing body for the great proportion of the charity schools. These were schools destined for the education of the children of the poor.
As our attention is turned to the Charity Schools, we find that the rise and popularity of the Movement had some of its origins in upper and middle class perceptions of the children of the poor. The observations which people of these classes had made about the children of the poor led them to consider that these children were disorderly. If the parents of these children were unable to control them, then it was perceived that some action needed to be taken. The proposition probably was made that if the children were disorderly and unchecked, they would grow up to be disorderly adults. These adults may well become rebellious in the future, and this would pose a threat to the well ordered society which the upper and middle classes wished to maintain, especially post French Revolution and Napoleonic wars. The upper and middle classes had no doubts that they were superior to the poor or lower classes. Class distinctions were well defined in this period: ‘Expressions of patronage on the one hand and of subserviency on the other, were then common forms and were recognised as such.’

Revisionist social historians have examined the social attitudes which prevailed in this period, and have considered that attempts to ‘discipline’ and ‘control’ the disorderly children of the poor were the probable motives underlying the growth of the Charity Schools. Pinchbeck and Hewitt argue that ‘the school would provide an essential form of social control and an agency for social discipline amongst a class conspicuously in need of both’.

Mary Jones also analyses the motives underlying the establishment and growth of the Charity Schools. She considers that: ‘The Charity Schools came into being chiefly, but by no means exclusively, to condition the children of the poor for their primary duty in life, as hewers of wood and drawers of water’. The SPCK launched funds and sought contributions for the establishment and maintenance of these schools. It was not only the upper and middle classes who contributed to these funds. There had been concerns expressed in the latter half of the seventeenth century that ‘the poor child should not be altogether illiterate’. The schools which were envisaged were designed not only to educate the children of the poor, but also to keep them ‘in that station in life wherein Providence had placed them’.

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72 Jones, p. 5.
73 Pinchbeck and Hewitt, pp. 287-288.
Many of the subscribers from all walks of life, would have been motivated to give from their religious convictions. This giving would have been seen by them as a practical expression of their faith. The religious revival which swept Britain in the eighteenth century had affected the lives of many people. Some who were not church members joined congregations which were marked by evangelical approaches. A number of those already within churches experienced a ‘personal spiritual revival’ as did John and Charles Wesley who played an important role in the revival movement.\(^{74}\) This revival which many had experienced in this period gave them a sense of purpose which covered all aspects of their lives: their work, their conduct, their social relationships, and their social responsibilities. These social responsibilities which were expressions of Christ’s mission ‘in the world’ could have been perceived as ‘being their brother’s keeper’, and therefore gave rise to their financial assistance to those in need, the children of the poor.

To understand why these people acted as they did, we need to ask what is the essence of evangelical thinking? Evangelicalism may be described as both a conservative and radical Protestant movement which developed over time and on which the eighteenth century revival in Britain had an important impact. Stuart Piggin argues that:

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\text{evangelicalism holds salvation by faith alone as its central doctrine and the Bible, understood as the Word of God, as its sole authority. The evangelical faith is crystallised in the Gospel which the early generations of evangelicals understood not only as the divinely given instrument for the rebirth of the individual soul, but also for the renovation of society and culture. It aims to produce right-heartedness, right thinking and right action. It calls for the consecration of heart, head, and hand. All Christianity is, of course, concerned with Christ, but evangelicalism is passionate about three of Christ’s concerns: his Word, his Spirit and his mission.}^{75}\]

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The Charity Schools became a favourite form of benevolence.\textsuperscript{76} Over a thousand of these schools were established by 1729 in which thousands of children, who would otherwise have been denied an education because of their poverty, received instruction in Britain during the eighteenth century.

It was also a common belief at the time that the children of the poor should be removed from the influences of their homes, which were considered by the respectable classes to be unsatisfactory, if not evil. This removal would enable their behaviour patterns to be modified. This belief in Britain was similar to the thinking of the early chaplains and Governors as far as the neglected and abandoned children of convict women were concerned. This belief or thinking was an important factor in the type of ‘closed’ residential Female Orphan School, which was later to be established by Governor King. Their education and training was to take place in boarding schools and the type of instruction and moral training provided was to be such that the children would be moulded to develop good habits. These good habits would ensure that as future workers they would be conditioned to be ‘good Christians and faithful servants’.\textsuperscript{77}

A curriculum was devised in order to achieve these aims, and great stress was placed on the importance of religious instruction in the principles of the Established Church, the Church of England. It was considered by the upper and middle classes, that the perceived idleness and growth of evil among the poor, stemmed from their ignorance of the principles of the Christian religion. This was to be addressed by the type of instruction provided by the Charity Schools. Such instruction ‘was provided within a framework of moral and religious education and worship, children were put into uniform and taught the ways of obedience’.\textsuperscript{78}

Instruction was provided initially in reading. Later instruction in writing was given when a degree of competency had been reached in reading. In some schools instruction was provided in arithmetic, but this was not available in all charity schools. Girls were part of the schools’ population, and sewing, knitting and sometimes spinning skills were taught as well as the rudiments of housekeeping. As there was a constant demand for domestic servants, these skills in housekeeping had a vocational utility. Boys were instructed in practical crafts and skills appropriate to

\textsuperscript{76} Jones, p. 3.
\textsuperscript{77} ibid., p. 5.
their likely future occupation. It was such a curriculum that would form the basis of education and training within the future Female and Male Orphan Schools. A framework of instruction and training would be established, in which moral and religious education formed part of each day’s routine.

In the 1720s and 1730s pressure was placed on the Charity School movement for the schools to become ‘working schools’. In the schools the children were to be trained in skills and employed in the manufacture of items, and these items were to be offered for sale. This was an attempt to provide funds for the schools, as well as bowing to the pressure of public opinion. This public opinion was expressed in terms of the importance of work. Children were to be inured or accustomed to labour. This was a definite shift from the literary approach to education.79

However, the attempts to make the charity schools ‘working’ or ‘industrial’ schools were not usually successful. To have successful enterprises of this nature would depend upon:

a. a high degree of skills by the children to finish items, competently;
b. the students’ physical strength, abilities and skills had to match those necessary for a marketable output;
c. a ready supply of cheap raw material was necessary (to allow for wastage);
d. children had to be in regular attendance at school so there would be no ‘bottlenecks’ in production;
e. the expertise of the teachers would need to be high enough to pass on the necessary skills, and to supervise the children’s work.

Seldom did all these conditions prevail. For the Charity Schools the push to promote the concept of ‘discipline of labour’, finally had to give way to a return to the literary curriculum.80

The training provided in the Charity Schools set a pattern for aspects of training in the Orphan Schools as later chapters will reveal. The children were taught to make garments which they wore. In the first decade of the Female Orphan School the girls did complete sewing orders for members of the public. However the attempt to make the colonial institutions ‘working’ or ‘industrial’ schools like the British model, does not appear to have occurred.

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79 Jones, p. 87.
80 Pinchbeck and Hewitt, p. 295.
The children from the Charity Schools could be easily distinguished from other children in the social scale, by their distinctive uniforms. The ‘charity’ children had uniforms which consisted of blue, green, grey or yellow coats together with stockings and matching headwear. These uniforms may well have been perceived as one way of bringing ‘order’ into the lives of the children.

Apparently the sight of the charity school children parading through the streets on their way to anniversary services or on special occasions, filled both subscribers and spectators with delight and satisfaction. In such parades these people could ‘see’ that the children of the poor had benefited from their subscriptions, certainly as far as the appearance and behaviour of the children was concerned. People lined the streets to see the children and their reaction is expressed in the following description:

There is a natural Beauty in Uniformity which most People delight in. It is diverting to the Eye to see Children well match’d, either Boys or Girls march two and two in good order; and to have them all whole and tight in the same Cloathes and Trimming must add to the comeliness of the Sight.\(^{81}\)

The reference to the attire of the Charity Schools children is pertinent to the thesis. In later chapters the uniforms worn by the boys and girls in the Orphan Schools will be described. Whilst not as colourful as those worn in the British schools, they were distinctive.

The control and management of the charity schools was vested in members of the local community. The clergy of the Church of England played an important role in this regard. However, in the eighteenth century there was an increasing participation in ecclesiastical matters by members of the laity. As many women were subscribers to the Charity School funds, as well as to other societies, it afforded them the opportunity to both support and supplement the lay element of the church. It also gave them an avenue of influence in the wider world beyond their home and families. Some of these women who were of the evangelical persuasion such as Catherine Cappe, Sarah Trimmer and Hannah More were well known for the strong moral

stands which they took. These women were strong supporters of the Charity School Movement.

The committee members, who were local subscribers, had extensive obligations. They were responsible for the regulations to govern the management of the school, and they supervised the work of teachers and pupils. The Committee’s care for the pupils extended beyond the classroom and the school. They were charged with the responsibility of finding suitable persons to provide the post-school pupils with apprenticeships. The boys tended to be apprenticed to various trades, and the girls generally entered domestic service where they would be trained as servants. Some, however, were apprenticed to dressmakers. The committee members were also involved in the welfare of ex-pupils. If a dispute arose between an employer and the former pupil, or if there were any reports of ill-treatment by masters, or mistresses, then committee members examined all aspects of the alleged problems and sought resolutions.

This section on the role of committee members, has relevance to the history of the Orphan Schools. Before the Female Orphan School was established, Governor King appointed a Committee consisting of two clerics and four lay members, to formulate plans for the School. The committee members were to continue to have oversight of the School, and Governor Macquarie later appointed Committees for both Orphan Schools. The reference to apprenticing the children as post-school pupils, will also have an important bearing upon the study of the colonial establishments.

