CHAPTER 6

THE CHILDREN OF THE ORPHAN SCHOOLS

In previous chapters we have considered the motives of earlier Governors in establishing the Female and Male Orphan Schools. The role of the various Committees in the management of the Schools, and the operation of these institutions has been examined. Attention has been drawn to the Rules and Regulations formulated by Governor Macquarie. Aspects of life within these institutions have been described including the children’s attire, their daily routine, and their diet. The nature of their school subjects and the monitorial system of education has been discussed, as well as the manual training provided for the girls and boys.

In this chapter it is proposed to look at the children for whom these institutions had been established. Who were the girls and boys who made up the population of the Orphan Schools? What were the social backgrounds of these children? What procedures were used for their admission to the Orphan Schools? Lastly what avenues were available to them when the time expired for them to leave the institutions?

From its establishment in 1801 the Female Orphan School though bearing that title, did not strictly adhere to that description. Whilst orphan children may have been considered to have the first priority for admission, other girls were admitted. There were neglected children; those girls whose parents were unable to support them; girls who had been deserted or abandoned by their parents and girls whose home conditions were considered to be unsatisfactory for a variety of reasons.

When the Duke of Portland advised Governor King that he approved of the measures which King had taken for the care and support of needy children, he sounded a note of warning that ‘care should be taken strictly to confine this institution to children of this description’. The Duke of Portland did not consider that children whose parents could afford to support them, should be maintained at Government expense.¹

On receiving this despatch, King requested the Committee ‘to examine how far any of the children now in the Orphan School do not come within the description pointed out’ in Portland’s despatch. The Committee was able to advise the Governor that the ‘whole of the children brought before the Committee were proper objects of the Institution’. Those children who were not orphans, and presumably had not been abandoned, had parents who were willing to make a contribution towards the children’s support. The Committee was of the opinion that all the children would benefit from their continuance in the school, both from a moral as well as an educational viewpoint.2

When describing the institution, George Caley the botanist in an undated letter to Sir Joseph Banks wrote:

At Sydney there is an Orphan School, which is now enlarging by an additional building and founded upon a rich fund. None but girls are admitted, yet it does not strictly adhere to its title, for children that have got parents are equally admitted too.3

The Rev. William Cowper spoke in a similar vein when he gave evidence to Commissioner Bigge in 1821 by stating:

I believe that the greater part of (girls received into the Orphan School) then had one parent living, and when it was found that this parent was either very profligate or very poor so as not to afford decent maintenance to the child, it was admitted to all the benefits of the Institution.4

Early documents pertaining to the admission of the children are not extant. However the Committee of the Female Orphan School considered applications or petitions for the admission of girls, and its recommendations were submitted to the Governor, who was the institution’s Patron, for his approval.5

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2  Female Orphan School Committee Meeting, 23 August 1802, in HRA, Vol. IV, p. 97.  
3  Caley’s account of Colony 1800-1803, in Historical Records of New South Wales, Vol. V, p. 298.  
4  Evidence of Rev. Cowper to Bigge, 23 January 1821, in Bonwick Transcripts, Box 8, pp. 3353-3354. Mitchell Library  
5  Report of the Select Committee on Transportation, House of Commons, Bligh’s evidence, 10 July 1812, pp. 39-40. (ML)
When Governor Lachlan Macquarie formulated the Rules and Regulations for the Female Orphan School upon its transfer to Arthur’s Hill at Parramatta in 1818, he paid close attention to the admission procedures and to the circumstances of the girls considered suitable for admission. In a summary of the Rules conveyed to the Colonial Secretary Macquarie stated ‘although this Establishment is denominated as an asylum for the female Orphans, it is not meant to be exclusively confined to that description’. If a girl had a parent who was not in a financial position to adequately maintain her, then such a girl was ‘to be considered eligible for admission’. In these statements we see a continuation of the original purpose of the Orphan School, which was to provide care for destitute girls, not just those who were classified as ‘orphans’.

An application for the admission of a girl was to be made formally by way of a petition ‘to the Committee, through the Secretary, or any other member’. As the grounds for admission had to be declared together with details about the parents of the child, as well as the child’s name, age and circumstances, we may infer that the person receiving the petition would make the necessary enquiries about the girl’s background. That person would then be in a position to recommend or decline to recommend her admission to the Committee.

The Rules and Regulations for the admission of boys to the Male Orphan School formulated by Macquarie in 1819 follow similar lines. Application for admission was to be made by petition to the Secretary or any other member of the Committee. The name and place of residence of the person who had charge of the boy was also to be declared. The petition was to be submitted to the Committee at its quarterly meeting.

When the Committee of the Female Orphan School held its first meeting following the transfer of the School to Parramatta, it considered the reception of a child from the Female Factory at Parramatta. Whether the children of women convicts in the Factory were admitted to the School when it was situated in Sydney is unknown.

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6 Macquarie to Colonial Secretary, 25 July 1818, in Colonial Secretary In Letters, Bundle 12, p. 260. State Records New South Wales 4/1740
7 ibid.
8 ibid., p. 26.
9 Male Orphan School Rules and Regulations, 9th Rule, 1 January 1819, p. 4. SRNSW 4/400.
10 Female Orphan School Minutes, 3 October 1818, p. 19. SRNSW 4/403.
As children from the Female Factory were to form part of the population in both of the Orphan Schools, an historical account of the Factory seems appropriate. The first gaol at Parramatta was destroyed by fire in 1799, and on that site a two storeyed structure was erected. Governor King established a Female Factory in the two rooms which comprised the upper storey of the building, initially for female convicts who were not assigned on their arrival in the colony. In this Factory the women were expected to engage in the spinning and weaving of wool. The Female Factory was therefore not only a place of detention, but it was also a working site as the term Factory implies.  

Although the Female Factory was a place of detention it was not regulated that the women remain confined there at night. This decision appears to be bound up with practical considerations, namely that there was not adequate accommodation for all the women to remain there for sleeping purposes. In his evidence to Commissioner Bigge, Francis Oakes the Superintendent of the Female Factory painted a vivid word picture of conditions in the Factory. The Factory consisted of one room over the gaol which housed male convicts, and this room measured about sixty feet in length and twenty feet in width. The women kept their rations in a dirty fireplace; cooked their food which was supplied by the government; slept on bedding or unwashed fleeces on the floor; and started work at daylight on machines which were also housed in this room. The area according to Mr Oakes held thirty-persons.

Because of the cramped, unhealthy and inadequate conditions some of the women sought accommodation in Parramatta, and it was alleged that they engaged in prostitution. In giving evidence to Commissioner Bigge Hannibal Macarthur stated that women from the Factory were allowed to lodge in Parramatta. A leading question was put to Macarthur in these words: ‘Have you observed that the women employed in the Factory become the Prostitutes of people in Parramatta?’ Mr Macarthur expressed the opinion that some of the women from the Factory ‘lived together in small rooms that they rent to keep houses of Prostitution’. Other women may have engaged in prostitution in order to pay for their lodgings in Parramatta.

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12 Francis Oakes to Bigge, 22 September 1820; in BT, Box 1, p. 286.
13 Hannibal Macarthur’s evidence, 10 August 1820, in ibid., p. 246.
14 ibid.
By day in these cramped conditions some of the women worked at picking wool, whilst others used the spinning wheels, two rows of which were in use along the length of the room. There were also women employed in carding wool. Some of these convict women were the mothers of children, and they together with their mothers had to endure these harsh conditions.

This was the situation which existed at the Female Factory when Lachlan Macquarie was appointed to be the Governor of the colony, and it continued for much of his administration. When Governor Macquarie in a despatch to the Earl of Liverpool, commented on the female convicts he described them as being ‘very burthensome in point of Expense and difficult of Appropriation’. He explained that wherever possible the women were assigned as servants to married settlers. Those not assigned were sent to the Factory at Parramatta. Macquarie envisaged that economies could be affected if slop clothing for the convicts was manufactured in the Factory. To that end he stated ‘it will be necessary to enlarge the Building very considerably, and to enclose the whole with a high stone wall’. Macquarie’s thoughts ran along the lines of separating the living and working sections when he wrote:

proper plan of suitable Building providing Accommodation for at least 100 women, as well as necessary Apartments required for carrying on different branches of Linen and Woollen cloth, as well as for dyeing and Milling the same accompanied with the Machinery and Implements necessary for these purposes should be sent from England.

To ensure that the Factory could be built on suitable land at Parramatta, Macquarie sought Earl Bathurst’ assistance to recover from former Governor William Bligh, land which had been granted to him by Philip Gidley King. Macquarie described the parcel of land as ‘one of 105 acres [known as Mount Betham] situated close to the town of Parramatta on the north side of the River’. In citing his reasons for this choice of site Macquarie wrote:

this is the only Eligible situation in the neighbourhood for the erecting a Factory for the employment of female convicts in the manufacture of Coarse Linen and

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16 ibid.
Woollen Cloths, it affording cleared level ground for a Bleach Field, and freshwater for the people, and the use of the Manufactory.\textsuperscript{18}

Earl Bathurst was able to advise Macquarie in December 1815, that Admiral Bligh had been acquainted with the knowledge that the land granted ‘to him by Governor King in direct contravention of his Instructions as Governor’ had been resumed.\textsuperscript{19}

Armed with this knowledge Macquarie made his intentions about the Female Factory known to Earl Bathurst, and in so doing he clearly revealed his attitude to the female convicts. He wrote:

\begin{quote}
I intend to have a new Factory and Barracks erected at Parramatta for the female convicts, and such a Building is particularly necessary for keeping those depraved Females at Work within Walls, so as in some degree to be a check upon their Immoralities and disorderly Vicious Habits.\textsuperscript{20}
\end{quote}

Macquarie knew that some of the women had lodgings in Parramatta, and his plans to enclose the proposed new Factory, were intended to keep the convict women from associating with the people of Parramatta. This factory was to be a place of compulsory confinement twenty-four hours a day as well as a place of industry.

In July 1818 the foundation stone of the new Factory was laid with due ceremony by Governor Macquarie.\textsuperscript{21} When the Factory was completed in February 1821 the women convicts were moved from the old Gaol Green to their new premises.\textsuperscript{22} (See photograph on following page). It has been noted that some of the convict women in the old Female Factory had children living with them. When the women moved to the new premises their children accompanied them. In the British penal establishments children were quite often imprisoned with their parents. When the transport \textit{Lady Penrhyn} was being loaded with convicts as part of the First Fleet, six women with three children who had been prisoners in Newgate boarded this

\begin{thebibliography}{9}
\bibitem{18} ibid.
\bibitem{19} Bathurst to Macquarie, 4 December 1815, in ibid., p. 645.
\bibitem{20} Macquarie to Earl Bathurst, 4 April 1817, in \textit{HRA}, Vol. IX, p. 353.
\bibitem{21} Macquarie Journal 1818-1822, 9 July 1818, p. 1. (ML) A774.
\end{thebibliography}
The Female Factory at Parramatta completed in 1821.
(Copy from material in the Royal Australian Historical Society Library)
transport on 9 January 1787. Later in the month on 26 January sixteen women and one child also boarded the *Lady Penryhn*.\textsuperscript{23}

In the colony of New South Wales, however, the chaplains the Rev. Johnson and the Rev. Marsden together with the early Governors, considered it desirable for the reformation of the children, to provide care for them away from the influence of their convict parents. The authorities feared that the parents, who were perceived as being vicious and immoral, would ‘contaminate’ their children, the ‘rising generation’. Was this the same thinking that caused authority figures such as the Superintendent, the Surgeon and the senior Chaplain to make application for some of the children from the Female Factory to be admitted to the Orphan Schools?

We know that the children from the factory were the offspring of convict women, but through the absence of extant records we do not know the precise social backgrounds of the girls who were admitted to the Female Orphan School in its early years. We may reasonably assume that their mothers were convicts, and that the girls were considered to be in necessitous circumstances, or were perceived to be ‘at risk’.

