CONCLUSION

Within thirteen years of the first fleet arriving at Port Jackson, Governor King established the Female Orphan School in 1801. This action was in response to the grave social conditions experienced by some of the colony’s children. Some of them had been orphaned, abandoned, or neglected and were in necessitous circumstances. Convict women were the mothers of these children, and one asks why were some of these women unable to provide adequate care and support for their children?

One of the aims of this thesis has been to add to our knowledge about the conditions faced by convict women in the colony. Research has indicated that many social and economic problems confronted these women. The male contemporary figures of the day who were in positions of authority, formed perceptions about the morals of the convict women, and these perceptions were not always well founded. A great social divide separated the authority figures from the convict women.

Recent literature has provided us with information about the situations, which many of these convict mothers faced. The imbalance between the numbers of male and female convicts led to an increase in the number of illegitimate children. Many of the fathers of the children were either unwilling or unable to support the women and the children. Desertion was a problem confronting many of these mothers.

Family structures that could have supplied the women with social, emotional and financial support were not available to them as convicts in the penal colony of New South Wales. Their employment opportunities were restricted, and very low wages were paid for their work. As assigned servants they would have been paid in rations. Accommodation where employers accepted children was not always available. Some women were dismissed from employment because they had children in their care.

In retrospect, research has shown that life was harsh for the convict mothers, yet despite the many problems that they encountered, the majority of these women were able to care for their children. There were however some women, for whom the burdens of life were too great, and they neglected or abandoned their children. These were the children who caused concern to the early chaplains and Governors.
It was this concern that led to consideration being given to the care of these children, who were part of the ‘rising generation’. An examination of the Governors’ motivations in establishing the Orphan Schools has been a further aim of this thesis.

The Orphan Schools were adaptations of the British Charity Schools, which provided elementary education for the children of the poor. Twentieth century historians have indicated that one of the aims of the Charity Schools was to establish social discipline among the poor. However, both Governor King and Governor Macquarie had expressed their emotions of ‘distress’ and ‘compassion’ as they witnessed the plight of some of the colony’s children. Their words have been quoted in the thesis, and suggest that the provision of care for the children was the motivating factor in the establishment of the Orphan Schools.

These Governors and the early chaplains expressed the desirability of ‘rescuing’ the children from their environments, which they considered were not conducive to the children’s welfare. King acquired ‘the finest house in Sydney’ to provide accommodation, care, education and suitable training for some of these orphaned, abandoned, neglected and destitute girls in 1801. During Macquarie’s governorship, a commodious, three-storeyed building was erected at Parramatta as the Female Orphan School, and the girls transferred there in 1818. Within the Rules and Regulations for the Orphan Schools that were formulated by Governor Macquarie much detail was paid to the health, diet, education and training to be provided for the children. These regulations were prescribed so that the children could receive adequate care.

As a reflection on the very practical actions of these Governors, it is argued that the founders of the Orphan Schools were humane, enlightened men. Both Governors King and Macquarie had wives who were genuinely interested in providing a leadership role in the Female Orphan School, and were active supporters of their husbands’ intentions. These men were not content to leave the children in their unfavorable circumstances, but they exhibited genuine philanthropy towards these destitute children. Whilst is it true that not all Governors were equal in their attention to the Schools, nevertheless the conclusion holds true.

The expressed emotions of the founders to the children’s plight, leads one to ask, what were the family circumstances and social backgrounds of these children, which
necessitated their admission to the Orphan Schools? The thesis has sought to explore these issues from available records for the period 1818 to 1832, to add to our knowledge about the children of the Orphan Schools.

Research has shown that breakdowns in family structures were largely responsible for the applications for admission being made by parents or relatives. Death, desertion, imprisonment and illness of a spouse, resulted in many families experiencing the situation of a sole parent in charge. The financial burden experienced by many ‘single parent’ families for whom historical records exist, led parents to place their children in care. Children from ‘single parent’ families accounted for 63 per cent of admissions. There were also the ex-nuptial children who accounted for 16 per cent of admissions. In all, 79 per cent of children who were admitted into care, came from ‘single parent’ families.

Another problem that led parents to place their children in care was the low incomes received, and this was particularly true of women who were employed as laundresses. Although these women were in employment, their level of income was insufficient to support children, particularly when there were several children in the family. The word ‘destitute’ was used frequently to describe such a family situation.

