CHAPTER 3

THE FEMALE ORPHAN SCHOOL AND ITS OPERATION DURING MACQUARIE’S GOVERNORSHIP

The situation in the colony facing the incoming fifth Governor, was one which would require strong leadership to restore order. We shall be examining Lachlan Macquarie’s background, and also his involvement with the Female Orphan School. The part his wife Mrs Elizabeth Macquarie was to play in that institution will also engage our attention, as well as her background, her strong personality, and her leadership role as Patroness of the School.

When a decision was made to relocate the School from Sydney to Arthur’s Hill, Parramatta we shall consider the Rev. Marsden’s activity in overseeing the construction. The problems he encountered in the construction will be discussed as well as the on-going inadequacies of the buildings.

The enlargement of the Committee by the re-instatement of former members; by the nomination of the wives of prominent men; and by the inclusion of other gentlemen will be discussed, as well as the numerous deliberations which engaged the Committee’s attention. Changes in staff of Masters and Matrons were made in this period, and the contribution made by these people who were charged with the day-to-day running of the School will be noted. The change in the monitorial system of the School will be mentioned and the punishment meted out to one of the girls will be examined. Finally an argument linking Governor Macquarie’s humane approach to emancipists to his policies relating to the Orphan Schools, will be made in this chapter.

The appointment of Lieutenant-Colonel Lachlan Macquarie to the position as the fifth Governor of the colony of New South Wales, saw a change in attitude by the British Government. The first four Governors had been naval officers, and it was decided to appoint a governor with a military background. The Government decided to send the 73rd Regiment to New South Wales, to replace the New South Wales Corps, and
Lachlan Macquarie was its commandant. Later the Colonial Office decided to appoint Macquarie as Governor. This information was conveyed to him by Lord Castlereagh, the Secretary of State, on 27 April 1809.

At the time of his appointment in 1809, Lachlan Macquarie a Scotsman from the isle of Ulva, was 48 years old. He had spent 33 years in the army having been a volunteer at the age of fifteen years. He had received his commission with the rank of ensign in Canada on 29 April 1797, and served with the Second Battalion in Nova Scotia. Macquarie had sought promotion throughout his career, and had attained the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel. He was a well disciplined man, and he brought to his office a broad background in military life.

Macquarie’s qualities and strengths have been expressed in these terms:

Macquarie’s humanity was fortified with good sense and sound judgment; more akin to justice than to pity; it meant fair play for all - the convict as well as the gentleman. Macquarie was intensely practical; had a great capacity for seeing facts as they were and for acting accordingly; yet always holding fast to his two guiding principles - humanity and justice.

Alan Atkinson also speaks of Macquarie’s qualities: ‘he was passionate and generous, also a man of pen and paper’.

Macquarie arrived in Port Jackson on board the Dromedary on 28 December 1809 accompanied by his second wife Elizabeth Henrietta Macquarie (née Campbell), officers and men of the 73rd Regiment, and bearing his commission which was dated 8 May 1809. His commission varied little from those of his predecessors Phillip, Hunter, King and Bligh despite the differences which each Governor had encountered. It was an unrealistic approach by the British Government, particularly when the Colony had experienced the problems and negative effects of the Rum Rebellion. Each Governor had been expected to effect certain outcomes, and it would

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2 Ritchie, p. 95.
3 ibid., p. 19.
appear that the Colonial Office was unaware of the real difficulties faced by its representative 12,000 miles away.

The commission included instructions to the Governor covering a wide range of objectives such as promoting peace and security in the colony; to see that Public Stores and Stock was protected and to ensure that the inhabitants observed religion and kept good order. The importation of spirits was to be controlled; land grant sizes were to be observed; certain tools of trade and the distribution of seeds for agriculture were to be controlled; certain procedures for the assignment of convicts were to be followed; general orders for the establishment of towns and the reservation of land for the upkeep of clergy and school teachers was not to be overlooked.7

Accompanying the commission was an enclosure from T.W. Plummer of Westminster, and it appears to be of a semi-private nature. The writer spoke in general terms about the convicts, describing them as: ‘being destitute of any powerful motives to industry, abandon themselves entirely to habits of idleness and debauchery’. The writer also described the treatment of female convicts and the assignment practice which prevailed. He considered that practice rendered ‘the whole colony little better than an extensive Brothel’. The outcome of the practice was the number of illegitimate children in the colony. Plummer proposed that provisions should be made at public expense to house women ‘who were not living with their husbands, in which they might maintain themselves by their own labour’. These single women were to be encouraged to marry and a type of dowry consisting of ‘small donations of Land and Stock from the Government’, was suggested as being appropriate if the women married and ‘settled respectably’.8

In March 1810 Macquarie made the following observation to Viscount Castlereagh, which indicates a negative attitude to the women convicts. He wrote:

The situation of the Colony requires that as many Male Convicts as possible should be sent out, the prosperity of the Country depending on these male convicts. Female convicts are, on the other hand, as great a drawback as the Males are useful.9

7 ibid., pp. 190-196.
9 Macquarie to Castlereagh, 8 March, 1810, in ibid, p. 221.
Helen Heney comments that Governor Macquarie seems to have ignored the proposals made by Mr Plummer. Despite Macquarie’s humanity, and his interest in buildings, ‘he left them [the convict women] without a roof over their heads’.10

On New Year’s Day 1810 a gathering of the inhabitants was held in the Parade Grounds and the Governor’s Commission was read by the Judge-Advocate, Ellis Bent. The regiment of soldiers were on parade and it was a very formal occasion. It was indicative that order was to be restored in the colony. The Governor addressed the assembly beginning with the words: ‘Fellow citizens and fellow soldiers’, and outlined the proposals he intended to implement, to carry out the authority which had been entrusted to him. He sought conciliation from all groups within the colony; he recommended all people to observe religious duties; he recommended that the peaceful natives of the country be treated with kindness; he expected the military to discharge their duties vigilantly; and he indicated that he would be a protector to all industrious inhabitants whether convict or free settler.11

We have noted in chapter 2 that Mr and Mrs Hosking had arrived in the colony in January 1809 and had taken up positions as Master and Matron at the Female Orphan School. A year later the girls were assisted in their education, because during the month of January a Spelling Book compiled from Mr Linley Murray’s An English Spelling Book had been printed for the institution. This was the first textbook printed in the colony, and the reporter considered that this spelling book: ‘cannot be otherwise than of much utility in facilitating the progress of the Children in the first principles of Education. … we are happy to reflect the children of New South Wales have now the opportunity of benefitting’.12 The provision of this book may be seen as a means of improving the educational facilities at the Orphan School.

Governor Macquarie (see illustration on following page) became Patron of the Female Orphan School and took an interest in its management. Changes had occurred in the membership of the Orphan School Committee during Governor Bligh’s administration, and after the Rum Rebellion. In August 1809 Colonel Paterson, who had assumed command of the colony, appointed the assistant chaplain the Rev.

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12 ibid., p. 3.
William Cowper, who was the resident minister at St Philip’s Church, Sydney, ‘as a member of the Committee of the Orphan School’. On 10 January 1810 Governor Macquarie requested that Robert Campbell and John Palmer, who were experienced former members of the Orphan School Committee, ‘resume their former situations as members of the Orphan School and Gaol Fund Committee’. Mr Campbell was a successful merchant with extensive warehouses, and Mr Palmer had occupied the position of commissary. As experienced businessmen they brought to the Committee prior knowledge of the school, and interest in the welfare of the girls.

Macquarie wasted no time in trying to stamp out some of the abuses which had crept into the institution, when it was reported that two of the girls had eloped from the school. They had been ‘seduced from the paths of virtue by persons residing at Sydney’. On 27 January 1810 Macquarie promulgated a General Order which read:

His Excellency the Governor, as the patron of that valuable institution deems it his duty thus publicly to make known his firm determination to prosecute all such persons, of whatever rank, class or denomination to the strict rigour of the law, who shall dare to attempt to seduce or entice away any of the girls of the Orphan School from that institution; besides exposing their names publicly in the Sydney Gazette.