Records do exist of the responses from clergy and magistrates to Governor Macquarie’s request for the names of boys who would benefit from their admission to the Male Orphan School. These responses and the Admission Book of that School provide some details about the boys for the period 1819-1847. The extant Admission Book for the Female Orphan School shows the first entry for 1817. The second entry is for one admission in 1820, and then six entries are recorded for 1821. Brief details about some of the girls have been recorded, but this Admission Book cannot be considered to be complete.

The minute books for both institutions from the transfer of the Female Orphan School to Parramatta in 1818, and the establishment of the Male Orphan School in 1819, record the Committees’ consideration of applications for admission to the Schools.

The Admission Books for the Male and Female Orphan Schools show that children were admitted whilst the interim committee was responsible for these

institutions. However no minutes survive for this period and the Admission Books do not provide information about the children’s social backgrounds.

When the control of the Orphan Schools passed to the Clergy and School Lands Corporation forms were prepared for the admission of children, on which provision was made for a brief social or case history. Forms on which a recommendation could be made concerning the needs of such children were also prepared, and these were generally signed by the person supporting the petitioner. In addition a certificate of birth or baptism signed by the Minister officiating at the service was to be attached to the application. (See following pages for copies of a petition and recommendation).

The Regulations under the Corporation for the admission of children, were similar to those which had previously been in place. Three classes of children were to be considered eligible for admission:

1. Orphans of one or both parents;
2. Living with vicious and immoral parents or guardians;
3. As it might relieve the distress of a large family.

A proviso which had not existed previously was added, namely that ‘these elections shall take place as vacancies may occur in each class to the extent of Funds’. 24

From reading the selected social or case histories of children (see Appendix 1) we observe that their admissions were based on the above three categories over the period February 1825 to July 1833.

From these sources selected social or case histories of the children have been compiled, which provide us with some knowledge of their backgrounds and the conditions under which they were living prior to their admissions. Research shows that the twin threads of poverty and need are woven through the applications. It would be reasonably correct to assume that girls and boys in similar circumstances to those described, would have been admitted throughout the life of the institutions.

Many boys and girls were admitted into the Orphan Schools, and the social or case histories which have been selected cover only 200 of these children. The reasons given for the admission of these young people have been tabulated. (See table on page 195). An analysis of this table shows that the loss or absence of a father

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24 Admission into the Male and Female Orphan Schools, Chapter XI, Sec. 1, in Clergy and School Lands Corporation, Proceedings of General Courts, 1829, p. 51. SRNSW 4/291.
TO THE TRUSTEES OF THE CLERGY AND
SCHOOL LANDS IN THE COLONY OF NEW
SOUTH WALES.

The humble Petition of
WILLIAM SPENCER
in behalf of
JOHN KING
Stating that the said
JOHN
is the Child of
JOHN KING and
ELIZABETH KING
as by the aforesaid Certificates will appear.

That the said Father
was a Soldier and was at the time
and is now in the 40th Regiment
and stationed at the Barracks
and together with several others
named the Commandant, Capt. William
Graves, wrote to the Governor,
and
has not since been heard of,
and the Mother has wholly
abandoned them, leaving them
orphaned.

Your Petitioner therefore humbly prays
that the said
JOHN KING
may be admitted
into the Orphan School; and if this Prayer be granted your

Petitioner hereby agrees that the said
JOHN KING
shall remain in the Orphan School so long as the said Trustees
shall think fit, and that when of a proper Age shall be disposed
of at their discretion as an Apprentice or Servant.

Wm. Spencer

Copy of Application Form requesting the admission of John King into the Male Orphan School in 1825 (original in SRNSW 4/330)
'Certificate and Recommendation.'

I hereby certify that according to the best of my knowledge and belief the several circumstances contained in this Petition on the preceding Page of this Paper are truly stated, wherefore I recommend Richard King as an object worthy of the benevolent attention of the Trustees of the Clergy and School Lands.

[Signature]

N.B. A Certificate of Birth or Baptism signed by the officiating Minister must be affixed to this in Original.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Orphans - both parents dead</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘Orphans’ - one parent living</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both parents together but unable to provide support/care financially</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both parents deserted</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both parents in prison</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Father dead, mother in poorly paid work</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Father dead, mother neglecting child</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Father dead, mother re-married with other children</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Father dead, mother re-married neglected child</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Father dead, mother abandoned children</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Father dead, mother financially unable to maintain children</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Father dead, mother in prison</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Father dead, mother ill, children destitute</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Father deserted, mother in poorly paid work</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Father deserted, mother with no means of support</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Father deserted, mother neglected/abandoned children</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Father deserted, mother ill</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Father deserted, mother cannot provide accommodation for children at</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>her place of service</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Father in prison, mother unable to support children financially</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Father ill, mother destitute</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exnuptials:</td>
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<td>Mother in the Female Factory</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mother in care</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother in low paid position</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother ill</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother unable to provide financial support</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother in service cannot keep child</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother deserted child</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother dead, father a prisoner</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother dead, father unable to support child</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother dead, father unable to care for children</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother dead, father ill</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother dead, father’s employment prevents adequate care for child</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother dead, father abandoned child</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother dead, father transported</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother deserted, father unable to provide care</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother deserted, father’s employment prevents adequate care of child</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother in Female Factory, father not maintaining child</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother a prisoner, father ill</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of children admitted</td>
<td>200</td>
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Sources: Female and Male Orphan School Minutes from 1818 to 1823; Clergy and School Lands Corporation Applications for Admission into Orphan Schools 1825-1833.
from the family unit, either through death, desertion, imprisonment or serious illness accounted for 43.5 per cent of admissions as recorded in surviving documents. Correspondingly the loss or absence of a mother for similar reasons, was responsible for 19.5 per cent of admissions. It is significant that the initial absence of one parent from the family led to 63 per cent of admissions.

There were children where only a mother was mentioned in the application, and it has been assumed that these were the offspring of unmarried women. Thirty two children who have been classified as ex-nuptial, accounted for 16 per cent of admissions. This group of children formed the third largest percentage for whom admission was sought. Approximately one third of these children had a mother in the Female Factory, and reference had already been made to that establishment.

As noted earlier despite the name Orphan Schools, the number of children who had no surviving or traceable parents accounted for only 12 per cent of admissions. The children who were called ‘orphans’, but who are known to have one parent living, amounted to 3 per cent of the admissions.

Eight children were admitted to the Schools despite having parents who were living together as a family. In these cases, through illness or injury or through economic circumstances such as crop failure, the parents were unable to provide for their children. The whole family at times became dependent on the charity or goodwill of their neighbours. The children were considered to be destitute and their admission amounted to 4 per cent.

From the selected social or case histories only one child was admitted because both parents had initially deserted the child. Admission was sought for the children who were considered abandoned by reason of their parents’ imprisonment. These children represent only 1.5 per cent of the admissions.

Interesting social conditions are revealed from these case histories. A number of women were unable to provide adequate care and support for their children because they were in low paid positions such as washerwomen. Many women had attempted to make provision for their children either as single mothers or as widows or deserted wives. Some women encountered problems when they sought live-in positions and had a child or children in their care. The prevailing economic conditions of limited employment opportunities and low wages; the lack of extended family support; the absence of financial assistance from the government; the lack of provisions for
workers’ compensation, and the absence of child care facilities, made their task impossible.

The size of families is not detailed in all of the case or social histories. However, instances are quoted where families consisted of two, three, four, five, six and seven children. Some of the women were left with a number of children, and this in itself presented a barrier to securing employment, and an income sufficient to meet the family’s needs. These women were often described as being ‘destitute’ because their husband had not left assets for their support.

The emotional effect on parents with the loss or absence of a husband or wife also has to be considered. Despair or a sense of inadequacy may have been experienced, which led the remaining parent to neglect or abandon children, particularly where there was no community support for the family.

A glimpse into employment conditions is provided as we read of the struggle some of the sole fathers experienced in caring for their children. The nature of the work which these men performed meant that they could not remain at home. Their attempts to take their children particularly their daughters, into their work environment though courageous, were fraught with difficulties. Some fathers who were assigned servants were in very poorly paid employment and were unable to maintain their children. Soldiers, who as sole parents had accommodation in barracks, were unable to provide their children with the necessary housing, care and support because their incomes were low.

In several instances the re-marriage of a mother led to difficulties. The husband of the second marriage may have objected to supporting his wife’s child. Problems may have arisen between the children of the ‘blended’ family. In two instances it was reported that the mother abandoned or neglected her child following her re-marriage. We are therefore left to speculate about the possible reasons for this course of action.

There is evidence of people, who were not family members taking care of orphan children. No details are given as to the circumstances in which these children were ‘taken into care’. One assumes that an adult responded to the needs of a child who was alone, by offering the boy or girl a home, care and protection. There were ten children in such care, of whom seven were boys and three girls. The carers consisted of five men and five women. Five boys were in the care of men, and the girls and remaining boys were cared for by women. The men were employed in
different positions. One was a waterman; two were farmers; one described as a poor man living at Cowpastures; the occupation of the other carer is unknown. Of the female carers one was employed as a washerwoman and another was a fishwoman. The occupations of the other women were not cited.

The carers were unable to continue their support of these children, hence the applications for their admission into the Orphan Schools. The reasons given for the surrender of the children range from poverty; a carer recently widowed; a carer with a family of her own to support; the inability to continue maintaining the child probably through altered financial circumstances. These ten children had not only suffered the ‘loss’ of parental care, but they experienced the withdrawal of their carers’ support. One can only imagine the effect this double loss had on their lives.

The general analysis provides us with some understanding of the reasons for the ‘selected’ children being admitted to the Orphan Schools. It is not difficult to imagine the range of emotions which many parents experienced as they surrendered their children into care. The children’s reactions to the separation from parents and their siblings, as well as their carers, are of course not known. Again we can imagine they felt a sense of loss; uncertainty about their future; and bewilderment about the situation in which they found themselves.

The petitioners or applicants were for the most part the parents of the children. In the case of orphans or abandoned children application for admission was made by a petitioner to whom the child was known. The children of women in the Female Factory had applications submitted for their admission to the Schools, by the Superintendent, the Surgeon or the appropriate Chaplain.

Not all applications resulted in the admission of children. In the minute books of the Male and Female Orphan Schools, references are made to the deliberations given to applications in various committee meetings. A parent who made application for the admission of his daughters to the Female Orphan School in 1819 was refused. The Committee decided that ‘the parents who were both in the colony were capable of supporting them’.25 Earlier that year a child in the Female Factory was denied

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25 FOS Minutes, 27 August 1819, p. 36.
admission, on the grounds that children from the Factory were outside the provisions of the institution.\textsuperscript{26}

A number of applications were considered by the Committee of the Male Orphan School in September 1819, and some of these were deferred. The Rev. William Cowper was requested to carry out further investigations.\textsuperscript{27} At the April meeting in the following year it is recorded that five applications for admission were not accepted.\textsuperscript{28}

Where applications were made for several children from one family to be admitted, the Committee used its discretion and on one occasion two sisters only were admitted from a family. At the same meeting in February, the eldest child of a petitioner was admitted, and two sisters from a family of four residing with their mother in the Female Factory were recommended for admission.\textsuperscript{29}

We have already noted that the new Female Factory at Parramatta had been opened in February 1821, and children from that establishment appear to have been more readily admitted into the Orphan Schools. In 1822 Major Goulburn the Colonial Secretary requested that two boys from the Factory be admitted, and his application was granted.\textsuperscript{30} Later in 1822 the Rev. Marsden recommended that five girls, who were living with their mothers in the Factory be admitted to the Female Orphan School, and their admission took place.\textsuperscript{31}

When the Clergy and School Lands Corporation was responsible for the Orphan Schools, a similar pattern of deliberation over applications took place. Not all petitions for admission were accepted and reasons for the non-admission are not readily available.