The problems experienced by some of the sole fathers as they sought to provide adequate care and accommodation for their daughters in particular, whilst at work in isolated ‘bush’ conditions have also been explored. These children were admitted to the Schools, where the necessary care could be provided. Also, the children who were orphans, and had no one to care for them formed part of the Orphan Schools’ population.

Our understanding about the social conditions and family circumstances of the children who were admitted to the Orphan Schools has been enriched by this research. It has provided us with an appreciation of the social and financial problems experienced by many families, and which impinged on the lives of their children.

The girls were due to leave the Female Orphan School when they reached the age of thirteen years, and the boys left the Male Orphan School at fifteen years of age. The question must be asked: ‘What avenues were open to the children when they left the schools?’ The thesis has examined the various ‘paths’ open to them, in order to add to our knowledge about these boys and girls.
A number of parents applied to have their children returned to the family unit. Some of these parents had completed their sentences and were emancipists, whilst others had received their tickets-of-leave. These parents were in a position to maintain and support their children. Some of the single women whose children had been placed in the Orphan Schools had married, and their husbands were willing to support the children. There were instances where relatives sought the return of the brothers and sisters of their spouses, and the involvement of the extended family members was evident.

Despite these family reunions, the majority of the children left the schools to enter into apprenticeships. From the early days of the Female Orphan School the girls were apprenticed, generally as servants. Within the school, training was provided to give the girls some skills, which would enable them to secure employment.

The apprenticeships entered into by both girls and boys were by formally executed indentures. Conditions were established for both the master or mistress and the child, and were binding on both parties. It was the responsibility of the master or mistress to ensure that the child would acquire competency in his or her ‘trade’ or occupation. The range of apprenticeships available to girls, other than in training as servants, was limited to three fields. The boys’ range of apprenticeships however, extended to twenty-six fields, and only five boys were apprenticed as servants.

As a result of this study we are better placed to understand the employment opportunities that were available to young people in the colony. The employment problems faced by some of the convict mothers in the early days of the colony were discussed previously, and it would appear that opportunities for employment had not improved to any marked extent as far as girls and women were concerned.

A study of the Orphan Schools following their placement under government control has been undertaken, in order to provide us with more knowledge and understanding about these institutions in their later years as separate entities.

The responsibility for the supervision, operation and management of the Orphan Schools was undertaken by the office of the Colonial Secretary, following the revocation of the Clergy and School Lands Corporation in 1832. No changes were introduced into the daily routine of the schools, and the routine that had been prescribed in 1829 prevailed. However changes were made to the curriculum in the
Male Orphan School. More advanced arithmetic lessons were introduced, and history and geography were added to the list of subjects. These changes were not introduced into the Female Orphan School. The educational provisions and the trade subjects provided for the boys, contrasts with the provisions which were available for the girls.

Improvements were made to the appearance of the Female Orphan School at Parramatta, but there was lack of adequate maintenance at the Male Orphan School, and the Master Richard Sadleir, was critical of the state of affairs. The staffs chosen to have oversight of the girls appear to have been suitable, and with few changes in staff, stability of supervision seems to have occurred. Sadleir remained at the boys’ school, and he exercised a caring attitude towards the boys in his charge.

The number of boys seeking admission to the Male Orphan School gradually fell, and with rising costs of administration the Governor decided to close that school and the boys were transferred to the Female Orphan School in 1850. The establishment became known as the Protestant Orphan School.

The inclusion of the government control of the Orphan Schools has added to our knowledge about the ways in which these institutions were managed during the later stages of their operation as separate entities. This study has made it possible to review and assess the value of the Orphan Schools, and their place in the provision of education and care for some of the poor, abandoned, neglected, orphaned and destitute children in the colony.

It is the conclusion of this thesis that some of the harsher judgements of the revisionist social historians need to be modified. There was a concern that further social disorder might proceed from an absence of policy and action with regard to ‘orphaned’ children usually of convict parentage. However there was genuine charity, philanthropy and concern for children in grave physical and moral danger. The Orphan Schools were not always effective in meeting the goals of their founders, nevertheless they performed an invaluable service in the lives of very many children.
APPENDIX 1

This section contains selected social/case histories of 200 children who were admitted to the Female and Male Orphan Schools between the years 1818 and 1833. The sources for these histories are the minutes of the Female and Male Orphan Schools for the years 1818-1823, and the applications for admissions received by the Clergy and School Lands Corporation for the years 1825-1833.