Despite the popularity of the Charity Schools especially in London and its environs, and in other large established cities, the spread of the industrial revolution affected the Charity School Movement. Many children of the poor became workers in mines and factories, in order to make a contribution to the family’s income. The SPCK turned its attention to overseas missionary work and publishing, thus diverting its interest away from the Charity Schools. Also:

the charity schools invariably supported by subscriptions, were seen by some cities in the changing circumstances of the late eighteenth century to be inadequate as a means of approaching the problem of

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83 Jones, pp. 45-52.
the growing needy towns, and of providing education on a wide enough scale. At the beginning of the nineteenth century Sir Thomas Bernard described charity schools as being ‘inefficient, lacking in adequate financial support, and too expensive to run’.84

An examination of the operation of the Charity Schools indicates that attempts to ‘discipline’ and ‘control’ the children of the poor were part of their aims and objectives. The arguments put forward by revisionist social historians about the possible motives underlying these schools appear to have been largely vindicated. However, the Charity Schools in Britain had a significant and probably, beneficial impact on the lives of many of the children of the poor. They were possibly the only means whereby many of these children were able to receive adequate care, the essentials of life, as well as an elementary education and religious training in the eighteenth century.

As a result of this survey of the Charity Schools Movement, we can now understand why the early colonial chaplains sought the establishment of an orphanage or school in the penal settlement. They considered that such a school operated along the lines of the Charity Schools would provide a means of ‘rescuing’ the destitute children from the unsatisfactory conditions in which they lived. The clerics envisaged that such a school was necessary to provide the poor, destitute children with food, clothing, shelter, secular education and training. Moreover, being removed from what they perceived as the bad influences of their parents, the children would have the opportunity of learning about the Christian religion. In addition to the pity they experienced when they observed the neglected children on the streets, these evangelical chaplains certainly had a moral conviction and a spiritual dimension in their thinking. This influenced what they perceived was the best means of ‘rescuing’ the orphans, abandoned and destitute children, who were also members of the ‘rising generation’.

From the survey about the establishment, aims, curriculum, management and operation of the Charity Schools, it has been shown that adaptations of these features

84 Silver and Silver, p. 6.
had relevance for the type of Orphan Schools which were later to be established in New South Wales.

Within this chapter there are indications that various Governors and their wives, public officials and others may have had favourable attitudes towards such institutions, and would be prepared therefore to serve on Committees, and to be involved in the operation of the Orphan Schools.

This chapter is based on secondary as well as primary sources. However, without the knowledge about the mainly English background, the history of the Orphan Schools to follow is barely explicable.
CHAPTER 2

THE ESTABLISHMENT AND OPERATION OF THE FEMALE ORPHAN SCHOOL

An examination of the difficult conditions which many of the convict women faced in the colony has indicated that there were orphaned and other children in necessitous circumstances. The judgements made by male contemporaries of the day, and their perceptions about the convict mothers led to their convictions that many of the ‘rising generation’ needed to be ‘rescued’.

As we look at the background of the person chosen to replace Governor Hunter namely Philip Gidley King, we learn that he had made provision for ‘orphan’ and destitute children whilst he served as Commandant on Norfolk Island. I ask the following questions. What were King’s perceptions about the children in Port Jackson? Why did he attempt to make provisions for their care? How did he propose initially to finance his project, the Female Orphan School, and what later steps did he take to ensure sufficient revenue for the Institution? Who were the members of his Committee and what functions did they perform? Why was his wife Anna Josepha King so important in this venture? What role did Mrs Elizabeth Paterson play on the Committee and in the School? In answering these questions we shall be assisted in understanding the character and significance of the Orphan School. The plan to build an institution for the boys is examined and the reasons for its deferment are to be considered.

In this chapter, the problems encountered in staffing the Female Orphan School will also be examined, as will the training provided for the girls together with the commercial aspects of their needlework. The introduction of the apprenticeship scheme occurred early in the School’s history, and similarities with the British Charity Schools are considered.

Governor Bligh encountered problems during his administration. He was arrested by members of the New South Wales Corps, and it was an unsettling time in the colony. The Female Orphan School experienced problems in this period of unrest, and we shall examine the effects of these on that institution.
When the Governor-elect Philip Gidley King, accompanied by his wife, Anna Josepha and daughter entered Port Jackson on board the *Speedy* on 16 April 1800, this was not his first visit to New South Wales. King had been associated with the first Governor of the penal colony of New South Wales, Captain Arthur Phillip. King had seen service under Phillip’s command in the Channel Fleet, and had accompanied Phillip in the *Europa* when that vessel sailed to India in 1783. Phillip ‘formed a high opinion of his merits’,¹ and chose King to accompany him as second-lieutenant on board the *Sirius*, the flagship of the First Fleet, which was due to sail to establish the penal colony at Botany Bay.

The fleet arrived in the first port of call Teneriffe, in the Canary Islands to take on fresh food and stores. King had an opportunity to meet with the Marquis de Branceforte, who was the Governor of the Canaries. The Governor showed him an institution which he had established for the very poorest men, women and children on the island. King was very impressed with this institution and wrote:

On arriving at the Building, which has been erected for the purpose, we found a number of Men, Women and Children at work some weaving, knitting, sewing and divers other employment, within this building. [There] was another building in which has been established a Manufactory of coarse linens and woollens, Ribbons, Tape etc., which are performed by Children and Women from seven years old to eighty, they are selected from among the poorest people on the Island, in short every female who is left an Orphan, or who is distressed, has only to present themselves in order to partake of the humane benevolence of the founder. When we were there, the Number of the females were one hundred and twenty, from seven years old, to twenty; and sixty from twenty to ninety.²

This institution at Teneriffe displayed to King one way in which care could be provided for women and children in necessitous circumstances. The Marquis de Branceforte had provided humane care for females who had been orphaned or were ‘distressed’. Later, when King who was the Commandant on Norfolk Island was faced with the problem of ‘orphan’ or destitute children, his visit to the institution on

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Teneriffe, which had clearly impressed him, may have given an impetus to his establishing an institution to care for these destitute children. Soon after the First Fleet eventually reached Port Jackson on 26 January 1788, Governor Phillip showed his confidence in Lieutenant King’s ability, because Phillip selected King ‘“as an officer of merit … whose perseverance may be depended upon”, to establish a subordinate settlement on Norfolk Island’.3

King’s task was to establish a self-sufficient settlement on Norfolk Island and it was hoped that an excess of food could be produced there to supplement the provisions of the Port Jackson colony. King took with him twenty three people consisting of mariners, nine male and six female convicts. One of the female convicts Ann Inett from Worcestershire was chosen as his housekeeper.4 She would later bear him two sons, Norfolk born on 8 January 1789 on Norfolk Island,5 and Sydney who was born at Port Jackson and was baptised at Sydney on 9 July 1790.6

Life was harsh on Norfolk Island; there were dense forests and undergrowth; windy conditions of gale proportions prevailed; there was no safe anchorage; and in April 1788 a plague of rats and grubs attacked the crops.7 In a despatch to Lord Sydney Governor Phillip wrote:

> Lieutenant King describes this island (Norfolk Island) as one entire wood, without a single acre of clear land that has been found when the Supply left them, and says that the pine-trees rise fifty to sixty feet before they shoot out any branches.8

During a period of incessant rain and cold he feared for the health and well-being of those on the Island. King displayed his concerns for those under his care and showed compassion. He considered that the tents in which five men and three women were living were quite inadequate. He therefore made other arrangements and wrote:

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3  Shaw, *ADB*, p. 55.
7  King and King, pp. 47-52.
I have shifted all provisions and Stores from the Storehouse into my house and placed them in the cellar and in the loft ... letting five men and three women (who are unhoused) have the Storehouse until a house can be conceivably built for them, which place the whole number under Shelter, except the Surgeon and Mate, a home for whom will be immediately begun.9

In the latter part of 1790 whilst in England reporting to the British Government on the problems and the urgent needs which faced the settlement in New South Wales, King married a cousin. Anna Josepha Coombe was a member of a respectable middle class family, and they were married on 11 March 1791.10 King returned to Port Jackson with his wife, reaching Sydney on 21 September 1791. Also on board was Captain William Paterson of the New South Wales Corps, and he was accompanied by his wife Elizabeth.11 With his commission of Lieutenant-Governor King sailed for Norfolk Island landing there early in November.12

During the period from 1791 to 1795 King undertook to make provisions for the education of the increasing numbers of children on Norfolk Island. King displayed more interest in education than Phillip and Hunter, but he did not face the same problems as Governor Phillip in establishing the penal settlement at Port Jackson. King was responsible for the erection of a stone building which measured fifty-six feet in length, was eighteen feet wide, and nine feet high to be used as a school house. Furthermore he had claimed £204 from the British Government for the cost of labour alone.13 Thomas McQueen, who had been transported for seven years, and who had been employed as a teacher in England, was the island’s first school master.14

On Norfolk Island there were a number of female ‘orphan’ children. The destitution of these children concerned King. He established an Orphan Institution to provide care for these girls. In the institution the children received an elementary education. They were also provided with clothing, shelter and food, and they were given training so that they could prepare for employment and meet with the same

10 Shaw, ADB, p. 56.
11 King and King, p. 56.
12 Shaw, ADB, p. 56.
13 King’s description of Norfolk Island, 18 October 1796, in Historical Records of New South Wales, Vol. III, p. 159.
14 ibid., p. 160.
success as others who had received a more fortunate start in life. The Rev. Samuel Marsden wrote about this establishment in these words:

In one part of (Norfolk) Island Governor King has built a school for the girls, and committed them to the care of Susannah Hunt, who appears to be well qualified for her situation. The number of children in August 1795 was seventy five, some of whom have neither parent nor friend to superintend their bringing up.