During this period the Rules and Regulations for the Female Factory were revised, and the revision applied to some of the children in that establishment. When four girls who were sisters, were sent to the Female Orphan School in December 1827, the following memorandum for the attention of the Committee of Management accompanied them: ‘In conformity with the Rules of the Female Factory, that all children above three years old belonging to prisoners in the Factory should be sent to the orphan schools - the undermentioned are forwarded to your establishment’. Four

\textsuperscript{26} FOS Minutes, 10 April 1819, p. 26.
\textsuperscript{27} MOS Minutes, 1 September 1819, p. 13.
\textsuperscript{28} MOS Minutes, 12 April 1820, p. 16.
\textsuperscript{29} FOS Minutes, 14 February 1821, p. 57.
\textsuperscript{30} MOS Minutes, 10 April 1822, p. 48.
\textsuperscript{31} FOS Minutes, 14 August 1822, p. 89.
other children accompanied the first family and included three girls from one family and another child. Eight girls were admitted on the same day, and their ages ranged from three to thirteen years.32

When the Rules and Regulations for the Female and Male Orphan School were formulated by Governor Macquarie, not only were conditions laid down for the admission of children to the institutions, but procedures were established for children to leave the Schools. Girls were to leave the School when they reached ‘the age of thirteen years, at which time they were to be apprenticed out as servants to families of good character’.33 The boys at the age of fifteen years were to ‘be bound apprentices to respectable Mechanics, or as servants to Settlers, at the discretion of the Committee’.34

From the early days of the Female Orphan School girls were apprenticed, and reference has been made in chapter 2 to the Rev. Marsden’s report that ‘eleven (girls) have been bound apprentices to Officers’ Wives’.35 A handwritten Indenture Form has been preserved from this period. (See following page for copy). Provision was made for the names of the ‘orphan’ and the person who was her mistress to be included. The form describes the conditions required from the girl in serving her mistress. The tuition and material provisions required from the said mistress were also prescribed. The end result of the tuition and training to be provided, was to enable the ‘orphan’ to pursue an occupation ‘becoming the Station of life of the Said Orphan’. The ‘station in life’ for many of the girls would have been as domestic servants for those whom John Ramsland has described as ‘the colonial elite’.36

Despite the provision of apprenticeships and regulations concerning the ages of the boys and girls for leaving the Schools, not all eligible children were apprenticed ‘out’. A system of internal apprenticeships was in existence. It is not known when this practice was introduced into the Female Orphan School, but it had certainly been

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32 Applications for Admission into Orphan Schools, 1825-1828, 22 December 1827. SRNSW 4/330.
33 FOS Rules and Regulations 1818, pp. 4-5.
34 MOS Rules and Regulations 1 January 1819, p. 5.
established by the time the School transferred to Parramatta. Similarly it became standard practice in the Male Orphan School in 1822.

It would appear that in 1819 girls were working in the School as assistants, or as servants in the kitchen and a ‘charge was being made for wages for these girls’. The Committee expressed surprise at the payment, and resolved that it would not sanction such charges.\textsuperscript{37} However, after some deliberation a change in attitude occurred, because the Committee decided that three girls of the institute were to receive six pounds in wages, but this was not to be paid in the future. It was resolved that ‘girls in those capacities may be entitled to some additional clothing at the direction of the Lady Patroness’.\textsuperscript{38} The response of the Committee to the payment for the girls indicates that it considered the girls should be a cheap source of labour and should be recompensed with accommodation, food and clothing.

Further deliberations were made about the internal apprenticeship at the Female Orphan School. It was resolved that in future at least six girls would be indentured to the institution. The reasons for choosing this number reflected the variety of domestic tasks in which the girls would need training to equip them to be servants. The resolution was passed which stated that in the future at least six girls would be apprenticed as servants, because ‘many Domestic conveniences are necessary to the Institution for the proper bringing up of the children as servants’.\textsuperscript{39}

At the next meeting the following girls, Mary and Ann Edwards, Mary Hazleborough, Elizabeth Jenkins, Louise Smith and Catherine Cooney were ‘indentured to the Institution as Servants until they are eighteen years of age’.\textsuperscript{40} We see emphasis being placed on the girls training to be servants in this action, and internal apprenticeships in both institutions had the effect of raising the ages at which these children left the Schools.

A year later a further six girls were indentured to the institution, and reference has been made to this course of action in chapter 3. These girls were selected because it was considered that they may have been able to serve as teachers, and girls who were considered to be more able were duly selected.\textsuperscript{41} This action probably does not reflect the Committee’s appreciation of wider future career paths for some of the girls.

\textsuperscript{37} FOS Minutes, Adjourned meeting 27 August 1819, p. 36.
\textsuperscript{38} FOS Minutes, 1 September 1819, p. 37.
\textsuperscript{39} FOS Minutes, Special Meeting 5 May 1820, p. 44.
\textsuperscript{40} FOS Minutes, 5 July 1820, p. 45.
\textsuperscript{41} FOS Minutes, 6 August 1821, p. 73.
It may well have been taken to meet the demands of the monitorial system which operated in the School, and which required monitors for the execution of this system of education. When the Rev. Hill was questioned by Commissioner Bigge about teachers at the Female Orphan School he replied ‘two girls who have served their apprenticeships are retained in the school, and they assist in turn, as also the two older apprentices’. These two former apprentices were Charity Evans and Susan Humphreys. Further details reveal that both Charity and Susan were employed as teachers at the yearly rate of £12, as well as receiving a weekly ration of ‘four loaves of bread, four pounds of meat, two ounces of tea and one pound of sugar’.42

At the August meeting the Committee also resolved that the girls who were apprenticed to the School were not available for external apprenticeships.43 The applications from potential masters or mistresses were considered to be secondary to the needs of the institution. An exception to this decision occurred when Lady Brisbane requested to have an apprentice and there were none available One of the School’s apprentices was sent to her. The resolution of August 1821 was waived three months later apparently in deference to Lady Brisbane.44

The practice of apprenticing boys was established in the Male Orphan School. In chapter 4 we have noted that five boys who had become proficient in their ‘trades’ training courses were apprenticed to the School in January 1822. The boys named Edward Gregory, George Freeman, William Gammage, James Lees and William Davis were apprenticed as shoemakers, a tailor, a carpenter and a baker respectively. Edward Gregory’s Indenture has been preserved and is dated 25 September 1822. It shows he was to be apprenticed in the Art and Mystery of a cordwainer, that being a guild name for shoemaker. In July the Committee resolved that the carpenter was to be encouraged to advance the tuition of the boys in his charge, by the payment of a gratuity. The Committee also approved that an additional apprentice by the name of James Chapman, who was then twelve or thirteen years old, ‘be apprenticed to the carpenter’.45 This brought the total number of internal apprenticeships in the Male Orphan School to six. It was some of these apprentices who took a leadership role in acquainting Major Antill of the alleged ill treatment of boys in the School, and we have ‘heard’ the voices of these boys in chapter 5.

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42 Rev. Hill’s evidence to Bigge, 7 February 1821, in BT, Box 24, Appendix, p. 4913.
43 FOS Minutes, 6 August 1821, p. 73.
44 FOS Minutes, 14 November 1821, p. 50.
45 MOS Minutes, 10 July 1822, p. 43.
Despite the fact that some of the boys and girls were apprenticed to the institutions, the majority of the children left the care of the Orphan Schools through being apprenticed externally. The system of apprenticeship, as we have already noted, was in place in the Female Orphan School early in its history. Governor Macquarie’s Rules and Regulations for both institutions provided details of the procedures to be followed for apprenticing the children. The reasons for the adoption of the system of apprenticeships need to be examined.

In chapter 2 Mrs Paterson’s hopes for the rising generation prior to the establishment of the Female Orphan School were quoted. She hoped that ‘the young men will become useful members of society, and the women faithful and industrious wives’. The children were provided with suitable training in the Schools, so that these ends could be achieved. However the children were young when they left the Schools and further training via apprenticeships would add to their skills and lead to future employment. Mrs Paterson’s use of the term ‘useful members of society’ has the connotation of future workers. As far as the girls were concerned, their moral wellbeing was of great importance to Governor King and the Committee. Perceptions were held about their ‘immoral’ parents particularly the mothers’ behaviour, and it was feared that some of the girls were already exposed to moral danger. By equipping the girls to learn the skills associated with domestic tasks they could obtain employment as servants, and need not be forced into prostitution.

Procedures were in place for masters and mistresses to acquire apprentices. Applications had to be submitted for the Committees’ approval. Applications cannot be located for the period prior to the Clergy and School Lands Corporation control of the Schools. Reference is made to applications in the Minutes of the School up to 1824. Not all applications were approved.

In giving evidence to Commissioner Bigge in response to a question about the difficulty of obtaining apprenticeships for the girls, the Rev. R. Hill indicated that there was no difficulty in obtaining apprenticeships, and he added:

and I think, that when the accommodation of the School House, and the system of management and employment of the girls is improved, there will never be a want of

46 Mrs Paterson to her uncle, 3 October 1800. Mss (ML) Ap 36.
applications to take them. The only difficulty will be in finding suitable persons.47

The use of the term ‘suitable persons’ leads one to think that the Committee exercised care in its approval of the applications for apprentices. Admiral Bligh testified before the Select Committee on transportation about the provisions made for the girls when they left the Orphan School. He stated:

They were frequently taken out upon application by the most respectable people, to be their servants, and those children became very well qualified before they left the school to read and write, as well as do all work as seamstresses.48

Again the term ‘most respectable people’ implies that there was some checking of the background of potential masters or mistresses.

After the Female Orphan School transferred to Parramatta the first reference to applications for apprentices occurs. A Mr E. S. Hall had applied for a female servant and ‘Mary Greene was assigned to him’. At the same meeting Mr Greenway the Government architect, was allowed Mary Edwards as an apprentice.49 For some reason not given in the minutes, a switch between apprentices was permitted by the Committee. Mary Greene was assigned to Mrs Greenway, who was ‘permitted to return Mary Edwards to the School’, and Mary Edwards was assigned to Mrs Hall.50 Whether this apprentice actually went to Mrs Hall is not known, because a girl bearing the same name was indentured to the Female Orphan School in July as a servant.51

Some Committee members and their wives participated in the apprenticeship scheme. In February 1821 Mrs George T. Palmer made a request that ‘Elizabeth Turner be apprenticed to her’ and this application was approved.52 Mr Hannibal Macarthur applied for a female apprentice and Ann Keenan was assigned to him. The Rev. Richard Hill ‘applied for an apprentice and Elizabeth May was assigned to him

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47 Rev. Hill’s evidence, 22 January 1821, in BT, Box 8, p. 3515.
48 Report from the Select Committee on Transportation ordered by the House of Commons, Bligh’s evidence, p. 40. (ML)
49 FOS Minutes, 27 August 1819, p. 36.
50 FOS Minutes, 19 April 1820, p. 43.
51 FOS Minutes, 5 July 1820, p. 45.
52 FOS Minutes, 14 February 1821, p. 59.
in May'. At the next meeting Sarah Singer was assigned to the Judge-Advocate Mr Wylde, and Catherine Collins went to Mr John Palmer’s home.

There were some irregularities in the apprenticeship scheme. Not all the girls who were assigned to masters or mistresses were apprenticed. At the first meeting held by the Committee of the Female Orphan School in October 1818, time was spent in discussing the fact that some indentures of apprenticeship for girls who had gone into service had not been executed. The members resolved that these ‘agreements’ ‘should remain unexecuted till a more proper and effectual Indenture as proposed should be adopted’. It was not until May 1820 that a resolution was passed to the effect ‘that proper indentures be immediately prepared and executed from the respective dates’. By October 1821 Mr Justice Field had prepared a form of indenture and also a bond, and these were presented to the meeting. Approval was given to these documents and it was ‘resolved that the Secretary be directed to have them printed’.

We have noted that Ann Keenan had been assigned to Mr Hannibal Macarthur. Early in 1822 Mr Macarthur requested that Ann be returned to the School because he found her ‘to be unfit for his family’. Ann was one of those apprentices for whom no indenture had been executed, and she was re-admitted to the Female Orphan School. Ann had been assigned but not apprenticed. Ann was later apprenticed to Mr John Bowman of Richmond.

