



Missing an Ancestor? Try Looking Behind Bars

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Introduction



- Boring people do not leave records
- Put the crimes into context of the times
- Find out all the details, not just the hard facts
- There may be some embarrassment
- There will be some fantastic records!



Finding Criminal Ancestors

- There is a family story
- Check indexes
- Browse newspapers
- Browse police gazettes



Family Myths

- Always investigate
- Ancestors do not just disappear
- One family story was that GG grandfather had been eaten by a crocodile in Oxley Creek
- No death certificate. No inquest. No proof.



The Real Story

➤ His wife said (1887)

“I was living at Oxley when he left me for a year and ten months.

I took out a summons before for maintenance at Ipswich about fourteen months ago. He was ordered to pay 10/- a week he did not pay it. He paid 8 pound 5 shillings as near as I remember. He gave me two pound about the beginning of July last.

I have got seven children to support. One boy is working, three are able to do for themselves but four are not.....,

Plan for report
concerning his wife

B.C.

McG
Simpson
1911

It appears that said
Adam Johnson was summoned
by his wife for maintenance
at Ipswich about sixteen months
ago and he was ordered to pay
10^s a week - his brother became
surety for him and then absconded
so that the wife derived no
benefit from the order -

On 24th October last
his wife summoned
Johnson for assault - the
case was dismissed as the
wife was not injured and the
correction was not more than

1.

a husband is entitled by
law to exercise

On the following
day or thereabouts he carried
away his wife's sewing
machine which compelled
her to summon him for
maintenance - the case
was heard on 3^d November
last and he was ordered to pay
12^s a week for the support of his
wife and four children -
three others being able to get
their own living -

When Johnson will
consent to work he earns
seven shillings a day and is

The case was dismissed "as the
wife was not injured and the
correction was not more than a
husband is entitled by law to
exercise"

What law?



Queensland Police Gazette.

Containing Information received in cases of Felony, and of Misdemeanor, and against Receivers of Stolen Property, reputed Thieves, and Offenders escaped from custody, with the time, place, and circumstances of the Offences, and description of those who are not known; the appearance, dress, and other marks of identity, with every particular which may lead to their apprehension; and a Description, as accurate as possible, of Property that has been Stolen, Horses, &c.

PUBLISHED BY AUTHORITY.

VOL. XXXII.]

SATURDAY, 4TH MAY, 1895.

[No. 20.


RETURN OF PRISONERS TO BE DISCHARGED FROM HER MAJESTY'S PRISON, ROMA, DURING THE MONTH OF MAY, 1895.

Name.	Where Tried.	Date of Discharge.	Offence.	Sentence.	Native of	Age.	Stature.	Make.	Complexion.	COLOUR OF		Remarks.
										Hair.	Eyes.	
1895.												
Adam Johnson	Roma	2 May	Threatening language	1 month's imprisonment or £2 fine	Ireland	51	5 6½	Medium	Fresh	Light-brown	Hazel	A long scar on right side of head; small flesh lump behind right ear; minus two front teeth upper jaw; bald.
Charles Pritchard	Charleville	6 "	Larceny	3 months' hard labour	England	28	5 2½	ditto	Fair	ditto	ditto	Two large burn marks on left arm.
Charles Smith	St. George	11 "	Riotous conduct	2 months' hard labour	Canada	44	5 2	Stout	Sallow	Dark-brown	ditto	Two moles on left breast; several old scars on head; scar under left eye; cross on left forearm near wrist.

Search

police gazettes

Clear search

Title ^	Category ⇅	Subcategory ⇅	Records ⇅
 Queensland Police Gazettes	Institutions & Organisations	Courts & Legal	41,288
 Tasmania Police Gazettes	Institutions & Organisations	Courts & Legal	6,604
 Victoria Police Gazettes	Institutions & Organisations	Courts & Legal	13,845

**Police Gazettes
are not just
criminals,
also victims
and missing
persons**







**Queensland only
1864-1874**

**English
newspaper good
for convicts sent
to Australia**

Search

police gazette

Clear search

Title ^	Category ⇅	Subcategory ⇅	Records ⇅
 Hue and Cry Police Gazette Index	Newspapers, Directories & Social History	Newspapers & Magazines	80,716
 New South Wales Police Gazette	Institutions & Organisations	Courts & Legal	17,787
 Queensland Police Gazettes	Institutions & Organisations	Courts & Legal	41,288
 South Australian Police Gazette	Institutions & Organisations	Courts & Legal	8,336
 Tasmania Police Gazettes	Institutions & Organisations	Courts & Legal	6,604
 Victoria Police Gazettes	Institutions & Organisations	Courts & Legal	13,845

Shauna Hicks

www.findmypast.com.au

Card Catalogue

Searchable listing of all record collections

Title

police

Keyword(s)

Search

or Clear All

☒ Only records from Australia

Filter By Collection

Newspapers & Publications 6

Schools, Directories & Church Histories 1

Convict, Criminal, Land & Wills 6

Filter By Location

Australia 6

Oceania 7

Results 1-7 of 7

Sort By Date Added ▼

Title	Collection	Records	Activity
 New Zealand, Police Gazettes, 1878-1945	Convict, Criminal, Land & Wills	519,643	
 Tasmania, Australia, Police Gazettes, 1884-1933	Convict, Criminal, Land & Wills	266,208	
 Queensland, Australia, Police Gazette Index, 1881-1945	Convict, Criminal, Land & Wills	416,924	
 Victoria, Australia, Police Gazettes, 1855, 1864-1924	Convict, Criminal, Land & Wills	943,920	
 South Australia, Australia, Police Gazettes, 1862-1947	Convict, Criminal, Land & Wills	710,008	
 New South Wales, Australia, Police Gazettes, 1854-1930	Convict, Criminal, Land & Wills	1,504,131	
 New South Wales, Australia, Registers of Police Employment, 1847-1885	Schools, Directories & Church Histories	1,394	

<http://search.ancestry.com.au>

Explore our collection

- > Family history
- > Immigration
- > Schools, Hospitals and Orphanages
- > Courts
- > Government
- > Lands and mining
- > **Convicts and early settlers**
- > Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples
- > Australian South Sea Islanders
- > War
- > Shipping and Railways
- > Business

Print

Convicts and early settlers

Queensland State Archives (QSA) hold records of early settlers pre and post separation from the colony of New South Wales in 1859, as well as convict records from Moreton Bay, St Helena and Toowoomba.

How do I find the records?

You can view our records on convicts and early settlers by [searching our indexes](#) if you know the name and location of the person you are looking for. For more information on searching indexes, see [Start your research](#) (PDF), or for specific tips on how to research information about early settlers, see the [Pre-separation resource guide](#) (PDF).

Early settlers

- [Pre-separation resource guide](#) (PDF)

Guide to resources on Queensland's early settler records held at QSA.

Convicts

- Chronological register of convicts 1824-1839—search the [index to chronological and alphabetical records of convicts](#) (Crown prisoners) at Moreton Bay penal settlement.
- Monthly and Half Yearly returns for Moreton Bay 1829-1837—search the [index to records from Moreton Bay penal settlement](#) of baptisms and burials, manifests of cargo and passengers shipped, and returns of prisoners and their employment.
- St Helena Prisoners 1863-1936—search the [indexes to names of all prisoners](#) who were held at St Helena Penal Establishment.
- Toowoomba prisoners indexes 1864-1906—search the [indexes to inmates from the HM Goal \(later Prison\) Toowoomba](#) and include the names of prisoners admitted, tried and discharged.