James - aged 7 lived in Windsor with his mother. His father was dead and his mother who was described as aged and a washerwoman, was unable to adequately provide for him.

William - aged 9 had six siblings. Both his parents were living but his father was blind. The family was living in poor conditions. William was considered to be ‘a real object of poverty’.

Brothers William and John - aged 8 and 7 years respectively, were living with their mother who was a widow. She was described as being ‘a very bad character’ and the boys were neglected.

Richard - aged 8 was in the care of his mother, whose occupation was given as washerwoman. Richard’s mother had been deserted by his father, who was a soldier in the 73rd Regiment which was then stationed in Ceylon. Richard’s mother was a person of good character, but was very poor.

John - aged 8 had no father to care for him. His mother had re-married and her husband had a large family of his own. Adequate provisions could not be made for John’s maintenance in these circumstances.

James - aged 6 had been left quite destitute. His mother had died during the passage to the colony, and his father who was a convict had been sent to Coal River. James was described as being small for his age.

James - aged 10 was an orphan. He had been in the care of a waterman in Sydney, but his guardian was too poor to continue to maintain him.
John - aged 8 had been deserted by his parents. His father had left the colony, and his mother’s whereabouts were unknown.

Thomas - aged 7 was living with his mother who was a widow. His mother’s financial position was precarious, and she was described as ‘being a bad character’.

Henry - aged 7 had only one parent living namely his mother. She was a government servant employed at a residence in Parramatta Road. Although Henry’s mother was a hard working woman, she was unable to adequately maintain Henry.

James - aged 8 had lost his father. His mother was employed as a baker in Sydney. She was described as being very poor and unable to support her son.

James - aged 9 had only one parent. His father was dead and his mother supported herself as a washerwoman. This was a poorly paid position and she was too poor to care for James.

Thomas - aged 7 was dependent on a sole parent, his mother. She derived income from her employment as a baker, but was considered too poor to support the boy.

John - aged 9 had only one parent to support him. His mother was a widow and although she was employed as a washerwoman, she had insufficient means to provide for John.

George - aged 9 had only his mother to care for him. She was a dealer who resided in Sydney. Despite her work efforts her income was low, and she was considered to be in poor circumstances.

John - aged 7 was in the care of a fishwoman. His father was dead and his mother had abandoned him. John’s carer could not continue her support.

Edward - aged 9 was an orphan. He had been in the care of a farmer at Airds, who was unable to continue his support for the boy.

William - aged 9 had been orphaned, and was being cared for by a farmer at Appin. The farmer faced economic difficulties and could not keep William.
Michael and his brother Edward - were aged 7 and 8 years of age. Their mother who was a sole parent was employed as a washerwoman. Her earnings did not enable her to support her children.

Richard - aged 9 was living with his father, who was a settler. His mother had died and his father was in ‘great distress’, and could not care for his child.

Brothers John and Richard - aged 7 and 8 years were reliant on their mother for support, because their father was dead. Although their mother had employment as a seamstress, she was unable to support her sons financially.

John - aged 8 had three siblings. His mother who was a convict, had employment as a washerwoman. She could not manage to maintain John.108

A girl aged 7 residing in the Female Factory was recommended for admission to the Female Orphan School. It was considered that her mother was not providing adequate care for the child.109

John - aged 5½ was an orphan. A seamstress applied for the boy’s admission, and her relationship to him was not disclosed.

William - aged 10 was in the care of his mother. Her employment as a washerwoman did not enable her to support him.110

Rhoda - whose age was not disclosed, had been deserted by her father who had left the colony. Her mother was unable to support herself and her family.111

Edward - aged 7 was an orphan with no one to care for him.

Thomas - aged 9 was admitted on the application of a gentleman. The reason given for his admission was ‘peculiar circumstances’. His mother was apparently alive.112

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109  Female Orphan School Minutes, 30 October 1818, p. 19.
110  Male Orphan School Minutes, 15 April 1819, pp. 11-12.
111  FOS Minutes, 27 August 1819, p. 36.
112  MOS Minutes, 12 April 1820, p. 15.
Robert - aged 5 had no mother to care for him, and his father was confined to a penal settlement.

