COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

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THE CHILD IN NEW SOUTH WALES SOCIETY:
1820 TO 1837

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A thesis submitted for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy of the University of New England.

Armidale
May 1982
I certify that the substance of this thesis has not already been submitted for any degree and is not being currently submitted for any other degree.

I certify that any help received in preparing this thesis, and all sources used, have been acknowledged in this thesis.
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This work is dedicated to my children, Josephine, Michelle, Dominica and Brendan who made life bearable during a difficult time and to my wife, Helen, who suffered this little ego trip to run its course.
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# ABBREVIATIONS

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<td>Aust.</td>
<td>The Australian</td>
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<td>ADB</td>
<td>Australian Dictionary of Biography</td>
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<td>AEHR</td>
<td>Australian Economic History Review</td>
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<td>Colonial Office Papers</td>
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<td>HRA</td>
<td>Historical Records of Australia</td>
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<td>HS</td>
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<td>Journal of the Royal Australian Historical Society</td>
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INTRODUCTION

Few things attract the mind more than the resolution of an apparent paradox, none more so than when it appears that good is being produced by evil. Such a paradox seemingly arises from a study of the literary evidence of early colonial N.S.W. These sources paint colonial society, with the exception of a small elite, in the blackest of hues. If one were to believe this description one could not imagine a more inhospitable climate for raising children. Those who have accepted these descriptions have then been faced with the problem of explaining how evil produced good for the general opinion was that the Colonial born children did not manifest the vice of the convict population. To date the argument has been that the Colonial born, convinced, by one method or another, of the value of the morality of the better classes, rejected their parents' values and became worthy citizens. This view was held by many contemporaries, although not all, and by some present day writers. Most modern opinion is derived from the thesis of K. MacNab summarised in the article co-authored with R. Ward.

The problem does not stop there for the glowing accounts of the colonial born lead one to expect from them in adult life a high public profile. Such is not the case. As Norma Townsend points out in her review of Volume 6 of the Australian Dictionary of Biography, very few

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1 This thesis covers only those children of European parentage. Aboriginal children in this period are a study in themselves. The term "Currency" was applied to the children born in the colony, while that of "Sterling" was applied to those born in the mother country. The use of the term varied, sometimes applying to all colonial born children and at other times only to those lower class children born of convict or emancipist parents. Breton, Select Committee on Transportation, 1837, Minutes, p153. It will be used in this thesis to denote all colonial born children and adults regardless of their parents' status.


of them made any enduring contribution to public and professional life, especially the girls. The history of N.S.W. is dominated, with a few notable exceptions, by migrants who either arrived as children or as young men or women. It appears as if the native born were either forced into, or desired, a lesser role in colonial affairs.

The search for the answers to these two paradoxes formed the initial impetus for this thesis. My answer in brief is that the polarities have been exaggerated in both cases and that the truth is found somewhere in the middle. In neither case is there a true paradox.

Three groups dominated society: the free, those who were born in the colony or arrived as free emigrants; the freed, those who arrived as convicts but had served their sentences or been pardoned; and the bond, the convicts still serving sentences. The ranks of the married, or child producers, were dominated by only two of these; the free and the freed. Many of the free were emigrants who came with ambitions, self motivation and a hope to further their families in a new colony free of many of the inhibiting factors of the old country but sufficiently British to provide moral and financial security for their children. Amongst the freed it would be difficult to argue that the majority was rehabilitated by their experiences, but it can be argued that most of the minority who married or cohabited was rehabilitated. Undoubtedly the greatest impetus towards family stability was the shortage of women. The women, whether convict, emancipist, or the "wanton baggage" of free emigration, because of their small numbers were in a unique position to bargain for the most desirable mate whether in legal marriage or stable de-facto relationship. Because of this the women used marriage, or less formal arrangements, to further their socio-economic prestige, making wise or economically advantageous choices of partners and establishing or reasserting their self esteem through such relationships.

This thesis will argue that the description of the moral economy of the colony put abroad by the conservative faction was a caricature of the real situation, and that the Currencies adopted the values of their parents. The great majority of parents rejected the grosser faults of convict morality as they moved into economic and social security and accepted an admittedly watered down, more democratic, less religious,
and less legalistic, version of the values of the "better classes". They became the aspiring classes, striving to achieve respectability and stability and determined that if they could not achieve it then their children would. Their children's status was thus enhanced individually within the family and as a group within the community but the ambitions instilled into the children were limited. Security was not to be found in education, salaries or wages but in property, in small basically self sufficient landholdings. For the girls the acme was a respectable and secure life as a wife and mother on the land. Thus, and this is the central hypothesis of this work, while initially the children's situation was enhanced by colonial conditions, they were fated to fill the middle ranking positions. These positions gave them security but little opportunity to make an economic, cultural or political mark on the history of the colony.

Chapter One will show how the narrow conservative ideology relating to marriage and childraising was not accepted "in toto" by the majority of the population, thus freeing the child from many of the rigours of a highly disciplined childhood. Chapter Two will deal with the practice of childcare, the physical condition of the children, and show the more advantageous situation of colonial children over their home country cousins. The third and fourth chapters will deal with the pressures placed on the family and the child by the structure of the colony; its demography in Chapter Three and its economy in Chapter Four. These pressures initially enhanced the status of the children, giving them a measure of social and economic security, freeing them from the necessity for early work, allowing them the opportunity to engage in family enterprise, fostering closer inter-family relationships, and providing "at risk" children with good support. Some, however, were to have a detrimental effect in adult life.

To this point the chapters will concentrate on the child's relationship with family and society, but Chapter Five will deal with the child and the law, one of the major points of contact between child and government. The colonial government was provided with the means, and quickly reached the desire, to intervene in children's affairs to an extent unheard of in England. Its principal aim was to establish
stable family relationships and revert to English custom but in the meantime it was forced to enhance the individual status of the child before the law. The final chapter will look more closely at the child's reaction to its situation, the short and long term effects of this upbringing and seek to establish conclusively the validity of the hypothesis of this work.
CHAPTER ONE

CHILDHOOD: IMAGES AND REALITY
The colony of N.S.W., between 1820 and 1837, was divided upon many lines. There were divisions along wealth and occupational lines, lines of civil status, and ideological lines. The combination of civil status and occupational status produced a strange class structure which not only does not fit into the format traditionally associated with class structures but is extremely difficult to describe. Even as early as 1812, ex-Governor Bligh was dividing society into six groups. He said:

Generally we consider that the first class is Military; the second, the Civil; the third, the settlers, in that class I include not only those from England, but those which were settled, and had grants after having received free pardons; the fourth Class are called landholders, they are made up of persons renting land, and I believe, including some ticket of leave men; the fifth Class, common labourers, free; the sixth Class, ticket of leave men and convicts.¹

He further qualified this structure by adding that the free settlers always had precedence. Emancipists were received only by general society not by the "first class", "could and never hope" to advance to a dignified status, and remained always tainted by convictism.²

In 1831 Thomas de la Condamine divided the colony into three groups; respectable society, the respectable emancipists, and the rest. Amongst "respectable society" he included the civil and military service and the principal merchants and landholders. Respectable emancipists consisted of those who had risen to the rank of shopkeeper and above.³ Condamine's assessment was similar to that of Breton who, in his appearance before the 1837 Molesworth Committee, distinguished five classes. The highest class of society, to which no emancipist was admitted, consisted of all gentlemen above the class of shopkeeper, that is, the government officials, professional men and "gentlemen settlers". The second class consisted of the emancipist landholders, merchants, and some professionals who controlled the majority of the colony's capital. They were "out of one society and below the other", barred from the gentlemen class but above the third class which consisted of shopkeepers and tradesmen, both free and freed. Below them

¹ Select Committee on Transportation, 1812, Minutes, p35.
² Ibid, p36.
³ Select Committee on Secondary Punishment, 1831, Minutes, pp72-3.
were the free labouring classes and finally the convicts.

These different perceptions must be kept in mind when assessing the views of a particular contemporary commentator on the state of morality and the quality of childcare in the colony. It must also be remembered, when assessing the effects of any action, that what is "acceptable" to the participants in that action is what is most important. It is impossible to generalise about the impact of the morality of a particular period upon the population of that time. All that can be done is to attempt to detail the reality of colonial conditions and, more importantly, conditions within the home. Most of the literary evidence on the morality of the colony comes from the representatives of the "first class" or "respectable society" with a smattering of information from the "respectable emancipist". Within this evidence there is an obvious ideological division between what were known as the colonial Whigs and Tories. Given the multifarious divisions it is important to understand the criteria each writer used to assess the situation. Even when the ideological factions agreed in their assessment one has to be careful that class interest, or identity, has not overcome ideological differences leading to condemnation of actions which the lower orders found acceptable and not deleterious to their children.

The debate between the colonial Whigs and Tories had its origins in the early division between the military and the freed and centred upon the debate over the positions each was to have in colonial society. The protagonists borrowed the English terms; those advocating the preservation of English standards proudly accepting the title of conservative Tories, while those who desired a new system which allowed the freed entry to the wealth of the colony happily dubbed themselves liberal Whigs. This simple division took on new complexities with the arrival of lower class free emigrants, the change in attitude of the Colonial Office towards the colony and as a significant number of Currencies entered the ranks of the adults. The early distinction between the free and the freed became blurred and the debate quickly evolved into a clash of ideologies between the small conservative elite and the new aspiring class of free and freed.

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4 Select Committee on Transportation, 1837, Minutes, pp152-3. It must be kept in mind that in Britain few of the colonial "aristocracy" would have graduated to the bottom rung of the "gentry".
In the 1820s the debate seems to have been a moral one with political overtones and the opposing positions are well summarised by Manning Clark:

...the Australian refrained from any pious or sanctimonious praise for the virtuous or any censure of the wicked. They praised all human activities which brought lads and lassess together: they loved all gay and lively intercourse. Not for them the black looks, the pursed lips, the tut-tuts of the parsons and the Sydney Gazette when they surveyed the human scene. They wrote up the behaviour of the convict community, their whoring, drinking, fisticuffs and brawls as a huge joke. For them drunkenness was not the occasion for talk about hell-fire from a lugubrious parson, but just part of the human comedy. While the parsons and Howe conjured up the fires of hell for the drinkers they, warm friends of humanity that they were, published a recipe for curing a hangover. The Australian despised all talk about human vileness, the unworthiness of human beings, and eternal punishment. They wrote as the true sons of the Enlightenment - as men who were called to lay low those infamous ones, those breastbeating sinners who begged a jealous Jehovah for his favour in the life of the world to come.5

In the 1830s the debate changed to one that was political with moral overtones. Both the Botany Bay Whigs and Tories used the features of moral debate of the 1820s to denigrate their opponents. The Herald defined the distinction between the two parties by stressing the morality of the Tories and the dissolution of the Whigs. Rhetorical exaggeration notwithstanding, it clearly reveals the underlying thoughts of the Tories.