Search the State Archives

- [ArchiveSearch catalogue](#)
- [Search the Indexes](#)
- [Request archive copies](#)

Archival research terms

Record—information of permanent and historic value, often in paper-based form (e.g. a letter, photograph, a map), but can also be a CD, a film or a digital file

Item—a single record or many records, e.g. an item may be a single architectural drawing, a 500-page leather-bound book, or a bundle of correspondence (letters, telegrams, reports)

Series—a group of related items created, received, or used in the same activity

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples

Courts

Criminal

- Read [Brief guide to murder records](#) including police investigations, newspaper reports and general correspondence. Many of the files are subject to a restricted access period.
- Search [Criminal depositions 1861-1885](#)—Index to records of criminal depositions that includes the name of accused, the offence and date and place of trial.

Police gazettes

- Read [Brief guide to police gazettes](#)—containing details of matters reported to police throughout Queensland from 1864.

www.qld.gov.au/recreation/arts/heritage/archives/courts

Pre-1900 watchhouse records are known to exist for these towns (there may be others).

- Aramac
- Birdsville
- Charleville, 1889-1893 (+ 1901-1904) (I published the index, and [names are online](#))
- Charters Towers, 1895-1896 and 1899 (I published the index, and [names are online](#))
- Cloncurry, 1874-1876 and 1887-1891 (I published the index, and [names are online](#))
- Coolgarra
- Crows Nest
- Croydon (index in progress)
- Dalby
- Goondiwindi
- Gympie ([1884-1886 names are online](#), plus advice re 1890-1931 index)
- Halifax
- Irvinebank
- Isisford
- Kamerunga
- Kilkivan
- Kuranda
- Leyburn
- Marburg
- Mareeba
- Mount Morgan
- Nebo
- Oakey
- Ravenswood (index in progress)
- Springsure
- Taroom
- Townsville

Some **1901-1904** records for Adavale, Augathella, Charleville, Cunnamulla, Eromanga, Eulo, Hungerford, Morven, Nocundra, Wooroorooka, Wyandra, Thargomindah and Upper Warrego are in a **consolidated index for south-west Qld** (which includes pre-1900 records for Charleville). The index has been [published](#), and [names are online](#).

All	Books	Pictures, photos, objects	Journals, articles and data sets	Digitised newspapers and more	Government Gazettes	Music, sound and video	Maps	Diaries, letters, archives	Archived websites (1996 – now)	People and organisations	Lists
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 [Advanced Search](#)

Refine your results:

▼ Place

- Queensland (17)
- New South Wales (5)
- Victoria (1)

▼ Title

- The Telegraph (Brisban... (6)
- The Brisbane Courier (... (5)
- The Macleay Chronicle ... (2)
- Townsville Daily Bulle... (2)
- Daily Standard (Brisba... (1)
- Morning Bulletin (Rock... (1)
- The Argus (Melbourne, ... (1)
- The Central Queensland... (1)
- The Courier-Mail (Bris... (1)
- The Richmond River Her... (1)
- The Sydney Morning Her... (1)
- Truth (Sydney, NSW : 1... (1)

Digitised newspapers and more

Showing: 1 - 20 of 23 [Refine search](#)

Sort by: Relevance

A BROKEN WINDOW.

The Telegraph (Brisbane, Qld. : 1872 - 1947) **Wednesday 2 November 1927** p 11 Article

... A BROKEN WINDOW. At the Police Court yesterday, before Mr, W. E. H. Ferguson, P.M., **Denis Patrick Finn**, 29, labourer, on remand, was charged wit hliavInc on Octohni-37, In George Street, wilfully and ... 111 words

Tagged as: [Denis Patrick Finn](#)

ALLEGED DESTRUCTION OF WINDOW

The Telegraph (Brisbane, Qld. : 1872 - 1947) **Wednesday 19 October 1927** p 16 Article

... ALLEGED DESTRUCTION OF WINDOW **Denis Patrick Finn**, 20, a labourer, appeared before Mr. J. Stewart ... 96 words

Tagged as: [Denis Patrick Finn](#)

BEFORE THE MAGISTRATES. METROPOLITAN COURTS. LARRIKIN TACTICS.

The Brisbane Courier (Qld. : 1864 - 1933) **Wednesday 2 November 1927** p 3 Article

... night." commented Mr. Ferguson, P.M., in the Police Court yesterday, when sentencing **Denis Patrick Finn** ... 118 words

Tagged as: [Denis Patrick Finn](#)

Lists

[view all 1 results](#)

Finn Family in QLD

Created by [shauhick](#), 67 items.

John and Sarah Finn and their children in QLD and northern NSW

Keywords: [Finn Family](#)

<http://trove.nla.gov.au>

"dennis patrick finn"

Search

☐ Available online ☐ Australian content ☐ In my libraries [Advanced Search](#)

Refine your results:

▼ Place

New South Wales (18)
Queensland (4)
ACT (1)

▼ Title

The Sun (Sydney, NSW : ... (4)
The Sydney Morning Her... (4)
Daily Examiner (Grafto... (2)
Northern Star (Lismore... (2)
The Telegraph (Brisban... (2)
Evening News (Sydney, ... (1)
National Advocate (Bat... (1)
Newcastle Morning Hera... (1)
Singleton Argus (NSW : ... (1)
The Brisbane Courier (... (1)

[more...](#)

▼ Category

Article (22)
[Detailed Lists, Results, Guides](#) (1)

Digitised newspapers and more

Showing: 1 - 20 of 23 [Refine search](#)

Sort by: [Relevance](#) [Sort](#)

APPROACHED A WITNESS

Evening News (Sydney, NSW : 1869 - 1931) Tuesday 11 December 1928 p 9 Article

... APPROACHED A WITNESS *Dennis Patrick Finn*, 30, mechanic, and Thomas Bede, 30, salesman, were con ... 48 words



Text last corrected on 28 December 2017 by Salamander

CONFIDENCE MAN SIX MONTHS' IMPRISONMENT

Singleton Argus (NSW : 1880 - 1954) Saturday 24 November 1928 p 8 Article

... Central Police Court, Sydney, on Wednesday, to *Dennis Patrick Finn*, and he added: "Six ... 152 words

Had Possession Of American Cigarettes

Daily Examiner (Grafton, NSW : 1915 - 1954) Thursday 28 December 1944 p 2 Article

... Had Possession Of American Cigarettes SYDNEY, Wed.— A fine of £10 was imposed on *Dennis Patrick Finn*, 44, salesman, of East Sydney, at Central "Court to-day, for having in his possession 135 cartons ... 71 words

£10 FINE FOR AMERICAN CIGARETTES SYDNEY", Wednesday.

The Canberra Times (ACT : 1926 - 1995) Thursday 28 December 1944 p 4 Article

... *Patrick Finn*, 44, salesman, of East Sydney/ at the Central Court ,to-day for having- in his possession ... £10 FINE FOR AMERICAN CIGARETTES SYDNEY", u £Wednesday. A fine of £10 was imposed on

Government

No results

Books

No results

Pictures, p

[view all 1 results](#)



Journals, a sets


<http://trove.nla.gov.au>

Shauna Hicks Cooroy

CHANGING NOTES. THEFT OF £162.

The Kyogle Examiner (NSW : 1912; 1914 - 1915; 1917 - 1954) Tuesday 11 August 1931 p 3 Article

... CHANGING NOTES. THEFT OF £162. On May 13, Denis Finn, alias *Johann Romanoff* (31), labourer, met ... 249 words



What did your ancestors look like?