Another girl whose apprenticeship was complicated was Phoebe Brady, who had been apprenticed to a Mr Forbes in October 1820. There was no further mention of Phoebe in the Minutes until August 1821 when Mr Harper, who had applied for an apprentice was permitted to have Phoebe Brady. A year later Mr Harper sought permission to have Phoebe returned to the School, and claimed that she was subject to fits. The Committee agreed to her return and Mr Harper employed Mrs Brady to return Phoebe to the School. Phoebe’s mother however took her to Newcastle, and ‘though contrary to the regulations of the Institution’, the Committee

53 FOS Minutes, 9 May 1821, pp. 70-71.
54 FOS Minutes, 7 August 1821, p. 73.
55 FOS Minutes, 14 October 1818, pp. 13-14.
56 FOS Minutes, 8 May 1820, p. 44.
57 FOS Minutes, 17 October 1821, p. 78.
58 FOS Minutes, 13 February 1822, p. 84.
59 FOS Minutes, 14 August 1822, p. 90.
60 FOS Minutes, 18 October 1820, p. 53.
61 FOS Minutes, 7 August 1821, p. 73.
resolved that it would be expedient for her to remain there.\textsuperscript{62} However, that arrangement did not reach fruition, because Phoebe was returned to the School a few days after the Committee meeting, and at the November meeting it was decided that she be allowed to remain at the School.\textsuperscript{63} Further information about Phoebe Brady was disclosed some nine months later, when Mrs Forbes had her application to have Phoebe apprenticed to her approved by the Committee.\textsuperscript{64} Whether this Mrs Forbes was related to Phoebe’s original master, or whether the same surname is a coincidence is unknown.

One of the four successful applicants for apprentices at the November meeting was Mrs Elinor Bateman. Mrs Bateman (née Turner) had been raised in the Female Orphan School. When she completed her apprenticeship and married she had applied for a marriage dowry of a cow, and her petition was approved.\textsuperscript{65} Mrs Bateman had been sent Mary Murphy as her apprentice, and three months later she made a request to have Mary Harrison apprenticed to her instead of Mary Murphy. The Committee considered that as she had ‘been bred in the Institution she be indulged with this exchange’.\textsuperscript{66} We have no knowledge of the grounds on which this exchange was requested by Mrs Bateman.

This practice of ‘exchange’ appears to be the exception rather than the rule, and the reader may consider that the master or mistress acted hastily instead of persevering with their apprentices, who were after all only children. The Committee may have sanctioned these exchanges either because it did not wish to antagonise the masters or mistresses, or because it considered an exchange was preferable to an unworkable apprenticeship. If the girls were placed in more ‘sympathetic’ households, it may have been to their advantage.

Not all the apprentices remained within the colony. In March 1821 a Mr R. Dry from Launceston (Van Dieman’s Land) requested a female apprentice. We do not know how or if Mr Dry’s background was checked, or whether the chaplain in that colony was involved. One of the girls from the Female Orphan School was present at the March Committee meeting and this appears to be an unusual situation. Ann Croydon was the girl, and we do not know whether she was questioned about her

\begin{footnotes}
\textsuperscript{62} FOS Minutes, 14 August 1822, p. 90.
\textsuperscript{63} FOS Minutes, 13 November 1822, p. 90.
\textsuperscript{64} FOS Minutes, 14 August 1823, p. 106.
\textsuperscript{65} FOS Minutes, 14 April 1819, p. 27.
\textsuperscript{66} FOS Minutes, 12 February 1823, p. 95.
\end{footnotes}
willingness to travel to Van Dieman’s Land. We do know however that approval was
given for Ann’s apprenticeship. 67

Another apprentice Charlotte Cornwall also went to Van Dieman’s Land. In
this instance the Committee was well aware of the character of the applicant because
it was Mrs Collicott, who had been Matron of the Female Orphan School. Mrs
Collicott had resigned with her husband in early 1821, and intended to take up
residence in Port Dalrymple. The Committee approved of Charlotte being
apprenticed to her. 68

Whilst the majority of apprenticeships from the Female Orphan School appear
to have proceeded smoothly, the problem presented by a pregnant apprentice was of
concern to the Committee. In February 1821 the Committee was informed that
Elizabeth Richardson, who had been apprenticed to Mr Hook had absconded from her
master and was pregnant. Elizabeth claimed that John Bateman was the father of her
child. Constable Blackman of the district of Minto had taken Elizabeth into his care
and sought reimbursement for his out of pocket expenses. The Committee found
itself in a dilemma. Although the Committee recognised that payments had to be
made on Elizabeth’s account, it did not wish to make payment out of the Orphan
School Fund. Such a payment may have been construed as condoning Elizabeth’s
behaviour, and it was decided that the Orphan School Fund could not be associated
with the ‘shameful behaviour’ of the girl. A compromise was reached and it was
decided to support Elizabeth from the Police Fund. A bond of twenty pounds per
annum ‘was entered into with two magistrates for the support of the child’. 69

The Secretary communicated with Governor Macquarie concerning the course
of action which the Committee had taken, and His Excellency approved of the
Committee’s resolution. 70 The Committee contacted John Bateman, who attended a
meeting held in early May. The Committee endeavoured to exert pressure on Mr
Bateman to marry Elizabeth. He denied that he was the father of the child and refused
to enter into a marriage with Elizabeth Richardson. 71 It was then discovered that the
bond previously entered into had no legal standing in the colony, and could not be
enforced. The Committee in the light of this information resolved to ‘forego the

67 FOS Minutes, 21 March 1821, p. 61.
68 ibid.
69 FOS Minutes, 14 February 1821, p. 58.
70 FOS Minutes, 21 March 1821, p. 60.
71 FOS Minutes, 9 May 1821, p. 69.
prosecution of John Bateman for seduction, on condition of his paying the sum of fifty pounds to the Institution for expenses'.

John’s father William Bateman, who had been employed by the Female Orphan School as a shearer in 1806, took action and presented a memorial to the Committee. It was then resolved ‘that the sum of twenty five pounds be accepted in consideration thereof’. John Bateman, whose name was later spelt without the (e), left the colony with his brother Henry in December 1821. He moved to Van Dieman’s Land thus removing himself from the situation.

It was also at the November meeting that one of the Committee members John Palmer, spoke about the sisters Catherine and Mary Collins from the Female Orphan School, who had been apprenticed to his family. Correspondence had been received from Messrs Jones, Riley and Walker seeking permission for Catherine and Mary to travel to India to join their mother. She had married and was in comfortable circumstances. Further correspondence between Messrs Palmer and Company of Calcutta and Messrs Jones and Company had taken place. Arrangements had been set in place for the captain of a ship (name not disclosed) ‘to take particular charge of the girls in the event of their being permitted to go’. Mrs Palmer had indicated that she was ‘ready to forego her own convenience for the benefit of the children, and was willing to part with them’. The Committee resolved that it would be in the best interests of the girls to join their mother.

These accounts of Elizabeth Richardson and Catherine and Mary Collins give us an insight into some of the Committee’s deliberations about the well-being of these girls, who had left the care of the Female Orphan School and who had been apprenticed. The Committee sought avenues to provide for Elizabeth and her unborn child, and even attempted to have her married to the putative father. The Committee may have considered that marriage would provide her with respectability, protection and on-going financial support. The background of the Collins sisters was vastly different, but again ‘the best interests of the girls’ was the overriding consideration. The actions taken reflect a caring attitude and give some credence to the Committee’s

72 ibid.
74 FOS Minutes, 14 November 1821, p. 79.
76 FOS Minutes, 14 November 1821, p. 80.
77 ibid.
statement after its dismissal by Governor Brisbane that ‘they never found any
irksoneness in the task of benefitting the rising generation of the colony’.78

The master and mistress in these two accounts had acted in a responsible
manner, but there were occasions when the Committee censured those people
responsible for the care of apprentices. In August 1822 it was reported that one of the
apprentices named Mary Kinsela had died whilst in the service of Mr Wiltshire. The
Committee formed the opinion that Mr Wiltshire had ‘failed to make a proper
communication with the Secretary’. There is no evidence concerning the
circumstances of Mary’s death. However, the Committee apparently had reservations
about the matter and it was considered that Mr Wiltshire was not an appropriate
person to have an apprentice. The Committee stated its ‘opinion that Mr Wiltshire
ought not in future be allowed an apprentice from this Institution’.79

Another master who was criticised unfavourably by the Committee was the
architect Francis Greenway. In May 1822 Mr Garling tabled a letter he had received
from Mr Greenway about his apprentice Mary Greene, whom we have already noted
was assigned to Mr Greenway in ‘exchange’ for Mary Edwards.80 It had been alleged
that Mary had stolen some bank notes belonging to Mr Greenway, and had been
‘turned out of doors’ by him.81 The Committee formed the ‘opinion that Mr
Greenway had betrayed the trust reposed in him with regard to the said Orphan
apprenticeship’.82 The Committee thought that Mr Greenway should have followed
two courses of action; namely to prosecute Mary for theft, or ‘to keep her in his home
under his protection’ whilst the matter was resolved.83 As Mr Greenway had not
proceeded in these appropriate ways, but had ‘abandoned’ Mary, it was ‘resolved that
Mr Greenway had forfeited any future claim to an apprentice from this Institution’.84

The position taken by the Committee in these problem situations reflects an
attitude of care, and this is further evidenced in the case of Caroline Rutter. Lady
Brisbane and Mrs John Palmer of the Local Committee had given permission for
Caroline to be apprenticed to a Mr Simpson who was the Commandant of Wellington
Valley, subject to approval being given by the Committee. However, Mr Simpson

78 FOS Minutes, 12 November 1823, p. 112.
79 FOS Minutes, 14 August 1822, p. 88.
80 FOS Minutes, 19 April 1820, p. 43.
81 FOS Minutes, 14 August 1822, p. 87.
82 ibid., p. 88.
83 ibid.
84 ibid.
had already taken Caroline to Bathurst, and the Committee did not want ‘her being exposed to recross the mountains’. It was resolved that Mr Simpson should ‘transfer her to a Mr Hawkins of Bathurst instead of Mary Jones who was assigned to that gentleman at the last quarterly meeting’.\footnote{FOS Minutes, 12 February 1823, pp. 95-96.} At the April meeting a letter from Mr Hawkins was tabled in which he expressed ‘his readiness to take Caroline Rutter instead of Mary Jones as soon as Mr Simpson returned to Bathurst to give her up’. The Committee resolved that a new indenture form be prepared so that Caroline could be claimed from Mr Simpson by Mr Hawkins ‘before Mr Lawson the Magistrate’.\footnote{FOS Minutes, Special Meeting 15 April 1823, pp. 99-100.} In this way the apprenticeship could have been formally executed.

The Committee was disturbed by Mr Simpson’s initial action in taking Caroline to Bathurst. It formed the opinion that he had acted ‘in violation of his word of honour to the Committee’. Furthermore Mr Simpson had apparently ignored the Committee’s resolution about Caroline’s transfer to Mr Hawkins and had kept her in Wellington Valley. Instead of taking legal proceedings against Mr Simpson the Committee resolved ‘to request that His Excellency the Patron will be pleased to exercise his authority to enforce the Resolution of the Committee’. Copies of the early resolution as well as the later one, and all correspondence in the matter were forwarded to Sir Thomas Brisbane for his attention.\footnote{FOS Minutes, 14 May 1823, p. 102.} The final outcome of this matter has not been recorded.

At the last meeting of the Female Orphan School Committee it was resolved that Mary Ward, Mary Innes, Sarah Gammon and Rhonda Wall be apprenticed to the institution. Applications were also received from eight applicants for apprentices, but no resolutions were recorded.\footnote{FOS Minutes, 12 November 1823, p. 110.}

When the Committee of the Male Orphan School met in April 1822 it was the Secretary’s opinion that ‘some of the boys are sufficiently advanced to be apprenticed if proper masters can be found for them’.\footnote{MOS Minutes, Adjourned Meeting, 17 April 1822, p. 40.} There was a potential master in Mr Uther a hat maker, who had indicated that he would be willing to have an apprentice, but was reluctant to do so, because a clause which was to be inserted in the Indenture, a
clause stated that if an apprentice’s marriage was approved, the apprenticeship would be cancelled. This clause was of concern to Mr Uther, and it was resolved that the terms of apprenticeship in the colony should be similar to those which operated in England. The Secretary was directed to submit this consideration to the Patron for his deliberation. Later in the month, one of the boys named Robert Briety was apprenticed to McLaren and Company in Sydney. Mr Uther must have reconsidered his position because William Anderson was apprenticed to him, and left the School on 15 May 1822. At the November meeting Mr E. G. Hazard, block and pump maker, made application for an apprentice, and John Jones became his apprentice leaving the School on 4 December. By the end of the year three boys had begun their external apprenticeships.