George - aged 9 was with his mother, who was employed as a washerwoman in Liverpool. Although in employment she could not support her son.

John - aged 8 whose mother was a washerwoman had been in the care of another woman. It was agreed by the Committee that this woman receive five shillings per week for the attention she had given to John whilst he was in her care.113

Sisters Mary Ann, Margaret and Susanne - were considered to be ‘objects of great distress’. Their father had died leaving a widow with four children. The girls’ ages were not given.

Celia - who was from Richmond had been abandoned and she was destitute. Her mother had been declared insane, and there was no reference to her father.114

William - aged 5 was the son of a sole parent. His mother was ill and had two other children. She was unable to provide care for William.

James and his brother George - aged 9 and 6 were living with their mother who had been widowed in the previous month. She was not able to support the boys.115

Brothers Samuel, David and Jeremiah - aged 9, 7 and 5 respectively were referred to as orphans in the Committee meeting. The Admission Book indicates that their father was a settler residing at Northern Boundary.

Brothers George, Thomas and Samuel - aged 10, 9 and 7 were likewise referred to as orphans. Their father was a cooper living at Windsor.116

Sisters Mary and Ann - aged 8 and 4 were living in poverty with their widowed mother, who had four other children dependent on her.

113 ibid., 12 July 1820, p. 21.
114 FOS Minutes, 4 October 1820, p. 51.
115 MOS Minutes, 11 October 1820, p. 27.
116 ibid., 10 January 1821, p. 24; MOS Admission Book, pp. 5-6.
Mary - aged 9 was an orphan. She had been in the care of a lady who was no longer able to provide for her.

Sisters Eliza and Elizabeth - aged 6 and 4 years were the daughters of a prisoner in the Female Factory. There were two other children in the family.\textsuperscript{117}

Mary Ann - aged 7 was an orphan, as was Elizabeth - aged 8. These girls had no parents to support them.

Margaret - aged 8 had an application submitted by her mother on the grounds of her ‘present dangerous situation’. In a report tendered at a later Committee meeting it was stated that the child appeared to be much older than eight years. The ‘dangerous situation’ implies that Margaret may have been at moral risk.\textsuperscript{118}

Brothers Thomas aged 12, Samuel aged 6 and Nathaniel - aged 3 were the children of a corporal who had died. Apparently there was no mother to care for the boys because the youngest boy Nathaniel was left in the care of a lady, who was to receive five shillings per week for his support.\textsuperscript{119}

Mary - aged 4 was residing in the Female Factory with her mother. Mr Oakes the Superintendent described Mary’s mother as ‘an infamous woman’.\textsuperscript{120}

Thomas - aged 6 was dependent solely on his mother for support. She was employed as a washerwoman at the Asylum and was unable to maintain him.

George - aged 8 was an orphan, who had been in the care of a lady residing at Farm Cove since his parents’ deaths. This lady who had been widowed was in straightened circumstances. She had employment as a washerwoman but was unable to provide financial support for George.\textsuperscript{121}

Thomas - aged 6 was the son of a government servant who had been sent to a penal settlement. His mother did not have sufficient resources to maintain him.

\textsuperscript{117} FOS Minutes, 14 February 1821, p. 57.
\textsuperscript{118} ibid., 7 August 1821, p. 74; 17 October 1821, p. 76.
\textsuperscript{119} MOS Minutes, 10 October 1821, p. 34.
\textsuperscript{120} FOS Minutes, 17 October 1821, p. 71.
\textsuperscript{121} MOS Minutes, 9 January 1822, pp. 36-37.
John - aged 8 had been in the care of his mother, whose earnings from being a washerwoman were insufficient for his maintenance.\textsuperscript{122}

Thomas - aged 7 was surrendered by his mother, seemingly a sole parent, without the means to support him.

Thomas - aged 6 was an orphan who was destitute.\textsuperscript{123}

John - aged 11 and Jeremiah - aged 10 were the sons of women convicts in the Female Factory.\textsuperscript{124}

Edward - aged 10 and Michael - aged 5 were both surrendered by their mothers who were experiencing financial difficulties.

William - aged 11 was an orphan. His guardian could no longer afford to care for him.\textsuperscript{125}

Mary Ann - an orphan had no visible means of support.