- Personal descriptions
- Scars and tattoos
- Photographs
- Sketches
- Other biographical details eg education, religion, occupation



All in the family: father & daughter

My GG grandmother was

- aged 40, height 5ft 4 1/2ins, medium build, fresh complexion, brown hair, hazel eyes, second finger of her right hand dislocated
- Scottish, Presbyterian and could read and write
- arrived in 1865 on board the *Sunda*



All in the family continued

My GGG grandfather was

- aged 32, height 5ft 4 1/2ins, stout build, fresh complexion, brown hair, blue eyes
- Scottish nationality
- tattooed with the Montrose coat of arms on his right breast, bracelets on both wrists and American colours on his right arm



Family Homes

- Life in prison
- Conditions in gaol
- Prison work
- Contributed to society



**Petrie Terrace Gaol ca 1880s
(Brisbane City Council image)**



**Brisbane Women's
Gaol ca 1903 (State
Library of Queensland
image)**

<http://trove.nla.gov.au>



Times Have Changed

- My GG grandmother's first 'crime' was to fall pregnant at the age of 16
- Child raised by his grandparents
- Then followed an unhappy marriage out at Eulo and Thargomindah
- Alcoholism, prostitution, homelessness followed (when not in gaol)
- Eventually met another man, became respectable, died a very old lady
- Yet no one in the family had ever heard of her!



Blame the Parents?

- The family had several oyster farms in Pumicestone Passage near Bribie Island
- Whether or not I can credit her choice of profession to the aphrodisiac powers of the humble oyster or not, it does give me an alternative theory for her occupation
- Did she eat too many of her father's oysters while growing up?

RETURN OF PRISONERS DISCHARGED FROM HER MAJESTY'S PRISON, FORTITUDE VALLEY, DURING THE MONTH OF DECEMBER, 1900.

Name.	Where Tried.	Date of Discharge.	Offence.	Sentence.	Native of	Age.	Stature.	Make.	Complexion.	COLOUR OF		Remarks.
										Hair.	Eyes.	
Christina Campbell	Brisbane	1900. 1 December	Drunkenness	7 days' imprisonment or £1 fine	Scotland	45	4 11	Stout	Sallow	Dark-brown	Dark-brown	Minus teeth upper jaw.
Ellen Ferguson	ditto	6 "	Obscene language	1 month's imprisonment or £3 fine	ditto	39	5 4½	Medium	Fresh	Brown	Brown	Second finger right hand disfigured.
Maria Billson	ditto	7 "	Drunkenness	7 days' imprisonment or £1 fine	England	64	4 1½	Slight	Sallow	ditto	Blue...	Nil.
Ellen Murphy	ditto	7 "	Obscene language	48 hours' imprisonment or £2 fine	Ireland	56	5 1½	Stout	ditto	Grey	ditto	Blind right eye.
Mary A. McGregor	ditto	9 "	Drunkenness	14 days' imprisonment or £1 fine	England	46	5 2	ditto	ditto	ditto	ditto	Lame from rheumatism.
Ellen Hayes	ditto	9 "	ditto	7 days' imprisonment or £1 fine	Ireland	33	5 2	Medium	ditto	Brown	Brown	Second finger right hand disfigured.
Sarah Palmer	ditto	10 "	Obscene language	ditto	ditto	62	4 10	ditto	Pale	Grey	Blue...	Scar over right eye; lobe left ear s neck.
Sarah Martin	ditto	10 "	ditto	48 hours' imprisonment or £2 fine	Queensland	28	5 1½	Stout	Fresh	Brown	ditto	"I love F.H. Fred Hayes" right arm.
Catherine Ferguson	ditto	17 "	Drunkenness	7 days' imprisonment or £1 fine	Ireland	60	4 11	Medium	Sallow	Grey	ditto	Right wrist dislocated; scar right che
Mary Healy	ditto	21 "	ditto	ditto	ditto	39	5 5½	Slight	ditto	Brown	ditto	Nil.
Catherine Hannen	ditto	21 "	ditto	7 days' imprisonment or £2 fine	ditto	52	5 1½	Medium	ditto	ditto	Brown	Scar left eyelid; minus all her teeth.
Lizzie Kelly	ditto	22 "	Obscene language	48 hours' imprisonment or £2 fine	ditto	37	5 0	Stout	ditto	ditto	ditto	Nil.
Emily Meredith	ditto	25 "	ditto	7 days' imprisonment or £1 fine	N. S. Wales	58	5 4	Medium	ditto	Grey	Hazel	Mole right cheek; scar on chin.
Annie Maher	ditto	28 "	ditto	14 days' imprisonment or £2 fine	Ireland	49	5 1½	Stout	ditto	ditto	Blue...	Nil.

ARRESTS REPORTED DURING THE WEEK ENDED 21st MAY, 1904—continued.

Name of Offender.	Place of Arrest.	Nature of Charge.	If Arrested on Warrant or Otherwise.	Reference to Police Gazette or Criminal Offence.	How Case Disposed of.	Arresting C
Noswigmeaw (S.S.I.)	Plane Creek	Threatening words	No warrant	Nil	Fined £5 or 3 months' imprisonment	First-class Constable R
Ellen Chick, alias Ellen Ferguson	Barcardine	Vagrancy	ditto	ditto	3 months' imprisonment	First-class Constable J
George Hammond	Muttaborra	Hawking without a license	On summons	ditto	Fined £10 10s. and 10s. 4d costs or 3 months' imprisonment	At the instance of Acti
Thomas Henry Burchill	Cunnamulla	Stealing	No warrant	ditto	Committed for sentence, District Court, Roma, 14th June, 1904	Constable H. J. Housto
Frank Lyons	Nambour	ditto	On warrant	Police Gazette, 1904, page 193	Fined £2 13s. 3d. restitution, or 1 month's imprisonment	Constables W. Adams
Ditto	ditto	Stealing conjointly	ditto	Nil	Fined £2 or 1 month's imprisonment (cumulative with previous sentence)	ditto.
John Haygart	Ingham	Supplying liquor to a South Sea Islander	On summons	ditto	Fined £5 or 1 month's imprisonment	At the instance of Con
Wat-teet Win (kanaka)	ditto	Aggravated assault on a female	No warrant	ditto	4 months' imprisonment	Constable J. Brady.
Arthur Mason	Brisbane	False pretences	ditto	ditto	3 months' hard labour	First-class Constable R
Charles Hutchinson	ditto	Obscene language	ditto	ditto	Fined £5 or 3 months' imprisonment	W. E. Foster (C.I.B. Constable J. Sexton.



Another GG Grandfather

- aged 52 years, Roman Catholic, height 5ft 7 1/2ins, proportionate build, sallow complexion, grey hair, blue eyes, weight 10 stone 12 pounds
- could read and write
- walked lame, his left thumb was deformed, his nose sharp with a red mole under the left nostril and finally a mole on his left rib cage
- no photograph could ever give that much detail



Newspapers

- Caricatures
- Sketches
- Accounts of what happened - can be more informative than actual court records
- Look at all relevant newspapers of the day

ALLEGED ARSON CASE.

At the South Brisbane Police Court yesterday, before Messrs. W. Yaldwyn, P.M., T. Austin, and E. Allen, J.P., a middle-aged man named John Finn appeared in custody charged with wilfully and unlawfully setting fire to a dwelling-house in Hampstead-street, Woolloongabba, last Sunday morning. Sub-inspector Geraghty conducted the prosecution. Constable Coman stated that at about 7.30 on the morning of the 30th instant he saw defendant in Balasclava-street, Woolloongabba, when he said to him, "Where did you sleep last night?" He replied, "Nowhere." Then he said to him, "Where were you last night?" to which he replied, "I was over in town." In answer to further questions he said that he arrived in town from Ipswich "between 9 and 10 yesterday morning." He also said that he came over here soon after dinner time. Witness then asked him how long he remained over here, and he said for a while, after which he went over to meet the half-past 5 train from Ipswich. Asked him then what time he came back, and he said, "I don't know; it was late; the shops and hotels were closed." Defendant did not know either what time he got home, and said later on that he slept on Nolan's veranda until he was awakened by the cold, after which he went for a walk round the cemetery, and had only just come back. Then asked him if he knew where Hampstead-street was, to which he replied,

"Yes, well." Defendant said that it was about a month ago since he was in the locality referred to, and denied that he was there on Saturday night. Witness then conveyed defendant to the watch-house, where he charged him with wilfully and unlawfully setting fire to a dwelling in Hampstead-street, Woolloongabba, on the morning of the 30th August. Defendant said, "What! Is it the place I was living in?" Witness said, "Yes." Defendant did not ask any questions. On the application of Sub-inspector Geraghty, a remand was granted till the 8th instant.