The girls lived in this institution, and they attended the school which was conducted within this setting, whilst Mrs Anna King, the commandant’s wife, presided over it. Thus it was on Norfolk Island that King became acquainted with the ‘problem’ of some of the convicts’ children, and his provision of care for these children, whose numbers were increasing, enabled him to develop his approach to improving the well-being of such children.

In order to secure funds for the operation of this school King levied taxes on imports; he imposed fines on people who were guilty of breaches of the peace; imposts were placed on illegal trading; and he also sought subscriptions from his officers. King not only showed vision as to the means whereby the orphan girls could receive care in an institution, but he also displayed a practical approach to the funding of such an orphanage and school. This practice used by King to fund the school, set a precedent for the taxes and imposts he was later to impose in New South Wales to provide initial support for the Female Orphan School. In the Introduction and earlier chapter the funding and operation of the British Charity Schools has been explored.

In writing about the provision of care, especially the clothing, provided on Norfolk Island for the destitute and abandoned female children, Lieutenant-Governor King also reported:

A third institution on a permanent footing is added to those, for the reception of such female orphan children as have lost or been deserted by their parents … . Unfortunately, those, as well as other children, are destitute of every article of clothing, except such as the

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stores affords, which is by no means calculated for children in this warm climate. The most necessitous of those children were for some time past cloathed.18

It was with this background of providing care for destitute children on Norfolk Island that Philip Gidley King with his wife and daughter returned to Port Jackson. Although the Governor-elect King arrived in April bringing with him a despatch recalling Governor John Hunter, the latter did not relinquish his position until September. The Rev. Richard Johnson and Governor Hunter eventually left the colony to return to England on board \textit{H.M.S. Buffalo}, in September 1800. The Governor and Mrs Anna King were then able to take up residence in Government House.19

Despite the delay in assuming command of the colony, King lost no time in reporting his perceptions of the prevailing moral conditions: ‘vice, dissipation and a strong relaxation seems to pervade every class and order of people’. To the Colonial Office he wrote: ‘The children are abandoned to misery, prostitution and every vice of their parents and in short, nothing less than a total change in the system of administration must take place immediately I am left to myself’.20

King (see photograph on following page) had made certain observations about many of the destitute, neglected children on the streets of Sydney, particularly the young girls, whom he considered were exposed to moral danger. He drew conclusions about the behaviour of many of the parents of these children. He made a judgement about the children’s possible futures and he drew on his experience with children in similar circumstances on Norfolk Island.

He formulated a plan for the care of female ‘orphans’ in the colony. His motivation was based on his moral stand about the plight of many young girls and he remained convinced about the corruptness of convict parents. He expressed his concerns in some detail to the Rev. Richard Johnson and other prominent members of the colony in these words:

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18 ibid., p. 160.
19 King and King, p. 76.
Governor Philip Gidley King: Founder of The Female Orphan School (from the copy in the Mitchell Library)
Soon after my arrival in the colony I had frequent opportunities of observing the numerous children of both sexes going about the streets in a most neglected manner. This observation was confirmed by the many distressing relations made to me of the early abuses the female part suffered, not only from the unprotected state they were in, but also from the abandoned examples of their parents, and those to whose care the orphans are committed. These circumstances, joined to the success of the asylum I formed at Norfolk Island for the care of female orphans, induced me to turn my attention as early as possible towards commencing a similar institution here for the purpose of withdrawing those real objects of charity and benevolence from the destructive connexions and examples of their dissolute parents in whom no reform can be expected, whatever good success may attend our endeavours to protect and instil proper notions in the minds of the younger part; altho’ I am well aware that even among the oldest of them there will be much to eradicate.21

In this communication King was genuinely distressed by the number of neglected children whom he had observed were on the streets without adequate care, shelter, food or clothing. Also in this correspondence we find that King had drawn the same conclusions about the neglected, destitute children of the colony and their parents, as had the Rev. Johnson and the Rev. Marsden. These three men with similar moral and social backgrounds had judged that these children’s parents, many of whom were convicts, were ‘abandoned characters’ who were incapable of reformation. Furthermore these authority figures also considered that the only hope for the children was to remove them from the ‘evil’ influence of their parents. King we have noted also considered that where children were abandoned and destitute; where family life had failed for whatever reasons; then the government had to accept responsibility for their care.

In chapter 1 we have surveyed the work of the Charity School Movement in Britain in the eighteenth century, and have noted the voluntary nature of this ‘child saving’ enterprise. Although the Movement was closely allied with the Church of England, which was the established Church. The British system relied on the philanthropy of groups and individuals to provide funds for the education and ‘rescue’ of those children who were perceived to be ‘at risk’. However, in the penal colony...
there were not even well established family networks with aunts, uncles or
grandparents to assist children, let alone the basis of philanthropy. Here we see an
example of King’s pragmatism, his matter-of-fact treatment of the problem. The
government would have to ‘rescue’ these needy children by making provision for
their well-being.

It was perhaps fortuitous that Captain William Kent of H.M.S. Buffalo, the
owner of a home which was considered to be the ‘finest residence in Sydney’, was to
return to England. The land belonging to Captain Kent was situated on the western
side of Sydney Cove, and it was a waterfront lot quite close to the head of the Cove,
where the Tank Stream entered it. On the plan of Sydney drawn in May 1800 by the
surveyor Mr C. Grimes, Kent’s land is shown as Lot 27. (See plan on following
page). On this plan that section of Sydney Cove had not been reclaimed, and Circular
Quay had not been constructed.

King, without any authority from the Colonial Office, made a conditional
purchase of Captain Kent’s home on 23 May 1800. King considered that this
residence would be ideal:

for the reception and education of part of the orphans,
the number of whom, and of other real objects for such
an institution, I am sorry to say, are 398 out of 958
children accounted for at the general muster.22

To Treasury officials in England, King gave his reasons for the conditional purchase
of Captain Kent’s home. He wrote that it was for an asylum to ‘withdraw the
orphans, and others from the vile example they hourly witness’.23

The purchase price of Captain Kent’s property which consisted of house,
offices and garden was £1539 17s 3d. This value was based on estimates prepared for
Lieutenant-Governor King by J. Bloodsworth the Superintendent of Bricklayers and
Plasterers and J. Anson, Carpenter. Their valuation was based on the following
estimates:

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22 ibid., p. 535.
Site of The Female Orphan School — Lot 27 the former residence of Captain William Kent (from the copy in *HRNSW* Vol.5, p.838)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>£</th>
<th>s</th>
<th>d</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bricklayers’, plasterers’, and masons’ work, with all materials</td>
<td>568</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carpenters’ work, timber, shingles, nails, glue etc.</td>
<td>818</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glaziers’ work, glass, putty etc.</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Locks, bolts, hinges, sashes and sash-lines, pulleys, weights, screws etc.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1539</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The house was situated between the current George Street and the Tank Stream close to King’s wharf, near the present north-eastern corner of George and Bridge Streets. The house stood below the hill on which St Philip’s Church was later erected, between that edifice and the old Military Barracks. There was a large garden in the front set out in square sections, and a shrubbery dotted each side of the house. The building itself, which was made of brick, had two storeys with a wing projecting on either side. (See illustration on next page).

Whether or not it was an oversight by the valuers is unknown, but two days after the conditional offer of purchase was made, Lieutenant Kent wrote to Lieutenant-Governor King:

>I observe in the valuation of the house no notice is taken of the expense I have been at on the premises, and particularly the garden; but this is a matter I mean to waive, well knowing your only object in this purchase proceed from the purest motives of benevolence towards the rising generation of this colony.

Although Lieutenant Kent had been very gracious in waiving the cost of the garden and fruit trees, by December 1801 he had still not received payment for his property. Both he and his brother had attempted to have the financial matter settled, but to no avail. Lieutenant Kent wrote to Sir Joseph Banks seeking his intervention in this matter. He indicated that he had a family of infants to support, and he intimated that he may have to resort to repossession of the property. This was a situation he did not

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The Female Orphan School is the two-storeyed building with two wings and ten garden plots to the south east of the Church.
(Source: D.D. Mann, The Present Picture of New South Wales 1811, John Ferguson, Sydney, 1979, opposite p.58)
wish to eventuate, because he realised that the girls would be obliged to leave the premises.\textsuperscript{28}

A Committee was appointed to direct and manage the Orphan School and to make recommendations to the Governor. This was an important historical ‘first’ for the colony. A group of private citizens was chosen to manage an institution which was to be financed from government revenue. In chapter 1 it was noted that in the British Charity School Movement, local committees were formed to manage these schools. The members of those Committees were also subscribers to the local Charity Schools. The committee formation in the colony was therefore quite unique.

The Committee consisted of people who were prominent in the colony: the two Anglican chaplains, the Rev. Richard Johnson and the Rev. Samuel Marsden; Mr William Balmain the principal surgeon and Mr John Harris a surgeon of the New South Wales Corps; Mrs Anna King the Governor’s wife and Mrs Elizabeth Paterson wife of Lieutenant-Governor Major William Paterson, (who was commander of the New South Wales Corps), were the original committee members.\textsuperscript{29} It is interesting to note that of the six committee members two were women, that is a third.