At the April 1823 meeting six applications were received and approved. We have noted and sighted a copy of Christopher Ralph’s Indenture Form in chapter 5, and he was one of the boys apprenticed at that meeting. Two boys were apprenticed to Mr Archibald Bell of Richmond. One of those boys, James Flood, had received a silver medal as the best shoemaker, at the second anniversary ceremony of the Male Orphan School, and reference has been made to James in chapter 4. The other boy, William Ward, had been apprenticed to Mr Underwood. This assignment was withdrawn because the master refused to instruct him in the trade of a mariner. William was then apprenticed to Mr Bell as a gardener. His Indenture Form has been preserved and further applications for apprentices were received and approved by the Committee during 1823.

Whilst it is true that the majority of children left the Orphan Schools to the care of masters or mistresses through the apprenticeship scheme, some children were able to rejoin their families upon successful application by parents or relatives. As with the applications for apprenticeship, not all these were treated favourably and some applications for the return of children were denied. An interesting aspect of some of

90 ibid., pp. 40-41.
91 MOS Admission Book, 22 April 1822, pp. 3-4.
92 ibid.
93 MOS Minutes, Special Meeting, 22 November 1822, p. 50; MOS Admission Book, pp. 3-4.
94 MOS Minutes, 8 January 1823, p. 52; Adjourned Meeting, 16 April 1823, p. 55.
these applications is that parents and relatives became involved in the process of the apprenticeship of family members.

In January 1821 James Jenkins made application to have his niece Elizabeth Jenkins apprenticed to him. A month later this application was approved by the Committee. Esther Biggs, the mother of George Stubbs, had married, and made application for George to be apprenticed to her husband ‘to be brought up to husbandry’. This was acceptable to the Committee, and George was apprenticed to Mr Biggs in November 1822. Mrs Jane Chandler who was the mother of William Gammage, applied for her son to be apprenticed to her husband. She referred to William’s ‘extreme deafness and other imperfections’, and stated that ‘she was anxious to have him under her own care’. The Male Orphan School Admission Book has the notation that William was apprenticed to ‘his father-in-law’. We would regard Mr Chandler as his step-father.

In February 1823 Mr Emmanuel Marvin petitioned the Committee to take his step-daughters Elizabeth and Eliza Owen out of the Female Orphan School. It was ‘resolved that under the peculiar circumstances stated by the Matron, one of them (Eliza) be apprenticed to him’. In August an application was received from Mrs Eliza M. Davidson for the return of her daughter Ann Saint John. Ann’s discharge was approved and she was apprenticed to Mr Davidson.

When Jane Woodhouse made application for her daughter, whose surname was Miller to be returned to her, the Committee ‘resolved that she be apprenticed to her step-father’. Mrs Woodhouse’s reason for wanting her daughter, was that she had another child who was subject to fits, and needed her daughter’s assistance. The probable reason for the Committee’s decisions to apprentice these children to the male relatives, is that these men would have been the breadwinners. They would have been in a position to provide financial support for the boys and girls.

There was an application which appeared to be treated in an opposite way. Mr John Bealer of Parramatta submitted an application ‘to withdraw his daughter-in-law [step-daughter] Catherine Johnson from the Institution’. The Committee considered
this application and reached the decision that it was ‘not proper to give the permission’.102 At its meeting in April of the following year it was ‘ordered that Catherine Johnson be discharged to her mother Rose Johnson now Bealer’.103

One mother who was successful in withdrawing her child in her own right was Mary Rigby. The child’s name has not been recorded and the mother made her application on the grounds that she had the means to support her child. She also expressed the wish that she wanted to have the child ‘under her own care’. The Committee deferred a decision with this application ‘for further inquiry and consideration’.104 At the Committee meeting in April it was decided that Mary Rigby could ‘regain her child’.105

When the control of the Orphan Schools passed to the Clergy and School Lands Corporation the practice of indenturing apprentices continued, and new Indenture Forms were printed. There were some significant changes such as the nature of the apprenticeship training to be provided by the master or mistress, for example a servant. There was far less detail about the negative behaviour of apprentices such as ‘wasting the master’s goods; not haunting Inns, Taverns or Alehouses; or playing at Cards, Dice, Table or any other unlawful games’. No reference was made to attending worship on Sundays. The Corporation’s Indentures made reference to the Colonial Act, No 4, George IV.106

Changes were made to the rules of apprenticeship. The age of boys to be apprenticed was lowered to 10 years, and the apprenticeship was not to extend beyond their nineteenth year. Girls could be apprenticed when they attained the age of nine years. They were not to remain as apprentices after reaching eighteen years, or entering a marriage with the consent of the Corporation.107

A further change associated with the apprenticeship scheme was a provision for the resolution of disputes between masters or mistresses and apprentices. When the Rev. W. Cowper gave evidence to Commissioner Bigge, he was questioned about

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102 FOS Minutes, 30 November 1818, p. 21.
103 FOS Minutes, 14 April 1819, p. 26.
104 FOS Minutes, 30 November 1818, p. 21.
105 FOS Minutes, 14 April 1819, p. 26.
107 Male Orphan School Indenture Form. SRNSW 4/390.
problems which occurred with apprenticeships. He stated that ‘several have not fulfilled their Indenture’. When questioned about the steps taken to compel the satisfactory completion of indentures, he replied ‘no action is taken at law’. It was the Committee’s decision to attempt to get the parties to the dispute ‘to resume their agreement and some transfers have been made by mutual consent’. He further commented that complaints about the conduct of female apprentices were not numerous.\textsuperscript{108} From these answers we can assume that the majority of apprenticeships were satisfactorily performed. Where a dispute arose mediation between parties was established in an attempt to reach a satisfactory outcome.

Under the Act which vested the Orphan School Estates in the Trustees of the Clergy and School Lands, special procedures were established for the hearing of complaints between masters or mistresses and apprentices. When a dispute arose the matter was to be heard ‘in a summary way by one or more Justices or Justices of the Peace’. Having heard the matter, the Justices were empowered ‘to punish the Apprentice by solitary confinement … for Time not exceeding one month, or by extending the time of service for a period not exceeding one year’. Punishments could also be meted out to ‘offending’ masters or mistresses and these were to take the form of withdrawing the apprentice from the service, ‘or by a fine to the King not exceeding the sum of ten pounds for each offence’. If the fine was not paid within twenty four hours after a sentence, then the goods of the master or mistress could be sold.\textsuperscript{109}

A more legalistic approach appears to have been introduced into the method of dealing with apprenticeship disputes, when the Clergy and School Lands Corporation became responsible of the control of the schools in 1825. The previous approach of mediation in which reconciliation between the parties was sought was replaced by a judicial approach as far as the apprentices, who were of tender years, and their masters or mistresses were concerned.

Although internal apprenticeships were a feature of the Orphan Schools, Archdeacon Scott (who as King’s Visitor had oversight of the Clergy and School Lands Corporation, and his role and involvement with the Orphan Schools will be described

\textsuperscript{108} Rev. Cowper’s evidence to Bigge, 23 January 1821, in BT, Box 8, pp. 3355-3356.  
\textsuperscript{109} Sydney Gazette, August 12, 1826, p. 1. (ML)
in the next chapter), had grave reservations about them particularly in the Male Orphan School. In a letter addressed to the Rev. Robert Cartwright, and probably written in July 1825 he indicated that from his (Scott’s) observations he had formed the ‘opinion that it would be in the interests of the Institution … if respectable tradesmen would take them (the boys indentured to the School) off the hands of the Institution for the remainder of their service’.  

Despite Archdeacon Scott’s misgivings, the system of internal apprenticeship was certainly continued in the Female Orphan School. In January 1827 Mrs Hannibal Macarthur applied for a girl apprentice. Her application was approved, but the Rev. J. E. Keane as Superintendent of the Institution made the following annotation:

Mrs McArthur be permitted to have a girl, but would earnestly recommend that a fixed order be made by the Committee that no girls be assigned after the application then be complied with, until all the departments of the house be supplied. … A list of twelve girls of eight years upwards to be selected and named to the Council from the orphan list, and to be entered as Servants of the Institution not to be apprenticed until they are sixteen years old.  

This lengthy comment by the Master indicates that the needs of the School were to be satisfied by the retention of girls as assigned servants.  

Although this suggestion was made by the Rev. Keane in January 1827, the Corporation pursued an active policy of apprenticing boys and girls through advertisements. The availability of children to be apprenticed varied over the period 1825 to 1833. In August 1826 the Clerk of the Corporation Mr Charles Cowper placed an advertisement in the *Sydney Gazette* advising potential masters or mistresses to make application for apprentices from the Male and Female Orphan Institutions. 

There was a positive response to this advertisement, because by late August, applicants for girl apprentices were advised that all available girls ‘had been disposed  

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It may have been in response to the August advertisement that Robert Bogg a shoemaker of Pitt Street Sydney, applied to have George Gregory apprenticed to him for five or seven years. This petition which was submitted in September 1826 has survived as well as the Indenture Form for George. (See following pages for copies of these documents).

There were still boys available for apprenticeships, because in October 1826 applications were invited from ‘Masters and Owners of Ships, Tradesmen and Others, who may be desirous of having apprentices from the Male Orphan Institution’. The reason for the advertisement being ‘that there are boys ready for assignment’. The firm of Berry and Wollstonecraft responded and requested ten apprentices above the age of thirteen years. The firm sought boys for a range of trades including one each for ‘millwright, carpenter, blacksmith, miller, two tailors and four ploughmen’.

Despite the fact that advertisements were placed inviting applications for apprentices, not all applications were approved. Where an applicant held a Ticket of Leave, the petition for an apprentice was denied. When Mary Solomon, who carried on a business as a dealer with her husband Fabian, wanted a girl apprentice, the Rev. William Cowper made these observations:

[They] appear to be respectable persons in dealing, but they have no seatings in any place of worship. I do not know how far they may be able to ensure the Girl’s attendance at Public Worship on Sundays, which I believe the Indenture requires.

Whilst it may have been in the By-Laws or Orders of the Trustees for an apprentice to attend public worship on Sundays, the indenture forms used in 1826 and later did not make mention of this requirement. Archdeacon Scott objected to a girl being apprenticed to Mrs Solomon, presumably on the grounds of the perception that she did not adhere to religious observances. Mrs Solomon was advised that there was no apprentice available.

If the applicant was the licensee of a public house then the petition was refused. When Mr T. White, who kept a public house, applied for a female apprentice

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113 Advice to petitioners Elizabeth Halloran and Hannah Laycock, August 1826, in Applications For Children 1825-1829, pp. 93, 99.
114 SG, October 21, 1826, p. 1.
115 Applications, 30 October 1826, in Applications For Children, p. 137.
116 ibid., p. 149.
117 ibid., 29 November 1826, pp. 151-152.
Copy of petition from Mr. Robert Bogg requesting to have
George Gregory apprenticed to him as a shoemaker (original in SRNSW 4/333)
This Indenture,

made the Twenty-ninth Day of December in the Year of Our Lord one thousand eight hundred and twenty-two between the Trustees of the Clergy and School Lands in New South Wales, and Robert Bogg, Shoemaker of Sydney

WITNESSETH, that the said Trustees have placed George Gregory, aged fourteen Years, or thereabouts, received into the Male Orphan School on the fifteenth Day of September last, with him to dwell and serve for a Term of seven Years, and that during the said Term the said Apprentice Robert Bogg faithfully shall serve, in all lawful Business, according to his Power, and Ability; and honestly, orderly, and obediently, in all Things, behave himself towards his said Master and towards all other Persons having lawful Charge of said Apprentice, during the said Term.