ALLEGED ARSON IN SOUTH BRISBANE.

At the South Brisbane Police Court on Tuesday, before Messrs. W. Yaldwyn, P.M., and J. Austin, J.P., a middle-aged man named John Finn appeared in custody charged, on remand, with wilfully and unlawfully setting fire to a dwelling-house in Hampstead-street, Woolloongabba, on the morning of the 30th August. Mr. B. Papi appeared for defendant, and Sergeant Ryan prosecuted on behalf of the police. Constables Colman and Martin gave evidence as to finding marks of hob-nailed boots on the ground surrounding the house, and to taking plaster of paris casts of the impressions. One of these casts corresponded with the right boot of defendant. Emily Corrie, a married woman, living next door to the house lately occupied by defendant, and which he is charged with setting fire to, deposed to seeing a man enter the front gate of the property and try to wrench the gate off. He went away, returned, and subsequently went away again. She could not identify the man. During that night a fire occurred in the house next door to her residence. Evidence was also given by Mary Nolan and Mary Finn, and, on the application of the police, defendant was remanded till next Monday.

Brisbane Courier
10 Sep 1903

Brisbane Courier
15 Sep 1903

SOUTH BRISBANE.

At the South Brisbane Police Court yesterday, before Messrs. W. Yaldwyn, P.M., and T. Austin, J.P., evidence was taken in the case of Frederick Whittaker, charged with stealing fish valued at 7s., the property of John Leber. Accused was further remanded till 17th instant, bail being extended. John Finn, on remand, charged with having wilfully and unlawfully set fire to a dwelling-house in Hampstead-street, Woolloongabba, on 30th August, was discharged after further evidence had been taken.

Brisbane Courier
1 Sep 1903

ALLEGED ATTEMPTED ARSON.

Fire Brigade Prevents a Conflagration.

Finn Charged With Firing the House.

Police Court Proceedings.

Last week John Finn was charged with wilfully and unlawfully setting fire to a dwelling house in Hempstead-street, Woolloongabba. The house is the property of Sub-inspector Burke. It would appear that on Saturday night, August 21, just one week after the bailiffs had been put in, Finn came down to Brisbane, as was usual with him at the end of each month, and, presumably, not finding his family at the house (in fact the place was still empty) he went to Mrs. Nolan's place, and, after seeing his family had some dinner, went away, and later on in the evening he returned and stayed at the house for about half-an-hour, leaving about 7 o'clock. About half-past

awakened by a noise, and found that the house next door was on fire. In reply to Mr. Papi this witness said that although the house had been empty for a week, the gates were not locked, but she had not seen anyone in the yard, and the Fire Brigade did not go there. A Mrs. Rasmussen, a widow, living on the other side of the house, gave evidence as to the fire, but she does not appear to have seen anyone about the place. The evidence of Constables Coman and Martin was to the effect that Coman arrested Finn early on the Sunday morning. About 3.30 a.m. on Sunday, August 30, in consequence of something he was told, Coman went to the house in Hempstead-street and found that a fire had recently taken place there. He examined the place and took possession of a piece of wire, a piece of burnt straw which looked as if it was a piece of hat material, and two pieces of burnt wood. Martin had previously visited the house about 2 a.m., when he found the place open, but no one about, and on going inside found the floors covered with water, and every appearance of a recently extinguished fire. He thought

THE FIRE HAD ORIGINATED IN ONE OF THE ROOMS.

in a corner by the brick chimney. Coman and Martin then went to Mrs. Nolan's house, where they saw Mary Finn, and subsequently they found Finn himself about 7.30 a.m. Coman asked him where he had stopped that night, and Finn replied, "Nowhere." In reply to further questions, Finn said he had come from Ipswich on the previous day, arriving in Brisbane about 10 o'clock in the morning, and about 3 o'clock in the afternoon had gone to Mrs. Nolan's, where he had dinner. He had stayed there some time, and had then gone to meet the 5.30 train from Ipswich. He did not know what time it was when he came back, but the shops and hotels were closed. He went to Nolan's verandah and went to sleep, and he woke up very cold. He then went for a walk round the cemetery, and told the constables he had not long been back. Coman took him into custody, and with Martin, about 9.30 a.m. went back to Mrs. Nolan's, where they saw Mary Finn, and obtained from her a pair of boots and an overcoat. They then went to the house in Hempstead-street, and Coman made an examination of the ground in the yard, where he discovered several

MARKS OF HOB-NAIL BOOTS.

He took impressions of them in plaster of paris. On the Monday at the watchhouse Martin showed Finn the boots and overcoat, and he said they belonged to him. On Sep-

UNLIKE AN INCENDIARY

as it is possible to imagine, and followed the evidence with the closest attention. The evidence on Tuesday went to show that on August 29, the day of the fire, Finn came down from Bundamba, and to Mrs. Nolan's house. This was about 3 o'clock in the afternoon. Finn was a little the worse for liquor at the time, and Mrs. Nolan and his eldest daughter upbraided him for coming home in that state. They then told him that he should look after his children more, and informed him of how the bailiffs had been put into the Hempstead-street house, and the furniture seized and taken away, and that his family had found food and shelter from Mrs. Nolan. Finn was naturally very much upset at the direful news, and commenced crying. His daughter then got him some dinner, and advised him to go and get a bed at some boarding-house. After having his meal, Finn went away, leaving at Mrs. Nolan's his clothes, which included a pair of boots and an overcoat. He returned between 6 and 7 o'clock the same evening, and after a few minutes' conversation left saying he was going to see if a piece of wire he had put across the garden in Hempstead-street was still there. He took with him his overcoat. Before leaving he asked his daughter to go with him to see a house at Stanley Bridge on the following morning. This was

THE LAST THAT THE WOMEN SAW OF HIM

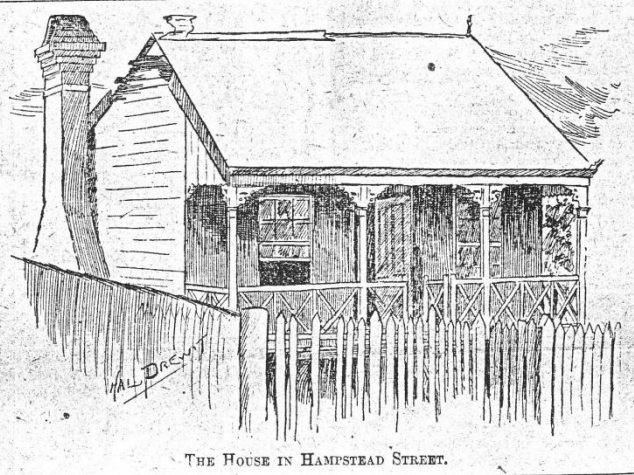
until the Sunday morning, about half-past six, when his daughter saw her father at Mrs. Nolan's, and when she asked him



MISS MARY FINN.