King decided that the maintenance of the Orphan School and the erection of other buildings to house the female orphans was to be financed from donations and public revenue derived from various sources. Duties were appropriated for the support of the Female Orphan School in August 1800, and they comprised the following:

The proceeds of the Retail Spirit Licences; the Port Duties; Entries and Clearances of Vessels; the Fees for Permits to remove Spirits; a Duty of 1½\% of Auction Sales; a Duty of 5\% Ad valorem on Articles imported, the produce of Countries eastward of the Cape, Fines levied by Court of Justice and Magistrates; the Governor’s Fees on all Grants, and the Quit Rents thereon; and certain profits, arising from the Sale of Supplies from His Majesty’s Stores as directed by the Right Hon. Lord Hobart.\textsuperscript{30}

\textsuperscript{28} ibid.
\textsuperscript{29} ibid., pp. 135-136.
\textsuperscript{30} Despatches from Governors New South Wales Enclosures 1827-29, p. 505. (ML) A1267-11.
The Committee held its first meeting on 8 September 1800. It was at this meeting that the Rev. Richard Johnson, the colony’s senior chaplain who was soon to return to England, was asked to hand over the cash and goods which had been subscribed to a charitable fund to provide for an orphan school. This fund had been commenced by him in 1795 possibly with Governor John Hunter’s support, and Richard Johnson was the treasurer. It was at this meeting that the Rev. Marsden was appointed to the position of treasurer, and this was the only position on the Committee, in which provision for payment was made. The other members acted as volunteers, or in honorary capacities.

The duties of the committee members covered such matters as reporting or making recommendations to the Governor about the enrolment or admission of ‘orphans’ or destitute girls to the School. The members would take into consideration the circumstances of any child whose name was submitted for admission. It was upon their recommendation that the Governor would base his decision for admitting a girl. A further responsibility of the committee members was to audit the School’s accounts. The members were further charged with the responsibility for the girls’ ‘Morals and Behaviour’. Mrs King was also later to act in the capacity of Patroness of the School. One can imagine that much deliberation took place as the Orphan School Committee held its initial meeting. Decisions were probably reached concerning the aims of the school, and the type and scope of curriculum to be developed.

The Rev. Richard Johnson produced his accounts as ordered, to the committee on 9 September 1800, and the members found that the cash and items in the fund were as follows:

Balance due to the Orphan School £114 16s 0d.
Articles in Mr Johnson’s possession purchased by cash appropriated for the use of the Orphan School:- nine pieces of chintz; two shawls; two pieces of white calico; three pieces of red gurrah; one piece of print (35½ yards); six pieces of gingham; two leggers of brandy containing 304 gallons in the public stores; due by cash, but for the use of the public gaol, to be paid by Mr Balmain £200 10s 9d.

32 Report from the Select Committee on Transportation, House of Commons, 10 July 1812, Governor Bligh’s evidence, p. 39. (ML)
33 Orphanage Committee meeting, 9 September 1800, in HRNSW, Vol. IV, p. 137.
King had originally considered that ‘398 children out of the 958 children accounted for at the general muster’ were neglected and in need of care.\textsuperscript{34} This figure seems to be very high and it was perhaps an overly ambitious plan for King to consider providing care, education, manual and religious training for such a large number of children. The Committee, however, was enthusiastic to provide as much accommodation as possible. At the meeting on 15 September, the proposed size of the establishment was discussed and the Committee hoped that the building would be able to accommodate one hundred girls. It was arranged with Mr Moore a carpenter, ‘to give in an estimate of the quantity of scantling necessary for fifty bed cradles to hold two children each’.\textsuperscript{35}

The Committee’s knowledge that there was an available residence to house some of the colony’s destitute and abandoned girls, must have encouraged the members to extend their horizons and consider ways of providing additional accommodation to house and care for more of the colony’s destitute children. As the residence at Sydney, Kent’s former home, was not expected to hold more than one hundred children, it was considered that an extensive and appropriate building be erected at Parramatta.\textsuperscript{36} The Rev. Samuel Marsden was requested to ‘contract the materials to build another school at Parramatta which is intended to contain about two hundred children’.\textsuperscript{37} This institution was to be placed under Marsden’s care because he lived in that district. Plans for the Parramatta institution had been prepared by Mr Barralier, and a site had been chosen known as Arthur’s Hill.\textsuperscript{38}

The Rev. Marsden entered enthusiastically into this task, and at the committee meeting held on 11 October 1800, Marsden reported that it had been estimated that two thousand pounds sterling would be required to have the orphanage at Parramatta constructed in accordance with the plans prepared and submitted by Mr Barralier. The treasurer also reported that bricks were being made for that purpose.\textsuperscript{39} Samuel Marsden had expressed his thoughts about the need for an orphanage earlier on 22

\textsuperscript{34} ibid., p. 135.
\textsuperscript{35} ibid., p. 138.
\textsuperscript{36} ibid.
\textsuperscript{37} Orphanage Committee meeting, 11 October 1800, in HRNSW, Vol. IV, p. 232.
\textsuperscript{39} HRNSW, Vol. IV, p. 138.
February 1800. He had written to an English friend Mrs Stokes in these words:

The building of an Orphan House is another object which lies near my heart. I shall feel uncommon satisfaction in having it carried into execution. The number of poor children in the colony I pity who have either no parent, or would have been better at this moment if they had never known them.40

Marsden’s expressed emotion of ‘pity for the poor children in the colony’, could have provided him with an impetus to get on with the task to which he was committed in his district of Parramatta. When Kent’s residence had been conditionally purchased in Sydney and was being prepared for the reception and care of ‘orphan’ girls, Marsden’s thoughts would have turned to make provision for the care of destitute children in his own local area.

It was not until 9 September 1800 that the impetuous King as Governor-designate advised the Duke of Portland, who was the Secretary of State, that he had conditionally purchased an expensive home without consent from the Colonial Office. He stated what he perceived were the urgent reasons for taking this course of action:

The necessity for some immediate steps being taken to save the youth of this colony from the destructive examples of their abandoned parents, and others who they unavoidably associate with, for want of an asylum to draw them from these examples, and from the assurances I have of the success and benefit that has attended an institution of that kind I formed some years ago at Norfolk Island, I have requested the persons named in the enclosure to act as a committee for conducting the necessary establishment, and have the honour to enclose their proceedings as far as they have gone. I am sorry it has not been in my power to give it the instant effect it required by other means than that of making a conditional purchase of Captain Kent’s house and grounds in Sydney for that purpose.41

41 King to Portland, 9 September 1800, in HRNSW, Vol. IV, p. 133.
King also outlined to the Duke of Portland the means whereby finances for both the Sydney orphanage and the proposed institution at Parramatta could be raised:

1. Funds then in the hands of the Committee,
2. donations,
3. a regulated duty on the entrance and clearing of vessels landing articles for sale,
4. privilege of watering at a convenient place for shipping,
5. issuing blank forms for promissory notes of payment among the inhabitants,
6. several other regulations of the same kind, and the appropriation of the quit-rents, fines and penalties'.

He further advised the Secretary of State that the costs associated with the institutions would be ‘without any further expense to the public’. The ‘public’ in this context referred to the Home Government.

King’s actions met with Portland’s support: ‘I highly approve of the measures you have taken’, he wrote to King, ‘for the formation of an institution for the support of education of those children who are left without any other resource’. Portland however was cautious, and no doubt concerned about the future possibility of the spending of government finance, because he suggested to King that, ‘care should be taken strictly to confine this institution to children of this description, and to oblige all those to maintain their own families, who have the means of so doing’.

After the committee meeting on 9 September 1800, Mrs Elizabeth Paterson wrote enthusiastically to her uncle, about the proposed orphan school in these words:

The children are to be entirely secluded from the other people, and brought up in habits of religion and morality … the boys will learn different trades; the girls housewifery and the use of the needle, as well as instruction in the basic subjects.
Mrs Paterson finished in this hopeful vein:

I cannot help looking forward to the time when the young men will become useful members of society, and the women faithful and industrious wives. Everyone must hope for our success in so laudable an undertaking.⁴⁶

In these words of Mrs Paterson, we can see similarities with the operation of the Charity Schools of Britain. The girls were to be completely removed from their environment and placed in a closed institution. As their environments and their parents were considered to be unsatisfactory if not ‘evil’, such drastic action was deemed to be necessary. Elementary education in reading and possibly writing was to be provided. Practical training in domestic skills for girls and in trades for boys was considered to be essential. The manual or practical training and the elementary education in basic subjects, was to be provided in an atmosphere where religious training was to be to the forefront. The children were to have moral values instilled in their education and training.

Although Mrs Paterson referred to the type of training to be provided for boys, it was to be quite a number of years before the Male Orphan School was established. In fact it was not until January 1819 that this institution was opened. There were certainly neglected and abandoned boys in the colony. Marsden considered that the boys were in need when he described their situation in these words: ‘who are equally in as distressed a state as the girls are’.⁴⁷ However King considered that the girls were in an unprotected state.⁴⁸

Philip Gidley King had assumed the responsibility of securing a home for the care, education and training of some of the colony’s destitute girls whilst John Hunter was still the Governor. Relations were probably strained between the two men because King had acted in an independent way, and presumably had not sought Hunter’s approval before embarking on his singular ‘rescue’ plan.