Botany Bay Whigs can prate of 'respectability' and 'liberality' and can uphold Convict principles! The reason is plain. Whig principles and Convict principles are, in Botany Bay, synonymous terms. The whole respectability of the Colony are Tories - the whole of the rabble are Whigs (save the mark!). The Tories are the most respectable, moral, and intelligent men in the Colony - the Whigs are the most dissolute and unprincipled - who fill the Factory with bastards, and express a wish through their newspaper, to see women nursing two illegitimate children, instead of one.6

On the other hand the Whigs stressed the moral hypocrisy of the Tories, disputed their belief that a man could never be reformed once he had set his face to God, or the Law, or had never had his natural vileness tempered by authority or sober regularity. They mocked the Tories' belief in their own moral superiority and the concomitant belief in

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6 SH, 19/1/1837, 2 (c).
their right to judge others. Finally the Whigs objected to the Tories presuming an authoritative place in the ordained structure of society.

The division had a huge impact on the respective proponents' view of the moral climate of the colony. This view coloured their assessment of the virtue or otherwise of the colony's children and determined many attitudes towards the "correct" education of children. Rather than compare the philosophy of each faction on every moral question the position of the Tories will be examined. They held the most rigid standards and were, through rather lurid accounts in appearances before various British Parliamentary Committees, the more influential in establishing the reputation of the colony. Comparisons with the other positions can be left to the relevant section in the body of this work.

The Tories found themselves surrounded by immorality and threats to good order. Broughton listed, in 1830, the five main vices of the colony as ignorance (or disregard) of all religion, prostitution, adultery, drunkenness, and theft. Others gave more detailed lists but Broughton's list needs only to be widened to seven main categories in order to encompass the full range: Religion, the Sabbath, authority, language, sexual matters, drink and crime.

The criteria for morality were long and complex. Chief amongst them was religious feeling. Religion, man's relationship to God, was the most important issue in life. God was a hard judge who had set clearly defined rules to follow. To live in "total neglect of a preparation for another and better world" was to degenerate into earthly, sensual, and devilish-minded animalism. Paramount amongst God's laws was the observance of his day. The Sabbath was the day of complete rest and communion with God. To break its rules was to begin the inevitable slide into immoral oblivion.

7 HRA, I, xv, pp725-8.
8 SG, 26/8/1826, 2(e).
9 "Sunday desecration, - despising the day of rest which the Lord has appointed, - is notoriously one of the first steps which a man is tempted to take in that downward course of sin ... Rev. W. Pridden, Australia: Its History & Present Condition, London, 1843, p339.
God had also established an order on earth with man at the top of the natural hierarchy and, within human society, another hierarchy of authority. Authority came from divine favour manifest in the wealth and respectability of the various classes. To attempt to gain authority by means other than reward for goodness and acceptance by higher ranking men was to destroy the very fabric of society. John Henderson wrote of the baneful effects of treating the better classes and the uneducated and inferior ranks as equals. The former should be the head and the latter the hand: both suffer if this is not so. Give liberty to the lower orders and they fall into licentiousness. Besides the lower orders accepting their position this divine order demanded that those in authority accept their responsibilities.

As the head of a family, [the moral person] sets in his own conduct, an example of regularity and sobriety to his servants, with whom he deals as they may deserve. He is strenuous in his endeavours to maintain good order, which he well knows cannot be maintained in this anomalous state of society without a vigorous administration of its laws.

All men had some responsibilities, especially parents of children, and to exhibit recklessness towards any charge was not only damnable in the guardian but dangerous to the ward.

Much of the crime of the colony originated in this lack of respect for the authority of the state and for the property of others. The democratising effect of granting land and favours to the lower orders removed many of the inhibitions to restraint in this area. A moral man upheld all the laws of God and man. Similarly much of the bad and obscene language arose from the lack of respect for God's and man's authority and the sensibilities of others. Oaths and blasphemies were totally anathema. Other "crude" language was insulting rather

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10 J. Henderson, Observations on the Colonies of New South Wales and Van Diemens Land, Calcutta, 1832, pp48-49. See also John Macarthur's toast at the farewell of his son "May our youth be taught that Liberty is a fallacy, unless founded on the fear of God, and a loyal devotion to the King." quoted in Clark, C.H.M., op.cit., p86.

11 SH, 19/1/1837, 2(c).

12 SH, 16/3/1835, 3(c).

than indecent. Obscenity, rather widely interpreted, applied to any sexually related matter such as the publication of a list of Sydney's "Sporting Ladies" or any "loud and unrestrained" conversation likely to shock the modesty of a decent female.

Drunkenness and whoring were unrestrained manifestations of activities that were legitimate in moderation and in the right circumstances. Drinking in excess led to all other forms of excess; most notably sexual activity. That sexual relations outside marriage and prostitution increased "the moral depravity of society, is too well known to require explanation". Concubinage was "peculiarly abhorrent to the Divine Legislator" and "repugnant to the interests of civilization, morality and religion". Concubinage could do nothing but produce children destitute of every moral principle and despisers of religion and authority. The practice was a danger to good parents and masters who could not hope to secure the virtue of their daughters or female servants.

Given such demanding standards it is little wonder that the self appointed moral minority looked askance at N.S.W. in the 1820s and 1830s. The Tory, synonymous with the moral man according to the Herald, was surrounded by what to his eyes were damnable abominations. According to them, the respectable were only a small proportion of the population. Sunday was a day of riot and profanation. All inns, butchers' and shops were open and it was a day of feasting, drinking and sport for the working class. In country areas Sunday was desecrated

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14 e.g. SH, 22/1/1835, 2 (d) where a boy said "there goes a b--y dirty soldier officer, he hasn't cleaned his boots nor washed himself, what a filthy guard, and other expressions of a like insulting character." In another case a master's son prosecuted a convict woman for using the expression "you hang down your head like a hangman". Bathurst Bench Books, 30/5/1826, NSWAO, 2/8322, ff142-3.
15 SG, 17/6/1826, 3(c); Aust, 16/3/1826, 5(c).
16 SG, 1/3/1827, 2(e).
17 SG, 14/4/1825, 2(c).
18 SG, 18/9/1823, 2(b-c).
19 SG, 14/4/1825, 2(c-d).
20 SG, 18/8/1825, 2(e).
21 Lang, J.D., Select Committee on Transportation, 1837, Minutes, p256.
by masters and servants who took the opportunity to settle accounts, weigh out the rations, pay visits, or work in the garden. Even though church accommodation was available for only about half the population of Sydney, less at Parramatta, and nil in most other areas, the churches were still only half full on Sundays. Even the emigrant class, those who were to save the colony, were often dissipated, useless, and mischievous. Many of the free emigrant women were little more than common prostitutes.

In the eyes of the "respectable" the immorality of the convicts and emancipists was beyond description. They totally lacked any religious feeling, were dissolute, demoralised, drunken, improper and thieves. Even those from whom one might expect some reformation were beyond the pale. Most of the "educated convicts" were "beyond redemption maintaining menial positions sufficient to provide them with grog etc." The convict mechanics were lazy, lacked deference to authority, were combinationists, and manipulated their scarcity to gain greater licence. The moral minority's view of the colony's sexual mores were damning. All convict women were prostitutes while the men often engaged in sodomy, bestiality and other unnatural crimes. The greater proportion of the population lived in concubinage and the only reason most convicts married, regardless of their marital status,

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23 Pridden, _op.cit._, p340
24 Broughton to Darling, 19/6/1830, HRA, I, xv, p727.
25 McLeay to Darling, 3/3/1836, HRA, I, xviii, pp343-4. Again, in the interest of comparison, much the same could be said of the midlands and north of the United Kingdom.
27 T. Galloway, _Select Committee on Transportation, 1838_, Minutes, p185.
29 Ullathorne, _Select Committee on Transportation, 1838_, Minutes, p17.
30 Mudie, _Select Committee on Transportation, 1837_, Minutes, p38.
31 Ullathorne, _Select Committee on Transportation, 1838_, Minutes, p17.
32 Scott, _Select Committee on Secondary Punishments, 1831_, Minutes, p148; _Lang, Select Committee on Transportation, 1837_, Minutes, pp256-7; _SG, 18/9/1823_, 2(b-c).
was to escape the convict life.\textsuperscript{33} These marriages frequently had a worsening effect; on the women especially. They became more drunken and depraved and resorted to prostitution to survive.\textsuperscript{34} Family life was consequently brutish and violent, often disrupted by the loss of a parent through the operations of divine or human law.

Such a view of family life led to a rather jaundiced attitude to the colony's children. According to "the just" great numbers of wretched, neglected, unwanted illegitimate children were consigned to nakedness, want, poverty and misery.\textsuperscript{35} The children were exposed "from earliest infancy [to] a spirit of irreverence and dissolution ... cradled in vice ... nursed at the bosom of profanity ... fed with the poison of ungodly lips, and ... drink in iniquity from their parents' example."\textsuperscript{36} Not only were children infected by parents they received further lessons in vice from convict servants both male and female. These servants were "deeply initiated in all the mysteries of human depravity" and had no hesitation in imparting those mysteries to their masters' children.\textsuperscript{37} When the child was sent to school exconvict schoolteachers had no hesitation in introducing alcohol to the classroom and frequently teachers had sexual relations with their pupils.\textsuperscript{38} In the street the child was exposed to constant danger from the spectacle of drunken men and women offering drink, exposing themselves, using obscene and indecent language, gambling, fighting, and indulging in a litany of other vices.

If one was to believe all this one could not imagine a more inhospitable climate for raising children. But clearly these views were the views of a tiny minority who concentrated on the worst and generalised from the particular. Their views, however, gained wide credence amongst contemporaries and amongst some historians. Their

\textsuperscript{33} Ullathorne, W., The Catholic Mission to Australasia, Liverpool, 1837, p27; Scott, Select Committee on Secondary Punishments, 1831, Minutes, p148.
\textsuperscript{34} Mudie, Select Committee on Transportation, 1837, Minutes, pp40-44.
\textsuperscript{35} Macquarie to Bathurst 24/3/1819 & 27/7/1822, HRA, I, x, pp94 & 678.
\textsuperscript{36} Ullathorne, W., Catholic Mission, pp28-29.
\textsuperscript{37} Byrne, J.C., Twelve Years' Wanderings in the British Colonies from 1835 to 1847, London, 1848, p231; Russell, J., Select Committee on Transportation, 1838, Minutes, pp55-58.
\textsuperscript{38} Scott to Darling, 1/9/1829, HRA, I, xv, pp220-221; Barnes, Select Committee on Transportation, 1838, Minutes, p47.
most damaging criticism, as far as children were concerned, was the claim that children were not accepted by their parents nor society in general. Apparently all viewed the children as little more than objects of amusement and lust. There can be no better place to commence to rectify the impression created by the Tories than with this image of non-acceptance.