tember 2, in consequence of what they had been told the two constables again went to the house in Hempstead-street, and took more plaster of paris impressions of imprints of hob-nail boots. The different plaster casts were all produced, and some detail evidence as to the similarity of the boots produced with the plaster casts was given. In reply to Mr. Papi, Coman said he had known Finn for two years before he arrested him, and that was how he knew where he lived. Mr. Nolan's house was about half a mile by the road from Finn's late residence. When he took the plaster casts of the footprints the ground was hard, but there had been heavy rain during the night, and there was no doubt but that the impressions had been made during the previous 24 hours. The big gates were open, and anyone could go in and out without hindrance. The house had been empty about a week before the fire, and the fire brigade had been there before he arrived. Constable Martin, under cross-examination, said he would swear the plaster cast was a facsimile of the

"Finn was a little the worse for liquor at that time"



THE HOUSE IN HEMPSTEAD STREET.

where he had been, he replied that he had been on the veranda for some time. Previous, however, to this, about a quarter past four o'clock, Mary Finn had been seen by Constables Coman and Martin. She told her father that they had been to the house looking for him, and he said he would go and see them and find out what they wanted. Before leaving he changed his boots. A Mrs. Emily Corrie said she lived next door to the house in which the Finn's had lived, and had known them for ten months. On August 29 she was on her veranda waiting for her husband to come home, when she saw a man coming from the direction of a paddock on the opposite side of the street. It was dark but she did not see the man's face, neither did she know him at all. All she could say was that he had an overcoat on and was wearing a dark hat. The man went into the gate of the empty house, and into the back, returning to the front he pulled up a few plants, which he threw into the road. He then

TRIED TO PULL OFF THE FRONT GATE

but did not succeed. Leaving the house, he re-crossed the road, but at once returned and opened the big gates, also trying to pull them off, but failed to do so. The man then went away. During the night she was

boot. He could see certain nail marks missing, but he admitted he was not an expert. He was on his oath, and

HE THOUGHT IT WAS A FACSIMILE.

He was not there until after the fire, and could only say what he had heard. He did not see the fire. The daughter, Mary Finn, in giving her evidence, also stated that the family had been living in the house in Hempstead-street, which was the property of Sub-inspector Burke, for the previous 12 months, and that her father, who was working at Bundamba, only came home once a month. On August 22 the bailiffs had seized all the furniture in the house for rent. Her father was away at the time. He had not then been home for three weeks. This completed the evidence given on Tuesday, and Sergeant Ryan asked for a remand until to-morrow, September 14, as some of his witnesses were unable to be present until then. The bench granted the remand, and allowed bail in £80 and one surety of a similar amount.

Strange, but any amount of men remain single because they object to keeping another man's daughter, while they have no objection whatever to keeping another man's wife.

Brisbane Truth

Acquitted



JOHN FINN.

1 o'clock the same night (or, to be precise, Sunday morning) the house in Hempstead-street, which the Finns had been put out of, was discovered to be on fire, but through the efforts of the neighbors and the South Brisbane Fire Brigade

THE CONFLAGRATION WAS EXTINGUISHED

before much damage was done. The police then took the matter up, and in a few hours arrested Finn, whom they charged with wilfully and unlawfully setting fire to a dwell-



Details of Family Life

- Dispelling family myths
- Little things you would never have known
- Name of the ship they arrived on
- Hardships they experienced



Family Hardships Revealed

- My lame GG grandfather was a farmer
- On 9 June 1890 he wrote to the Lands Department asking for an extension of time to pay rent instalments. The letter states that he lost his crops due to wet weather.
- In addition he had broken a limb more than seven months ago and it was still difficult for him to do hard work.
- It must have been a very bad break or not fixed properly at the time as he was still walking lame 14 years later.

Accidents Do Happen

ALLEGED UNLAWFULLY KILLING.

Gundah Gunderson, on remand, appeared in the South Brisbane Police Court this morning (says Saturday's "Telegraph") to answer a charge of having unlawfully killed an old-age pensioner named Samuel Charlesworth, by knocking him down when accused was driving a sulky in Logan-road, on the night of the 4th of September. Accused was committed for trial at the next criminal sittings of the Supreme Court, to be held on the 3rd of November.

Drink driving and
horse and buggy
accidents

Acquitted



Record Sources

- State Archives
- Specialist Groups Historic Gaols eg Fremantle, Boggo Road
- CoraWeb
- Trove

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➤ Criminal and court records

- ... [New South Wales \(6\)](#)
- ... [Queensland \(3\)](#)
- ... [South Australia \(1\)](#)
- ... [Tasmania \(3\)](#)
- ... [Victoria \(4\)](#)
- ... [Western Australia \(1\)](#)

[Queensland State Archives - Online Indexes - Convict / Prisoner](#)

These indexes include: • Chronological register of convicts 1824-1839 (now providing free direct access to digital copies)• St Helena prisoners 1863-1936• Toowoomba prisoners 1864-1906 ... [more](#)

[Findmypast - Pentridge Prison, Victoria - Prison Registers 1871-1960](#)

These records details prisoners from HM Pentridge Prison, the main prison in the Melbourne area. The records list the prisoner's occupation, place of birth, physical description, crime, other ... [more](#)

[Linc Tasmania - Tasmanian Names Index](#)

This site offers a single search across the following:• Arrivals (19th Century). Passengers and ships arriving, mainly in Hobart. Contains surnames A-K, L-Z to be added• Births (1803-1933). ... [more](#)

[The Police Gazette of Western Australia](#)

State Library of Western Australia has the Police Gazette of Western Australia 1876-1900 online and fully

www.coraweb.com.au/categories/criminal-and-court-records

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Gaols

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Gaol Inmates / Prisoners Photos
Index

1870 to 1930



Fully digitised

[Search the Index](#)

The Gaol Photographic Description Books contain a photograph of each prisoner and personal and criminal history.

[More about the Index »](#)



Subjects:

[Crime](#)[Gaols](#)[Indexes](#)

www.records.nsw.gov.au/archives/collections-and-research/guides-and-indexes/gaols/indexes



Shauna Hicks Cooroy May 2018

No 23462

1 11 6 N

Native Place Wood River N.S.W.

Year of birth 1918 ~ 1898

Arrived in State { Ship... Df. Year...

Trade or occupation previous to conviction Mechanic R.L.

Religion R.C.

Education, degree of R.S.

Height, without shoes 5 feet 11 1/2 ins.

Weight in lbs. { On committal 161 On discharge

Colour of hair Fair

Colour of eyes Blue

Marks or special features Scar

Second knuckle of left little finger has been broken recently

Right little finger has been injured

at Dennis Finn. Name DENNIS PATRICK FINN.

Date when Portraits were taken 23.11.28

Year of birth 1918 ~ 1898

Arrived in State { Ship... Df. Year...

Trade or occupation previous to conviction Mechanic R.L.

Religion R.C.

Education, degree of R.S.

Height, without shoes 5 feet 11 1/2 ins.

Weight in lbs. { On committal 161 On discharge

Colour of hair Fair

Colour of eyes Blue

Marks or special features Scar

Second knuckle of left little finger has been broken recently

Right little finger has been injured

(Nos. of previous Portraits...)