Governor Macquarie had a strict moral code and intended to legally prosecute and publicly shame those men, who had induced the girls from the school, if they were apprehended. He would have considered that their behaviour was immoral, and the fact that the girls ‘in care’ had been seduced, probably angered him greatly.

Mrs Hosking the Matron of the School, was meanwhile encouraging the girls to continue to participate in the commercial world as far as their sewing skills were concerned. In February 1810 an advertisement appeared in the Sydney Gazette which read - ‘Plain Needle-work will be taken into the Orphan House and executed by the Girls under the inspection of the Matron, on moderate terms, to be paid for when

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13 SG, August 27, 1809, p. 1.
14 SG, January 14, 1810, p. 6.
16 ibid., p. 282
delivered'. This advertisement confirms the evidence which Bligh gave to the Select Committee on Transportation in 1812, and which has been cited in chapter 2, when he stated that the girls ‘made shirts, and all kinds of linen and money was paid by people who required them to do so’. 

In March 1810 Macquarie decided that there should be changes made to the existing Orphan School Fund and Gaol Fund. He determined that a separate Colonial Police Fund be established and that: ‘three quarters of all the duties and customs collected in the port and town of Sydney and in other parts of the settlement be paid into the hands of the treasurer appointed for the fund’. The remaining quarter of these levies was to be paid into the Orphan School Fund, and the assumption was made that the funds generated would be sufficient to offset the expenses incurred by the School. The funds were perhaps considered to be buoyant, and these financial changes were to take effect from 1 April 1810. Further changes were also envisaged, and the Orphan School was not to be the sole recipient of the quarter of the levies imposed. It was proposed that the expenses of a charity school, yet to be established in Sydney and ‘at the other principal settlements in the colony’ were also to be met from the quarter of duties.

When Governor Macquarie advised Lord Castlereagh about the changes he had made to separate monies collected into two funds, and his intention to establish charity schools, he also envisaged changes to some duties. He proposed to ‘increase the Duties on Spirits to three shillings per Gallon, and raising the License to Publicans’. Macquarie hoped that these measures would raise sufficient funds to carry out his plans.

In May 1810 whilst formalising the separation of the financial basis of the Female Orphan Fund from the Colonial Police Fund, Macquarie appointed Lieutenant-Governor O’Connell, the Rev. Samuel Marsden and the Rev. William Cowper to be Trustees for the management of the Female Orphan Institution. Robert Campbell, who had been re-appointed to the Committee in January, and who had also

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17 SG, February 11, 1810, p. 1.
18 Select Commission on Transportation, 10th July, 1812, Bligh’s evidence, p. 40. Mitchell Library.
20 ibid.
21 ibid., p. 342.
occupied the position of Treasurer resigned, and the Rev. Samuel Marsden was appointed once again Treasurer of the Female Orphan Institution.\textsuperscript{23}

In addition to the naming of the Trustees, the Governor by a General Order set out regulations governing the procedures to be adopted by the Trustees. They were:

- to meet every month at Sydney, to order and regulate the accounts of the institution, and to order such payment to be made from the fund as they deem necessary. The Trustees are to meet quarterly at Sydney, in order to audit the accounts of the preceding quarter, previous to their being submitted by the treasurer for the Governor’s final approbation. … after which an abstract of the receipts and disbursements will be published in the *Sydney Gazette*, for the information of the public.\textsuperscript{24}

These very strict guidelines were probably instituted so that the financial dealings of the Female Orphan Institution would be properly executed, and open to public scrutiny. They did however impose demands of a high order on the Trustees.

At the Orphan School Mr and Mrs Hosking were giving satisfaction to the Committee. The Rev. Samuel Marsden was pleased with his selection of this couple, and wrote in a positive vein to the Archbishop of Canterbury: ‘I have also found the Schoolmaster and Mistress appointed to superintend the Female Orphan School persons of the very best characters. … The Committee mentioned their conduct in the most flattering terms to me’.\textsuperscript{25}

Mrs Macquarie paid her first visit to the Female Orphan School accompanied by Mrs Elizabeth Paterson, who had been a daily visitor to the school with Mrs Anna King. Mrs Macquarie became the Patroness of the School (see illustration on following page), and took a keen interest in its activities.\textsuperscript{26}

Elizabeth Macquarie brought to the colony a knowledge of agriculture and gardening which she had gained in her place of birth. She was interested in

\textsuperscript{23} SG, May 15, 1810, p. 1.
\textsuperscript{25} Marsden to Archbishop of Canterbury, 2 May 1810, in Bonwick Transcripts, Box 49, p. 291. (ML)
\textsuperscript{26} Lysbeth Cohen, *Elizabeth Macquarie Her Life and Times*, Wentworth Books, Sydney, 1979, p. 82.
Mrs. Elizabeth Henrietta Macquarie
(from the copy in the Mitchell Library)
architecture and took a leadership role in the planning and later management of the Female Orphan School at Parramatta being the Patroness.

As Miss Elizabeth Henrietta Campbell she was 26 years old when she met her distant cousin Lachlan Macquarie. He had been a widower for a number of years, and had been stationed in India on military service for seventeen years. They had both travelled to the Isle of Mull to visit her brother-in-law Murdoch Maclaine, who was terminally ill. Elizabeth has been described as a ‘gently born Scotswoman without fortune’, who had spent most of her life on her brother’s small estate in Appin.

Elizabeth was a young woman of strong character, capable of working on a small farm and taking responsibility for the household management: ‘She was mistress of many aspects of her life from an unusual age’. Following the death of her brother-in-law, ‘she directed Maclaine’s household through its time of bereavement, and sustained her sister’s morale’, and Lachlan Macquarie found her ‘agreeable and benevolent’. Not only had Elizabeth shown herself helpful during the time of sorrow, but she ‘had impeccable taste in gardens’. Macquarie had been shown around the grounds by her relatives, and was impressed by a very pretty new gravel walk which she had planned and seen executed ‘around the waterfront at Airds House in Appin’.

The friendship between Elizabeth Campbell and Lachlan Macquarie ripened. He proposed marriage and was accepted, but he returned to India for service and was not prepared to marry her prior to his departure. His first wife Jane Jarvis had died in India after three years of marriage, and he had decided not to take another wife to that country. Elizabeth agreed to the long engagement and the couple finally married ‘at Holsworthy in Devon on 3 November 1807. She was a bride aged 29 years and the groom was then 46’. A daughter was born in September 1808. She was named Jane Jarvis Macquarie after his first wife, but the child died in December of that same year.

Like her predecessor Mrs Anna King, Elizabeth Macquarie exercised a firm, energetic and seemingly much appreciated patronage. ‘There is evidence of high humanity which this second Governor’s wife, the worthy successor to Anna Josepha

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28 Atkinson, p. 317.
29 Ritchie, p. 68.
30 ibid.
King, brought to New South Wales’. She became a daily visitor to the Orphan School, and by July 1810 the school was running smoothly without male detractors. Governor Macquarie later informed Commissioner Bigge of his wife’s activities at the Orphan School in very positive terms: ‘Mrs Hosking, the Matron, always paid attention to Mrs Macquarie’s helpful remarks in regard to the health and general conduct of the children. In her visits to the school she was frequently accompanied by Rev. Mr Cowper’.

Significant changes had occurred in the landscape near the Female Orphan School since its establishment in 1801. An earlier map drawn in 1800 and included in chapter 2, showed the site of Captain Kent’s property on Lot 27. He had acquired this land as a lease-holder on 8 October 1799. Captain Kent’s land had a waterfront on Sydney Cove.

Governor Bligh ordered the Assistant Surveyor James Meehan to prepare a Plan of the Town of Sydney, which he did by 31 October 1807. This plan shows the extensive reclamation of land which had occurred on the southern and western shores of Sydney Cove. Lot 14 the site of the Female Orphan School on this plan, is no longer a waterfront site, and has the Tank Stream as its eastern boundary. The pattern of land use had changed, and near the school much closer settlement had been the outcome. (See map on following page).