And the said Robert Bogg, for himself and doth covenant with the said Trustees, and their Successors for the Time-being, by these Presents, that he the said George Gregory, the said Apprentice, shall and will teach, and cause to be taught, in the best Way and Manner, and shall allow competent and sufficient Meat, Drink, Apparel, Lodging, Washing, and all other Things necessary and fit for an Apprentice, that he be not any Way a Charge to the said Trustees, during the said Term, and that all Persons who shall have lawful Charge of the said Apprentice, shall observe and conform to all such Rules, Orders, Bye Laws, and Regulations as the said Trustees shall make from Time to Time, pursuant to the Colonial Act, 4 Geo. IV.

In Witness whereof, these Presents have been duly executed by the said Parties, the Day and Year first above-written.

Signed, sealed, and delivered, by the said Trustees

[Signature]

in the Presence of

[Signature]

Robert Bogg

[Signature]

[Signature]

[Signature]

Copy of Indenture form apprenticing George Gregory to Mr. Robert Bogg as a shoemaker in 1826 (original in the Mitchell Library uncat. Mss, Set 508, Item 1)
in 1830 his petition was opposed by the Committee.\footnote{Applications, 3 February 1830, in Applications For Children Out of the Orphan Schools 1830-1832, p. 45. SRNSW 4/334.} In March 1831 George Cutler who was a publican applied for two boys ‘one to be employed as a miller and the other as a blacksmith’. Archdeacon Scott objected to the petition on the grounds of Mr Cutler’s occupation, but a majority of the Committee upheld the petition ‘because Cutler is an excellent mechanic’. However, the Clerk Charles Cowper stated that this decision: ‘was not to be established as a precedent’.\footnote{ibid., March 1831, pp. 251-252.} The position taken by the Committee was not consistent. Whilst Mr Cutler’s situation may have been unique, perhaps the Committee reasoned that association with a publican was less suitable for a female apprentice than for male apprentices.

Some parents also took an active role in the apprenticeship scheme on behalf of their sons. In August 1826 Margaret Fry (née Cogan) the mother of John Fry, who had been admitted to the Male Orphan School at its opening, requested that John not be apprenticed to sea service ‘in consequence of his ill-health’. Mrs Fry wanted John placed in some trade and he was apprenticed to Mr E. G. Hazard the block and pump maker.\footnote{Applications, August 1826, in Applications For Children 1825-1829, pp. 73-75.} Mrs Fry was not alone in her active involvement. In December Mr Horton James a tobacco manufacturer of 96 George Street Sydney, petitioned for John Price to be apprenticed to him.\footnote{ibid., 22 December 1826, p. 165.} In January 1827 John’s mother Elizabeth Price also petitioned that her son be apprenticed to Mr James, and John went into his service on 18 January.\footnote{ibid., 13 January 1827, pp. 187-188.} In July 1831 Ann Patchett petitioned that her son John had ‘come free to the colony and deserved to learn a trade’. (In the Admission Book John’s surname was spelt Paget on his admission to the School in August 1829). Mrs Patchett requested that John be apprenticed to Mr Fitzgerald a shoe maker at 26 Phillip Street Sydney.\footnote{Applications, 27 July 1831, in Applications for Children 1830-1832, p. 307; Admission Book Male Orphan School, pp. 19-20.} The parents of Cornelius Kain, Martha Kain (née Smith) and Hugh Kain, approached Mr James Wemyss a boot and shoe maker of George Street Sydney, to apprentice their son. Mr Wemyss was willing to maintain Cornelius who was then aged eight and three quarter years, and later teach him the trade. When it was...
ascertained that Mr Wemyss was a publican his petition was denied.\textsuperscript{124} The parents persisted in their attempts to have Cornelius apprenticed. In July Mr William Anderson, a baker of Essex Street, petitioned to have the boy in his care, ‘to maintain and educate him and later apprentice him in the trade of Baker’. It was ordered that Cornelius be apprenticed to Mr Anderson. In the Admission book of the Male Orphan School it is recorded that Cornelius was discharged to his mother on 8 July 1833.\textsuperscript{125} It is not known whether Cornelius later began an apprenticeship with Mr Anderson.

These petitions made on behalf of their children display not only a caring attitude by the parents, but indicate an understanding of the parents’ actions by the Committee. The petitions were not dismissed but appear to have received as much consideration as all the other requests about apprenticeships.

From some of the applications for the period of the Corporation’s management of the Orphan Schools, we are provided with details about the reasons why some apprentices were chosen. Potential masters or mistresses were able to visit the Female Orphan School to make a selection from the girls available to be indentured. Petitioner Sampson Sealy refers to Esther Cruse being introduced to his wife by the Matron Mrs Ellis. Mrs Sealy wanted Esther ‘to wait upon her child’.\textsuperscript{126} In June 1831 Mr Lethbridge applied to have Betsy Maguire indentured to him because his wife ‘had seen her and thinks she is likely to suit’.\textsuperscript{127}

Mrs Hayes applied to have Ann Meehan indentured to her in January 1832. She gave her reason in these words: ‘Having lately observed the conduct and behaviour of some young girls who were taken from your Institution and finding that they conducted themselves with great propriety and attention’. Mrs Hayes seemingly based her choice of a girl apprentice on her observations of some of the girls who were in service.\textsuperscript{128}

In some instances the applicants were seeking an apprentice because the indenture of their current servant was about to expire. Mr George Simpson sought a replacement for Caroline Rutter. This is an interesting application, because we have already noted earlier in this chapter Mr Simpson’s actions and failure to transfer

\textsuperscript{124} Applications, 3 June 1833, in Applications for Children 1833, pp. 35-37. SRNSW 4/335.
\textsuperscript{125} ibid., 1 July 1833, pp. 59-61; MOS Admission Book, pp. 23-24.
\textsuperscript{126} Applications, January 1831, in Applications for Children 1830-1832, p. 197.
\textsuperscript{127} ibid., 10 June 1831, p. 291.
\textsuperscript{128} ibid., 17 January 1832, p. 413.
Caroline to Mr Hawkins. We can only presume that His Excellency the Patron did not proceed with the former Committee’s request that he enforce its resolution. Caroline obviously had remained with Mr Simpson who praised her ‘good conduct’. Mr Simpson’s application for another apprentice was approved, and it was suggested that either Mary Brown or Martha Brily may be apprenticed.  

Mr Phillips of Hunter River was the master of Elizabeth O’Donnell, who had been apprenticed to him for nearly five years. As Elizabeth’s indenture was soon to be concluded he sought another apprentice. Mr Phillips wrote: ‘Elizabeth’s conduct has been most exemplary during the whole period of her servitude’. In October 1827 Sarah Harvey requested to have Ann Larkin apprenticed to her. Mrs Harvey’s former apprentice Jane Palmer had been with the petitioner for ‘upwards of three years and she conducted herself well during the whole time.’ When Robert Bateman made application for another girl apprentice as a servant, he referred to the fact that ‘Mary Ann Harrison had served her time’. He added that his wife had been an Orphan School girl, and would take care of the apprentice.

In June 1829 Mr Alexander Berry wrote in a very positive vein when he applied for six boy apprentices for the firm’s establishment at Shoal Haven. He commented that nine apprentices were at the Shoal Haven establishment and ‘are becoming so useful (being already more serviceable than the generality of Convict Servants) - gladly take six more’.

Mr Simeon Lord however did not find that all his apprentices had been satisfactory. In August 1826 when he applied for ‘six or eight boys aged eleven to fifteen years to be taught wooling business, some hat manufacture and at his Tanning and Currying business’, his application was deferred and further enquiries were to be made about the whereabouts ‘of his last apprentices’. In responding to Mr Charles Cowper’s letter Mr Lord complained that as far as four of the apprentices were concerned: ‘after being fed and clothed for three years they have run away, or been taken by their Father or Mother, and another went to England and was said to receive some property left to him’. Mr Lord stated that he considered ‘that the Corporation should have to compel them to serve the whole of their time if the condition on my

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130 ibid., 1 March 1827, p. 229.
131 ibid., 2 October 1827, p. 317.
132 ibid., 2 February 1829, p. 429.
133 ibid., 11 June 1829, p. 483.
134 ibid., 28 August 1826, pp. 85-86.
part was performed’. The skills of the apprentices were developed over the years, and it was in the latter part of their apprenticeship that their output began to offset the outlay on them.  

Apparently Mr Lord’s previous approaches to the Police Office and to Major Goulburn about the boys’ conduct had been ineffective. Despite the problems which Mr Lord encountered he still had made application for more apprentices, and this may indicate that overall there was benefit to be gained by him by the use of boys from the Male Orphan School as apprentices.

We have noted that some potential masters or mistresses visited the Female Orphan School prior to making their application for an apprentice. In August 1826 the Rev. Robert Cartwright in his capacity as Master of the Male Orphan School, suggested to Archdeacon Scott that prospective masters should meet the boys at the School. This activity would enable them to determine if the boy may be suitable for the proposed apprenticeship. Mr Robert Bogg may have visited the School because in September he applied to have George Gregory apprenticed to him, and we have already sighted this application and George’s Indenture Form. Major Druitt took advantage of the opportunity and visited the Male Orphan School in early September. The Major had applied for three boys by name and two of them Henry Brown and Jeremiah Mahony were assigned to him on 29 September. This selection appears to have been the outcome of his visit.

The examination of the applications for apprentices has so far provided us with the names of some of the prospective masters or mistresses, as well as with the names of some of the apprentices. Applicants provided the names of seventy five children whom they wished to apprentice. Of these seventy five children forty seven were girls. We have seen why some apprentices were chosen, and have noted the trades some of the boys entered. It is proposed to look at the range of training which these apprentices were to receive. For the period under review 1825-1833 two hundred and nineteen applications have been examined. Two hundred and thirty eight apprentices were sought of whom one hundred and twenty five were girls. Not all of these applications were successful.

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135 ibid., 4 September 1826, p. 87.
137 Cartwright to Cowper 13 September 1826, in ibid.; Applications, September 1826, in Applications For Children 1825-1829, pp. 113-114; MOS Admission Book pp. 1-2, 5-6.
In October 1827 Mr Reuben Chapman of Pitt Street requested a girl, who as an apprentice would have the advantage of learning dressmaking. Mr Chapman’s petition was granted. This is an interesting application, because needlework had been taught in the Female Orphan School since its opening in 1801. The girls became competent in this activity, because not only did they make the clothes they wore, but they also completed sewing orders for members of the public. When the Male Orphan School was established the girls made the boys’ shirts. Whilst the former Committee managed the School there was no reference in the minutes to an application for a girl to be apprenticed as a seamstress or dressmaker. One would have thought that with the growth of the colony both numerically and economically, there would have been a demand for local dressmakers. This appears to be a lost opportunity for the girls. It possibly does not only reflect a mind-set of the Committee that the girls were to find their places in society as servants; it may be solely a question of the demand for female servants in a society in which housework was labour intensive, being greater than the demand for dressmakers.

Mr John James presented a petition for a female apprentice stating that his wife Jane intended to ‘instruct the girl in dressmaking’ in February 1830. In the same month Mrs Elizabeth Raine applied for M. Brooks so that she could learn the ‘business of dressmaking and sempstress in general’.

Mrs Sarah Hitchcock sought an apprentice in 1831, and advised that she would be ‘instructed in the business of millinery’. This apprenticeship should have been suitable for one of the girls, because they had been taught to make cotton headwear, and later developed the skills to make straw hats.

Petitioner Brindley Bettington applied for an apprentice girl aged about thirteen years, ‘who is a good seamstress’. In 1833 a Mrs Robinson requested a girl ‘aged less than fourteen years, capable of needlework’. The petitioner stated that two female servants would be in the household, implying that the apprentice would concentrate on needlework. In 1830 Mrs Charity Nott to whom reference has been made in chapter 5 widened the employment opportunity for a girl, by applying for an

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138 Applications, 10 October 1827, in Applications For Children 1825-1829, p. 319.
139 Applications, February 1830, in Applications For Children 1830-32, p. 21.
140 ibid., p. 35.
141 ibid., 5 January 1831, p. 175.
142 ibid., 28 March 1831, p. 257.
143 Application, 1 July 1833, in Applications For Children 1833, p. 55.
apprentice to be a ‘Nursery governess’. Mrs Nott had opened an educational establishment at 33 Castlereagh Street, and sought an apprentice from her former school.