Margaret - aged 8; sisters Rose and Matilda -; Mary Anne - and Charlotte - aged 7 were admitted from the Female Factory.

Ann - aged 8 had a widowed mother in Parramatta, who could not afford to maintain her.\textsuperscript{126}

John - aged 7 had been deserted by his father who was not living in the colony. His mother was described as an ‘abandoned woman’ who neglected him.

Edward - aged 5 had a father who was paralysed and was an inmate of the Benevolent Asylum. His mother who was a convict had been sent to Newcastle. Edward had no one to provide care for him.\textsuperscript{127}

\textsuperscript{122} ibid., 19 April 1822, p. 38.
\textsuperscript{123} ibid., Adjourned Meeting, 17 April 1822, p. 30.
\textsuperscript{124} ibid., 10 April 1822, p. 38.
\textsuperscript{125} ibid., 10 July 1822, p. 43.
\textsuperscript{126} FOS Minutes, 10 August 1822, p. 89.
\textsuperscript{127} MOS Minutes, 22 November 1822, p. 50.
Thomas - aged 8 was the son of a convict woman employed as a servant. She was unable to provide support for her son.

James - aged 8 was surrendered by his father, who could not adequately care for the boy.\textsuperscript{128}

Sisters Catherine and Bridget - had recently lost their father who had died suddenly. His widow and children had been left without means of support and were in great distress.\textsuperscript{129}

Eleanor - aged 6 was an orphan without any means of support. She was considered to be in urgent need of care.\textsuperscript{130}

Elizabeth - aged 7 had other siblings. Her mother was a sole parent and could not afford to maintain her daughter.\textsuperscript{131}

Brothers William aged 7, Henry aged 6 and James - aged 4 were considered to be in great distress. Their mother had ‘died insane at Castle Hill Mental Asylum’. Their father whose occupation was a labourer, was also stated ‘to be insane’.\textsuperscript{132}

William - aged 8 was an orphan, and there was no one to care for him.\textsuperscript{133}

Ann - aged 7 was an orphan with no visible means of support.\textsuperscript{134}

Mary - aged 5 and her brother John were destitute. Their father was a deserter from the 46th Regiment. He took a boat out of the harbour and had disappeared. Their mother had wholly abandoned the children.

Sisters Ann and Elizabeth - were aged 4 and 2 respectively. Their father held a ticket-of-leave. Their mother died in childbirth on 3rd December 1825. Their father stated that he was unable ‘to bestow that care on their education which their welfare requires’.

\textsuperscript{128} ibid., 8 January 1823, p. 53.
\textsuperscript{129} FOS Minutes, 12 February 1823, p. 96.
\textsuperscript{130} ibid., Special Meeting, 18 April 1823, p. 100.
\textsuperscript{131} ibid., 14 May 1823, p. 103.
\textsuperscript{132} MOS Minutes, 9 July 1823, p. 56.
\textsuperscript{133} ibid., 8 October 1823, p. 58.
\textsuperscript{134} FOS Minutes, 12 November 1823, p. 109.
Ellen - aged 7 was the daughter of a soldier, who was a widower with two other children. The baby aged one was cared for by a lady at Army expense of five shillings per week. The father considered he could care for his son.

William - aged 6 was in the care of his mother who was a servant in Mr Minchin’s home. She had begun to behave ‘in a drunken and depraved manner’ and had been confined to gaol. William’s father was a prisoner of the crown. The boy was considered to be ‘free of every vice at present’.

Sisters Fanny aged 7 and Sarah - aged 5 were deserted by their mother when they were very young. Their father, who was a wood cutter was in ill-health, and could not provide maintenance for the girls.

Brothers Michael aged 7 and John aged 5 and their sister Anne - aged 8 had a widowed mother. Land had been taken from her and she was unable to support five children. The mother was described as ‘a very deserving young woman’, who intended to care for her two youngest children aged 4 and 2 respectively.

Mary Anne a very young child, had only one parent following her mother’s death in hospital. Her father was a brickmaker, and was obliged to travel to obtain work. He had no one to care for Mary Anne who was ‘found to be totally neglected, crawling about in a sad state of dirt’.

Brothers John aged 4½ and Samuel - aged 2½ were without means of support and were entirely destitute. Their mother was dead and their father was a prisoner. Their only relative a grandmother, who had taken care of them, had been convicted at Windsor.