It is to Governor Hunter’s credit that he did not allow his personal feelings towards King to interfere with his generous donation to the charitable fund which the Rev. Johnson had commenced. It is recorded that in addition to donating a ‘handsome

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⁴⁶ Mrs Paterson to her uncle, 3 October 1800. MSS (ML) Ap 36.
clock’, he also donated fees he had accumulated through land grants. Hunter was a religious man and his genuine concern for the colony’s neglected children has already been noted in chapter I.

One can imagine it was with some excitement that the Committee of the Orphan School greeted Sunday 16 August 1801, and it must have been with a sense of great achievement that Governor King and the Committee witnessed the opening of the School. King certainly considered that the establishment was necessary to ‘rescue’ the children, because he had written:

Finding the greater part of the children in this colony so much abandoned to every kind of wretchedness and vice, I perceived the absolute necessity of something being attempted to withdraw them from the vicious examples of their abandoned parents.

He also re-iterated the necessity for the school in these words: ‘it was the only means to rescue the succeeding generation from the great depravity which exists among the present inhabitants of the colony’.

The Rev. Richard Johnson unfortunately had left the colony and was not able to witness the opening of the Orphan School. He had shown his concerns about the ‘rising generation’. He had expressed the reasons why such a school should be established when he wrote to the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel (SPG) in 1794. He had worked towards the establishment of the school by collecting contributions and he had served for a short term on the Committee as the colony’s senior chaplain.

Thirty-one girls, not all of whom were orphans, between the ages of seven and fourteen years were enrolled when the residence was ready for occupancy. There are no extant admission registers, school rolls or requests for admission forms for this period of the Orphan School. The names of those thirty-one girls and the backgrounds from which they came remain unknown.

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50 King to Treasury Commissioners, 7 July 1800, in HRNSW, Vol. IV, p. 113.
51 ibid., p. 65.
A church service was held prior to the opening of the Female Orphan School. The Rev. Samuel Marsden was the preacher and his sermon covered three main aspects. He spoke about the parents of the colony’s children. He described the deplorable situation in which many of the children lived. This was followed by an exhortation to children, teachers and all those associated with the institution. They were encouraged to instruct those in their care so that they would grow ‘in the knowledge of Christ, whom to know is life eternal’.\textsuperscript{53}

A missionary, the Rev. Rowland Hassall, provided an eye-witness account of the opening day activities of the Female Orphan School at Sydney. He wrote:

After the service was ended the Rev’d. Mr Marsden conducted us to the Orphan House (which is the best house in all Sydney, none excepted) where we was highly delighted with seeing the girls in the greatest order feasting on excilent sort pork and Plumb puddin, and seemed very happy in their new situation. In short, the whole is much better than I could have expected, and does much credit to those who have the management of the institution. There are thirty-one girls received into the school for learning, clothing, bed and board - the daily visitors are Mrs King and Mrs Paterson the first two ladies in rank in the Colony.\textsuperscript{54}

The Rev. Samuel Marsden expressed his delight at the opening of the Female Orphan School, and he paid tribute to the Governor who ‘gives it every support’, and to Mrs King and Mrs Paterson who attend every day that it may be properly managed.\textsuperscript{55} Mrs Anna Josepha King (see copy of painting on the following page) holds a unique place in Australian history. She was the first lady in the penal colony of New South Wales to have the status of Governor’s wife.

Miss Anna Josepha Coombe has been described as a lady of genteel birth, who at the age of twenty six, married her first cousin Lieutenant Philip Gidley King in March 1791. King was thirty three years old, and we do not know the background to their

\textsuperscript{54} Hassall to SPG, 17 August 1801, in BT, Box 49, pp. 183-184.
\textsuperscript{55} Mrs Marsden to Miss Stokes, 22 August 1801, in Hassall’s Correspondence, Vol. 1, p. 45. (ML) A1677-2.
MRS. PHILIP GIDLEY KING

Minature; artist and date unknown

By permission of the Trustees of the Mitchell Library, Sydney
meeting and subsequent marriage. King had been sent to Norfolk Island in 1788 to establish a settlement there, and he returned to England on 20 December 1790 to report to the British Government about the urgent needs of the penal settlements. By March 1791, within weeks of his marriage King left England on the Gorgon to take up his position as Lieutenant-Governor of Norfolk Island.57

The following words have been used to describe Mrs Anna King:

she, came from a respectable middle class family. She was well-educated, widely read, fond of writing letters, keeping a journal, dancing and singing. She held strong religious beliefs, had high moral standards and a clear set of principles from which she never departed.58

It would appear that Mrs King was also a loyal wife and a compassionate person. Before she gave birth six weeks after landing to her son Phillip Parker King in December 1791, she took care of Norfolk (son of Ann Inett), who was the elder of her husband’s two illegitimate children. Norfolk was then nearing two years of age. Mrs King was also apparently a very generous person because she considered that both Norfolk and his brother Sydney, should be provided for by the King family. These boys and Mrs King’s children developed a kindly loving relationship, and this has been attributed to Mrs King’s wise and generous example.59

On Norfolk Island Mrs King was able to develop a friendship with Elizabeth Paterson (see photograph on the following page) the wife of Captain William Paterson of the New South Wales Corps. Captain Paterson had command of a detachment of soldiers, and the Patersons had sailed to Norfolk Island from Port Jackson with the Kings and the Rev. Richard Johnson. This friendship may have helped Mrs King as she adjusted to a life which was so vastly different from her Devonshire background. When the Patersons left Norfolk Island in March 1793 Mrs King had no other officer’s wife to share her life in the penal settlement of Norfolk Island.60 When the ‘orphanage’ was established on Norfolk Island Mrs King took an active interest in its daily operation, although she had to take care of a young family of her own. This

56 Bassett, p. 2.
57 Gillen, p. 208.
58 King and King, p. 50.
60 ibid., p. 53.
Mrs. Elizabeth Paterson
(from the copy in the Mitchell Library)
experience was to stand her in good stead when she returned to Port Jackson as the wife of the Governor-elect of the colony.

Mrs King was able to renew her friendship with Mrs Elizabeth Paterson and it has already been indicated that both these ladies were original members of the Orphan School Committee. Furthermore their participation in the operation of the School was evidenced by their ‘daily attendance’ at that institution. Mrs King and Mrs Paterson were two women of the governing class, who were the wives of authority figures. They were able to take a very active interest in the welfare of the girls, and their involvement had a positive impact on the operation of the School in its formative years.

In referring to Mrs Anna Josepha King it has been written that she ‘began the reshaping of female authority in New South Wales’. Alan Atkinson also writes:

>a small space was opened for the authority of women such as Mrs King, whose voices were re-enforced by rank and gentility. Her authority helped to focus and enlarge that of other women in New South Wales who could call themselves ladies. It offered an arena for women’s imagination.61

Soon after the opening of the Female Orphan School, the religious training of the girls began. On 24 August 1801, the Rev. Samuel Marsden in writing about the provisions made ‘for the poor distressed children of the colony’ advised, ‘I spent the last evening with them for the first time, and I made a beginning to instruct them in the principles of Christianity, sang a hymn, and went to prayer with them’.62

Governor King’s joy at the establishment of the school, and his hopes for the children was expressed to Portland:

>I am happy to inform your Grace that the Orphan House at Sydney, is inhabited by those deserted female orphans who are rescued from the scenes of prostitution and iniquity, that disgraces the major part of the inhabitants of this colony, many of whom are from nine

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62 Marsden to Mrs Stokes, 24 August 1801, in Hassall’s Correspondence, p. 54.
to fourteen years old … . I hope the happiest effects will be produced by the institution.  

Mrs Elizabeth More Hume was appointed Matron of the Female Orphan School. She had arrived as a free settler to the colony, and was accompanied by her brother. Mrs Hume was the daughter of a clergyman, and came from the county of Kent. She had married Andrew Hamilton Hume in September 1796, and was the mother of Hamilton Hume who undertook overland explorations from Sydney to Port Phillip Bay in Victoria. Her married life had difficulties and her husband was charged on two occasions for felonies of which he was acquitted. On two occasions he was dismissed from government positions. As the government store keeper at Parramatta, it was found that there were ‘irregularities in his administration’.  

Mrs Hume taught the girls needlework, reading, spinning and some few writing, and the girls were victualled from government stores. Unfortunately Mrs Hume, whose salary was £40 per annum, tendered her resignation within a very short period, and cited ‘some unpleasant circumstances and increase of family’ as her reasons for leaving her post. Governor King had described Mr Hume as a ‘worthless character’, and the reasons for his description were probably bound up with the ‘unpleasant circumstances’ to which Mrs Hume referred in her resignation. ‘Hume’s reputation as an honest citizen’ had been demolished as a result of the August 1796 Court proceedings.  

Problems were apparently encountered from the earliest days of the school in the provision of suitable staffing, especially as far as the appointment of an acceptable Matron or Superintendent was concerned. Mrs Hume was followed as Matron by Mrs Robinson, whose name appears on a financial statement of Staff and Costs 1801-1802. Her period of service is shown as 27 September 1801 to 27 September 1802. She was initially paid at the rate of £21 per annum and this was raised to £30 per annum from 27 April 1802. The receipt of money was signed by Mary Robson, so perhaps Mrs Robinson was known as Mary Robson.