In 1800 37 leases had been tabulated and five of these were at Farm Cove. When Meehan’s map was prepared and the reference table constructed, 99 leases had been reserved within the area for the Town of Sydney. This great increase had occurred within a seven year period. Campbell writes:

This map is the earliest reliable representation of the town, and, ... utilised as a guide in the control of building sites and the laying out of streets etc. Macquarie, three years later, directed that “no person whatever shall erect any house or dwelling in the town of Sydney, whether leasehold or otherwise without previously obtaining his permission through Mr Meehan, the Acting-Surveyor”.36

32 Atkinson, p. 319.
33 Macquarie to Bigge, 18 January 1821, in BT, Box 26, p. 5746.
35 ibid., pp. 72-73.
36 ibid., p. 82.
The Lot number for the Female Orphan School in 1807 was 14, following the reclamation of Sydney Cove.
(Source: J.F. Campbell, "The Valley of the Tank Stream", JRAHS, Vol.10, Pt. 2, 1925, p. 82)
The unsuitability of the Orphan School site in a rapidly growing town was evident, and attention was again paid to the desirability of constructing another institution at Parramatta. In chapter 2 it has been noted that in 1800 Governor King had planned to build a second orphanage to accommodate ‘orphan’ boys, but owing to various circumstances only the Female Orphan School at Sydney had been established.

A site had previously been set aside at Arthur’s Hill at Parramatta. Thomas Arndell was an assistant surgeon with the First Fleet, and arrived in Port Jackson on the *Friendship*. He was appointed to be in charge of the hospital at Parramatta, and became very interested in agriculture. He began cultivating land and on 16 July 1792 he had been given a 60-acre grant of land known as Arthur’s Hill by Governor Phillip, ‘even though servants of the Crown were not yet entitled to such concessions’.37

This grant had been acquired by Governor King, but little work had been done on the site when the decision to abandon the building of a second orphanage had been taken. To accompany his article about Rose Hill Government Farm, J. F. Campbell prepared a map showing the location of the Orphan’s House ‘G’ at Parramatta. This site extended to the banks of the Parramatta River, on slightly undulating land.38 (See map on following page).

On 19 January 1811 a somewhat disturbing Public Notice advised that changes involving restrictions on future enrolments at the Orphan School would occur. Whether parents had complained to the Trustees about the behaviour of their daughters when they left the school and returned home is unknown, although reference is made to ex-pupils’ ‘bad examples’. Whether the Committee wished to restrict the intake of girls for other reasons is also unknown, because the notice was couched in the following terms:

> The committee of the Orphan Institution have resolved:—
> That the admission of children into the Female Orphan School who have parents in the colony, being a deviation from the spirit of the original institution, and the bad example set by these girls when returned to their parents being productive of very serious evils, and destructive to the morals of the other girls, no children

Plan of Parramatta showing the site of the Female Orphan School, (FOS) on the northern side of the Parramatta River
(Source: J.R. Campbell, 'Rosehill: Government Farm and the founding of Parramatta', *JRAHS*, Vol.12, Pt. 6, 1927, p.367)
but real orphans are in future to be admitted to the benefits of this institution.\textsuperscript{39}

Although the institution bore the name Female Orphan School, not all the girls who were admitted even from its inception were orphans if we define that term as children who have no parents. The term used in the notice, namely: ‘a deviation from the spirit of the original institution’, appears to be at variance with the actual practice. It was the plight of the children who were observed to be poor, destitute, neglected and abandoned, rather than their status as orphans, which moved the early chaplains and Governors to consider making provision for the children’s care. This approach was of course in keeping with English philanthropic practices. In fact, King’s attitude to the perceived moral behaviour of many of the girls’ parents led him to consider that an ‘orphanage’ was the best means of ‘rescuing the rising generation’ from the ‘evil’ influence of their parents. A writer of the time said the Orphan School did not ‘strictly adhere to its title, for children that have got parents are equally admitted too’.\textsuperscript{40}

After the decision was reached to move the Orphan School from its unsuitable location, in August 1813 tenders were called for materials for the construction of a building at Arthur’s Hill, Parramatta. The materials requested in the notice were ‘1000 bushels of lime, 20,000 feet of timber in Boards, Joists and Scantlings, and cutting 100,000 Bricks’.\textsuperscript{41} Contractors responded, and in the following month Governor Macquarie travelled to Parramatta to lay the foundation stone.\textsuperscript{42}

The Rev. Samuel Marsden once again became involved in this building programme. (See illustration on following page). A decade earlier when a proposal was considered for a Male Orphan School he had been given the oversight of the construction of the Orphan School at Parramatta. However through lack of funds those plans had been deferred. In that earlier period Marsden had been responsible for engaging a gentleman to draw the plans for the orphanage. However he had no involvement with this aspect of the project in 1813. When giving evidence at the

\textsuperscript{39} HRNSW, Vol. VII, p. 489.
\textsuperscript{40} George Caley, ‘State of New South Wales 1800-1803’, in Banks Papers, Vol. 8, p. 231. (ML) A79-1
\textsuperscript{41} SG, August 14, 1813, p. 2.
\textsuperscript{42} Macquarie Memoranda, p. 63. (ML) A772
Bigge Inquiry in 1820 he said that he was shown the plans for the Arthur’s Hill building, when he paid a visit to Government House. Marsden said that he did not know who had prepared the plan but he considered ‘it a very fine one’. He added:

Mrs Macquarie observed that it was drawn upon the plan of a gentleman’s home in Scotland. As Mrs Macquarie was in favour of it I certainly did not as a simple member of the Committee object to what was approved by the Governor as Patron of the Institution. No other committee member objected.43

Marsden’s use of the term ‘simple member of the Committee’ suggests that he may have experienced resentment at this exclusion from the preparation of the plan, particularly when he had the responsibility for the oversight of the construction.

Progress on the building site took place, and in a report in 1814 Marsden wrote:

I am now putting the roof on the Female Orphan House at Parramatta which will contain about two hundred girls. It is a noble building. If the young girls are only taken care of and kept from vice the colony will prosper.44

However despite the promising start to this venture many problems arose in the course of construction. As a result the building of the Female Orphan School proceeded slowly, and dragged on year after year. The problems on the building site appear to have arisen from the quality of the workmen employed, and complaints about payment for work done. It seems that workmen, the Rev. Marsden and Governor Macquarie tended to blame one another for the delays.

Marsden described different ex-convict workmen as being intoxicated and unable to work efficiently. He used these words to describe the workmen, ‘generally drunken worthless characters’, and much of his time was taken up in supervision.45 The Governor had not authorised the building of the Orphan School as a government project, and had not permitted the use of convict labour on the site.46 The two principal workmen employed were former members of the 73rd Regiment, and they

43 Marsden to Bigge, (incomplete record), in BT, Box 20, p. 3481.
44 Letter From Marsden, 8 October 8 1814, in Hassall’s Correspondence, p. 136. (ML) A1677-2
45 Marsden to Bigge, (incomplete record), in BT, Box 20, p. 3482.
46 Bigge to Bathurst, 7 February 1823, in BT, Box 28, pp. 7071-7072.
had according to Marsden, ‘habits of intoxication and failed in their application to work’.47

One workman in particular complained that he experienced delays in the settling of his accounts, and Governor Macquarie accused the Rev. Marsden of not always paying the workmen in cash, but of providing them with goods.48 The Rev. Marsden stated that some wives of ex-convict workmen had requested him for goods when their husbands had not provided for them. He remarked: ‘had I given them (the workmen) money to purchase meat, wheat, sugar etc., they would have gone to Publicans, and left their families to starve’.49

The Rev. Marsden was able to show accounts to Commissioner Bigge of which the Committee had approved whilst the Orphan House was in the course of construction. The amount paid in cash was £2197 17s 4d, whilst the total amount for ‘goods in kind’ was £228 6s 11d. The goods consisted of meat, wheat, flour, sugar, tea, tobacco and clothing. Of a total expenditure on ‘wages’ of £2426 4s 3d, only a little over ten per cent was received as ‘goods in kind’.50

In the early days of the penal settlement convicts were paid with rations. It would appear, that this early payment system persisted in part in the colony, when convicts gained their freedom. In Bigge’s assessment of the situation he considered that ‘all labourers in New South Wales are paid for their work as well as in articles of substance as in money’.51 The Rev. Marsden was apparently not acting inappropriately in his method of paying workmen employed in construction work at Arthur’s Hill.