When the colony was established little thought was given to the provision of services for children, the assumption being that the few military children would be best dealt with through their families. The major reasons for confining convicts to N.S.W. were punishment and deterrence although there were vague hopes that the journey to N.S.W. and the inducements of a new land would somehow reform the convicts. These hopes of reformation did not extend to the establishment of convict family units but it quickly became apparent that, first, children were rapidly becoming a significant element in the population, and, second, hopes of immediate and general convict reformation were ill founded. The moral minority quickly realised that the colony could be saved only by the "rising generation" and they transferred their attention from reforming the convicts to protecting the children.

By the 1820s the cry of "Advance Australia" had been taken up by many and children were seen as an essential element in that advance. The Gazette, echoing the sentiment of many, welcomed the arrival of 37 wives and 107 children on the Thames in 1826.

This is a 'nouvelle' method to 'Advance Australia', in importing children by wholesale. However it's all grist that comes to our mill. We hope the next importation the ministry will send us, may turn out to be a cargo of healthy and attractive damsels, and children will follow of course.39

The advantage with children was that "being of a tractable disposition [they] would more readily acquire a knowledge of the occupations most in demand in the colony" and reformation would not have to be carried out before they could become useful members of society.40

The ramifications of the protection given by government and society to children will be expanded in the following chapters and only a brief summary of what follows need be given here.

39 SG, 19/4/1826, 3(a).
40 Eckford, J., Committee on Immigration, 1835, Minutes, p304.
The overriding object of each of the early governors was similar to that of any leader of a state; the preservation of peace. To do this in a potentially explosive penal colony the governors were given almost total control of every facet of the daily life of their subjects. As a matter of priority they attempted to introduce into the colony the socially stabilising influence of the family, to offset, as much as possible, the evils of an uprooted, disaffected population.\(^1\) The small population and the closeness of society contributed to an awareness of individual worth. The children of the colony were demographically more obvious, less susceptible to indifference caused by high infant mortality, and rapid maturers. Both Twopeny and Pember Reeves point out that the small size of the colonial population meant (even in the 1870s and 90s) that the individual counted for more, that it was harder to escape the notice of others, and that one small incident was often seen by the governors as the beginnings of a raging social bushfire.\(^2\) Problems within families that could threaten the hard won gains towards a family based colonial respectability could be quickly identified and solutions quickly attempted.\(^3\)

State support of welfare was widely accepted. The majority of the inhabitants of penal N.S.W. came from a socio-economic class used to State interference in family life through the enactment of the Poor Laws and Criminal Law. The victims' negative reaction to this welfare system did not go as far as denying the principle of government help to the needy, but the victims resisted the implementation of any comparative system in N.S.W.. To the victims, the Poor Laws were a

\(^1\) See for example Aust, 1/7/1826, 1(a); Bligh, Select Committee on Transportation, 1812, Minutes, p31.  
\(^3\) Even Governor Darling, not noted for his benevolence, was moved to render assistance (in the form of a passage back to England) to the wife of A.M. Baxter the insolvent Attorney General of N.S.W. Baxter in drunken fits ill treated his wife and finally deserted her in complete destitution taking his son with him. Darling's action was probably due in part to his desire to rid the colony of such an unsavoury example, but it is interesting to note that the Colonial Office, reflecting English attitudes to family difficulties as much as the Office's parsimony, rebuked Darling for his charity. ADB, I, pp74-75; Darling to Murray, 10/2/1831, and 14/3/1831, HRA, I, xvi, pp77 & 110-111.
negative and disruptive interference in personal and family affairs. When they encountered a government with control of most facets of economic life, and ostensibly set up to look after them alone, they demanded a positive system of support for the individual and the family. There was little else that the government could do as the colony lacked the social and religious framework for implementing a relief system based upon the English Poor Law.\textsuperscript{44}

The greatly exaggerated fears of socially aspiring parents added weight to the Government's own fears for the corruption of youth from the reputed depravity of the children's parents and the whole of society. It was felt that even good parents were unable to provide the necessary protection for children within the family due to the debauched state of colonial society in general and to the necessity for convict servants in particular. If the children were to be the saviours of N.S.W. they had to be saved from this contamination and the only way that they could really be saved, according to many authorities, was by isolating them from society or other equally drastic protective intervention. The policy of isolation through the State run orphanages, the public and the Sunday Schools, and the School of Industry, was pursued with more vigour and effected a larger proportion of the children than in England.\textsuperscript{45} It was impossible to do this for all, but the will to intervene on behalf of the child, even into the family itself, manifested itself in many other areas.

Children were welcomed by the authorities even though grave fears were held for their moral safety and they often formed a burden on the finances of the colony. Only in the 1830s, with a crackdown on convict marriage and the rapid increase in the children of the free, did the government begin to welcome only the children of the moral and frown upon the children of the bond.

Within the family children also seem to have been welcomed. We are almost totally dependent on the writings of the literate


\textsuperscript{45} See Chapter 2; Cleverley, J.F., The First Generation, Sydney, 1971, passim.
colonial elite for this impression but sometimes glimpses can be gained from the papers and other sources of a readiness by all classes to accept the arrival of a new child, a sense of deprivation when one was lost, and a general pride in the forwardness and talents of their colonial offspring. The overwhelming impression gained from these sources confirms the opinion that the great majority of parents willingly accepted and loved their children. As Pinchbeck and Hewitt point out, "the great majority of parents have always loved their children but the interpretation of affection has varied from one generation to another". It is impossible to draw up an objective set of criteria which help assess the level of acceptance between periods or even of social groups within the same period. The harsher the life the harsher the treatment of children by modern standards, for little attempt was made to shield the child from the realities of life.

Perhaps the only universal measure of affection is the parents' willingness to care for and maintain their children. Even this is not unqualified for parents who could not support their children often had no option other than to give them up and face accusations of abandonment. No one could claim that Sarah West, for example, was lacking in affection even though she was forced to use a subterfuge to get her eldest son (10 years of age) into the orphanage. She sent the boy on an errand with his younger brother to the Archdeacon with a note hidden in another requesting the Archdeacon to detain both children. She could not get the eldest to go voluntarily and

i am so distressed that i have not nor neither can i procure any thing for their Subsistence ... They are nearly destroyed for want of not going through want of the support of nature and manners.47

Another letter to the orphanage authorities details the heroic care and obvious deep affection of E. Reidy for his child. Reidy, a sawyer, was deserted by his wife and left to fend for his young daughter.

Reidy has fulfilled the duties of a Parent to his child as far as in his power, but as his work leads him to shift from place to place and to be frequently in the

47 Sarah West to Archdeacon Broughton, 30/6/1832, "Application for Admission to the Orphan Schools: 1829-1832", NSWAO 4/331, ff299-301.
forest, he is compelled to take the poor infant along with him, and frequently to leave her days and nights together in Huts with prisoners... Sensible of this circumstance, Reidy for some time, continued out of his hard earnings to pay a dollar a week for her maintenance, in a respectable family in Sydney, but he found that with all the frugality he could employ, it was impossible to continue the allowance, and the child has since this period been frequently carried by him into the forest, wrapt in a Blanket, where he has watched over her till his return in the Evening when he has brought her home in a similar manner. 48

Likewise the Jones family, although they had confined their son to the orphanage, refused to put up with the severe punishment meted out to the son and removed the boy from the institution. 49

Many single convict women who fell pregnant were sent back to the women's prison, the Female Factory at Parramatta, which had the only lying-in facilities in the colony. According to the Tory tradition most of these children were abandoned, but in reality, the majority of children born in the Factory were taken by their mothers, by desire and not by compulsion, when they left that institution. Sometimes the quality of the care may not have been good but there are examples of convict mothers who were punished for refusing to work when it would have endangered the health of their child. 50 Few cases of deliberate infanticide, overlying, desertion, or parental ill-treatment are recorded. In most cases that did occur the fault was often put down to drink and the mother, or parent, after sobering up usually "exhibited the strongest symptoms of despair for the deprivation which she had subjected herself to by intoxication." 51 Press reports of accidents to children were often accompanied by expressions of parental affection for the victim. A 13 year old boy hurt in a riding accident was "idolised by his parents". 52 The disappearance of another boy of

49 Aust., 2/5/1828, 3(a-b).
50 Catherine Clarke, for example, was sentenced to three months in the Factory for refusing to work because her child was sick from a flax hull lodged in the child's eye. Bathurst Bench Book, 27/4/1826, NSWAO, 2/8323, ff114-115.
51 SH, 5/3/1835, 3(f); SH, 2/12/1833, Supp. 2(e).
52 Aust, 3/5/1826, 3(a).
the same age, while bringing cows down to Sydney, threw his parents into "great affliction".53 Even an "industrious couple" who had adopted a very young girl were "exceptionally devoted to the child".54 Simple gestures amongst the lower classes also indicate affection for their children. For example, Thomas Phillips, a brassfounder, always went to his children's bedroom to give them a final check before retiring.55

Many workingmen put their bonds with their family above financial considerations. A constant complaint of the employers was that they could not get family men to do tasks such as shepherding because they were separated from their families for long periods.56 Many modern commentators have seen this as a sign of unwillingness, of immigrants especially, to leave the urban environment rather than a positive indication of family bonding. In the city, in contrast to most rural occupations, family and job could be combined. This sentiment was not restricted to the lower orders for T.V. Blomfield wrote:

I returned to Sydney a short time since, determined to raise some money somehow, in order that I might take my family down. I was heartily tired of being absent from them.57

Employers also complained of the unwillingness of parents to engage their children as domestics or in any other occupation which took the child from the parent's control,58 another indication of parent-child bonding.

One advantage of the crowded housing of the lower classes was that if the parents were unaffectionate the possibility was that one of the lodgers would show some affection for the child. In one case the lodger was playing with an infant when a dispute arose between the

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53 Aust, 6/6/1827, 3(c); SG, 3/6/1824, 4(b); SG, 25/3/1820, 3(a).
54 Aust, 26/8/1826, 3(b).
55 Aust, 13/2/1828, 3(a) - on this occasion he found a snake in bed with his twelve month old baby.
56 Campbell, C., Committee on Immigration 1838, Minutes, pp25-6.
58 Committee on Immigration 1838, Minutes, pp199, 1, 212.
parents. He removed the child from the room and the dispute.\textsuperscript{59}

Another ex-convict left all his earthly possessions to the young daughter of his landlord.\textsuperscript{60} Convict servants, often at great risk to themselves, rescued their masters' children from imminent danger from a variety of causes including snakes and rampaging cattle.\textsuperscript{61}

These examples are only indications and much that follows will take up these points but they do offer some hints of the feelings of the lower classes. Amongst the literate the evidence of affection for children is widespread. Some of it is restricted to terms of endearment such as "our dear little boy", "my dear departed", and "your dear boys" which have to be treated with some caution. They may just be convenient covers masking reality. There are, however, many more substantial proofs than this. The pride and love of some parents is obvious. Elizabeth Bate wrote:

I wish dear Aunts you could see her. I am sure you could not help loving her she is so engaging and they all say pretty but of course I would be a no partial judge.\textsuperscript{62}

Some fathers, like Francis Duguid, could scarcely contain their pride in their wives' childbearing ability.