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63 King to Portland, 21 August 1801, in HRA, Vol. III, p. 123.
66 Byrnes, ADB, p. 563.
68 HRA, Vol. IV, p. 96.
Other members of staff at the School were a cook Ann Sandilan, a housemaid Ann Gauntery, a porter Thomas McDermott and a servant named William Ogden. Three teachers are also listed, their names being Mary Peat, Mary Cosgrove and Elizabeth Edwards. These were older girls, apparently monitors employed to instruct the younger girls, and may have been three of the girls initially admitted to the School at its opening. One wonders about the quality of the instruction provided, because Elizabeth Edwards was only able to make a mark when receipting her salary of £1 11s 6d per annum. Mrs Robinson’s sister was later appointed to the post of assistant Matron.  

Governor King alludes to the staffing limitations in a despatch to the Duke of Portland when he states that the girls have been given into the care of ‘as eligible people for that purpose as could be selected in this colony’. The School was then able to be financed from the imposts which had been levied, but the girls were still being ‘victualled by the Crown’.  

It would appear that the Female Orphan School was a ‘show piece’ in the colony. Not only were officials in England kept abreast of developments in that institution, but important visitors were made knowledgeable about its activities. One such visitor was the French cartographer Commodore Baudin, who was moved to make a generous contribution to the school. To Mrs King on 29 August 1802 he wrote:

Madam,

On the eve of my departure I take the liberty of sending you £50 of English money which I beg you to accept, to be distributed for the assistance of orphans. Although I am a foreigner in this colony, I hope you will not deprive me of the pleasure I have in finding a suitable opportunity of proving to you what respect I have for such institutions, especially when they are supervised by persons who, like yourself, know how to appreciate their usefulness for the present, and their advantages for the future.  

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69 ibid.
71 Commodore Baudin to Mrs King, 29 September 1802, in HRNSW, Vol. IV, p. 966.
This donation would have been added to the revenue of the Orphan Fund. We have already noted the various levies and duties initially imposed by Governor King to raise funds for the support of the existing orphan institution in Sydney, and the proposed institution at Parramatta.

In addition to those imposts a charge of £5, to be directed to the Orphan School, was placed on vessels which conveyed passengers without permission from the Governor or officer in command. A further charge of £5 for orphans was to be levied on boats which were carrying grain from the Hawkesbury in open vessels, or which exceeded the prescribed weights. If an employer used convict labour without the prisoner having the required certificate, then half-a-crown per day of employment was to go to the Orphans. Dues were levied on coals for home consumption and on timber. These were known as ‘King’s dues for Orphans’. 72

Colonial vessels were required to be registered and the fees for the Orphans were ten shillings. Also permission to sail to Botany Bay or to the Hawkesbury required two shillings, and the same amount for re-entry. If vessels were proceeding beyond Broken or Botany Bay then the sum levied was five shillings and the same applied for re-entry. 73

Masters were levied ten pounds, and half-a-crown per day for the servants who were absent from public labour. If a licensed person was in breach of regulations then five pounds was payable to Orphans. Conditions were applied to the landing of spirits and other strong drinks, as well as to licences. The penalties applied were five pounds to Orphans, and three pounds to Orphans for each licence. 74

If stallions were loose and were not claimed within a week they were forfeited to Orphans. Any free person found guilty of using the Tank Stream for wrong purposes, for example polluting, cleaning fish or having pigsties nearby could be fined £5 for the Orphans. Any swine roaming at large without a ring and yoke, could be forfeited to the Orphans. All timber exported had a levy applied of three pounds for 1000 feet solid. Weights or measures which were defective attracted a penalty of £10. 75

This very extensive, but by no means complete list of charges levied in support of the Orphan School, shows how wide-ranging these imposts were over a

72 Mann, pp. 17-19.
73 ibid., p. 19.
74 ibid., pp. 20, 23.
75 ibid., pp. 27-28.
number of activities. It would appear that King sought every available avenue to ensure the adequate financial backing of this institution. These levies were imposed over time.

Governor King maintained constant correspondence with English officials, especially concerning the provisions for the destitute female children. He had informed Lord Hobart, the Secretary of State, about the Committee’s plans to construct a similar institution for the care of orphan boys, and that subscriptions were being sought to that end. Lord Hobart was desirous that such a school be established, and in August 1802 he encouraged King in these words:

I felt highly interested in the perusal of your account of the progress which has been made towards the completion of the institution for the care of female orphan children . . . . An establishment of a similar nature for the reception of males, could not fail of being productive of the best effects, and I shall have great satisfaction in hearing of the adoption of a plan for that purpose.  

When the Female Orphan School opened there were thirty-one girls enrolled. The committee members were anxious that extensions should be made to the institution so that more girls, who were in need of care, could be accommodated. Their request was made to Governor King following their meeting on 17 April 1802.  

King believed that the girls were exposed to greater moral danger than the boys, and he agreed that extensions should be made to the Sydney Institution. When a new building was completed near the existing residence, there was room for more girls, and by 31 December 1801 forty-nine girls had been received into the Institution. By 24 March 1803 there were fifty-four girls enrolled, although the capacity of the school at that time was for one hundred girls.  

The spending of funds on the Female Orphan School, meant that the plans for establishing a similar institution for boys did not reach fruition. Lord Hobart’s expectations about the school for boys could not be met. King regretted the deferment when he wrote to Lord Hobart, ‘I much fear that our funds will not at present allow us to think of a similar institution for males, which is about as desirable

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76 Hobart to King, 22 August 1802, in HRNSW, Vol. IV, p. 825.
77 HRA, Vol. IV, p. 95.
as the other’. Disappointment among the committee members we can imagine, would have been great. A site had been chosen at Parramatta; subscriptions were sought; a plan had been submitted; estimates had been prepared for costs; tenders had been called and bricks made for the building; but despite all this activity, plans had to be deferred.

When the financial position of the Orphan Fund deteriorated due to the extensions and the costs of providing care for the girls, King attempted to solve the economic problems of the establishment by making land grants to the committee members of the Female Orphan Institution who were to act as Trustees in the use of the land. The members were then Mrs A. J. King, Mrs E. Paterson, the Rev. Samuel Marsden, surgeons John Harris and Thomas Jamison and the Commissary John Palmer. The grants in question amounted to nearly 13,000 acres of land. In writing to Lord Hobart King reported his actions, and the reasons for them in these words:

> Viewing the present and future benefit of this institution and the only present means by which it is supported, that is duties on entries, clearances etc., I am persuaded that without the most rigid economy and perseverance on the part of the Committee, that Institution must have languished ere now. Anxious to provide in some measure for what I have been the humble instrument in establishing and forwarding, I have considered it necessary to locate about 13,000 acres of land for its endowment, which by being let out in portions, may in a short time produce an increasing fund for the support of that institution.81

One of these grants of land consisting of 12,300 acres was in the Cabramatta district, about three miles to the west of Liverpool township. To the north of the site was Prospect Common; Cabramatta Creek was the southern boundary. Old Cowpastures Road formed the western boundary, whilst Prospect Creek and a farm belonging to Cummings was the eastern boundary.82 (See location map on following page).

The second land grant lay much closer to Sydney town. It comprised about 500 acres and was located on the southern side of Parramatta Road and included the

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82 ibid., Note 14, p. 801.
Site of the Orphan School Land Cabramatta, three miles to the west of Liverpool (from the copy in the Mitchell Library)
area now occupied by Sydney University and its colleges. This particular grant was known as Grose Farm, and included land originally set aside by Governor Phillip when he had acted on Additional Instructions in August 1789 and subdivided 1000 acres at Petersham Hill. He set aside ‘four hundred acres for the maintenance of a minister, and two hundred acres for that of a schoolmaster’. He also reserved an allotment of four hundred acres for use by the Crown. This last allotment lay between the first two sections.

In 1792 on 29 September, Governor Phillip had granted the Lieutenant-Governor Francis Grose, a lease of thirty acres within the Crown reserve of four hundred acres, because Grose had indicated that he wished to erect a house on that site. The price determined for the lease was two shilling per annum for each acre of land, and the lease was to run for fourteen years.

The plan of Grose Farm (see plan on following page) shows four hundred acres for Crown purposes, however five hundred acres was granted to the Female Orphan Institution Committee at Petersham Hill, which included Grose Farm. It would appear that additional acres were added to the Crown Reserve and the increased acreage was ‘bounded by the Orphan School Creek in the north-east, and Johnston’s Creek in the north west’.

The original lease granted in 1792 to Francis Grose of thirty acres, was for a period of fourteen years.

In 1803, the lease was in possession of Thomas Laycock, and Governor King purchased the unexpired term of three years, and cancelled the deed on 27th of September, 1803. This land was included in a grant dated 13th August, 1803 of 500 acres to the trustees of the Orphan Institution.