Also, in giving evidence before Commissioner Bigge the Rev. Marsden indicated how some of the costs of the building were calculated. Mr Greenway, the architect, and a Mr Rouse, acting on behalf of the Government, and a workman appointed to represent the workers, measured the work which had been done by the carpenters and plasterers. These men were then paid on the basis of that estimate. A Mr Elon, who was a stone-mason, was the principal workman on the site at Parramatta.52

47 ibid., p. 7071.
48 ibid.
49 Marsden to Bigge, 30 January 1821, in BT, Box 26, p. 6036.
50 ibid., p. 6035.
51 Bigge to Bathurst, 7 February 1823, in BT, Box 28, p. 7071.
52 Marsden’s evidence to Bigge, 27 December 1820, in BT, Box 8, p. 3395.
It was obvious that tensions existed in the relationship between the Governor and the Rev. Marsden and these had been heightened. In the last quarter of 1814 an incident in worship occurred during a service at St Philip’s Church. Governor Macquarie was a practising church member and has been described as ‘a pillar of the Church of England’.\(^5^3\) He was however not of evangelical persuasion as were the chaplains, and was offended during the service. The reason for his upset was:

> The use of unauthorized version of psalms in service occurred. He (Rev. Cowper) caused them to be sung for some Sundays in our Church to the Exclusion of those attested by Authority to the Bible and Book of Common Prayer.\(^5^4\)

He conveyed his concerns to Earl Bathurst and the possible effects that the changes to worship would have on the Church of England traditions. He also made observations about some of the clergy in these words:

> Mr Marsden and some of the Assistant Chaplains are originally of low Rank and not qualified by liberal Education in the usual way for the Sacred Functions entrusted to them, and are also much tinctured with Methodistical and other Sectarian Principles.\(^5^5\)

Marsden was the son of ‘poor country folk’, and was born ‘in the tiny hamlet of Bagley in West Yorkshire’. He was influenced by the religious revival which occurred in the mid-eighteenth century. In 1786 when aged twenty one, ‘he accepted an invitation from the Elland Clerical Society to train as a clergyman of the Established Church. Marsden was deeply influenced by Methodism’.\(^5^6\) The Governor’s reaction to the chaplain’s conduct of worship, his attitude to the clergy, and his lengthy report to Earl Bathurst, probably exacerbated the already strained relationship between Macquarie and Marsden.

\(^5^4\) Macquarie to Bathurst, 7 October 1814, in *HRA*, Vol. VIII, p. 337.
\(^5^5\) *ibid.*
On 21 December 1816 Governor Macquarie appointed three ladies to be joint or vice patronesses of the Female Orphan Institution. These ladies were the wives of prominent men in the colony. Mrs Molle was the wife of the Lieutenant-Governor. He was the commanding officer of 48th Regiment and had arrived in New South Wales early in 1814. Mrs Elizabeth Jane Wylde, who arrived in the colony earlier in the year, was the wife of the Judge-Advocate John Wylde. Mrs Anna Maria Macarthur was the wife of Hannibal Macarthur, and as a nephew of John Macarthur, his family connections gave Hannibal a position of social prominence. Mrs Macarthur was the eldest daughter of former Governor Philip Gidley King, and her mother Anna Josepha King had been the active Patroness of the Female Orphan School. These additional appointments enabled the ladies to widen their sphere of influence in the colony, and gave them an opportunity to exercise some authority within the Female Orphan School. At the same time Governor Macquarie also appointed the Hon. Mr Judge-Advocate Wylde, and Mr Hannibal Macarthur as members of the Committee of the Female Orphan Institution.

Later in September 1819 the Governor increased the size of the Orphan School Committee by the appointment of seven men to be members ‘of the Female Orphan Institution, the Male Orphan Institution and the Public School Institution’. The men chosen were Sir John Jamison, Knt., the Rev. Richard Hill, Captain H. C. Antill, John Piper, John Oxley, John Harris and Frederick Garling. The Government Notice about the appointment closed with these words: ‘and they are to be respected accordingly’. This phrase implies that apart from their social standing by reason of the positions they already held, an appointment to this Committee was also to be highly regarded.

When the Female Orphan School at Arthur’s Hill was ready for occupancy in 1818 it was a fine looking building, and today is part of the (Parramatta campus) University of Western Sydney, following extensive restorative works. It is the oldest three-storey public building in Australia, and is therefore of heritage significance. The building is an example of Palladian architecture. (See copy of painting on
following page). Shylie and Ken Brown have provided this description:

The central block, surmounted by a gable suggesting a classical pediment is three storeys tall, with side wings at the same height. Branching outwards from them are lower, linking buildings, at the end of which are two-storeyed pavilions. When it was built it had a charming vista to the river across park-like lawns.  

Although the school at Arthur’s Hill had been specially constructed to accommodate the girls from the Female Orphan School at Sydney, further work had to take place to rectify apparent deficiencies. It was decided at the October 1818 committee meeting that: ‘Many offices, outhouses and buildings such as stables, bake houses, lodges, sheds, enclosures and other improvements are still necessary to render the Orphan House adequately convenient’. To carry out these improvements a draft plan was drawn. It was submitted to Mr Greenway, the architect, and he approved of the design. He was given the task of preparing the final plan and preparing estimates for the costs involved in construction. By 1820 the final plan for the improvements to the building had been ‘corrected and approved under the Sanction of the Patron and Lady Patroness. Mr Greenway was given authority to place an advertisement for contracts for this work’. Mr Greenway had initially placed the following advertisement in January 1819:

To Contractors.
The different Tradesmen, who may be disposed to Contract each to his own Branch for the Alterations and Additions to be made to the Orphan School at Parramatta, may see the Plan and Specifications at F.H. Greenways Civil Architect, George Street on Monday 1st of February.  

It is not known whether or not contracts were presented, or whether it was decided to defer these alterations, or whether the Patron and Lady Patroness had reservations about the plans, but work did not proceed at that time. However, a second somewhat shorter advertisement was placed in July 1820 which read: ‘To Builders, who are

64 Female Orphan School Minutes, 30 October 1818, pp. 19-20. State Records New South Wales, 4/400.
65 FOS Minutes, 14 July 1820, pp. 46-47.
inclined to Contract for carrying into Effect certain Alterations at the Orphan School Parramatta. Plans and specifications may be seen at the office of Mr F. H. Greenway, Architect.\(^{67}\) There was a response to this advertisement from a Mr W. Watkins, whose tender was for £1531 for the proposed alterations. This tender was submitted to the Committee, and the Secretary was requested to contact Mr Greenway.\(^{68}\)

Governor Macquarie was especially proud of the school provided for the girls at Parramatta. Although he described the new commodious building whose planned cost was £5753, in the following glowing terms:

> a large handsome brick - built house of three storeys high, with wings and all the necessary out offices for the accommodation of 100 female orphans, and for the master and matron of the institution, having an extensive garden and orchard and a grazing park or paddock for cattle attached thereto; the whole of the premises being enclosed with a high strong stockade.\(^{69}\)

it has been shown that time, effort and expense on additions and alterations were necessary after its opening in 1818, before the Orphan School buildings reached a satisfactory standard. In fact, work continued on the buildings until 1823.\(^{70}\)

To ensure that the girls were to find a comfortable environment, Marsden was ordered ‘to cause all the apartments to be well aired, and fires to be kept in them, so as to render the home perfectly comfortable to the children on their arrival there’.\(^{71}\) One can imagine the excitement which the girls may have experienced as they prepared to leave the rather cramped conditions at the Sydney Orphan School, prior to moving to their new, large, specially constructed School. On 30 June 1818 the female ‘orphans’ together with Mr and Mrs Hosking left Sydney for Parramatta. The government boats were made available to the Master and Matron to take the ‘orphans’ and their luggage to their new premises. The group travelled via the Parramatta River to the new

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\(^{67}\) SG, July 22, 1820, p. 4.