Thomas - aged 8 was a neglected child who was found roaming the streets at nine o’clock at night. His mother was an inmate at the Female Factory and his father was serving a sentence on Norfolk Island. The boy was quite destitute.

Jane - aged 5 was the daughter of a woman who had re-married. Her mother had three young children by her present husband, who was employed as a labourer. Jane’s mother considered she was unable to support her daughter.
Scholastica - aged 5 had four siblings. Her parents were dead. Her father was a farmer who died intestate, and there was no one to care for the girl.

Sophie - aged 9 had only one parent living. Her mother intended to go into service to support herself, and had no means of providing for her daughter.

Sisters Jane aged 9 and Margaret - aged 8 had no one to care for them. Their mother was in the Female Factory and had two other daughters. Their father who was a prisoner had been shot, and their grandfather was in an iron gang at Port Macquarie.

Sisters Hannah aged 6 and Sarah - aged 4 had two other siblings. Their father had been transported to Moreton Bay. Their mother ‘had no fixed means of obtaining a livelihood, and was in very great distress’.

Brothers Thomas aged 8½ and Samuel - aged 5 together with two younger brothers had been deserted by their father, who was at Macquarie Island. Their mother was without means of support, because her husband’s employer stated that her husband ‘had not authorized him to send an allowance’ to her.

Ellen - aged 5 was living with her mother who was an assigned servant. This arrangement appears to have been unsatisfactory, because her mother’s employer sought Ellen’s admission to the Female Orphan School.

Brothers John aged 12 and Mark - aged 9 were the sons of a convict, whose wife had died. Their father was earning one shilling and threepence per day, and was unable to support his sons, who were in great distress. (See following page for application form).

Shephardess - aged 2 was an orphan. Her mother had died in childbirth and her father died eighteen months later. The child was taken into care by a woman who was unable to continue to support her.

William - aged 7 was the son of a constable at Liverpool, who had ‘committed a breach of trust’ and was imprisoned. His mother, who had three other children including two year old twins, was in a weak state and suffered great distress.
Mary - aged 7 had a brother in the Male Orphan School. Her father was dead and her mother’s poverty rendered her unable to support or educate her children.

William - aged 7 had only one parent because his father had died. His mother had remarried unhappily and William was neglected. He was ‘frequently without instruction and without a home’.

Brothers Francis aged 6 and John - aged 4 were the sons of a soldier in the 57th Regiment. Their father was a sole parent with two other children, whose stated income was seven pence per day exclusive of rations. He was unable to provide for the boys.

Three siblings Mary Ann aged 7, Thomas aged 5 and Henry - aged 2½ had been abandoned by their mother. Their father died six weeks previously and had left no means of support for his wife and children. Their mother had appeared before the Court ‘but had been acquitted on the charge of cattle stealing’. Since her discharge she had not visited or enquired about the well-being of her children. She had ‘forsaken her offspring’.

Margaret - aged 6 was the daughter of ex-convicts who had served their time. Her mother had ‘forsaken her home’ and abandoned her daughter. Her father was a farm labourer who was required to go into the forest sometimes for a week. Margaret accompanied her father and was left in a hut with prisoners, and she had never attended school. On occasions her father ‘had draped her in a blanket, carried her into the forest and left her all day’, whilst he did his work.

Sisters Elizabeth aged 8 and Anne - aged 5 lost their mother two months earlier. Their father was in employment but could not care for his daughters. He was prepared to pay five pounds per annum for each girl for her maintenance.

Brothers Joseph aged 6 and James - aged 4 were the children of a wood splitter, who was obliged to leave the boys in order to split palings in the bush. Their mother had recently died. Their father offered to pay five shillings sterling for his boys’ upkeep.
Mary Ann - aged 6 was the daughter of an assigned servant, who was unable to provide adequate care for her. Her father was serving time at Port Macquarie.

Brothers Francis aged 10, Samuel aged 7 and Charles - aged 5 had been deserted by their father who had gone to Van Dieman’s Land. He had spent sixteen years in a de facto relationship with the boys’ mother and they had a younger sibling. Their mother was unable to financially support her four children.

Brothers Edward aged 8 years and Charles - 6 years had three other siblings. Their mother was a widow who was in distress and was not able to provide for her family.