Mrs. Duguid having been inconsiderate enough not to equalise the sexes on the late occasion & was safely delivered of another Miss Duguid on the 30th Ult. and as she seems to think nothing of these matters now, having been in the dining room since the 8th, there will be no end to the number of Miss Duguids unless a stop is put to this dent of thing.\textsuperscript{63}

Large families were accepted and sometimes welcomed. Mary Wild seemed to regret that her family was restricted to two living children when she wrote:

I never expect to have any more children, and I do not regret it if God spares me those two, My poor Harry,

\textsuperscript{59} Aust, 8/2/1828, 3(c-d).

\textsuperscript{60} Geo. Brassington to Rebecca Godber, 6/7/1823, NLA, Ms 4199.

\textsuperscript{61} Aust, 19/7/1826, 3(c); SH, 13/4/1835, 3(e).

\textsuperscript{62} E. Bate to her Aunts, 19/8/1839, Bate Family Papers, NLA Ms 5839, item 4.

\textsuperscript{63} F.L. Duguid to unknown, 11/10/1836, Duguid Family Papers, ML, Ms 2199, f13.
and Mary, are well provided for in heaven, as it was God's will to take them I must be satisfied.64

Christiana Blomfield pointed out that large families were a great comfort in the colony for the family was often the only form of companionship available.65 Michael Hayes was less enthusiastic about his large family, of "say eight children", for it "impedes any progress I endeavour to attain here" and was "an incumbrance to remove" but he went on to say:

My children I love as my life, they to be with me in my last days, to terminate my last breath amongst my relatives in my native place, are objects interwoven in my heart.66

The birth or baptism of a child was usually celebrated in some style by the upper ranks of society.

The christening of their last child, a fine healthful little girl, Mr. and Mrs. Cooper celebrated on Monday evening, by a spirited ball and sumptuous supper. The Ladies, who were nearly all currency lasses equalled, if not exceeded in number, the other sex. Emblematical figures of peace and plenty, encircled by the olive and cornucopia, were designed, in chalks, on the ball-room floor, in a very tasteful way. Plenty exhibited herself under the most tempting forms, in fruits and wines, and pastry during the night, and Tuesday morning had dawned before the merry group had quitted the pleasures of the ball-room.67

It is difficult to determine if this occasion was celebrated amongst the lower classes. Birth was probably more important than christening for this group even though most had a christening ceremony as the overwhelming majority of children in the colony were baptised.

The Mutch Index indicates that the normal time for christening was about a month after the birth, allowing time for the mother to recover and the preparations to be made. There were many exceptions to this general rule, however. Some sickly babies were privately

64 Mary Wild to her sister, 1/4/1819, Wild Family Letters, ML, Doc 1050, f6.
65 C. Blomfield to L. Edwards, 5/1/1828, C.E. Blomfield, op.cit., p.54.
66 M. Hayes to Richard, 23/12/1816; M. Hayes to Patrick, 25/11/1812, Letters from M. Hayes, NLA Ms 246 (no item nos). He seems to have been unsure of the number!
67 Aust, 19/7/1826, 3(c); see also Aust, 28/6/1826, 3(c).
baptised and, if they survived, publicly christened at a later date.\textsuperscript{68} The baptism of the Factory children, although the rite still had to be public, was done "in the quickest possible manner in order not to offend public decency in the least possible degree ...". Even the presence of the mother could be dispensed with.\textsuperscript{69} Other parents were forced to wait months, and even years, to have a child baptised because of the distance involved and the lack of clergy. In 1829 eight unbaptised children, ranging in age from three weeks to nine months, were in Maitland awaiting the arrival of a clergyman.\textsuperscript{70} One solution was to have designated houses and times for the baptism of children advertised in the papers. Thus the \textit{Gazette} in 1825 advertised:

\begin{quote}
The Chaplain purposes to be at the house of Mr. Andrew Johnston, at Portland Head, on Whit Monday, the 23rd of May, at which Time and Place the Parents of any unbaptised children, are earnestly requested to attend with them, and their Sponsors.\textsuperscript{71}
\end{quote}

The position of sponsor seems to have been very important because the physical as well as the spiritual care of the child often fell to the godparents in the event of parental death, a frequent occurrence. John Hawdon delayed the baptism of his son for "months and even years" in the hope that his friend, after whom the baby was named, would arrive in the colony and be godfather.\textsuperscript{72} George Allen, probably more conscientious and puritanical than most, felt the responsibilities to be so great that he refused to become a godfather.

Mr. and Mrs. Hart have for some time been requesting me to stand Godfather to their child. I have many objections - because the duty is heavy and great, because I shall most likely not be allowed to exercise it, because I am fearful I shall not be able to perform that duty, and further I do not approve of the way in which the Established Church baptise the children. I think it

\textsuperscript{69} Brisbane to Bathurst, 1/6/1825, HRA, I, xi, p619.
\textsuperscript{70} J.N. Wood to Arch. Scott, Appendix 15, Darling to Murray, 18/10/1829, HRA, I, xv, p234.
\textsuperscript{71} \textit{SG}, 10/2/1825, 1(b).
wrong to require Godfathers and Godmothers - how can they renounce the Devil and all his works for a child when they cannot do it for themselves.\(^{73}\)

Similarly Francis Duguid refused to be a godfather "nor have another for any of mine" because the Anglican ritual placed these burdens on the sponsor and not on the parents. He thus waited until a Scots Presbyterian minister was able to baptise his child.\(^{74}\) Most godparents were probably honoured to be asked but some, with possible complications in mind, insured a degree of independent means on the part of the child by giving presents of livestock.

When Matilda was born her Father gave her a cow and calf and her Godmother & Godfather each one so by the time she is twenty one if God spares her she will have a nice little fortune from them.\(^{75}\)

As John Hawdon indicated the naming of babies was another major decision. The children of the middle ranks and above were rarely named on whim but invariably named after someone. The preservation of the family name, both Christian and surname, was fairly important. Richard Bate, who by 1848 and at least eleven years of marriage had only daughters; wrote to his brother:

I congratulate you on the Birth of your Boy and feel honoured in the compliment you propose paying me by letting the name of Dick still continue in the family after my Death for I have given up all hopes of ever being able to make one of my own.\(^{76}\)

A sample of 150 families taken from the 1828 Census shows that of all the families with boys 64% had one boy with the same name as the father. Interestingly only 28% of the families with girls had one daughter with the same name as the mother. In just over 60% of the families with a boy of the same name as the father the boy was the first born.

Another popular source of names was amongst relatives or those for whom the parents had regard or were indebted. Sarah Noble named her first daughter Priscilla:


\(^{74}\) F.L. Duguid to unknown, 11/10/1836, Duguid Family Papers, ML, Ms 2199, f14.

\(^{75}\) E. Bate to her Aunts, 19/8/1839, Bate Family Papers, NLA, Ms 5839, item 24.

\(^{76}\) R. Bate to John Bate, 21/2/1848, Thompson Papers, NLA, Ms 4737.
You might wonder why I called her by that name it was by the particular desire of our Sister in law who had a particular desire and they were at the time very kind to us.  

George and Isabella Barber must have either been impressed with Wentworth's new book, or been indebted somehow, for they named their son, born in 1820, Wentworth Charles. This consistent naming of children after someone else meant a fairly restricted range of names. The sample revealed only 46 different names amongst 302 boys and 42 names amongst 147 girls. John (15% of all boys) and James (13%) were the most popular boys' names while Elizabeth/Eliza (19% of all girls) and Mary/Maryann/Maria (19%) were the most popular girls' names. The five most popular names covered 54% of the boys and 47% of the girls while the ten most popular covered 74% of boys and 74.5% of girls.

Some people did show a little imagination in the selection of a name. Andrew and Ann Goodwin named their daughter, born on 3/2/1838, "Australia Jubilee". Francis Duguid gave one of his daughters the fairly common name of Mary but for a complex reason. The girl was a child of the Bible, in D'oyley and Morts Edition it has a plate of Martha & Mary, an exquisite engraving, from an admirable passage. After that picture she was called, with the expressed intention that should the child attain the years of maturity it should be pointed out to her, as expression of the desire of her earthly parents, that my Mary should also chose the better part.

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77 Sarah Noble to J. Humphrey, 16/1/1842, Wemyss Family Letters NLA, Ms 686, f5. See also C. Blomfield to Mrs. Edwards, Nov. 1828; T.V. Blomfield to E. Blomfield 20/11/1821; C.E. Blomfield, op.cit., pp 43-44 & 28.

78 Mutch Index.

79 This compares with some figures from the 1977 Sydney Morning Herald which took a survey of its birth notices for the previous year. Unfortunately it doesn't give the number of children but there were 658 different boys' names (many just different spellings of the same name) and 783 girls' names. The figures for the top 40 names are given (1969 boys and 1225 girls) and all have more than 15 children for each name. The five most popular names represent only 29% of the boys and 29% of the girls in the top 40. The ten most popular names represent 47% and 46% respectively. These figures would be considerably lower if the remainder of the children were added. SMH, 8/1/1977, 13 (a-d).

80 Mutch Index.

81 F.L. Duguid to Elizabeth, 9/9/1837, Duguid Family Papers, ML, Ms 2199, f17.
Duguid's Mary did not get the chance to choose either path for she died in infancy.

The sentiments expressed at the death of a child are one of the better, and often the only, indicators of parental affection. Modern commentators often indicate a belief that in past times the death of an infant or a stillbirth was greeted with calm acceptance bordering on callous indifference. There was certainly an official uninterest in stillbirths in particular and also in child mortality, but this does not mean that a similar sentiment prevailed in the affected family. This certainly seems to be the case in New South Wales in the 1820s and 1830s. There is almost a total lack of official documentation on stillbirths, probably reflecting uninterest in a matter that did not impinge upon the good government of the colony. The evidence indicates that within families the situation was quite different. Gov. Macquarie's anxiety at the approaching birth of his son, after his wife had had a succession of miscarriages, contrasts with his government's silence on the matter of stillbirths. Sarah Noble, writing of her stillborn daughter, expressed evident anguish and she constantly sought solace in God "for his great and bountiful mercies towards me and mine". The occasional birth notice, such as: "Birth: On the 7th instant, Mrs. W.H. Tyner, of a son, still born." appeared in the papers indicating a certain feeling of loss and grief at such an occurrence. On an official level the State was reasonably zealous in pursuing coronial inquiries into suspicious circumstances surrounding the delivery of stillborn babies indicating that it, too, was keen to make sure criminal practices did not deny life to safely delivered children.