\(^{68}\) FOS Minutes, 4 October 1820, p. 46.


\(^{70}\) FOS Minutes, 14 August 1823, p. 106.

\(^{71}\) Campbell to Marsden, 26 June 1818, in Colonial Secretary Out Letters, pp. 288-289. SRNSW 4/3498.
building ‘some time since created there for their further residence and accommodation’.  

Macquarie, with administrative efficiency, drew up a set of Rules and Regulations for the Female Orphan School, which were to become operative as soon as the girls arrived at Parramatta. Those appointed to manage the institution consisted of the Patron and Patroness, the Governor and Mrs Macquarie, as well as four vice-patronesses and eight committee members. 

Details were listed concerning the days on which the committee members were to meet on a quarterly basis. The purpose of the meetings was to enable the members not only to examine and inspect the orphans; but to audit the quarterly accounts; they had to consider applications for admission, and generally take an interest in the well being ‘of the Institution entrusted to their management’.

The number of admissions to the school was to be limited to 100 girls for the time being. The ages for the admission and discharge of children were also determined. Girls under five years of age, or over eight years of age, were ineligible for admission. The girls were to leave the institution when they reached the age of thirteen years or soon afterwards. These girls were ‘to be apprenticed out as servants to families of good character’ and the choice of these apprenticeships was left solely to the discretion of the committee members.

The parents or guardians of the girls had no control over them, nor had the right to remove them from the School. The parents forfeited any control once the girls were admitted. The loss of control also extended to girls who had been apprenticed. No parent had the right or authority to remove a girl from her apprenticeship until she reached the age of eighteen years. The length of the apprenticeship as ‘servants or otherwise’ was determined to be for at least five years, or until they entered into a lawful marriage. The committee members were required to approve of such events.

When the girls left the institution they were to be provided with both a ‘Bible and a Prayer Book’. If a girl had displayed ‘exemplary good conduct’ during her apprenticeship’ then she was to be rewarded with the ‘gift of a cow on being

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72 Macquarie Diary, 3 June 1818, p. 168. (ML) A773
74 ibid., p. 2.
75 ibid., p. 4.
76 ibid., pp. 4-5.
77 ibid., p. 6.
married’.78 This was probably an encouragement for the girls to enter into a legal marriage, and the gift was a type of dowry. One such apprentice, Ann Bray, petitioned for a grant of a cow, and the Committee requested the Secretary ‘to order the overseer to furnish her with a good young cow as a marriage portion’.79

Attention was paid to the children’s diet, and the regulations indicated that the food provided was to be plentiful, plain and wholesome with no waste. Each girl was to receive a daily ration of a pint of milk morning and evening or a pint of tea instead of milk in the evening. The quantity of bread allowed was three quarters of a pound, as well as half a pound of meat. Vegetables were provided, but no mention is made of fruit. Instead of meat it was possible for the girls to have ‘rice or flour pudding one or two days in the week’.80

The girls’ clothing of a uniform type was provided, and it was distinctive. The Charity School children in Britain wore a distinguishing uniform to indicate their difference from other children, and it would appear that a similar attitude prevailed in the Female Orphan School. The regulations stated that ‘the clothing and dress of the children of this Institution is to be suitable to their condition in Life; economical, plain and uniform’. The main item was a blue gown, over which was worn a white apron and tippit. The tippit was a type of cape which covered the shoulders and came down some distance in front covering the chest. On their heads the girls initially wore a white cotton bonnet, however they were able to wear straw bonnets as soon as they became proficient in their manufacture.81

The rules also laid down particulars for the education of the girls, which was to be essentially of a practical nature, and to keep them in that ‘situation in life’ in which they had been placed. The education which they received was not intended to make them upwardly socially mobile. In Rule 15, pertaining to education and training we read that the girls:

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\begin{align*}
\text{are to be educated only in view of their present condition in life and future destination, namely as wives or servants of women settlers, mechanics and labouring people … . To be taught to read and write, so as to be able to read and understand the Holy Scriptures; they are to be instructed in common needlework; in making}
\end{align*}
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\footnote{ibid., pp. 6-7.}
\footnote{Minutes of Committee, 18 October 1820, in BT, Box 23, p. 4781.}
\footnote{Rules and Regulations, p. 7.}
\footnote{ibid., p. 8.}
up their own clothes and linen; in spinning and carding; in the management of a dairy; in baking; cooking and all sphere of household work: they are also to be worked occasionally in the garden and field as an useful and wholesome exercise.\textsuperscript{82}

The Rules and Regulations provide us with interesting details about the ‘closed’ or ‘total institutional’ nature of the Female Orphan School. Parents had to forfeit their ‘rights’ to their daughters; contact with the ‘outside’ world was restricted; life within its walls was to be ordered and regimented; religious training was to be an essential part of their education; and the girls’ future lives were to be circumscribed.

Religious observances were seen to be an important part of the girls’ training and reformation. Each Sunday the girls were to attend a church service where the form of worship followed was that of the Church of England.\textsuperscript{83} The girls attended St John’s Parramatta, where the senior chaplain the Rev. Samuel Marsden was in charge.

Under the Miscellaneous Rules a special Committee, consisting of the Patroness and the Vice-Patronesses was appointed and extra duties were imposed on them. This Committee was encouraged to gather at the school on a quarterly basis with the specific purpose of observing the instruction which was being provided for the girls. Furthermore the Committee was to assume a type of inspectorial role by pointing out to the Master and Matron possible defects which they perceived had occurred, and then suggesting ways in which the quality of education and instruction might be improved.\textsuperscript{84}

It was also regulated that on 16 August each year an Anniversary Service was to be conducted. That date was important, because it marked the opening of the Female Orphan School in Sydney, by former Governor Philip Gidley King. The Service was to be held at St John’s Church of England at Parramatta, and all members of the Orphan School were to attend. Following the worship the girls were to answer questions about the Church Catechism and the New Testament. This questioning took the form of a public examination of the girls. At the close of that activity, the Patroness and Vice-Patronesses were to present awards of one or more silver medals to the pupils who were considered the best in particular subjects such as Reading, Repeating or Needlework.

\textsuperscript{82} ibid., p. 8.
\textsuperscript{83} ibid., p. 9.
\textsuperscript{84} ibid.
The occasion was also to be used as an opportunity for a follow-up assessment of apprentices. It was expected that the masters and mistresses together with their apprentices would also attend the church service. The girls who had been apprenticed were questioned in private by the committee members about the treatment they had received from their master or mistress. Likewise the master or mistress was given the opportunity to speak about the behaviour of the apprentice.85

Special seating arrangements were made for the girls when they attended church services each Sunday. Separate forms were to be placed in front of the altar for the girls. Furthermore it fell to the Treasurer of the Committee to make this provision. The Master or Matron was required to accompany the girls to and from the church. If it was not possible for this supervision to be provided, then a service of a private nature was to be held at the School.86 This was an interesting seating arrangement and provision. Usually the supply of furniture in a church is the responsibility of the congregation or its representatives. The position of the girls in front of the altar would mean that they were separated from other worshippers. The seating may have been so arranged to allow greater supervision to be exercised over them during the service.