CONVICTIONS

Where and When	Offence	Sentence
Central Pk 21 11 28	Falsely pretence	6 months H.L.
Sydney Pk 5 12 28	Appealed dismissed conviction	Notice of appeal lodged 21/11/28
	Confirmed and sentence increased to 12 months H.L.	
Supplied by Police		
St. Adelaide P.L. 20 12 12	Idle + disorderly	1 month in Reformatory
St. Brisbane P.L. 6 10 15	Assault police	1 month H.L.
	Obscene language	Convicted discharged
Brisbane P.L. 30 5 27	Stealing	£5 or 1 month H.L.
" 3 10 27	Illegally use motor car	£5 or 1 month H.L.
" 1 11 27	Willful damage to property	£5 fine
Sydney P.L. 11 11 28	Endeavour to persuade witnesses from giving evidence	Fined £20

Heard appeal against sentence of 2 months

from appeal for 22.2.29. Application by the prisoner for 6 months

+ Trial

Collection ▼

Enter collection search terms here



Advanced Search | ▼

Justice, crime and law

Criminal trial briefs, capital files, inquests and prison registers



www.prov.vic.gov.au/explore-collection/explore-topic/justice-crime-and-law

Register of Male and Female Prisoners (1855-1947)

Record Series Number (VPRS): 515, 516

Gaol No. 2994/39
9-6-39 Lorna E. Elliott, Sept 1939 Born June 1903



269

PHOTOGRAPHS

No. 26563

Name *Brown John*

Height ...	5 ft. 9"	Sentence.	6 Months	6 Months
Weight ...			In default	of Bail
Complexion	freek		of	swiches
Hair ...	black			
Eyes ...	blue			
Nose ...		Date of Conviction.	14. 5. 94	1. 6. 00.
Mouth ...				arrested
Chin ...				17. 9. 00.
Eyebrows ...		Offence.	Threatening	Threatening
Visage ...			Life	Life
Forehead ...				
Date of Birth ...	1856.	Where and before whom tried.	St. Melbourne	St. Melbourne
Native Place	Victoria		Petty Sessions	Petty Sessions
Trade ...	Laborer.		St.	St.
Religion	Presbyterian		offence	offence
Read or Write ...	Both.			

Particular Marks.

Mole left side of mouth.

Previous History.

Previous History.

Married. 2. 4. 92. (assault) 14 days Impr. 18. 5. 91. (smuggling goods) 14 days. Impr. as John Brown

At what Station.

When Received.

Offences, Sentences, &c.

Extensions by—

Visiting Justice.	Governor.
M. D.	M. D.

Melbourne Gaol 14. 5. 94.
Melbourne Gaol. 17. 9. 00.

21st July 1894 To Freedom by order of His Excellency, the Governor on entering into his own recognizance.

May 1901 warrants dis. 22nd June 22. 2. 1 To Freedom by remission



Gaols

The State Records collection contains records documenting the gaoling of offenders, both within the police gaols and the wider gaol system. We hold records for Adelaide Gaol, Yatala Labour Prison, Gladstone Gaol, Mount Gambier Gaol, Port Augusta Gaol, Port Lincoln Gaol, Redruth Gaol and Wallaroo Gaol.

Police gaols can be located by searching our Catalogue for the name of the local police station.

State Records has created the following Fact Sheets for gaol records:

[Photographs in Police and Gaol Records Fact Sheet](#) pdf 57.17kb

State Records also holds various Indexes and Special Lists for gaol records, see

[GRS 2414 - Register of prisoners - Adelaide Gaol \(1857 - 1889\)](#)

ADELAIDE GAOL PRISONERS' REGISTERS

SAARDRELLI	Vol C, p 259
SABBERN, William T	Vol C, p 69
SABINE, Jno. H	Vol D, p 144
SABINE, Jno H	Vol D, p 76
SACHE, Elizabeth	Vol F, p 240
SACK, Charles	Vol E, p 138
SADDLER, Harry	Vol I, p 187
SADLER, Arthur Edward	Vol G, p 390
SADLER, Arthur Edward	Vol G, p 391
SAFFER, Margaret	Vol E, p 91
SAGE, Mary	Vol C, p 100
SAGE, Mary	Vol C, p 166
SAGER, Thomas	Vol G, p 458
SAIER, James (alias Denton, James)	Vol I, p 36
SAIER, James (alias West, James)	Vol I, p 36
SAIER, James (alias McMahon, James)	Vol I, p 36
SAIER, James (alias Spencer, James)	Vol I, p 36



PRISON AND GAOL RECORDS

The State Records Office holds many relevant series of records relating to State prisoners, some of which date back to 1830 and document the establishment of Perth's first gaol. These early records relating to prisoners and prisons in WA can be traced through the records of the Colonial Secretary's Office (CSO). See also further information on how to access CSO records.

Prison records during the convict period are also available although in many cases they are inextricably linked with the records of the Convict Establishment - as local prisoners during the convict period were classed as convicts. Records relating to prisons for this period can be located through the guide to [Convict Records](#).

The majority of records listed below span the post convict period and relate to prisoners held in Western Australian prisons, gaols and police lockups.

NOTE: Prison records have a restricted access period of up to 70 years. Please see the [Accessing Restricted Records](#) section for information on how to apply for access to restricted records.

Departmental Records

The Gaols Department was first listed as a sub-department of the Colonial Secretary's Department in 1917, following the appointment of the Comptroller-General of Prisons under the Prisons Act 1903. The Department was responsible for the functioning of all prisons and gaols within the State.

[illegible]



Hair.	Whiskers.	Visage.	Forehead.	Eyebrows.
<i>Brown</i>	<i>—</i>	<i>Round</i>	<i>High</i>	<i>Dark & thick</i>
Eyes.	Nose.	Month.	Chin.	Native place.
<i>Brown</i>	<i>Medium</i>	<i>Medium</i>	<i>Medium</i>	<i>Tasmania</i>
<i>Short build</i>				

Tasmanian prison records

Find records of prisoners after convict transportation finished.

What is online?

Gaol Records

- 1830-1995 Plans, architectural drawings, elevations and sections of public buildings and infrastructure 1830-1995 - search on "gaol"
- 1861-1933 [Tasmania Police Gazettes \(POL709\)](#). Includes reports of crimes and

☰ On this page

[What is online?](#)

[Gaol Records](#)

[What else is there?](#)

[Hobart Gaol](#)

www.linc.tas.gov.au/family-history/Pages/Prison.aspx

Braidwood Gaol Entrance Book 1856-1899

[Search the database](#)[Home](#)[Email Peter](#)

This database was compiled from the list of Register entries of the Braidwood Gaol, New South Wales for the period 1856-1899. Unfortunately the exact date & reason for admission was not recorded in the register. An approximate time period was interpolated by using the ages of some of the "inmates." It must be stressed that travellers and others used the gaol's facilities as it offered the cheapest accommodation.

The field structure is Alias|Gaol No|Ship|Arrived|State|Age|Birth Place|Sex|Creed|Complexion|Height (ft ins)|Occupation|Make|Hair|Education|Eyes|Remarks|Period

Brief History

Quoting from pages 100 -101 of Netta Ellis' book titled "Braidwood, Dear Braidwood. A History of Braidwood and District":

In 1861 a substantial two storeyed gaol and gaoler's residence costing £1819, was erected at the northern end of Wallace street, on the edge of the Police Paddock where the barracks for the Mounted police had been built twenty five years earlier. In 1862 the gaoler, R Waters, wrote frequently to Sydney requesting extra amenities; he wanted a well, a shelter shed, a shower bath for prisoners and a fenced area for growing vegetables. More secure locks on cell doors were necessary "to prevent a sudden rush by prisoners at night on a false call". In 1863 the cesspool at the gaol was reported to be "useless except for stagnant water". Dr Redhead reported that the latrines had been "receptacles of faeces of five hundred persons for the past ten months, and as the weather lately has been very muggy the contents emitted a most deleterious miasma which together with effluence arising from decomposition of soaked animal blood and the various

HISTORY

A BRIEF HISTORY >

FREMANTLE PRISON TIMELINE >

SWAN RIVER COLONY PRE 1850 >

THE CONVICT ERA >

THE MODERN ERA >

RECOMMENDED READING >

CONVICT DATABASE >



HERITAGE

HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE >

CONSERVATION >

PRISON COLLECTION >

ARCHAEOLOGY >

PRISON BUILDINGS >

BEFORE AND AFTER IMAGES >

Shauna Hicks Cooroy May 2018

<http://fremantleprison.com.au/history-heritage>

Life & Death in the Sunshine State

[Home](#)[Queensland Stories](#)[Beastly Tales](#)[Hangings](#)[Graveyards](#)[Colonial Columns](#)[Boggo Road](#)[Ghosts](#)[Books](#)

26 March 2018

Ghost Trek: The Next Generation

I helped develop the 'Ghosts of South Brisbane Cemetery' night tour for the Friends of South Brisbane Cemetery, and I'm a guide on the tour. And I'm even not sure 'paranormal tours' should be allowed in municipal cemeteries.