The following advertisement which appeared in the *Sydney Gazette* August 3, 1806, refers to this grant:

83 ibid., p. 802.
87 *HRA*, Vol. IV, Note 43, Grose Farm, p. 663.
Map of the Crown Reserve including Grose Farm at Petersham Hill which was granted to the Female Orphan Institution Committee
(Source: J.F. Campbell, 'The early History of Sydney University Grounds', JRAHS, Vol.16, Pt.4, 1930, p.280)
To be let by the Orphan School Committee for a term of three years. The very valuable farm known by the name of Grose Farm within two miles of Sydney on Parramatta Road, comprising five hundred acres, about fifty acres of which are cleared; together with a commodious farm residence, and out-buildings, and two good gardens.\(^8\)

As Governor King had made land grants to the Committee to ensure the economic viability of the Female Orphan School, it is difficult to understand his later action, as far as the 500 acre grant at Petersham Hill is concerned. On 12 August 1806, a couple of days prior to the close of his administration, he transferred to his successor Governor William Bligh two hundred and twenty acres of this grant. This action had the effect of reducing the size of the acreage in the control of the Committee to two hundred and eighty acres, and the trustees apparently gave their conditional assent.\(^9\) This reduction in size, one imagines, would have had an impact on the income producing effect of the property. This grant, as well as other parcels of land made over to Bligh, did not receive mention in despatches.\(^9\)

During Macquarie’s administration the validity of Bligh’s grant was the subject of lengthy official correspondence. A compromise was reached by which the Camperdown estate, (so named by Bligh) was retained in the interests of Bligh’s legatees.\(^9\) Over time the two hundred and twenty acres of land were subdivided and sold.

Meanwhile at the Orphan School a further change in staff had occurred. A Sergeant Stroud and his wife had ‘accepted the superintendency of that Institution’. King wrote in glowing terms of this couple whom he described as ‘a great acquisition’. King also expected them to ‘do extremely well’. King conveyed this information to Under Secretary Sullivan.\(^2\) This note of confidence was maintained by Governor King who stated that ‘The Orphan House is well managed by Sergeant Stroud and his wife, who give the greatest satisfaction to myself and the Committee’.\(^9\) This period appears to have been a time of stability in the Orphan School as far as staff were concerned. King also indicated to Lord Hobart at the same

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88 *Sydney Gazette*, August 3, 1806, p. 1. (ML)
89 Campbell, p. 280.
92 King to Sullivan, 8 May 1803, in *HRA*, Vol. IV, p. 245.
time that there was an improvement in the state of the Orphan Institution although their funds were ‘rather low’. 94 Three months earlier, in May 1803, King had advised that the girls were ‘making great progress in reading, writing, plain work and spinning’. 95

Improvements to the Orphan Fund occurred and in January 1805 King was able to inform Lord Hobart that the management Committee was continuing to exert its ‘human endeavours’ for the well being of the institution. He also considered that the School would be able to house one hundred children, and added ‘as the Fund is now so rich, they are struck off the Stores for Grain, and receive but a small proportion of Salt Meat’. 96

In the January 1805 record of disbursements of the Orphan Fund reference is made to a stone wall and paling (fence). 97 The Committee had agreed to this expenditure, and in June of that year an advertisement appeared in the *Sydney Gazette* calling for tenders to supply and create a stone wall around the Orphan School. The dimensions were to be eight feet in height and eighteen inches thick. 98 Reasons for the construction of this wall do not appear in committee proceedings. There is no evidence of girls absconding from the school at that time. However they may have been perceived to be at risk from ‘unwelcome guests’, because the school was not a great distance from the barracks. Earlier Mrs Paterson had used these words ‘the children are to be entirely secluded from the other people’. This action was to remove them from what were considered to be ‘evil influences’. The wall was perhaps a visible sign that the girls were indeed ‘secluded from other people’, by being completely enclosed behind the ‘wall’.

Governor King had written to Lord Hobart about the Orphan School and his desire to see it as a permanent feature of colonial society. He expressed his sentiments in these words: ‘when I quit the scene I shall form a sincere wish that it may be continued as it has been so successfully begun’. 99

During his term as Governor, and even before that period, King had suffered from ‘rheumatism and gout’. 100 It was because of King’s indifferent health that the

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97 ibid., p. 282.
100 Bassett, *The Governor’s Lady*, pp. 33, 44.
family had returned to England having sailed from Norfolk Island in April 1796. Whilst in England King’s health improved, although he experienced money problems and probably looked forward to taking up his appointment as Governor-elect of the colony of New South Wales.

One of his tasks was to control if not stop the monopolistic practices and the profiteering which officers of the New South Wales Corps had developed though the sale of spirits. It was considered that John Hunter had not been able to cut government costs or to adequately challenge the vested interests of the officers. These may have been the reasons why he was recalled by the British Government.101

When one considers the state of the colony, and the well-developed military opposition to the administration, King faced an uphill battle. With his frequent bouts of ill-health, the difficulties of administering a penal colony and the well-entrenched opposition of the New South Wales Corps, it is much to King’s credit and is an expression of his humane nature, that he was able to devote so much time and energy to the plight and rescue of the ‘orphan’ children.

In writing about King’s involvement with the New South Wales Corps, an eyewitness at the time George Suttor a free settler, who had a farm at Baulkham Hills, made the following observation:

That a penal settlement should be without a Military Guard was an oversight, but the Colony at that time had but a very indifferent military establishment; and Governor King, though a man of great promptness and ability, and of great experience in colonial matters, was much opposed by Officers of the New South Wales Corps; they were great rum dealers, and it might be said general dealers, with the exception of Colonel Paterson, who was a very honourable and amiable man and officer, but not of sufficient energy to restrain the evils of those under him. Indeed the situation of the Colony and the characters of those who composed it produced evils beyond the wit of man, or of Governor, to prevent.102

It is probable that the mounting pressures from the New South Wales Corps resistance, and his deteriorating health forced King to return to England. The

101 King and King, p. 72.
Admiralty Orders for King’s return were forwarded from Secretary William Marsden to Governor King in November 1805. He was advised that he had ‘been relieved by Captain Bligh in the Government of New South Wales’, and he was ‘required and directed to make the best of his way to England in *H.M. Ship Buffalo*’.103

The future well-being of the Female Orphan School remained high on King’s list of priorities. He expressed his thoughts in these words:

> I now have the honour of transmitting that from 1st January to 12th August of this year (1806), when I resigned the Command to Governor Bligh, who will take that Institution under his protection. The intention and success of which will be materially promoted by his amiable Daughter who has offered to succeed Mrs King in the internal Superintendence of that Asylum on whom the Welfare of the rising Generation so much depends.104

At the close of King’s term as Governor, the Rev. Samuel Marsden made footnotes on the Receipts and Disbursements Account of the Orphan Fund for the period 1 January 1806 to 12 August 1806. He listed the assets of the Orphan Institution as consisting of: the Sydney Orphan School, a farm in the Cabramatta District, and a farm and buildings at Petersham together with livestock consisting of a bull, cows, calves, ewes, rams, wether male and female lambs. He also indicated that ‘since 16th June 1806, the Institution has ceased having any Provisions or Support from the Crown’. The Rev. Marsden continued in a positive vein: ‘Since the commencement of the Institution in August 1801, Six Orphans have been married, and portioned with £10 each; and eleven have been bound Apprentices to Officers’ Wives’.105 The reference to the eleven girls who had been apprenticed indicates a role which the Female Orphan School was to play in the colony, namely the supply of servants for the ‘colonial elite’.

The King family sailed from Port Jackson on 10 February 1807, although Captain William Bligh had reached the settlement on 6 August 1806. King had suffered a recurrence of gout, and had to remain in Government House at Parramatta. On 23 April a birthday party was held on board the *Buffalo* to celebrate King’s forty

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105 ibid., Enclosure, p. 765.
ninth birthday.  

Philip Gidley King’s health deteriorated and he ‘died in September 1808, leaving a wife and family in real financial need. Treasury’s meagre help was long in coming to his widow’.  

The problems which existed in the colony of New South Wales as far as the monopolistic and trading practices of the officers of the New South Wales Corps were concerned, have already been noted. When Governor William Bligh took up his position he encountered the same problems when he attempted to break up these entrenched practices. His actions lead to enmity with the New South Wales Corps and with John Macarthur.  

As Governor Bligh became engulfed in political controversy this meant that the Crown’s representative was not able to show the same interest in the welfare of the Orphan School as his predecessor. William Bligh did not report on the committee’s deliberations in despatches, and the records of the Committee are not extant. This was a period of decline in the history of the Female Orphan School.  

Viscount Castlereagh in a despatch to Bligh in December 1807, more than a year after his appointment, drew the Governor’s attention to a number of social matters in the colony. Among these he expressed the need for promoting an increase in the number of marriages in the colony as a means of reducing the number of illegitimate births; the proper assignment of women convicts upon their arrival; and the need for providing adequate education and training for orphans so that they could become useful members of society; and inherent in this was their appropriate apprenticeship after they left the institution.  

This despatch may have been prompted by a letter written by the Rev. Samuel Marsden to Under Secretary Cooke, whilst Marsden was in England in 1807. He painted a very bleak picture from his perspective about the moral and religious conditions which prevailed in the colony. He wrote:  

The depravity and vice which pervade a large proportion of the Community does, by its preponderating influence, effect the whole, and gives to

106 King and King, pp. 143-148.
the individual habits and manners much to be deplored. Any attentive humane observer … would soon be convinced of the truth of these remarks; and when he beheld a rising generation of several hundred of fine children exposed to a contamination fatal to body and soul, he would tremble for their danger.