The requirement for the presence of the Master or Matron arose from the fact that the girls travelled to church ‘by the Passage boat’ along the Parramatta River, and special safety precautions would be necessary. The girls alighted at the wharf and made the return journey in the same way. The reason given for the use of the boat was ‘to save expenses, which now cost £20 per annum’.87

Whilst the Hoskings were in charge of the Orphan School, Mrs Macquarie and two of the Vice-Patronesses wrote to the Committee drawing attention to the state of chimneys which were smoking, the need to provide milch cows for the institution, and the necessity for a high fence to be constructed to ensure that the children did not get out onto the road, or into the Parramatta River. It was suggested that spinning wheels be provided so that the girls could spin woollen and cotton yarn. The Committee considered these proposals and approved of them.88

In October the Committee received a letter from Mr John Hosking tendering his and his wife’s resignation, to take effect from 1 January 1819. He indicated that

85 ibid., p. 10.
86 FOS Minutes, 30 October 1818, p. 16.
87 Rev. Hill’s evidence to Bigge, 22 January 1821, in BT, Box 8, p. 3314.
88 FOS Minutes, 14 October 1818, p. 14.
the family wished to leave the colony.\textsuperscript{89} It has been suggested that Mr Hosking’s decision arose because of a quarrel he had with the Rev. Marsden.\textsuperscript{90} Mr Hosking was a non-conformist, and the family took an active role in the Methodist Society. A letter to which Mr Hosking had been a co-signatory appeared in a Methodist publication. The Rev. Marsden took exception to the letter which he considered defamed him, and relations between the two men were strained.\textsuperscript{91}

The resignation does not appear to have been wholly connected with the work of the Hoskings as Master and Matron of the Orphan School. When the Rev. Cowper gave evidence to Commissioner Bigge about the Hosking’s role at the school, he said that generally the committee was satisfied with the Hosking’s conduct and he added:

Mrs Hoskin’s was a very attentive and kind woman. Latterly Mr Hoskins was not so attentive as he ought to have been to his Part of the Duty. It is however but due to them both to say that it would be Difficult to meet with Two more fit Persons for the situation than they were.\textsuperscript{92}

Following the advice about the Hosking’s resignation at the November 1818 committee meeting it was ‘resolved that Mr Thomas Collicott and his wife Mary be appointed Master and Matron of the Institution’.\textsuperscript{93} Mr Thomas Collicott who had been ‘convicted of forgery at the Old Bailey’ in January 1812, had his death sentence ‘commuted to transportation for life’. His wife Mary together with their children arrived at Port Jackson on board the ‘\textit{Mary Anne} on 18th March 1816’.\textsuperscript{94}

The family experienced difficulties because although Thomas had been assigned to his wife he was not permitted ‘to take up paid employment’. The family was therefore dependent on government rations for its survival. After Thomas Collicott received a conditional pardon on 1 January 1817 he was able to engage in employment. Thomas and Mary Collicot had been personally interviewed by the Committee and took up their appointment on 1 January 1819.\textsuperscript{95}

\textsuperscript{89} FOS Minutes, Hosking To Committee, 30 October 1818, p. 17.
\textsuperscript{90} Vivienne Parsons, Hosking, John (1806-1882), \textit{ADB}, Vol. 1, p. 555.
\textsuperscript{91} Marsden’s observations on Mr Eager’s evidence, in BT, Box 21, pp. 6115-6116.
\textsuperscript{93} FOS Minutes, 30 November 1818, p. 21.
\textsuperscript{95} ibid., pp. 2-3.
Mrs Macquarie took her role as Patroness seriously, and she was interested in both the management of the School and the welfare of the girls. She was a frequent visitor to the Orphan School. Her frequent visits and her attention to detail gave her the opportunity to view the operation of the School at close quarters. In August 1819 the Patroness wrote two letters to the Committee. In the first letter she expressed her disquiet about the appearance of the younger children which led her to believe that they were not receiving sufficient food. This letter inferred that Mrs Collicott’s care of the children was inadequate. Mrs Macquarie also expressed her dissatisfaction with the cook, and she remarked that this lady had two or three infant children and was therefore not qualified for the situation she held.

To add to her list of complaints Mrs Macquarie stated that gentlemen visited the Master and Matron. She also understood that the girls were allowed to spend the evening in Parramatta. She then recommended that a couple, John and Mary Matthews, be employed at the School in the capacities of gardener and cook. Mrs Macquarie added: ‘which would be some check on the Matron’. The tone of her letter suggests she was suspicious of the Collicotts, and dissatisfied with aspects of their positions as Master and Matron. She may also have used her position to secure the appointment of the Matthews.

In her second letter of 14 August which was read to the Committee, Mrs Macquarie enclosed a letter she had received from Mrs Collicott. Prior to her appointment as Matron, Mary Collicott had cared for a girl name Wood, whose mother was unable to provide a home for her. Mrs Collicott had taken the girl to the School with her, and this action had upset the Patroness, who expressed her indignation in these terms: ‘I by no means approve of a boarding school for young Ladies being combined with an Orphan School’.

Mary Collicott had realised that her action with regard to the girl Wood had caused Mrs Macquarie concern, and in a conciliatory manner wrote:

I find I have displeased you with my having Miss Wood under my protection. … I should have asked your permission to have brought Miss Wood with me. You were unavailable … . I applied to the Secretary Mr Campbell and he saw no objection, but stated that he was only one person. … Mrs Wood is so situated that

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96 Lysbeth Cohen, p. 117.
97 FOS Minutes, 25 August 1819, pp. 28-29.
98 ibid., p. 30.
she did not have a home for her. Miss Wood is an acquisition, and does all she can to assist me. She is no expense to the Institution.  

It would appear that this letter did not have the writer’s desired effect. Mrs Macquarie wrote out a series of questions pertaining to food supplies for the children, both in quantity and sources; also for the Master’s family, the stockman, and the family’s visitors. These questions were almost like an inquisition, and the Committee heeded to Mrs Macquarie’s request, by calling for a response from Mr and Mrs Collicott. The couple supplied detailed accounts, which the Committee apparently found to be quite satisfactory.

The Committee agreed to the Patroness’ recommendation that a gardener and cook be employed, and Mr and Mrs Matthews were engaged at a joint salary of £40 per year. The hapless cook with small children was dismissed from her post. The family unit was disrupted; and the Committee almost as a peace offering:

Resolved that seven shillings and sixpence per week be allowed to the present cook on her being removed for support of her three children, and that her elder child a boy be recommended for admission to the Male Orphan School Sydney, and that half a year’s wage be given to her on being discharged.

Although Mrs Macquarie had recommended the appointment of the Matthews, this situation did not have a satisfactory outcome. Mr Matthews as gardener and his wife were not satisfactory, and their behaviour was described as ‘insolent’. Possibly in despair about the Matthews, Mrs Collicott wrote to the Committee and expressed her dissatisfaction. The Committee investigated the situation, and came to the conclusion that Mrs Collicott had grounds for her complaints. The Committee found:

That great misconduct in many other particular instances was chargeable against them - and having especially also ascertained that Matthews was not qualified even by his own acknowledgment as a Gardener, and that both parties professed the Roman Catholic Religion.

99 ibid., p. 32.
100 ibid., p. 35.
It was resolved at the committee meeting that neither of the Matthews be retained. When certain allegations were made in retaliation by the couple against the Master, concerning the children’s mess, the Committee upon investigation, found the ‘charges had no foundation’. 101

In July the Committee considered more recommendations by the Patroness and Vice-Patronesses. Some of these matters concerned the Master and Matron, and others pertained to the children. The recommendations involved moving the Collicotts from an upstairs bedroom occupied by the Matron and family, into a large schoolroom downstairs, and the former bedroom was to be used as a schoolroom. The proper number of dogs which the Master could own as his right, was to be settled by the local Committee. It was recommended that spinning wheels be ordered, so that ‘the children could be taught to Knit and Spin with as little delay as possible’. The activities of the girls were to be further extended ‘in gardening, in hoeing, in weeding and farming, and any other employment in this fashion suited to the children’. 102

Mrs Collicott’s efforts were also recognised in an indirect way, when the ladies commented: ‘the general improved appearance of the Children is highly satisfactory, as also the progress they have made in needlework’. 103 In recognition of Mary Collicott’s ‘attention to the School and the general improvement in the children’, the Committee in August resolved to pay her a gratuity of £30. However it was noted that this was a type of special bonus, and its future payment was not to be taken for granted. 104