The 'Ghosts of South Brisbane Cemetery' tour was an idea that had been floating around for a long time. The aim was to develop a new style of night tour at the cemetery, one that questions the whole subject of ghosts and gets people thinking more critically.



Life and Death in the Sunshine State



The underside of Queensland history with Chris Dawson (MPHA Qld; Grad. Dip. Applied History; BA, Anthropology [both University of Queensland])

Blackall Prison (1891-1902)

The introduction of the Prisons Act 1890 in Queensland led to a shake-up of the prison system here, with attention paid to the official classification of police gaols and 'real' prisons. One gaol to be upgraded was at [Blackall](#), a small Queensland town lying some 500 km south-west of Rockhampton. European pastoralists had arrived there during the 1860s and a village was in place by 1867. This was named Blackall and it later became the administrative centre for the local district.

<http://boggoroad.blogspot.com.au>

Tours

HISTORY
TOUR

PRISONER
TOUR

OFFICER
TOUR

ESCAPES
TOUR

GHOST
TOUR

BOGGO ROAD GAOL HISTORY TOUR

- This 1 hour 15 minute Tour includes time to see the original cells and the original prison hospital.
- The History Tours are run at 11:00am 7 days a week.
- The History Tour is suitable for all ages.

[Book Now](#)

On : 5 May, 2018 | By : [Boggo Road Gaol](#) | Category : Uncategorized | View : 7

Lifers – Frederick Emanuel Lewis and John Wilson.

SHOT HER DOWN IN COLD BLOOD!

THE MOST BRUTAL AND COLD BLOODED HOLD UP IN BRISBANE IN MANY YEARS TOOK PLACE AT POPE STREET OFF GLADSTONE ROAD AT DUTTON PARK AT THE HOME OF MR. AND MRS. RICHARD STEPHENS FROM THE PADDINGTON PICTURE THEATRE.

“STICK 'EM UP, QUICKLY!”

SHOT HER DOWN IN COLD BLOOD!

The most brutal and cold blooded hold up in Brisbane in many years took place at Pope Street off Gladstone Road at Dutton Park at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Richard Stephens from the Paddington Picture Theatre.

It was 11:30pm on the 30th of January 1932, the Stephens family returned home from the theatre with the evening's takings. As the family car pulled into the drive way and into the garage they were startled by a loud report. Mr. Stephens thought it was a blow out.





Inside Boggo Road

with the Boggo Road Gaol Historical Society (Inc.)

[Home](#)[History Vault](#)[Boggo Books](#)[The BRGHS](#)[Museums](#)[Tours](#)[The Future](#)[News & Events](#)

Unlock the History of Boggo Road Gaol...



The 'Circle', female division, Boggo Road 1916 (State Library of Queensland)

Boggo Road Gaol Historical
Society (Inc.)

BRGHS



'inside history'

'Inside Boggo Road' is produced
by the Boggo Road Gaol Historical
Society, who are the #1 source of
information about prison history in
Queensland.

Search Boggo Road

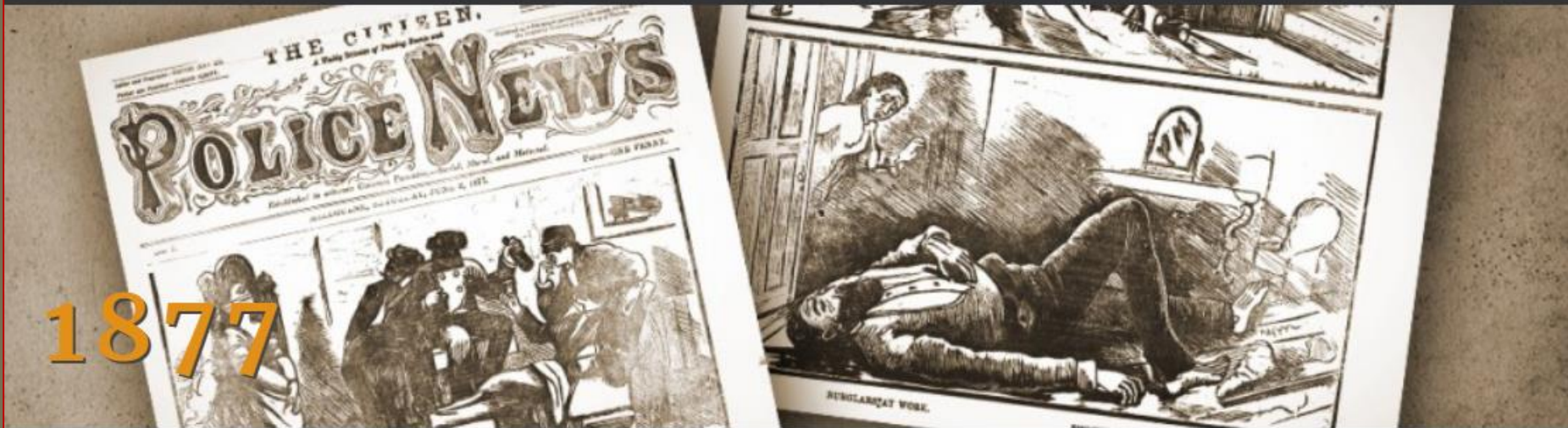


The Prosecution Project

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Do you know your family's past? Search

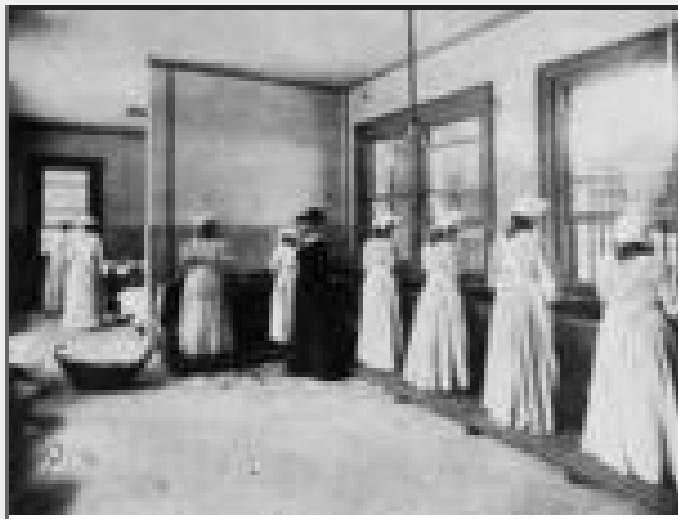
Visualise Trial Statistics

Generate graphs for records via court,

On this week in... 1936

Three's a crowd

<https://prosecutionproject.griffith.edu.au>



Prisoners using the laundry facilities
at the new female division of Boggo
Road Gaol, Brisbane, 1903

State Library of Queensland



Prisoners having dinner in the
exercise yard at the new female
division of Boggo Road Gaol,
Brisbane...