Isaac - aged 6 had a sole parent his mother, who was described as ‘a poor needy woman who was unable to provide maintenance and education for her son’, after her husband’s death.

James - aged 9 had a widowed mother and his father died four months earlier. There were three other children in the family and there was not adequate support for them all.

Robert - aged 12 or 13 had a widowed father, who was unable to provide for him. Robert had been abandoned and was living on charity.

Siblings Sarah aged 12½, Alice aged 11 and Joshua - aged 7 had two older siblings who were able to care for themselves. The children were living with their parents on a farm, and the crops had failed the last two years. Their father was unable to work at his trade of shoemaker because his eyesight was impaired. Their parents had relied on the charity of their neighbours for their day-to-day needs.

Sisters Anne aged 12 and Mary - aged 7 had five other siblings. Their mother was a sole parent with no visible means of support.

Mary Ann - aged 6 had been in the care of the petitioner for 3 years. Her mother had abandoned her, and her father had died at Parramatta. The petitioner was unable to continue to support Mary Ann.
Francis - aged 5 was the son of a washerwoman. His father had been sent to Port Macquarie where he died. His mother was unable to provide for her son.

Batholomew - aged 8 was the son of government assigned servants. His parents had an older and younger sibling with them, and it was impossible for three children to be accommodated at their place of employment.

Charles - aged 8 had lost his left hand in an accident the previous year. His father had broken his thigh in an accident and was unable to work. The family consisted of parents and six other siblings which included four year old twins. Charles could not be maintained by his parents.

Siblings Sarah aged 8 and Robert - aged 5 were in the care of their mother, who had been a widow for six months. She was too poor to keep her children.135

Sisters Margaret 5 years and Esther - aged 4 were dependent on their mother. Their father was in Sydney Jail under sentence of death. Their mother who was a poor woman was unable to provide her daughters with maintenance and education.

Bartholomew - aged 5 had an older sister aged 8. Their mother who had been confined seven weeks earlier, found it impossible to maintain herself and her children. The boy’s father was on Norfolk Island serving a fourteen year sentence.

Sisters Ann aged 8 and Mary - aged 5 had five other siblings. Their mother a sole parent had no visible means of support.

John - aged 7 had an elderly father, who was said to be seventy-eight years old and who was in service at Kissing Point. John’s mother was described as ‘an abandoned woman who was living with another man’. His father who was infirm was unable to provide him with care or accommodation.

Mary Anne - aged 8 was an orphan, both of whose parents had died within the past two years. Her foster parent was no longer able to provide support for her.

135 Clergy and School Lands Corporation, Applications for Admission into the Orphan Schools 1825-1828, 4/330 SRNSW; Male and Female Orphan School Admission Books.
Sisters Maria aged 5 and Epaulina - aged 4 were in the care of their mother. Their father had been killed and their mother was in a poor state of health. The girls were ‘wholly unprovided for and destitute’.

William - aged 6 and his three siblings had been deserted by their father, who had returned to England. Their mother suffered depression and was unable to continue work in her usual occupation of washing and needlework. There was no one to provide for William.

John - aged 8 was an orphan. His mother had died six and a half years earlier, and his father had deserted him six years ago by his departure from the colony. Fears were held that the boy was ‘learning bad habits and if not checked could become a reputed thief’.

Mary Ann - aged 7 had her father as a sole parent after the death of her mother. Her father worked as a shingle splitter and was unable to provide a regular home or maintenance for her.

Sisters Alice aged 9 and twins Ellen and Mary - aged 3 lost their mother in childbirth. Their father who was a corporal in the 57th Regiment had no means of supporting his daughters.

William - aged 2 was an orphan. His father was transported to a penal settlement for seven years following the murder of William’s mother. William was left with a poor man at the Cowpastures, and this man could no longer afford to support the boy.

Sisters Mary aged 11½ and Margaret Ann - aged 2½ had two other siblings. Their mother was under sentence of fourteen years transportation. Their father who was a soldier in the 57th Regiment found that his income was insufficient to support all his children.

Mary Ann - aged 8 and a sister had been deserted by their father four years earlier. Their mother who worked as a servant wanted to get into service, and found this was an impossibility whilst she had Mary Ann in her charge.
Edward - aged 9 could not be adequately cared for by his mother. Following his father’s death Edward’s mother had remarried, and had a large family of young children.