Towards the end of 1820 Thomas and Mary Collicott decided to resign their posts at the Orphan School. The reason given for this decision was ill-health, and the Committee resolved to accept the resignation. The Collicotts had displayed great patience when dealing with Mrs Macquarie’s imperious manner. Despite the strains which were probably placed upon them, they had both attended to their duties in a competent manner. Their influence at the Female Orphan School appears to have been a positive one, because the ladies’ Committee report submitted to the meeting ‘found the children healthy and in every respect satisfactory’. 105

101 FOS Minutes, 8 April 1820, p. 40.
102 FOS Minutes, 14 July 1820, in BT, Box 23, p. 4779.
103 FOS Minutes, 14 July 1820, p. 47.
104 FOS Minutes, 12 August 1820, p. 50.
105 FOS Minutes, 3 January 1821, pp. 54, 56.
The following notice was placed by the Rev. Richard Hill, Secretary of the Female Orphan School in the *Sydney Gazette*:

Female Orphan School

The Master and Matron of this Institution being about to relinquish their situations, and married Persons as are duly qualified to undertake so important a Charge, and are desirous of obtaining the appointment are to send written Offers of service to the Secretary, on or before 30th Instant, which will be laid before the Committee on Wednesday, 3rd of January, 1821.106

An application from a Mr Wood expressing his desire to offer the services of himself and wife to fill the vacant situations at the School was declined by the Committee. However, a Mrs Susannah Matilda Ward was interested in the position, and after the Rev. Hill tendered her application, the Committee resolved that she be appointed, and agreed that she was to be paid the joint salary normally received by the Master and Matron. This was conditional in that she would be liable to pay for any assistance she might need in the management of the school.107 Apparently the Committee had no other suitable applicant for the situation, when Mrs Ward was given this unusual appointment.

Soon after Mrs Ward’s appointment, Major West, an assistant surgeon who lived at Parramatta and who was the institution’s surgeon wrote to Mrs Macquarie. He considered the girls’ sleeping arrangements were unhealthy and felt it had contributed to the ‘indisposition that has lately prevailed amongst the children in the Orphan School, Parramatta’. Major West’s concerns were brought to the attention of the Committee by Mrs Macquarie. The Committee including Dr John Harris made an inspection of the bedrooms occupied by the children, ‘and found them very clean and airy and the children in good health’. It was found that there were only rare occasions when more than two children occupied a bed. The accommodation did not permit separate beds for each child. As the health of the children was generally good, it was

106 SG, December 9, 1820, p. 2.
107 FOS Minutes, 3 January 1821, p. 56.
therefore resolved that ‘no alterations were to be made at present in relation to the Sleeping Apartment’.\footnote{108}

On 24 April Major H. B. Antill wrote to the Rev. Richard Hill about information Mrs Macquarie had received from Mr Knox the overseer at Grose Farm. Mr Knox had apparently conveyed to her the news that the Female Orphan Institution Committee intended to discharge the men whom ‘she had placed there … for the Improvement of the Grounds’. If such an intention was being considered then Antill wrote: ‘I have the Governor’s direction to communicate to you, that it is his desire that these men may not be removed but allowed to carry on the improvements, pointed out to be made by the Patroness’.\footnote{109} It was found that a false report had been made to the Lady Patroness by Mr Knox, and the Committee had no intention of discharging the men working in the School grounds.\footnote{110}

The long-suffering committee members were indignant. They had paid deference to the Lady Patroness as the Governor’s wife, and had attempted to carry out her various suggestions, although the tone of her missives often implied they were ‘orders’, not just suggestions or recommendations. The members possibly realised that she was genuinely interested in the well-being of the girls, despite her approach to different issues. The Committee however expressed its present and future attitude towards the Patroness, and to the sense of duty and responsibility which they had as committee members, when they advised the Governor in these words:

\begin{quote}
At the same time, the Committee conceding that, by the very nature of their office all the concerns of this Public Institution are committed to their sole (gratuitous) management, and that this office is entrusted to them by the Patron and Patroness, who by such commission have parted with such management, think it incumbent upon them, in indication of their trustworthiness, and in justice to their honorary office, to declare, that although they shall always think it no less their duty than their pleasure to attend to any suggestion or recommendation from the Patroness, they cannot forego their right to control the above-mentioned, as well as every other matter relating to the concerns of the Institution.\footnote{111}
\end{quote}

\footnote{108} FOS Minutes, 21 March 1821, p. 61.
\footnote{109} FOS Minutes, 9 May 1821, pp. 65-67.
\footnote{110} ibid., p. 66.
\footnote{111} ibid.
At the meeting held by the Committee in May 1821 consideration was given to several matters. The construction of a ‘small hut or cottage’ in the garden of the Orphan School was proposed. It was thought that the gardener and three male convict servants, who had accommodation in the Orphan House, ‘be in future lodged in the workmen’s hut’. Apparently the only means of moving from their room to the grounds and back, was via the wash-room where the girls were employed. It may have been perceived that this movement was a distraction to the girls, and it was resolved that the ‘shed’ construction should proceed.\(^\text{112}\)

The other matter raised concerned property belonging to the School. The Rev. Marsden tabled a letter from the Patron concerning the grants of Grose Farm and the Orphan Estate at Cabramatta, which had been entrusted to the Trustees of the Female Orphan School by Governor King in 1803. Mr John Oxley the surveyor, who was a committee member, advised the meeting that the changes which had been made to the Petersham District land, namely the 220 acre grant which had been made to Governor Bligh in August 1806, had been done by way of a memorandum. In lieu of the ‘loss’ of the 220 acres at Petersham, 600 additional acres at Cabramatta had been transferred to the Trustees, but the transfer had ‘never been regularly granted to the Institution under the Seal of the Territory’. As the Governor had indicated the possibility of the resumption of the Petersham Grant, on which Grose Farm occupied thirty acres, the Committee resolved that the Governor be advised that the members would consider ‘such proposals for the exchange of Grose Farm as His Excellency’s liberality may please to make’.\(^\text{113}\)

This matter was not finalised until after Macquarie had left the colony. In May 1822 a communication was received by the Committee from Macquarie and Major Goulburn in which proposals were made relative to Grose Farm. It was resolved ‘that the proposal be accepted and the Trustees be authorised to surrender Grose Farm to the Crown for a grant of One Thousand Acres of land at Bathurst’.\(^\text{114}\)

From the original grant of 500 acres made by King, the reduced grant of 280 acres was relinquished by the Committee ‘under a deed of exchange dated May 27th, 1823 when the property again reverted to the Crown’.\(^\text{115}\)

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\(^{112}\) FOS Minutes, 9 May 1821, p. 70.

\(^{113}\) ibid., pp. 67-68.

\(^{114}\) FOS Minutes, 8 May 1822, p. 87.

In August four ladies of the Committee Mrs Susan Palmer, Mrs Elizabeth Marsden, Mrs Catherine Palmer and Mrs Phoebe Hill paid a visit to the school, and commented favourably on the ‘state of the house and the general appearance of the children’. Furthermore it gave them ‘pleasure in witnessing the indefatigable exertions of Mrs Ward’. The Ladies considered that the institution would benefit from her continuance there.\textsuperscript{116}

The inclusion of the work and deliberations of the Committees, has relevance in this and succeeding chapters. The members were men and women specially appointed by the Governors to have oversight of the School. Prior to the establishment of the Female Orphan School King appointed people to serve as committee members, presumably because he considered they had concerns about the girls’ welfare. Macquarie appointed some prominent authority figures and some of their wives as committee members. Their task was to assist in the governance of the School so that the Governors’ philanthropic intentions would be realised.