State Library of Queensland



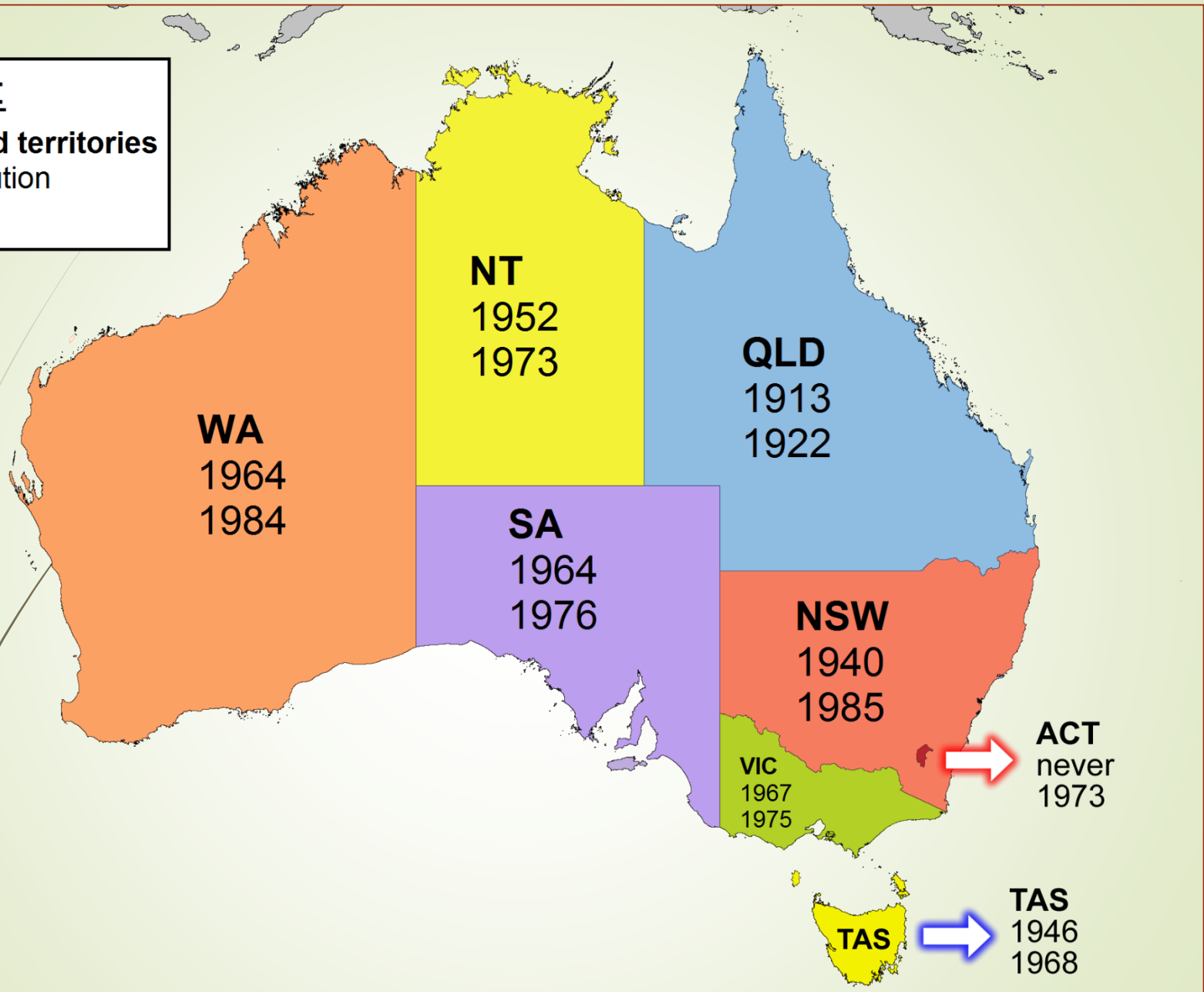
<http://trove.nla.gov.au>

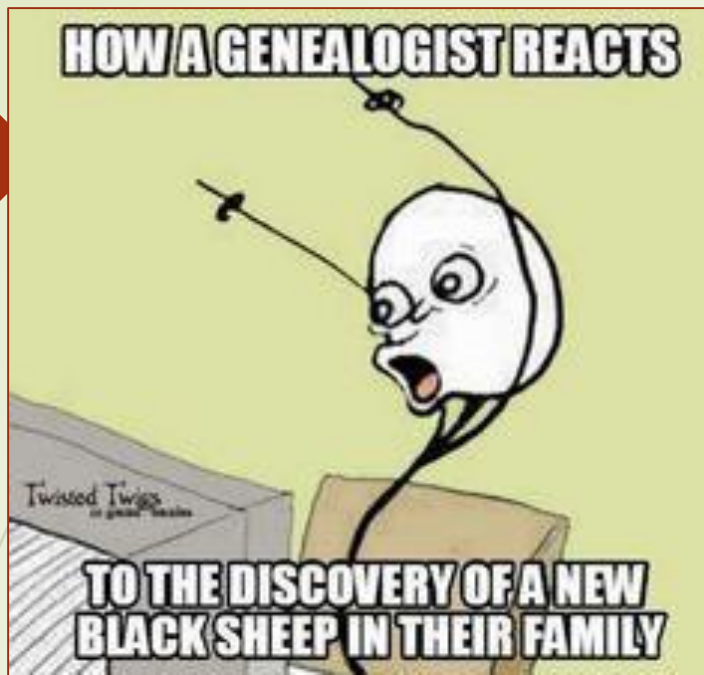
Legend:

States and territories

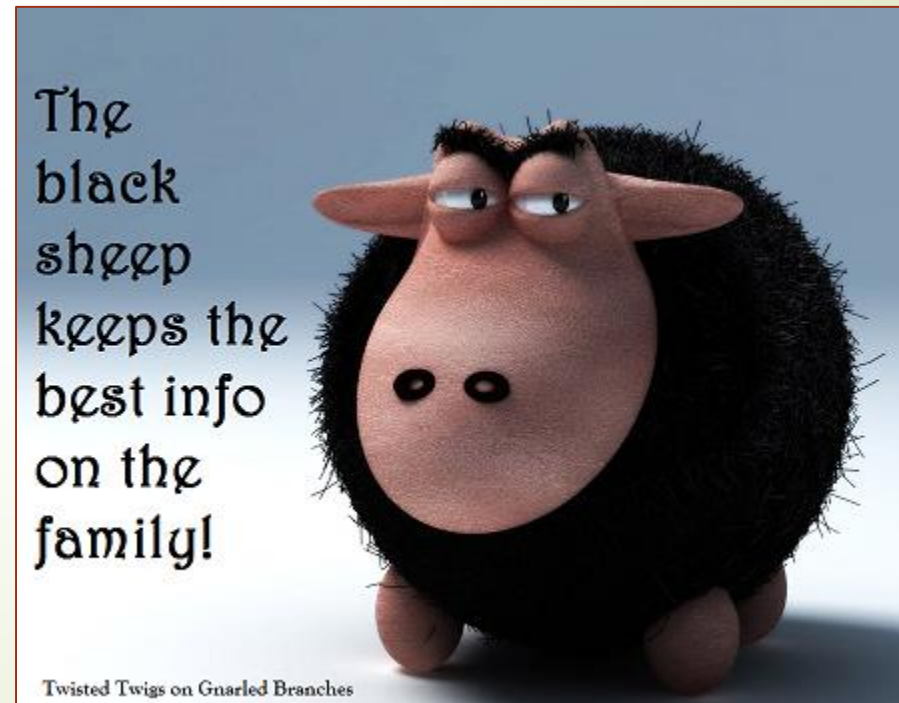
Last execution

Abolition





<https://twistedtwigsgenealogy.com>





Conclusion



- Don't be afraid to look, ancestors were human
- If it wasn't for them, we would not be here today
- The biographical and physical information is not always available elsewhere
- New resources – more online indexes, digitised records, ongoing
- Revisit your missing ancestors and maybe those brick walls will come down!