In February 1831 Mr Frederick Garling (Jnr), who was the son of Frederick Garling the former Crown Solicitor and member of the dismissed Committee, applied for a female apprentice. He wanted a girl ‘about ten or eleven years of age, who will be able to do plain needlework’. Frances Crowther, aged twelve years, was apprenticed to Mr Garling (Jnr) as a servant. His reference to needlework in the application does not refer to an apprenticeship in that trade. Both the application and the Indenture Form for Frances have been preserved. (See copies on following pages).

At the beginning of 1828 Charles Thompson petitioned for an apprentice. He wanted the ‘girl to be employed in Nursing and Needlework’. A similar petition was received from Thomas Meehan of Macquarie Fields later in the year. He sought a girl between the ages of eleven and twelve years to ‘nurse an infant and perform a little plain needlework’. Naomi Dobson who had two small children stated that she wanted an apprentice who could ‘do needlework and attend to the children’. Although skills in needlework are mentioned in these petitions for apprentices, we can assume that the main services of the girls were to be associated with child minding. The girls may have been required to make children’s clothing or to repair household linen. These girls were not apprenticed as seamstresses.

The handful of applications for girls to be apprenticed in fields other than that of domestic servants stands in stark contrast to the opportunities which were offered to the boys. Over the same period boys were sought to be apprenticed in twenty six different occupations. The training of male apprentices was offered in the following fields: shoemaking, wheelwrights, millwright, carpentry, blacksmith, milling, tailoring, ploughmen, cabinet making and upholstery, printing, plumbing and glazing, tobacconist, seamen, gardening, farming, teaching, tobacco cultivation, woollen

144 Applications, 30 June 1830, in Applications For Children 1830-1832, p. 108.
145 ibid., 12 February 1831, p. 211.
147 ibid., 24 July 1828, p. 389.
148 ibid., 19 March 1829, p. 443.
Copy of petition from Mr. Frederick Garling Junior requesting a female apprentice aged ten or twelve years (original in SRNSW 4/333)
This Indenture,

made the Twenty-sixth Day of February in the Year of Our Lord One thousand eight hundred and eighty-one between the Trustees of the Clergy and School Lands in New South Wales, and

Mr. Frederick Garling, jun. of Sydney,

WITNESSETH, that the said Trustees have placed Frances Crowther aged Twelve Years, or thereabouts, received into the Female Orphan School on the 21st Day of Sept. 1827 with

— to dwell and serve 8 years from the Date of these Presents, until the 26th of February 1837, and until his lawful marriage with

During all which Term the said Apprentice Frances Crowther faithfully shall serve, in all lawful Business, according to his Power, and Ability; and honestly, orderly, and obediently, in all Things, behave loving herself towards his said Master and towards all other Persons having lawful Charge of said Apprentice, during the said Term.

And the said Frederick Garling for himself and all other Persons having lawful Charge of said Apprentice, during the said Term, shall and will teach, and cause to be taught in the best Way and Manner, and shall allow competent and sufficient Meat, Drink, Apparel, Lodging, Washing, and all other Things necessary and fit for an Apprentice, that he be not any Way a Charge to the said Trustees, during the said Term, and that the said Frederick Garling and all Persons who shall have lawful Charge of the said Apprentice shall observe and conform to all such Rules, Orders, By-Laws, and Regulations as the said Trustees shall make from Time to Time, pursuant to the Colonial Act, 4 Geo. IV.

In Witness whereof, these Presents have been duly executed by the said

Parties, the Day and Year first above-written,

Signed, sealed, and delivered,

by the said Frederick Garling-Junior in the Presence of

[Signatures]

Copy of Indenture form apprenticing Frances Crowther to Mr. Frederick Garling Junior as a servant in 1827 (original in the Mitchell Library uncatalogued, Ms. Set 508, Item 1)
manufacture, hat manufacture, tanning and currying, boat-building, turning, bricklayer, pottery and pipe manufacture, tinman and brazier, baking - and servants. Out of the applications which were examined only five requests were made for boys to train as servants.\(^{149}\)

The breadth of apprenticeships available for boys reflects the growing and diversifying nature of the colony’s economy. However, the few opportunities available for girls to be indentured in fields other than that of servants, is very similar to the employment situation which faced convict women in the penal settlement some forty years earlier, and which has been noted in chapter 1.

During the period 1825-1833 a number of parents applied to have their sons and daughters returned to them. Many of these men and women had completed their period of servitude. They wanted their children re-united with them, so that the family unit could be re-established. These applications had to be recommended by a Minister or magistrate. As with applications for apprentices not all parental applications were successful. An examination of some of these applications will enable us to appreciate the circumstances in which parents were placed, and the changes which had occurred in their lives.

In June 1825 Mrs Ann Green applied to have her three sons James, George and John Taylor returned to her. When she was widowed in 1820 James and George were placed in the Male Orphan School. Mrs Green may have thought that she could support John, but he too was later admitted to the School. In her application she stated that she was ‘now a married woman, launched into trade and wanted her three boys back’. No decision was made and eleven months later Mrs Green re-applied for her sons and indicated that she wanted ‘to apprentice them to Mr Cooper an Architect and Builder to learn the trade of carpenter and joiner’. Mrs Green also wrote to Governor Darling in June 1826 and persisted in her attempts to gain her sons. James and George were returned to their mother in October 1826, but John who was twelve and a half years old was retained in the School. A year later he was apprenticed to the Corporation’s Office.\(^{150}\)

\(^{149}\) Applications For Children out of the Orphan Schools 1825-1829; 1830-1832; and 1833.

\(^{150}\) Applications, 30 June 1825; 29 May 1826; 20 June 1826, in Applications For Children 1825-29, pp. 7, 41-42, 55-56; Male Orphan School Admission Book pp. 3-4, 5-6.
When Mrs Kenniwell applied to have her son Edward Sleigh returned to her in May 1826, she indicated that she had re-married. Mrs Kenniwell and her husband had set up in ‘business as shop-keepers and dealers’. The husband had to visit country areas for two or three days at a time; and Mrs Kenniwell wanted Edward to assist in the family business. This petition was approved and Edward was returned to his mother in September.\(^{151}\)

Mrs Woodhouse in her application for her daughter Caroline Miller was able to report that she was then in a position to support her daughter. Her application was recommended by her referee who stated that ‘she is a woman of good character’. Caroline was able to join her mother in October 1826.\(^{152}\)

Mrs Cassidy applied to have her son Edward returned to her in November 1826. She indicated that she wanted the boy at home with her because she was not well. As Edward was only eleven years old Mrs Cassidy intended to have him enrolled in a school, and later to have him apprenticed. In the recommendation which accompanied the application it was stated that Mrs Cassidy ‘was a person of moral character but was not affluent’. Edward joined his mother in December.\(^{153}\) In this application we have a child required because of parental need. He would be the ‘carer’ of his mother who was ‘not well’.

The application which Mrs Sarah Jones submitted for the return of her daughters Sophie, Harriet and Susanne Hall has been preserved and is self explanatory. (See copy on the following page). Following a re-marriage Mrs Jones wanted her family re-united. Sophie and Harriet were granted permission to return to their mother. Susanne who was then ten years old remained in the School. By May 1829 when an application was made for a female apprentice by Mr John Staff, Mrs Ellis the Matron recommended that Susan Hall be apprenticed to him. It was noted that although Mrs Jones had made an application for Susanne’s return, the mother was unable to be traced at that point of time.\(^{154}\) In this family situation only a partial reunion of parent and daughters was possible.

When David and Ann Patterson applied for their daughter Isabella to be returned to them their application was refused. Mrs Patterson held a Ticket of Leave and her husband was an assigned servant. The parents were in a position to ‘acquire

\(^{151}\) Applications, 8 May 1826, in Applications For Children 1825-1829, pp. 33-34.

\(^{152}\) ibid., 17 October 1826, pp. 129-130.

\(^{153}\) ibid., November 1826, pp. 147-148.

\(^{154}\) ibid., December 1826, p. 167; 18 May, 1829, p. 475.
Petition from Mrs. Sarah Hall requesting the return of her three daughters Sophia, Harriett and Susanna from the Female Orphan School (original in SRNSW 4/333)
an honest living for themselves and support for their daughter’. However, because they were convicts their petition was denied.  

Mary Clitherow, who was free, requested that her daughter Mary Walsh be returned to her. Mr Clitherow was employed as a plasterer and he was described by the Rev. Cowper ‘as a prisoner but industrious’. Mary’s mother stated that her daughter’s health was not good, and despite her step-father being a convict, Mary was ordered to be returned to her mother.  

When Ann Kelly applied for her daughter Mary Ann Joyce, her memorial was couched in emotive terms. The following description is given of Mary Ann’s admission to the Female Orphan School:

[She] was wrested from the Memorialist without her consent and placed there in 1824 when the Memorialist was in servitude, and was unable to resist the manner in which her religious tenets would strongly compel her to do so, she being a member of the Catholic Church. Since she has become free and has the means of Educating her own child according to the religious beliefs she prefers. She humbly and respectfully solicits you to be pleased to order the child to be returned to her.  

This is an interesting memorial because it raises two issues namely, the removal of children over three years of age from women convicts who were in the Female Factory, and sectarian matters.

Earlier in this chapter the removal of children from the Female Factory to the Orphan School was raised. The reasons behind this Rule were not stated, but one may presume that the Corporation authorities did not consider the Female Factory was a suitable place for children. Their mothers were not only prisoners of the Crown, but they were members of an industrial complex with set tasks to perform each day. No facilities for formal education were provided for children within the Factory. An overriding consideration may have been the way in which the authorities thought about the mothers of these children. The early chaplains and Governors had formed the perception that the convict women were ‘immoral’ and ‘vicious’ and were

155 ibid., 6 May 1827, p. 267.
156 ibid., 28 May 1827, pp. 285-287.
158 ibid., 22 December 1827.
therefore a bad example to, or a bad influence on their children. The statement that some of the women from the Factory were engaged in prostitution in Parramatta has already been noted. The decision may have been related to the desire to remove the children from possible moral contamination.

Mrs Kelly was one of the mothers whose daughter Mary Ann was removed from her. The use of the terms ‘wrested’ and ‘without her consent’ provide us with a graphic picture of a mother who felt the ‘loss’ of her child deeply. Furthermore, the fact that her daughter was placed in an institution whose religious teaching was exclusively Anglican in nature, was a second affront to this woman, who was a member of the Catholic Church. John Joseph Therry the Catholic Chaplain supported Mrs Kelly’s application, and mother and daughter were reunited in 1827.\footnote{ibid., 28 August 1827, p. 303.}

Mary Condon was also supported by John J. Therry when she applied for the return of her son John Jackson. Mrs Condon’s marriage ceremony had been performed by the Catholic Chaplain. He stated that her husband was ‘a free tradesman and an industrious personage’. Mrs Condon said she was in a financial position which enabled her to ‘cloathe and educate my child in the future’.\footnote{ibid., 7 November 1827, pp. 331-332.} The petition was denied on the grounds that Mrs Condon was a convict.

When John Weston applied for his daughter Harriet who was then aged nine years, he said that he was able to maintain her. The Rev. R. Hill recommended that Harriet be assigned to her father as an apprentice, and some six days after the petition was made Harriet went to her father.\footnote{ibid., 20 June 1829, pp. 489-490.} This was not an unconditional return of a child and perhaps it was considered that an indenture would ensure that Harriet received certain essentials, and an apprenticeship was therefore a safeguard for her.