A change in the monitorial system used in the Female Orphan School was to take place. The Rev. Thomas Reddall who had ‘attended Central National School, to become proficient in the Madras system of instruction, and continued there until May 1820’,\textsuperscript{117} was ordained to the Church of England ministry, and was appointed to be assistant chaplain to New South Wales. After arriving in Port Jackson in September 1820, he took up his appointment at the Male Orphan School to introduce Dr Bell’s Madras System.\textsuperscript{118} The Rev. Reddall also introduced Dr Bell’s National System of Education into the Female Orphan School. The Committee after examining the children placed on record that they ‘were much pleased to witness the progress made by the girls in the National System as introduced by the Rev. T. Reddall, and the consequent improvement both in education and good order’.\textsuperscript{119}

Mrs Ward submitted the names of six senior girls, and the Committee resolved that:

\textsuperscript{116} FOS Minutes, 7 August 1821, pp. 71-72.
\textsuperscript{117} V.W.E. Goodin, Reddall, Thomas (1780-1838), ADB, Vol. 2, p. 368.
\textsuperscript{118} This school was opened on 1 January 1819, and the story of its establishment and operation will be taken up in succeeding chapters.
\textsuperscript{119} FOS Minutes, 7 August 1821, p. 73.
Mary Bruce, Mary Ann Lycett, Eliza Kinchley, Elizabeth Leonard, Elizabeth Colston and Elizabeth Donald be immediately apprenticed to the institution, as it appears exceeding proper to select suitable children from time to time as are likely to serve for teachers.\textsuperscript{120}

However, these apprenticeships do not appear to have been more than the selection of the more able pupils as monitors, and therefore this scheme cannot be classified with the later pupil-teacher type of apprenticeship.

Despite the Committee’s favourable comments about ‘the consequent improvement both in behaviour and good order’, in October 1821 a serious incident occurred in the school involving one of the girls. At a special committee meeting held on 17 October the committee members resolved what punishment should be meted out to her. It would thus appear this was a further responsibility of the Committee. From the evidence it appears that Sarah Patfield had given ‘some small caps and shirts’ to her sister Elizabeth. The Committee apparently formed the opinion that Sarah had ‘stolen’ the items. The ‘crime’ Sarah committed was perceived to be one of theft, and the Committee resolved that the following punishment be inflicted on her:

\begin{itemize}
\item A suit of Factory clothing be provided for her - a collar of wood marked Thief to be worn day and night, that her head be shaved in the presence of the other girls and that solitary confinement and bread and water be continued till the next meeting, and that she be brought down to prayers in that disgraceful manner night and morning.\textsuperscript{121}
\end{itemize}

The Committee made this resolution not only to shame and punish Sarah Patfield, but in the hope that other girls in the school would be deterred from a similar offence. However the Committee considered that this ‘in house’ punishment was preferable to a public prosecution, which they considered would ‘utterly ruin her’.\textsuperscript{122}

Although the Committee did not want Sarah to be ‘utterly ruined’, one can only conclude that it had no conception of the possible psychological effects of the punishments which were imposed on her over a period of time. The severity of the punishment imposed on Sarah seems harsh by today’s standards, and appears to be an

\begin{footnotes}
\item[120] ibid., p. 72.
\item[121] FOS Minutes, 17 October 1821, p. 77.
\item[122] ibid.
\end{footnotes}
anomaly when considered against the background of the comparative enlightenment of the Orphan School, but theft was considered a serious offence. There are similarities to prison punishment being imposed on Sarah, particularly the head shaving, solitary confinement and the diet of bread and water. In her consideration of punishments in the School, Kociumbas argues that it was the: ‘assumptions made about the convict “taint” … which affected the treatment of children in the orphan institution’.

A further outcome of this incident was that greater restrictions were placed on future visitors. These people were perceived as having a negative effect on the girls’ good behaviour. Permission to visit had to be sought from the local Committee in future, and the Matron was required to be present during the visit. It was hoped that these restrictions would ‘guard against the evils which have been produced by the too frequent admission of the friends and relatives of the Orphan Children’.

A final disgrace was to be borne by Sarah Patfield. At a committee meeting held in November, a resolution was passed that Sarah was to ‘be discharged [expelled] from the School’. This furthermore was not to take place privately, but the Rev. Marsden was to ‘dismiss her before the other children’.

The Lady Patroness prepared a report on behalf of the ladies committee in November and there were some very positive comments. An improvement in the children’s health was commended. Mrs Ward’s activities gave ‘full satisfaction’ because it was stated she ‘unites respectability in herself to unremitting attention to her charges’. There was cleanliness and good order in the house, and the girls were making satisfactory progress with their needlework. It was noted that the Rev. Mr Reddall’s instruction had wrought general improvements in the order of the school.

Despite these positive comments a sour note came at the end of the report to the effect that the bedrooms were infected with bugs. The local committee was advised to take some action, and the means for the destruction of this infestation were duly offered. The Committee decided to act upon the recommended ‘remedy’ and resolved that the following measures should be adopted, ‘The interior of the House be

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123 Details of punishments given to women in the Female Factory. Persons placed before the Bench of Magistrates at Parramatta from March 1815 to 8 November 1817, in BT, Box 12, p. 231.
125 FOS Minutes, 17 October 1821, p. 77.
126 FOS Minutes, 14 November 1821, p. 79.
127 ibid., pp. 81-82.
limewashed, and the woodwork be painted in the sleeping rooms with the least possible delay agreeable to the recommendation of the ladies'.

Governor Macquarie had exhibited genuine benevolence towards the girls in the Female Orphan School, and this probably stemmed from his humanity. Macquarie also displayed a sense of justice in his humane approach to emancipists. He explained his attitude to Bigge:

some of the most meritorious men of the few to be found, and who were most capable and most willing to exert themselves in the public service, were men who had been convicts! I saw the necessity and justice of adopting a plan on a general basis which had always been partially acted upon towards those people, namely, that of extending to them generally the same consideration and qualifications which they would have enjoyed from their merits and situations in life, had they never been under the sentence of the Law.

These ex-convicts were referred to as emancipists, because they had been freed from their period of servitude. Although these people were ‘free’, bitter class animosities arose between the ‘free’ exclusives and the ‘freed’ emancipists. The attitude held by Governor and Elizabeth Macquarie, and their manner of expressing it both socially and professionally, led to difficulties with many of the exclusives in the colony, and also with the senior chaplain the Rev. Samuel Marsden. It was to create serious problems for Macquarie later in his administration.

During Lachlan Macquarie’s period of administration, improvements had been made in the accommodation provisions for the female ‘orphans’. In the new Female Orphan School at Arthur’s Hill Parramatta, the girls were situated in more open surroundings. They were away from the built-up area of Sydney Town, and the problems which that site had presented. They were again receiving the level of

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128 FOS Minutes, 13 February 1822, p. 83.
129 Macquarie to Bigge, 6 November 1819, in HRA, Vol. X, p. 222.
130 Ritchie, p. 135.
attention and protection which the institution’s founding Governor, Philip Gidley King, envisaged for the poor ‘orphan’, neglected or abandoned girls.

Guidelines had been established for the management and operation of the School, and these covered both internal and external matters. This led to improved governance of the Female Orphan School. The administration of the institution was more rigorous and the management Committee, with its increased membership, was able to pay attention to a variety of the institution’s concerns. The Masters and Matrons had provided periods of stability, and the general well-being of the girls appears to have been improved. Dr Bell’s National System of Education had been introduced and improvements in the girls’ education were considered to have taken place.

Mrs Elizabeth Macquarie, as the Governor’s wife, was able to exercise a very positive influence on the Female Orphan School. She was a capable woman who showed a practical concern for the School and the girls’ well-being. She was well meaning, but on occasions appears to have been misguided in her assessment of staff and situations. In her involvement with the Orphan School she was assisted by the wives of prominent authority figures in the colony. These ladies were afforded the opportunity to make their input into the institution through their active membership of the Ladies Committee, thus widening their sphere of influence in the colony.

In this chapter the humane intentions of Governor Macquarie have been demonstrated. Although he was not the founder of the Female Orphan School he exercised his power to stamp out abuses which had occurred in that institution. He became involved in the School and as Patron he adopted a ‘hands on’ approach to the affairs of the establishment. In this he was ably assisted by his wife.

During this period the high hopes which King had for the Orphan School, in his attempts to provide accommodation, care, education and training for girls in necessitous circumstances, had again been realised. The chapter contributes to our understanding about the operation of the Female Orphan School during Macquarie’s administration. The Rev. Richard Hill made an observation about the Female Orphan School at the close of Macquarie’s administration, when he remarked that the School for the girls ‘is in a very flourishing state’.  

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