The sentiments expressed on the death of a child after a successful birth were again dependent on many factors, especially the age of the child and the condition of the mother. The Home Government's

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82 M.H. Ellis, op.cit., pp260-261.
83 S. Noble to J. Humphrey, 16/1/1842, Wemyss Family Letters, NLA, Ms 686, f67.
84 SH, 12/10/1837, 3(e) or SH, 19/10/1837, 3(d), or SH, 18/8/1834, 3(d), or SG, 27/9/1836, 3(d).
85 see SH, 8/8/1833, 3(d), or SH, 8/5/1834, 3(d), or SH, 10/8/1835, 3(a). Coroners Inquests 1809-1821, 14/2/1821, 14/2/1821, NSWAl, 4/1819.
Stillbirths did not have to be registered and the legal presumption in these cases was that the baby was born dead. See Chpt 5.
indifference in this case was more evident than the colonial government's indifference. The colonial authorities often complained of conditions on ships, and children's deaths resulting from these conditions, but the home government's usual response was to say that the figures were what one would normally expect. The colonial government was also responsible for some of the most stringent quarantine laws then in operation anywhere in the world with the expressed intention of restricting infectious diseases especially amongst children.

At the family level, some people affected by a death continued to show a certain fatalism, but it is often merely a facade, and was probably more likely amongst those parents who lost a number of children as, for example, the Rev. Ralph Mansfield and his first wife who had seven children only one of whom survived infancy. Mrs. Lawson, writing to her son in England, seems to add the death of the baby as an afterthought but here the son was probably expecting the death and there was probably a considerable gap in time between the death and the letter. Even though Robert Howe used the famous quote "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord" when announcing, in 1824, the death of his son and the rest of the death notice shows obvious distress. The most fatalistic of letters was that of J. Norton. In a series of letters to his wife, during the illness of his third son, his calmness, rationality and acceptance, in contrast to his wife's frantic anxiety, reaches a stage where he almost appears to hope that the child would die.

My apprehension is that Baby from your long illness previous to its birth and other causes is not quite right and I have always entertained a great doubt of its living. I now feel much more alarmed at the probable effect of the trouble and anxiety you know I suffer in your health than at the possible termination of Baby's

86 Glenelg to Gipps 30/12/1837, HRA, I, xix, pp216-217.
87 Cumpston, J.H., Influenza and Maritime Quarantine in Australia, Melb., 1919.
88 ADB, 2, pp204-5.
89 "The baby died the day you sailed for England. All the family is well ..." Mrs. T. Lawson to her son, 12/5/1824 in MacSween, A., "Some Lawson Letters, 1819-1824", JRAHS, 50(3), 1964, p234.
90 SG, 26/2/1824, 3(d).
illness - do not I entreat you my dearest girl (should the little infant sink under its malady) give way to unavailing grief, it is after all a very great doubt if it is not a happiness to die in infancy and escape all the trials and visitations of this life ... you are still surrounded by dear little children who require all your love and attention and by a husband devotedly attentive to you - for their sake - for mine for your own my dearest love do not allow a visitation of providence that is perhaps made in mercy to us all to destroy your spirits and your health Let us rather exercise a fortitude that will convert these visitations into occasions of thankfulness and by submitting to the decrees of a merciful and wise providence cultivate the correct hope that belongs to a belief in its justice.91

At no stage during the crises did Norton leave Sydney to visit the child. In fact he eventually persuaded his wife to leave the child in the care of a relative and Dr. Black and come to Sydney for a rest. The child survived.

It is clear from Norton's letter where the priorities lay in such a situation. Obviously the indifference of the past to the death of a child was not so much an indication of callousness as a necessary defence mechanism to maintain parental sanity, although a vicious circle probably arose with death causing indifference, indifference breeding callousness, and callousness causing further deaths. The colonists believed they had a lower child mortality and morbidity rate and this belief appears to have broken that vicious circle.

This is not to say that the natural death of a child was treated with the same respect as that of an adult. The death of a child was usually greeted with grief and anguish at unfulfilled hopes but without the distress caused by the death of a person with responsibilities.92 In keeping with the general belief in the innocence of children the grief was often accompanied by sentiments of relief that the child had been taken before despoilation by the colony's wickedness.93 The

92 SG, 25/3/1820, 3(a) is a good example of many.
93 There is a good example of this in the poem "On the Death of an Infant" by an anonymous author. SG, 8/1/1824, 4(a).
pious lessons provided by the innocent death of a christian child were often drawn to the attention of the public by the papers. 94

The belief that their child would now be with its heavenly parents is almost universal amongst the literate. The Rev. Joseph Orton claimed that whenever he was asked how many children he had he replied:

I have ten, four above and six below; and I never have a doubt in my mind as to meeting all my dear children in heaven. 95

But the belief did not lessen the sting of death however. Frances Cox in one letter wrote:

I will not promise to write much for my spirits will not allow it at present. The heavy loss I have lately sustained was a shock very unexpected to me ... Much as we love them when living yet never do we feel their real value till parted from them. None but a mother can tell the feeling of one. 96

The poem "On the Death of My Dear Children", by M.J. Evenden, used all the familiar expressions of acceptance and pride in a heavenly child, then continues:

But still the afflictions great, the trials hard
When called to part with those we fondly love
E'en though we know they are from evil saved
And without trial gain their rest above
Yet still in God I'll trust for well I know
He grieves with willingly the child of Man
For nought but mercy doth he send the blow
Content I rest then with the Almighty's plan. 97

One disturbing feature of much of this sentiment and the acceptance of death, even if qualified, was that few recognised any contribution they may have made to the death of the child. This was less noticeable amongst the families with a good history of child-rearing. There the death of a child was probably more of a shock and was, in some cases,

94 SG, 23/10/1823, 2(b); 3/4/1823, 2(e).
97 "On the Death of My Dear Children", Feb. 1837, R.E. Close Papers ML, Ms 678/1, ff9 & 12. It appears that he had lost three children.
viewed by the mother as a reflection on her ability. Jane Cox wrote:

I lost my seventh child when she was ten months
and that grieved (and I am now ashamed to say) hurt
my pride very much. My mother never lost a child.\textsuperscript{98}

Once again we have little information on the lower classes' attitude to the death of one of their children. Harsher conditions destroyed the possibility of many of the familiar displays of sentiment enamoured by the higher ranks of society. Newspaper advertisements, proper burials, and days off for mourning were all too expensive. The lack of such signs does not denote a lack of interest in the death of a child. There are examples of parental uninterest in the fate of a child but equally there are the examples already mentioned of parental affliction at the loss of a child.\textsuperscript{99} The consolation provided by the religious beliefs of the literate were probably unavailable to some. The Irish seem to have made no distinction between the death of an adult and a child by maintaining their traditional wakes even for the death of an infant.\textsuperscript{100}

Even in matters as basic as birth and death there were debates and issues, but these paled in comparison with those which surrounded most other aspects of childrearing. It is probably true to say that most parents have a preconceived, often unconscious, idea (a model) of the type of child and the type of behaviour they expect. Their attitude towards their own and others' children is shaped by how well the child conforms to the model. In the period under study, and within the higher to middle ranks of society, there were a number of socially approved models that parents could "borrow" to mould their children to standards which would win them a place in society. These models often had quite fundamental differences. One cannot see if the debate, or an equivalent, took place within the lower classes but the authorities did attempt to inculcate their values into the "lower orders". Differing models competed within the various manifestations of authority so

\textsuperscript{98} "Reminiscences of Jane Maria Cox, etc." August 1873, C. Brooks Manuscript, NLA, Ms 1559/3, p19.

\textsuperscript{99} See above, pp14-15.

\textsuperscript{100} SH, 23/2/1835, 2(f).
the debate must have had some influence on all social classes. The debate within the upper ranks is quite easy to follow but the opinion of the lower echelon more difficult to ascertain. It is, however, possible to gain some glimpses of the ideology of both government and lower order parents in the clashes between the two over a variety of issues.101

Much has been written on the differing models of the child held by sections of the community. Basically the debate has been between the adherents of the innocence of children, on the one hand, and, on the other, by the adherents of the depravity of children. These models have a profound effect on the choice of issues that are then considered important and on the results these have on childrearing, discipline and education. Historians have tended to follow a whiggish interpretation of the development of these ideologies towards a more enlightened attitude but one is tempted to agree with Philip Greven that there never has been a single consistent set of beliefs which characterised a particular period and which subsequently changed. At all times several models competed and often interacted within the one society with sometimes one model more dominant than another.102

Greven sees three dominant models at work in seventeenth and eighteenth century Anglo-American society. The first was the Authoritarian or Evangelical model which sometimes recognised a type of innocence in newborn children, often contrary to the dictates of parental belief and reason, but also feared and mistrusted an object which was so obviously bent on self aggrandisement and self gratification. To overcome this, the result of Adam's sin, all training was geared towards establishing a permanent pattern of submission to parents and God. The accent was on Love and total Obedience through the suppression of the self, the breaking of the will, the acceptance of rigid authority, and the recognition that the child (and the adult) was no authority unto itself. Training started almost immediately, for the newborn was as culpable and as receptive to training as any older

child.\textsuperscript{103}

The Moderates, the self controlled, were Greven's second model. They accepted that their newborn children were innocent if not immediately then certainly after baptism cleansed the soul of original sin. Infant children were regarded as innocents also. Here the accent was on Love and Duty with a more lenient demand for the child to show deference to those in authority and a due regard for those of a lower rank. The will of the child did not have to be broken but because it was malleable and susceptible to the moulding of the parents the child had to be preserved from evil influences and the seeds of virtue planted in the infant mind. Obedience and duty were still paramount but they came through the maintenance of authority which neither slid into indulgence nor into despotic power. Example, reasoning and love replaced the birch.\textsuperscript{104}

Finally, Greven isolates The Genteel, the self assertive. These families were usually small, intense, wealthy and allowed their children free reign, for "to curb their children is to spoil their genius".\textsuperscript{105} In this model the child is inherently good and innocent. They accepted man as man, were at ease with their own nature, and indulged their whims in the sure knowledge that God's love and benevolence would always encompass them.\textsuperscript{106}

The parallels with the models Greven draws and those operating amongst parents in N.S.W. are close. The colonial distinction that is usually made is that between the Evangelical-Puritan model, which closely parallels Greven's Authoritarian model, and the Enlightenment-Lockean model.\textsuperscript{107} In the former the child is inherently bad and has to be led from the path of destruction while in the latter the child is a "tabula rasa", morally neutral and open to the influence of environment and education. This distinction does not do justice to the many similarities and the few subtle differences between the two models as they operated in N.S.W. and seems to be a rather crude carry over of the moral and political/factional debates of the colony in the

\textsuperscript{103} \textit{ibid.}, pp28-43.  
\textsuperscript{104} \textit{ibid.}, pp156-170.  
\textsuperscript{105} \textit{ibid.}, p276.  
\textsuperscript{106} \textit{ibid.}, pp266-281.
1820s and 1830s. It would be a mistake to fit neatly the followers of the Gazette and the Australian, or the Tories and the Whigs, into the Puritan-Enlightenment division. The quite vehement polarisation of the factions and their use of the moral question clouds the discussion of many issues concerning children and does not do justice to the position held by the majority in either faction. The similarities tend to overshadow the subtle differences.