A similar situation arose when Johannah Taylor applied to have her children, Catherine and Bartholomew, returned to her when they had been in the Orphan Schools for four months. Mrs Taylor had recovered her health and was in a position to support the children. She had obtained employment in a Board and Lodging establishment in Sydney. The Rev. Hill supported Mrs Taylor’s application and recommended that her daughter and son be apprenticed to her. Both children were to
receive further education in schools in Sydney, and went into their mother’s care on 8 August 1829. 162

Richard Weavers applied for his son William in September stating that he was in the employment of the Rev. Cartwright and was able to maintain the boy. The Rev. Cartwright was unable to support his employee’s application and wrote ‘I am at a loss to know how Weavers is able to support his son. I cannot recommend his wish be complied with’. William remained in the Male Orphan School until June 1831 when he left to be apprenticed to Mr Bowman. 163

Expediency may also have played a part in the discharge of children to their parents. Alice Maddox applied for her daughter Sarah Williams in October 1829. The Rev. Marsden supported the applicant whom he considered was able to support Sarah, and he added ‘the Orphan House is too full’. 164

James Hincks applied for his two sons, John and Mark, to be returned to him after he had completed his period of servitude. He had obtained employment ‘as a Constable at Carters Barracks’ and was able to provide for his boys. 165 The boys were discharged to their father on 1 March 1831. Mr Hincks’ petition for the discharge of his sons John and Mark has been preserved. (See following page for copy).

Mrs Elizabeth Cadman applied for her daughters Phoebe and Ellen Mortimer to be returned to her, after her marriage to John Cadman who served as Superintendent of the Government boats. Mrs Cadman wanted to care for her daughters thus enabling the family to be reunited. Her petition was granted and Phoebe and Ellen were apprenticed to their step-father John Cadman. 166

Mary Bolton had two daughters who had been apprenticed from the Female Orphan School. Ellen was apprenticed to Mr Raper, and Sarah had been apprenticed to Francis O’Meare a Conductor of Police. Mary Bolton sought the return of Sarah stating that she ‘wanted the child under her particular attention and under her own immediate care and supervision’. Mr O’Meare was ‘willing to forego any claim on her’. The referee considered that Mary Bolton was ‘capable of maintaining her daughter and will not be inattentive to the moral and religious obligations which

162 ibid., 5 August 1829, pp. 508-509.
163 ibid., 5 October 1829, pp. 533-534; MOS Admission Book pp. 15-16.
164 Applications, October 1829, in Applications For Children 1825-1829, pp. 535-536.
166 ibid., 21 February 1831, p. 221.
To the Trustees of the Male Orphan School.

Received 18th Feb. School Lands.

The Humble Petition of James Hincks.

Know ye,

That your Petitioner desires
admission for his two sons, John and
Mark Hincks, into the Male Orphan
School, in the year 1831, to endeavour
a position for the Crown.

Your Petitioner, most humbly for the
favor received, most respectfully lay these
words that having been granted to
Emancipation, is now employed as a
Constable at Carter Barracks, and being
enabled to provide for them, he Humbly
prays that they may be placed under
his protection, and you, Petitioner
as in duty bound, will ever pray.

Hincks

[Signature]

Petition from Mr. James Hincks requesting the return of his sons John and Mark from the Male Orphan School in 1831 (original in SRNSW 4/334)
devolve upon her’. This application involved unusual circumstances. Francis O’Meare’s wife Elizabeth was also Mrs Bolton’s daughter. Sarah Bolton had therefore been apprenticed to her brother-in-law Francis O’Meare.

When the terms of her transportation expired in March 1831 Ann Howard sought to have her son William reunited with her. She had obtained a position ‘as a yearly servant to a respectable person in Parramatta’ and had accommodation for herself and William. Further enquiries about Ann Howard’s background revealed that she was co-habiting with William Donald, who was in employment as a nailer. Mr Donald had offered to support William. In addition to Ann Howard’s living arrangements, evidence indicated that she ‘was considered a bad character during the time she was a prisoner’. Her application was denied and we presume the decision was based on moral grounds. In November a petition was received from William Donald who had married Ann Howard. He stated that they wanted William ‘under our care and to rear him’. The Rev. Marsden recommended this application indicating that William Donald was an industrious man who ‘can provide for the boy Howard’. On 1 January 1832 Ann Donald again petitioned for her son William who was five years old. Mrs Donald referred to the previous petition endorsed by the Rev. Marsden and finally her persistence was rewarded and William was discharged to his step-father on 14 January.

It was not only the mothers and fathers of children in the Orphan schools who applied for the return or discharge of children. Other relatives sought to have family members in their care. We have noted this with Sarah Bolton, whose sister Elizabeth O’Meare, had Sarah apprenticed to her husband Francis O’Meare. Ann Howe the wife of William Howe petitioned for the return of her brother Thomas William then aged ten years. Mrs Howe stated that the family could provide for Thomas’ education and maintenance, and Thomas was ordered to be placed in Mr Howe’s care in late December.

On 6 March 1828 William Roberts sought the discharge of his brother-in-law Thomas Long from the Male Orphan School. Mr Roberts indicated that he would have Thomas educated in a ‘private school and afterwards apprentice him to some

167 ibid., May 1831, pp. 277-279.
168 ibid., 4 February 1830, p. 51.
170 ibid., 2 November 1831, pp. 343-345; 1 January 1832, pp. 399-400.
respectable business’. Mr Roberts’ application was rejected on the grounds that he kept a public house. Mr Roberts addressed a further letter to the Corporation in which he expressed his surprise and regret that his application had been rejected. Two days later Thomas Long was apprenticed to Mr Allen at Argyle (Southern Tablelands).

Margaret Earle applied for her sister Ellen Deggins to be discharged to her in June 1829. Margaret had married a cabinet maker and was in a financial position to support Ellen, who was ordered to be placed with her sister. In May 1831 William Macdonald applied for his grandson Joseph Wood, who had been admitted to the Male Orphan School in 1825 as an orphan, to be discharged to him. The Committee apparently considered that Joseph’s best interests would be served by living with his grandfather, and his discharge to Mr Macdonald was ordered.

Mr J. Cox made an application on behalf of Henry Hall who was employed by Mr Cox as a blacksmith. Mr Hall wanted his two nephews John and Samuel Laurance assigned to him. Mr Hall’s request was granted and the brothers left the Male Orphan School to go into their uncle’s care on 9 July 1831.

When Alexander Barton applied to have his granddaughter Eliza Matilda Weeks, who was then eight years old, placed in his care, he stated that she was an orphan. Eliza’s mother had died in 1826 and her father had remarried. He later died on 14 February 1831, and had left no will. The Rev. Samuel Marsden felt that he could not recommend the application because Mr Barton ‘was an old man and did not have the means of supporting the girl’. Mr Barton’s application was rejected.

Morris Ganning made application for his wife’s son James Galvin to be discharged from the Male Orphan School in February 1832. In his petition he expressed his ‘thanks to the Committee for their fostering care for the last three years’. The referees described Mr Gannon as being ‘an honest and sober man, well able to support the child’. The Master Mr Richard Sadlier was positive in his support

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172 Applications, 6 March 1828, in Applications For Children 1825-29, p. 353.
174 Applications, 26 June 1829, in Applications For Children 1825-1829, pp. 481-482.
175 Applications, 2 May 1831, in Applications For Children 1830-1832, pp. 271-272.
176 ibid., 14 June 1831, pp. 293-294.
177 ibid., August 1831, pp. 313-316.
of the application and James was able to be reunited with his mother the next month.\footnote{ibid., 6 February 1832, pp. 425-427.}

Abraham Myers was another petitioner who applied for the discharge of a relative by marriage. Mr Myers was the husband of Mary Ann Myers (née Merryman), and her brother George Merryman then aged thirteen years was in the School. Mr Myers was a dealer carrying on business in George Street Sydney. In his application Mr Myers stated that he had ‘the means of binding the lad to a trade and of supporting him with due attention to his morals and a strict regard to his advancement in life’. George left the institution to go into Mr Myers’ care on 8 July 1832.\footnote{ibid., 30 June 1832, pp. 499-500.} This was not first application for George’s discharge. In March John King petitioned for George, whom he stated ‘was a relative of my wife’, to be sent to him. This petition lapsed because it had not been ‘attested by one or more clergymen, magistrates or other persons known to the Commissioners’.\footnote{ibid., 10 March 1832, pp. 449-450.}

The children who were admitted to the Orphan Schools were the children of the poor. Their convict mothers were essentially drawn from deprived backgrounds in Britain where they had committed an offence and had been transported. Their contemporaries who remained in the community had similar parentage, but we have examined the variety of reasons which led to the need for authorities to provide care for orphan, neglected, abandoned and children in necessitous circumstances.

In reflecting on the convict system and its impact on family structures and hence on Australian childhood, Jan Kociumbas writes that ‘among the problems was the instability of poor and one-parent families’.\footnote{Jan Kociumbas, \textit{Australian Childhood A History}, Allen & Unwin, Sydney, 1997, p. 40.} The truth of this statement has been supported in the analysis of the reasons for the admissions from the selected case histories. Sixty three per cent of admissions resulted from the reduction of a family unit to a one-parent family, and further 16 per cent of admissions were children of unmarried mothers. Seventy nine per cent of these admissions were therefore from one-parent families, and this is a very significant figure.

When writing about the British children of the poor in the late seventeenth and throughout the eighteenth century, Hugh Cunningham states that as far as the poor
were concerned ‘childhood was perceived as a time for inurement into habits of labour’.

The same situation applied in the penal colony of new South Wales, and Kociumbas makes the observation that in ‘numerous impoverished and one-parent families children were obliged to work’.

The founders of the Orphan Schools were mindful that the children in these institutions would be required to work to sustain themselves in the future. In addition to instruction in rudimentary education, training was also provided so that the children could acquire employable skills within the Schools, and this training was extended through the apprenticeship scheme. Ailsa Burns and Jacqueline Goodnow, in discussing the Orphan Schools state the truth, that the ‘goals of the schools were to train children into habits of virtue and industry, and to provide them with the skills necessary to earn a basic wage’.

The examination of the records pertaining to the children who were inmates of the Orphan Schools, has enabled us to have a greater appreciation of the social backgrounds of some of these boys and girls. We have gained an insight into the many difficulties which some parents encountered, and which impinged on the lives of their children leading to their admission to these institutions. In this way the social conditions which prevailed in the colony have been revealed. We have also been able to see and understand the apprentice scheme as it operated in the Orphan Schools.

Whilst the voices of the children may have been silent in this chapter, the voices of the adults, be they parents, potential masters or mistresses or relatives, ‘speak’ to us in their applications and petitions for the admission or discharge of children. The parents’ despair at their inability to provide support and care for their children is very evident. Likewise their courage in coming to terms with their lot, which for many was a time of penal servitude, and in establishing themselves as ‘free’ members of society is clearly displayed in many of their applications for the return of their children. Parents and relatives sought the opportunity of taking responsibility for the care and support of their children or kin.

The motives of potential masters or mistresses are evident in some of the applications. The majority of these adults ‘speak’ of their need to have apprentices to

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183 Kociumbas, p. 41.
assist in their houses, or firms, or businesses. Occasionally one glimpses a caring attitude in the application, as indeed one is conscious of neglect or demeaning situations being experienced by some of the apprentices.

The role of relatives in seeking the return of children from the institutions is an important factor which has emerged in this study. Not only were children re-united with parents, but the wider family unit played a part in the children’s discharge. We are left to imagine the rejoicing which may have been experienced when the family was re-united, and also the adjustments which would have been necessary from institutional life to family life. For some children a step-father had become part of the family, representing a person whom they did not know. It was often the presence of such men who made it a financial possibility for the mothers of these boys and girls to seek their return. Likewise the marriage of sisters had enabled brothers-in-law to take an active role in the support and care of their spouses’ siblings.

Lastly the voices of the Committees or Commissioners ‘speak’ to us. We have seen instances where the Committees’ actions ‘speak’ of their understanding and acceptance of parents or relations situations. The Committee commonly displayed a sensitivity to the requests of parents or relatives. On the other hand some of the Committees’ decisions ‘speak’ to us of the seeming harshness or callousness in some of their rejections of applications for the return of children. The rejections were based on the perceptions or judgements made about the applicants, and denied some parents or relatives and their children or family members, the opportunity of resuming life together. We can only imagine the disappointment, anger, frustration and heartbreak some of these parents or relatives experienced when their applications were denied. We are left wondering if these children ever ‘found’ their parents or relatives again when their time as apprentices had expired.