In August, 1806, the number of children amounted to 1832, of whom 1025 were illegitimate, and many of them of convicts and forsaken by their parents. Remote, helpless, distressed and young, these are truly the children of the State.110

In this same letter the Rev. Marsden also indicated that there was need for ‘a sturdy, prudent married man and woman’ to assume the position of Master and presumably Matron of the Female Orphan School. This reference to staffing arose because staff changes had occurred at the school. The Balance Sheet of the Orphan Institution for 31 October 1807, shows the following item, ‘March 7th paid H. Stroud Balance of his Wages as Master of the School and discharged him by order of the Trustees £18 15s 7d’.111 The departure of the Strouds followed the marriage of their daughter to a Mr Apsey. A Master appointed by Bligh turned out to be a disaster, and he certainly failed in his duty of care. Two of the committee members John Harris and Thomas Jamison who were opposed to Governor Bligh resigned from their positions. These issues were raised by Mr John Harris, a member of the original Committee, when he wrote with considerable feeling to Mrs Anna King on 25 October 1807. He used these words:

Mr Harris - what have you done with the Orphan School! To which I reply, I have left it Mrs King, consequently no good can come of it, and Mr and Mrs Stroud left it when their daughter married Mr Apsey. The Governor then by his own Ipse Dixit put in that honest man of the Gown Rev. Newsham. … this honest man was the Master of the school, preached in the afternoon on Sundays and took Unwarranted liberties with the Girls on Mondays, for which he is now ordered two hundred Lashes, to stand in the Pillory three times and to hard Labor in Newcastle. In short the school has lost its good name, and which in some measures I do not regret; Tho in others I am very sorry.112

The removal of Newsham from his position led to the appointment of a Mr and Mrs Marchant as Master and Matron in 1807. Mr Harris referred to this appointment in that same letter to Mrs King when he wrote: ‘A Mr and Mrs Marchant who came out from England as I am told for that purpose’. Unfortunately, Mr Marchant was so unwell that he was unable to take an active role in the School, and he subsequently died. Mrs Merchant later resigned from the position of Matron. A couple, Henry and Susannah Perfect, who had been employed in a private school, were then appointed to the position. We may infer that these people were not considered to be satisfactory by the Rev. Marsden, because we have already noted his comment to Under Secretary Cooke in November 1807.

In evidence given in 1812 to the Select Committee on Transportation Bligh stated that he ‘found the school in a very disorderly state, many of the girls were very loose in their manners’. At the beginning of Governor Bligh’s administration in August 1806, the Strouds were in charge of the Orphan School. Bligh’s comments about the ‘state of the school’ reflects negatively on those in charge of it. Perhaps that is why Mr Stroud’s appointment was terminated in March 1807. We have already seen that he was ‘discharged by order of the trustees’. Governor Bligh requested the Secretary of State to send out from England suitable teachers who would be able to make a contribution to the education of the ‘rising generation’. He wrote: ‘With respect to the education of youth, four respectable men are wanted for the benefit of the rising generation, in these also should be married men, and a man and his wife are necessary for the Orphan School’.

It was during Bligh’s evidence to the Select Committee that we get a brief glimpse of life in the Female Orphan School during his period of administration. In answer to a question posed on 24 February 1812 about the training of the girls in trades, Bligh replied: ‘they were taught to read and write and to work as seamstresses; and the straw-hat manufacture was beginning to be introduced’. To a further question about the commercial aspect of the girls’ work, Bligh stated:

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113 ibid., p. 246.
115 Report from Select Committee on Transportation, House of Commons, 10th July, 1812, Bligh’s evidence, p. 40. (ML)
It was not advanced so far; with respect to selling bonnets and things, they made them for themselves; but they made shirts, and all kinds of linen, and money was paid by people who required them to do so; and that money went to the fund for their support generally.117

On 26 January 1808, Governor Bligh was deposed and placed under arrest by officers of the New South Wales Corps. This event is known as the Rum Rebellion, and occurred less than two years after his appointment as Governor. Colonel Johnston took charge of the administration, and this was a very unsettling period in the colony. When Lieutenant-Colonel Joseph Foveaux arrived at Port Jackson in July 1808, as senior officer he decided to assume command of the situation. A short time later Foveaux corresponded with Viscount Castlereagh expressing his concerns about staff inadequacies at the Orphan School in these words: ‘I shall endeavour to maintain the Orphan School upon the plan introduced by Governor King. Altho’, from the want of a proper person to entrust with the direction of the children, unavoidable abuses and irregularities will arise’.118

Problems associated with the good name of the school had been evident for some time. In 1805 a man by the name of H. Simpson was sentenced to flogging by three members of the Orphan School Committee, who were also magistrates. The members were the Rev. Marsden, Thomas Jamison and John Harris. Their action resulted from a scandalous liberty taken with the character and reputation of one of the orphans. The punishment was reduced from one hundred to fifty lashes, and was imposed in order to act as a deterrent, ‘to shield the objects of this benevolent Institution from wanton and uncharitable slander’.119

William Pascoe Crook, who had been accepted as an ‘artisan missionary’ and received some training in tin plating, saw service in the South Seas with the London Missionary Society. When he arrived in Port Jackson he was engaged by the Rev. Samuel Marsden to open a school in the Church at Parramatta.120 Crook was later invited by Marsden, during King’s governorship, to take charge of the Orphan School but he declined the offer. It was not until some years later that he gave his reasons for not accepting the position on these grounds:

117  Bligh’s evidence, in Select Committee on Transportation, p. 40.
118  Foveaux to Castlereagh, , 6 September 1808, in HRA, Vol. VI, p. 642.
119  SG, November 24, 1805, p. 1.
we declined because it seemed impossible as matters then were to rectify the dreadful abuses of that institution; the far greater part of the female orphans when they left the school turning out as prostitutes and many, there is just ground to conclude, were little better while in the school.\textsuperscript{121}

Whilst in England during 1808, the Rev. Marsden had obtained the services of Mr John Hosking and his wife as Master and Matron of the Orphan School. In describing them to Rowland Hassall, Marsden wrote: ‘They are pious people, and I think will answer well for that situation’.\textsuperscript{122} Mr and Mrs Hosking arrived in Sydney on the \textit{Aeolus} on 29 January 1809. Mr Hosking was an ex-teacher of a Voluntary School in England, and was familiar with the Lancastrian monitorial system. He was the first trained teacher to arrive on the mainland.\textsuperscript{123}

Early in January 1809 Joseph Foveaux handed over control of the colony to Colonel William Paterson, who had at first been ‘reluctant to become involved in the doings of a provisional government’.\textsuperscript{124} However, Paterson finally left his post at Port Dalrymple in Van Diemen’s Land on 1 January 1809. Colonel Paterson tried to improve the funds of the Female Orphan School by instructing that ‘the fines levied on offending bakers are to be paid into the Orphan School Fund’.\textsuperscript{125}

At the end of the first decade of the nineteenth century we find that the colony experienced a difficult situation. Suttor painted a very dismal picture when he wrote as follows: ‘Anarchy and idleness spread over the land, the cultivation of which was neglected. This state of affairs continued for two years; many families were involved in ruin’.\textsuperscript{126}

Although Governor King had anticipated that William Bligh would involve himself with the Female Orphan School, and that his daughter Mary Putland would ‘succeed Mrs King in the internal Superintendence of that Asylum’, his hopes did not reach fruition. For a period of a year both Bligh and his daughter were confined to Government House.\textsuperscript{127} Also Mrs Putland’s husband who was a lieutenant in the navy had died of consumption on 4 January 1808, and much of her time had probably been

\textsuperscript{121} Crook to London Missionary Society, 18 June 1813, in BT, Box 49, p. 33220.
\textsuperscript{122} Marsden to Hassall, 7 June 1808, in Hassall Correspondence, Vol. I, pp. 193-194.
\textsuperscript{123} Vivienne Parsons, Hosking, John (1806-1882) \textit{ADB}, Vol. 1, p. 554.
\textsuperscript{125} SG, October 1, 1809, p. 1.
\textsuperscript{126} Suttor’s evidence, in Mackaness, \textit{Memoirs of George Suttor}, p. 49.
devoted to his care. Those duties thus restricted her involvement with the management of the Orphan School.\textsuperscript{128}

In this chapter King’s background and his motivation in establishing the Female Orphan School have been examined. Our attention has been drawn to the unique position of the Committee which was chosen to manage an institution financed by government revenue. The significance of Mrs Anna King’s place in colonial society has been noted, as well as the importance her ‘voice’ played in encouraging other women to participate in ‘public affairs’. The opening of the School and the high hopes set on it for the ‘rescuing’ of ‘orphan’ or destitute children has been described, as well as the problems encountered during Governor Bligh’s administration.

The well-being of the Female Orphan School deteriorated, and its reputation left much to be desired. There had been too many changes of staff in terms of Masters and Matrons, and some of the people chosen for responsible positions within the School, were far from satisfactory and this had an undesirable effect on the stability and morale of the institution. Governor Bligh and his daughter were not able to exercise a positive influence in the School. Members of the Committee had either resigned in protest because they were anti-Bligh men, or were deposed because they were pro-Bligh supporters. Both Harris and Jamison who were surgeons, had ceased to be involved in the management side of the school,\textsuperscript{129} and Robert Campbell and the Rev. Henry Fulton were sacked from the committee after the Rum Rebellion.\textsuperscript{130} As the committee members had initially taken a ‘hands on’ approach and appeared to be genuinely concerned with the advancement of the institution, the loss of such committed members inevitably had a significant impact on the direction and management of the school. In all respects it was indeed a ‘dark time’ for the institution on which its founder Philip Gidley King had set such high hopes, in his attempt to ‘rescue’ the neglected ‘orphan’ girls, who were part of the ‘rising generation’.

\textsuperscript{128} Bligh to Castlereagh, 30 April 1808, in \textit{HRNSW}, Vol. VI, p. 611.
\textsuperscript{129} Harris to Mrs King, 25 October 1807, in King Papers, Vol. 8, p. 246.