There are indications that some people held opinions that were close to the Evangelical-Authoritarian model of innate depravity. An anonymous correspondent to the Gazette in 1824 was aghast at a suggestion, by another correspondent, to do away with country schools and to barbarise the children of the colony to fit them for the rough life ahead.

Does he not know that the perverseness and insolence of uncultivated nature are general subjects of complaints and severe censure? And as a late writer judiciously remarked, that 'children, whilst they are emulously solicitous to become objects of approbation, feel the necessity of moderating their own desires, and restraining their own humours. They hear that resistance to authority is criminal, and they find that it is ineffectual. They are enabled to compare the tranquillity (sic) of submission with the inquietude of perverseness; and they discover, by reflection as well as experience, that before they expect favour, they must deserve protection'.

Whether the writer meant "uncultivated nature" to apply to newborns and young children is difficult to assess. Another indication of the belief in an already corrupted nature being set on the straight and narrow by education is found in the prospectus of J.D. Lang's Caledonian Academy. The prospectus promises that the school would "be conducted on such principles, as may ensure the amelioration of the heart ...".

Adherents of the opposite position, the Rousseauean innocent, Greven's genteel and self assertive class, the inherently good child, were quiet if they were present at all. The social, economic and moral climate of the colony made it extremely difficult for genteel families to emerge even amongst the tiny elite proportion of the population. All, no doubt influenced by their perception of the aboriginals as perverse and degraded rather than innocent or natural,
made it obvious that the untutored mind, the person left to his own devices would sink into error and immorality.

The uncertainty surrounding the true opinion of these writers is more obvious in others. They seem to have the same ambivalence towards their children as Greven noted amongst his American parents. Robert Howe, the most obvious proponent of the Evangelical position, wrote of the need for education to quell "the vicious propensities of the heart" and to lead children "from error into the ways of truth". After such an education children were "capable of becoming ornaments to that society in which they may hereafter move as useful members thereof ...". These seem to presume an innate depravity in infants and children. Yet in another place he could lament, on the death of his sixteen month old son, that he was "a sweet little infant" whom "all admired ... for his beauty; and he was too lovely to remain long among us - He has gone to 'fairer worlds on high'. Howe also talked of the "natural talent of every little colonist" which if developed would lead him from vice and ignorance to wisdom and knowledge. His paper is sprinkled with descriptions of young children as "the sweet babe", "sweet little girl" and the "little innocent". Finally he allowed his paper to publish, without comment, a poem "On the Death of an Infant" whose lines encapsulate the belief in the innocence of children.

Oh! I could gaze for ever
Upon that waxen face;
So passionless, so pure,
That little shrine was sure
An angel's dwelling place.

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110 SG, 1/4/1826, 2(e).
111 SG, 6/1/1821, 3(a).
112 SG, 1/4/1826, 2(e).
113 SG, 26/2/1824, 3(d).
114 SG, 6/1/1821, 3(a).
115 SG, 27/2/1823, 2(b).
116 SG, 15/12/1823, 3(b).
117 SG, 4/12/1824, 3(c).
God took thee in His mercy,
Unspotted and untried,
He fought the fight for thee,
He won the victory,
And thou are glorified

Now (like a dew-drop shrined
Within a crystal stone)
Thou'rt safe, in heaven my dove,
Safe with the Source of Love,
The Everlasting One!

And when the hour arrives
From earth that sets me free
Oh, may thy spirit wait,
The first at heaven's gate,
To meet and welcome me! 118

The major difference between the Gazette's attitude and that of the Australian was that the latter had no ambivalent feelings towards the innocence of the child. To it the child was unquestionably an innocent, free of vicious or immoral propensities. The Australian used expressions such as "unvitiated youth", 119 lamented "departed innocence", 120 and in their writings on the need for education presumed always that the child was morally neutral, open to the effects of environment and education. 121 Sometimes it seemed to suggest that the untutored, the natural, child would be sucked into "that vortex of excess which has rendered their parents irreclaimable" 122 but the closest it came to arguing that this was the result of inherent weakness in the child was its statement that

Among youth of active disposition the mere absence of instruction is attended with as pernicious consequences as the most forcible inducement to the commission of crime with others. 123

Such consequences were the result of the low morality of society, not the fault of the child itself. The lack of instruction did not educe the viciousness of the heart but rather the "vicious principles of

118 SG, 8/1/1824, 4(a).
119 Aust, 21/7/1825, 3(a)
120 Aust, 15/7/1826, 3(b).
121 e.g. Aust, 23/12/1828, 3(d).
122 Aust, 21/7/1825, 3(a).
123 Aust, 25/3/1826, 2(d)
society are imperceptibly imbibed for want of admonition". The same held true for goodness. The child did not become a moral adult because of its inherent goodness but because "the nobler purpose" was planted in the heart by parents and educators. It was a positive action through example and love and not just through the disciplining of evil inclinations.

Neither faction fitted neatly into the Puritan versus Enlightened models of Greven. Within the colony, however, there was a closer association between the Tories and the Evangelical model and between the Whigs and the Enlightenment model than between the Tories and the Enlightenme nt model or the Whigs and the Evangelical model. In summary, the Tories, the evangelicals, rather inconsistently professed an innocence in infants but regarded all men as having inherently evil propensities which education was meant to overcome. These propensities did not manifest themselves in the infant but quickly surfaced, if proper steps were not taken to overcome them, during the maturing process. The Enlightened, the Whigs, professed the innocence of children in terms of the moral neutrality of the child. Neither evil nor goodness came from within the child but was instilled into the child by the educative process.

Thus far most of the evidence and the debate has come from the press. The problem remains of assessing how representative each attitude was amongst the population in general. The impression, from the literate minority, is that the overwhelming majority came down on the side of the Lockeans. A belief in the innocence of children and the evil effect of the colony's environment is almost universal, but many express attitudes that are ambivalent or self-contradictory leaving one in doubt as to their practical as opposed to their theoretical position.

The Protestant clergy were almost universal in their belief in the inherent evil of the individual and of mankind. The redemptive act of Christ had given the spirit the power to conquer the flesh but had in no way diminished the power of evil within the individual. The unbaptised child and adult were powerless to combat this inherent evil;

124 Ibid.
125 Aust., 23/12/1828, 3(d).
baptised they were given the power to engage in a campaign with, and to eventually overcome, the corruption of their human heart; a campaign which continued unabated until the final battle was won or lost at death.

The child, whether baptised or unbaptised, held the same measure of corruption. As Marsden pointed out:

How comes it, that every Child the first moment ... manifest corrupt tempers and dispositions. If only some, and those of wicked parents, evinced such depravity we might be led to account for it in some other way, but when [with the] exception of one or two who were sanctified from the womb, this has been the state of every Child born into the world. We are constrained to acknowledge that our nature is corrupt ... How can we account for [the] Sufferings and Deaths of infants, but on the Supposition that they are partakers of Adam's Guilt and misery - ... If Children are not in the Eye of God transgressors of his Law, they cannot need to be remeemed from its Curse - But Christ is as much the Saviour of Infants as [He is of] Adults.126

Where the child differed from the adult was that the former's inherent corruptness had not been

Heightened and confirmed in all its vicious habits by long and repeated indulgences of inbred corruption.127

Baptism gave the dying child the power to overcome its inherent evil, if it so desired, and gain the reward of everlasting life.

The environment was initially secondary to the inherent evil of the individual. The latter demanded a recognition of one's own sinfulness and the complete abnegation of self, the former depended on the success of that abnegation and the avoidance of evil situations and persons until that victory was completed in death. After conversion the major focus of attention shifted to the environment from which came invitations to reassertion of the self. In its most dour form all activities which distracted the mind from its subjegative

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126 Sermon on Psalm 51 vs5 "Behold I was shaped in Iniquity", 23/7/1815, Marsden Family Papers, PRO 3580: Sect X, Item 6, ff5-6.

relationship with God were abhorred. Frivolous play or entertainments, reading novels or other non-religious "trash", gambling, and drinking were not only frowned upon if engaged in by the elect but also by others who thereby gave bad example and exposed the weak to temptation. More moderate adherents allowed for some genteel secular entertainments and relaxations but equally abhorred the grosser self abuses of gambling, drinking and fraternising with members of the opposite sex.

In childhood the campaign had to be waged on two fronts at the same time. Optimally the war waged by the child and its parents against the child's self will was carried out free of the distractions of an immoral society until the seeds of virtue had been well and truly planted. Childhood was the

Seedtime - hereafter you will reap the Harvest, as a Reward for your present Labour - many learn when young and foolish, what they have in future life to unlearn, & often with much difficulty.\(^{128}\)

When the environment interfered it made the task of breaking the will extremely difficult.

Catholic theology made a more subtle distinction between the body and the soul than that made by Protestants. Ullathorne was probably typical of the thinking Catholic population when he spoke of the children being taught "crimes very early, before indeed, their moral powers are sufficiently developed and strengthened to enable them to resist their animal spirits."\(^{129}\) His reference to "animal spirits" appears, at first, to place him in the Evangelical mould but his position was not that simple. The body was not inherently evil but its demands needed to be moderated by the spirit and reason, something that Ullathorne was afraid was not occurring because of the low opinion he had of the moral climate of the colony.

The doctrine of Limbo illustrates the Catholic's belief in the personal innocence of the unbaptised child but its share, through its humanity, in the corporate guilt of Adam; a corporate guilt that had been removed by Christ's death but needed to be reaffirmed by

\(^{128}\) S. Marsden to Jane Marsden, 5/9/1826, Marsden Family Papers PRO 3580, S. II. f36.

\(^{129}\) Select Committee on Transportation, 1838, Minutes, p23.
each individual. The first battle between flesh and spirit resulted in a resounding victory, in baptism, for the spirit, leaving the child both personally innocent and free of corporate responsibility. Some may have held Jansensitic views, stressing the inherent evil of the animal spirit, but it would have been a rare Catholic parent who did not view their child, whether baptised or unbaptised, as an innocent until around his or her seventh birthday.¹³⁰ Their view was not pure Lockean but was somewhere between that and the Evangelical position.