Mary - aged 9 lost her mother three years earlier. Her father who had been a stone cutter was confined to bed, and was considered to be ‘close to death’. Her father could not care for himself or for Mary.

William - aged 7 had two other siblings. His father had been shot, and his mother was in service. She had been forced to relinquish her position, because her children were considered to be ‘a burden to the family’ where she was employed.

Catherine - aged 9 was in the care of the petitioner. Her mother was dead and her father was at Newcastle. The petitioner who was poor had a family of her own, and was unable to provide education or maintenance for Catherine.

Sarah - aged 7½ had lost her mother, and her father was a private in the 39th Regiment. He was quartered in the barracks and could not provide his daughter with the necessary care.

Sisters Mary Ann aged 7, Catherine aged 5 and Jane - aged 2½ had one other sibling. Their father had died suddenly and left a widow and four young children totally destitute.

Caroline - aged 3 was the daughter of a convict who had been in the Female Factory. Her mother had gained employment at the Female Orphan School as a washerwoman.

John - aged 4 had a mother who was described as industrious and hardworking, but who was nevertheless destitute. His father was dead and he had a brother in the Male Orphan School.

Sisters Elizabeth aged 11 and Ann - aged 7 were found in the burial ground ‘in very deplorable circumstances’. Their mother had died in hospital the previous month, and their father who was a seaman was not willing to take charge of his
daughters. He did agree to pay five pounds per annum for each girl whilst he had employment.

Brothers William aged 10 and John - aged 6 had two other siblings. Their father was a patient in the Lunatic Asylum. Their mother was destitute with no means of supporting her family.

William - aged 20 months was the son of ‘a native of the colony’. His mother was in the Benevolent Asylum and was unable to provide care for her son.

John - aged 7 was with his mother. His father was in Van Dieman’s Land and no support had been received from him for a year.

Jane - aged 3 had a sole parent. Her mother was in service and had no means of caring for her daughter.

Brothers Joseph - aged 8 and John - aged 6 had other siblings. Their father, who had been employed for several years in medical establishments in the colony, died. Their mother had no means of providing for the family and it was considered that she set ‘a bad example’ to her children.

Henry - aged 6 was one of a family of five children. His late father had been a private in the 39th Regiment. His widowed mother had no means to provide for her young family.

Edward - aged 9 was an orphan who had two older siblings. His mother died in 1825 and his father died in January 1832. His father left no property and the boy was considered to be destitute.

William - aged 7 had four siblings. His mother, who had been the family’s chief support recently died. His father who was a fisherman, was in receipt of ‘a scanty pittance, and was also infirm’. The father could not support himself let alone his children.136

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136 ibid., Application for Admission into the Orphan Schools 1829-1832, 4/331 SRNSW.
Twins John and William - aged 7 had three siblings whose ages ranged from fifteen years to a baby. Their father died on the voyage to Australia, and their mother had supported the family by the sale of clothing. Their mother hoped to secure employment to support the baby. She anticipated that the older boys aged 15 and 10 years would obtain employment. The twins’ admission to the Male Orphan School was sought so that she could find work.

Edward - aged 8 was an orphan. Both his parents were dead. His father had been killed on Parramatta Road, and his mother had been killed at St Patricks Hotel. The boy was quite destitute.

James - aged 7 was born in the Female Factory and his mother had deserted him. His foster parent was a watchhouse keeper at Liverpool, but when this position was lost, care could no longer be given to the boy.

Alex - aged 10 was an orphan with two siblings. His father had been a quarryman prior to his death, and his mother had a long term illness which resulted in her death. The boy was destitute.

Brothers Henry aged 8 and Joseph - aged 6 had one other sibling aged 2. Their father died two years ago and their mother was destitute. Their mother wanted Henry and Joseph to be properly reared, and she intended to go into service with the youngest child.

Mary Ann - aged 7 had three siblings. Her father who had worked as a brass founder was accidentally burnt to death. The family were entirely destitute.\(^{137}\)

\(^{137}\) ibid., Application for Admission into the Orphan Schools 1833, 4/332 SRNSW.
I. PRIMARY SOURCES

A. MANUSCRIPTS

(a) State Records of New South Wales

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