One could argue that these religious debates had little effect upon the ordinary man. The colony's irreligion reduced the influence of the clergy to a rearguard action carried out through the colony's civil authority, a point not only made by contemporaries but also by present day writers, but the proportion of men who married and/or had children was small so while ignorance and irreligion may have been rampant amongst the single convicts the same may not be true of the majority of married convicts. It is interesting to note that the two clergymen, Mr. Cross and Mr. Bowden, when appearing before the Bigge Commission, agreed that the "greatest number" of children were either baptised or christened in the church.¹³¹ This would seem to indicate that some primitive belief existed amongst the populace. The Protestant illiterate and semi-literate left few indications of their beliefs. Unlike the Catholics they had no popular saviours, like Father Therry, to whom they could write or have letters written thus revealing some of their ideas.

Faith often degenerated into superstition and religious events into secular celebrations. From the little evidence on Catholics it is obvious that superstition and ignorance were present amongst some. Father Therry's influence was such that

¹³⁰ M. Hayes was not perturbed at non baptism (by priest) of his younger children. M. Hayes to R. Hayes, 25/11/1812, Hayes Letters, NLA, Ms 246.
¹³¹ Bigge, Ecclesiastical Establishments etc., Evidence, Appendix, CO 210/127, ff21 & 36.
infants were brought long distances to him: his
baptism was a guarantee of good luck and regarded
in later life as a mark of good character.¹³²

Therry himself spoke of the children as "lambs" and often called
attention to the need for Catholic education to form the morals of
the rising generation and to remove them from the "contagion of bad
example".¹³³ The parents of the children, the bearers of "the
contagion", were probably less enthusiastic about the need for educa-
tion but possibly shared with Ullathorne and Therry a more primitive
belief in the innocence of their "lambs".

Regardless of the superstitious nature of these primitive beliefs
they obviously had some impact on the population. A leavening of the
Protestant dough must also have taken place. Protestant protests at
Catholic influence were not only aimed at Catholics in positions of
authority but also at Catholic influence on the beliefs of the
Protestant flock.¹³⁴ In England the tiny Catholic proportion of the
population had minimal impact, but in N.S.W. where they represented
nearly a quarter of the population, the contrast between Catholic and
Protestant viewpoints must have led to some intermingling of beliefs
at the lowest levels.

The trademark of a true evangelical position should have been the
emphasis placed upon inherent evils being exacerbated by colonial
conditions. In reality few seemed to take up this position but this
could be the result of writers being so overwhelmed by the moral
climate of the colony that they failed to mention the evil of the
child's nature. Writers who emphasise the "destructive example" of
society do not necessarily rule out a belief in the inherent evil of
the child. The early governors, for example, who were responsible for

¹³² P. O'Farrell, Catholic Church and Community in Australia: A
¹³³ ibid., p25.
¹³⁴ see for example Burton's attacks on the insidious influence
of the Charity nuns on the inmates of the Female Factory.
the establishment of the orphan institutions reveal little of their attitude to the inherent morality of children but certainly stressed the "destructive example of their abandoned parents, and others who they unavoidably associate with ...".\textsuperscript{135} King sought "to protect and instill proper notions in the minds of the younger part".\textsuperscript{136} Does this mean physical protection and moral education or does it mean protection of embryonic moral notions as well as the instilling of further notions? The former interpretation, in contrast to the latter, would not admit any belief in the moral neutrality of the child. It is difficult to determine King's actual position.

Macquarie seems to have been more worried about the physical than the moral wellbeing of the children. In his reports to the Colonial Office on the establishment of the male orphanage he stressed the wretched and neglected state of the helpless illegitimate children consigned to nakedness, poverty, want and misery as well as the victualling burden the children frequently placed on the stores.\textsuperscript{137} He makes no mention of the children's moral condition but does mention the benefits of the moral education they received.\textsuperscript{138} This seems to imply that Macquarie at least believed in the moral neutrality of children and that their innocence need not be corrupted by early exposure to vice. Macquarie, however, showed that he did not believe in the total innocence, or the salvation of, unbaptised infants by taking the precaution of having his sick son privately baptised soon after his birth and then publicly christened a month or so later.\textsuperscript{139} Macquarie probably had a more practical Scottish flavour to his Episcopalian beliefs acknowledging the evil in men's hearts but seeing temptation in terms of an open invitation to break the rules rather than in terms of an insidious environment prompting selfaggrandisement.

Amongst parents the belief in the innocence of their children is even stronger. There is plenty of evidence of parental belief in the

\textsuperscript{135} King to Duke of Portland, 9/9/1800, HRA, I, ii, p532
\textsuperscript{136} King to Johnson, 7/8/1800, HRA, I, ii, p534
\textsuperscript{137} Macquarie to Bathurst, 27/7/1822, HRA, I, x p678 and 24/3/1819 \textit{ibid.}, p94
\textsuperscript{138} \textit{ibid.}, p678.
\textsuperscript{139} Ellis, M.H., \textit{op.cit.}, p261
evil of the world. All the literate parents were careful about their children associating with convicts and expressed disquiet about the moral climate of the colony. But there is very little hint of a belief in any evil inherent in the child being exacerbated by the supposedly low moral climate of the colony. The evangelicals' fear of the child's self will is present but it is interesting that many parents admired the "spirit", "temper", or "precociousness" of one of their children even though it often made life a little more difficult for themselves. They did not, as the true evangelical would, attempt to "break" that spirit but rather "channel" it in the right direction, a sure sign, according to Greven, of Moderate or Enlightened parents. This spirit was recognised as the foundation of personal dynamism, initiative, and drive which as a child would "do much with fair means, but nothing when compelled" but would, if properly channelled, "make them good and steady, and be a comfort to us in our old age".  

When the parents talked of a problem child rather than blame the child's inherent evil, or that of the world, they were often realistic enough to seek a more rational explanation or to blame themselves for spoiling the child. Mary Brooks, when she caught a convict servant teaching her child to swear, did not put the child's ready response down to its evil propensities exhibiting themselves but realised it was a manifestation of the child's imitative talent. One wonders what her reaction would have been if the child had been the daughter of a lower class family. The dangers of over affectionate parents were also realised. John Wild hoped that his child would, in later life, "merit" the affection being lavished on it by its parents and grandparents but few others made this demand and expressed love for all their children regardless of the child's disposition. Most were aware that their "spoiling" affection for a child "so droll in her way ... so innocent and good tempered as to be a great favourite with all" could do more damage than anything coming from the child.

140 C. Blomfield to Matilda, 18/8/1830, Blomfield, C.E., op.cit., p64; Harriet to Phillip King, 20/3/1827, H. King Letters, ML, Ms 1793, f38
142 J. Wild to Grandmother, 20/7/1833, Wild Family Papers, ML, Doc 1050, f34.
itself. 

Frances Cox even acknowledged her involvement in the sinful world surrounding the child. Her daughter "was taken in early childhood from a sinful world to reign where sorrow is never known, she is now no longer mine to be taught by me any of the ills of this world". 144

Other parents lamented that they either did not have the time to devote to their children or lacked the temperament needed for the task. Christiana Blomfield was quite perceptive about her weakness of "hastiness".

If I had the patience to correct him as I ought, or a mild manner of talking to him, he would, I have no doubt, make a good child; but I am too hasty and sometimes do more harm than good when I chastise him. 145

Christiana's statement reveals that chastisement was supposed to be a rational and measured punishment for a wrong action taken as a last resort when reasoning and love (or the withdrawal of parental affection) had failed. It was not to be an immediate angry response. Because it needed to be rational it was a pointless exercise on the very young. Eleanor Stephen wrote of her one year old

I mean to whip her when she deserves it, and when she is old enough to understand the meaning of that kind of correction. At present 'hush' and 'no baby' and a kiss are all the punishment she receives. 146

Even so corporal punishment was introduced at an early age. Harriet King noted in 1827 that her two and three year old sons "came in for their share of correction". 147 It also continued well into the teens. "A Guardian", writing in the Australian, hoped that all fathers and guardians of apprentices who questioned the legality

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144 F. Cox to J. Norton, 9/9/1824, Mackenzie & Norton Papers, ML, Ms 1389/2, ff43-44. (My emphasis)

145 C. Blomfield to Matilda, 18/8/1830, Blomfield, C.E., op.cit., p.64.


147 H. King to P. King, 20/3/1827, H. King Letters, ML, Ms 1793, f38.
of their indentures would follow the example of his neighbour "who flogged his ward home again". His letter, however, implies that this was not common and probably not well accepted.\textsuperscript{148}

Many parents, like Christiana Blomfield, probably saw the futility of corporal punishment whether administered in haste or with due consideration. When a "respectable" couple brought their 13 year old to the Police Office for punishment (he had been "up the bush") they were urged to take him home and "flog him soundly". The father replied that he had tried this often and it was useless. The Officer, who was powerless to do anything unless the child had broken a law, then made the boy kneel and beg the forgiveness of God and his father, and promise not to abscond again.\textsuperscript{149} Some firmer measures were taken in co-operation with parents. Contrary to all law one 9 year old boy was left in solitary for two days and nights before he was discharged to his mother apparently cured of his absconding habit.\textsuperscript{150} Other parents who presumably despaired of curing children of absconding resorted to laying charges against the child to force the court to act. Thus the father of a 12 year old girl charged her with stealing his collar, absconding, and living in a house of ill repute.\textsuperscript{151} Another ploy, after the passing of the 1835 Vagrancy Act, was to get the authorities to charge the absconders with vagrancy.\textsuperscript{152}

It appears that most of these parents ran a thin line between the evangelical and the moderate position. In some there is a hint of a belief in the evil in human hearts but most seem to accept the moral neutrality of the young child which could, through control of its environment and its education, be set on the path to evil or good. This ambivalence became more obvious as their infants grew into children. It is clear that there was a concept of developmental phases, mainly physical but with moral overtones, within the total maturational period. This concept was not very comprehensive, however, thus contributing to the confusion which surrounded the age of maturity.

\textsuperscript{148} \textit{Aust.}, 25/11/1828, 2(c).
\textsuperscript{149} \textit{SH}, 13/11/1837, 2(e).
\textsuperscript{150} \textit{SH}, 23/3/1837, 2(g).
\textsuperscript{151} \textit{SH}, 2/1/1837, 2(g)
\textsuperscript{152} \textit{SH}, 31/12/1835, 2(g).
The first hint of a belief in developmental phases is revealed by the distinction often made between the newborn baby and the "interesting" child. This distinction was very common in the letters of the period. T.V. Blomfield wrote to his brother of his six months old son who "begins to be very interesting" and Frances Cox wrote of her "dear departed [who] was just beginning to be interesting to us" again at the age of about six months. One presumes that this distinction was between a baby's unresponsiveness to parental activity and a baby who recognised and reacted to parents. This is spelled out in Eleanor Stephen's letter to her mother in 1840 when she wrote:

You would hardly believe the fondness of this little creature for her Pa. If he is in sight she is not happy, till he takes her - and then she will not look at me - but if I offer to take her she turns round and clings to him - and if I carry her off by force as I sometimes do, she cries and holds out her arms in the most imploring manner. She bids fair I think to be a noisy little puss and as full of fun as Minnie's little Virginia - She is now altogether more knowing and lively by far than any Baby of her age I ever saw. She Kisses very affectionately and dearly loves a little coaxing.

This distinction implies a value judgement on the part of the parents. They seem to prefer infants after the "interesting" stage, but whether this meant the child was less appreciated in the earlier stage is difficult to judge. This preferment was obviously not universal. Mrs. P. Smith apparently preferred the tiny bundles and was most disappointed in the rapidity with which colonial children grew. She wrote:

[The baby clothes] fit her but the generality of babies in this country are so large that they would be scarcely large enough for a child just born, a lady remarked the other day that she scarcely had saw a baby in this country. They were all children.


154 El. Stephen to her Mother, Sydney, 3/2/1840, Correspondence of Bedford Family, ML, Ms A4482, ff24-25.

155 P. Smith to her Mother, Sydney, N.D. (probably 1830-2), Smith Family Papers, ML, Ms 1525, f4.
The next developmental phase covered the period of teething, walking and presumably toilet training although the silence surrounding the last is almost complete. The successful completion of teething was greeted with relief by parents and became a badge of honour for the successful mother. Equally, early walking was another excuse for parental pride. About toilet training we know little. A sensibility which described the toilet as "the necessary" or "a part of the garden devoted to Cloacina" would hardly mention this aspect of child-rearing even in the most private of letters. It is also possible that the children of literate middle class parents, the only ones capable of leaving records, were toilet trained by a nurse and the parents had little contact with this aspect of childrearing.

The next step seems to have been about the age of 6 or 7 years. The 1828 Census shows considerable "centring" on age seven for both boys and girls which may indicate that it was considered a significant age by parents. It was at about this age that the final obstacle to gender recognition, the pinafore for boys, was removed and boys dressed in pants and coats and girls in dresses. It was also the time when most "school" education began.

The onset of puberty was seen as the final crucial developmental period for the child, "the most dangerous crisis of their lives", but the silence surrounding this process is as deep as that surrounding toilet training. Amongst all the literature there is only the one hint as to the process even taking place and nothing on how parents and young men and women dealt with the "crisis". One gains the impression from this silence and the views held about child sexuality, to which this chapter will return, that the process was seen as a problem of coping with bodily functions rather than coping with the problem of

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156 e.g. Eliza Bate to her Aunts, Sydney, 9/11/1839, Bate Family Papers, NLA, Ms 4737, (no item no.).
157 Aust., 25/11/1828, 3(c).
158 "centring" involves parents whose children's ages are between 6 and 8 years listing them as 7 years of age in the census returns.
160 Broughton to Darling, 19/6/1830 in Darling to Murray, 20/10/1830, HRA, I, xv, p727
sexuality. The "lower orders" accepted more readily a child's sexuality after puberty, demonstrated by their acceptance of early marriage, a more relaxed attitude towards youthful sex, and, in the most extreme form, by some parents giving recently pubescent girls encouragement to move into prostitution.\textsuperscript{161} This more realistic attitude contrasts with the middle class belief in the continuance of asexuality; at least in the maidenly innocence of pubescent girls.\textsuperscript{162}

The recognition of these developmental steps was not reflected in any depth by popular notions of separate periods in the development of an adult. The most concise popular expression was probably a division into infancy, childhood, and youth. Shakespeare's seven ages of man recognised three "childish" phases; namely, infancy, schoolboy and lover.\textsuperscript{163} English law recognised three roughly equivalent groups: the innocent under 7s, the presumptively innocent under 14s, and finally the under 21s who were responsible for their own actions under the criminal law but not responsible under the civil law.\textsuperscript{164} "Lorenzo" in his poem "To a Young Lady on the Fifteenth Anniversary of Her Birth" divides childhood into two followed by a further period of growth and maturing.

Successive years, well pleased, have seen
The lisping babe, the artless child,
Till now she blooms at gay fifteen,
The flowret of Australia's wild.

May ripening virtues grace her soul,
And may increasing bliss be her's!\textsuperscript{165}

At what age the child was considered to be a mature, independent person is difficult to say. The rapid maturing of colonial youth threw confusion into the minds of many, giving rise, for example, to calls

\textsuperscript{161} Cunningham, P. Two Years in New South Wales: etc. (London, 1827) Sydney, 1966, p208; Aust., 31/8/1827, 3(b); Aust., 26/4/1826, 3(d).
\textsuperscript{162} e.g. SG, 10/2/1823, Supp., 1(b).
\textsuperscript{163} Shakespeare, W., As You Like It, Act II, Scene vii.
\textsuperscript{164} See Chapter Five.
\textsuperscript{165} Halloran, L.H., SG, 19/6/1823, 4(a).
for the lowering of the legal age for land ownership and grants and marriage without parental consent. The government's division of the population for statistical purposes into those 12 and under and those over 12 erred on the side of immaturity but probably reflected more closely the attitude of the colony, especially the "lower orders", than the legal age of maturity set at an arbitrary 21. Infancy was probably terminated about age 5-7, childhood by either puberty or reaching the age of economic advantage (around the age of 12-14) followed by a period before marriage or reaching a majority, where the child established itself as an independent entity.

A belief in developmental theories and in maturational landmarks presupposes that the child is an incomplete entity moving towards some identifiable end. The end was the thing that mattered and the road less important. Childhood was thus a period of incompleteness, a period of growth centred on the development of adult faculties. There did not appear to be any inherent value in childish ways other than as amusement to adults, and as Coveney points out the child had to be trained out of its childish ways into the moral and rational perfection of regulated manhood.166

The Romantic Poets, who were a great influence in England with their attack on the rationalists for driving a wedge between reason and feeling, do not seem to have ranked highly in the colony. Their accent on the desirable qualities of imagination, wonder, and joy was overshadowed by the dominant parental pride in the rapid improvement and maturation of colonial children. Christiana Blomfield writes, for example, of telling her eldest son, then 4 years old, that if he was good

God would love him and give him everything. He said directly; 'What, lots of pancakes and sugar?' Poor little innocent fellow, that is his idea of everything that is good, but he will, I hope, soon know better.167

The more quickly these sorts of errors were rectified the better the training.

166 Coveney, P. Poor Monkey; The Child In Literature, London, 1957, p4
167 Blomfield, C. to In-laws, 2/6/1825, C.E. Blomfield op.cit., p47.
The characteristics most admired in children by the aspiring classes were far from being imaginative. The two paramount virtues in children were self-abnegation and subjection to parental authority. The latter flowed from the former, but the former was more widely defined in an almost endless list of virtues. Desirable qualities were both physical and temperamental. All parents hoped for a "stout" and pretty child. From the evidence most thought their children were pretty but some were forced to admit that their child was delicate. Cleaning and neateness were still recognised as the exterior signs of godliness.

As far as temperament was concerned the desirable qualities were "a quiet and excellent disposition", a good temper, mildness, sense, intelligence of mind, an alert memory, attentiveness, punctuality, tenderness, affection, amiability and generosity. The most undesirable characteristic amongst children was a self-sufficiency and self-opinionatedness which gave rise to passion, perverseness, selfishness, hasty-ness of temper and even an undue fondness for talking.

168 J. Hawdon to G. Wood 20/8/1832, Hawdon Family Papers, ML, Doc 1046, f5; C. Blomfield to In-laws, 2/5/1825, C.E. Blomfield, op. cit., p48; E. Bate to Aunts, 19/8/1839, Bate Papers, NLA, Ms 5839, ff24.
169 SG, 6/1/1825, 3(b); C. Brooks, "Diary", Oct. 1827, Brooks Papers, NLA, Ms 1559, p77.
170 SG, 19/6/1823, 4(a); T. Birkley to his father, 3/9/1839, Birkley Papers, NLA, Ms 4216.
171 SG, 29/1/1824, 4(a); H. to P. King 1827, Harriet King Letters, ML, Ms 1793 f42; F.L. Duguid to Eliz. 9/9/1837, Duguid Papers, ML, Ms 2109, f19. While Francis Duguid was upset at his daughters talking, Christiana Blomfield obviously thought it a sign of talent and spirit for she wrote that her Thomas "was such a little chatterbox you would be quite pleased with him". C.B. to Mrs. Edwards, 16/4/1824, C.E. Blomfield, op. cit., p45. Backhouse saw quietness as one of the great lessons in self denial. A Narrative of a Visit to the Australian Colonies, London, 1843, p474; these desired qualities are beautifully summarised by the cover of Arthur Willmott's first Copy Book which he used in England in 1835:

The Good Boy
The good boy loves his parents, minds what they say to him, and tries to please them. When they deny him what he wants he does not sulk or look angry. He loves his teachers; he likes to learn his book; he is not idle. He is very kind to his brothers and sisters, to his playfellows, and even to dumb creatures. He does not fight, quarrel, or call names. He does not speak rudely to anyone. If he sees anyone lame, crooked, or old, he does not laugh at or mock him. He does not tell a lie. If he has done any thing wrong he does not deny it; he says he is very sorry and will try to do so no more. He never takes any thing that does not belong to him, nor meddle without leave.

Willmott Family Papers, ML, Ms 2619/2, Item 1.
Most of all, parents desired an "acceptance of authority", "a spirit of reverence for parents and superior authority", "appreciation of parental goodwill", and "proper subjection", and abhorred "insolence of feeling and bearing towards their elders".172

Obedience was a lifelong duty of the child while the parent lived. It was always bound to be subject to the "common cause" or the patriarch's will.173 This subjection was held to be imperative amongst the children of even the least deserving of parents. The father who committed the ultimate sin of not marrying, according to the Gazette, could expect his son to "revere his father in deference to the unconditional behest of the Almighty, whilst he must be destitute of any real or positive affection for his parent".174 One of the enduring complaints against the servants who came from the lower classes was that, although they were often intelligent, they had an "inferior disposition being pert and not given to tell the master".175

It was noted above that many parents welcomed signs of "spirit" in their children, but recognised that all the more perverse sins were a sure result of mischannelled spirit and a lack of respect for authority. Sometimes they could be excused through "gross ignorance or habitual frailty" but drinking, sexual proclivities, and indications of independence such as abandoning the parental home were all seen as signs of ultimate degradation and criminal tendencies on the part of the child which often reflected badly upon the parents. Not only were the children "rogues and vagabonds" but the parents were often not acting the part of a parent and exhibiting extreme recklessness towards the child.176 According to opinion most of these children came from the lower orders, the convict and ticket-of-leave class, and little else could be expected

172 SG, 29/1/1824, 4(a); Ullathorne, Select Committee on Transportation, 1838, Minutes, p23; J. Wild to grandmother, 20/7/1833, Wild Family Papers, ML, Doc 1050, f34; H. to P. King, 20/3/1827, Harriet King Letters, ML, Ms 1793, f38.

173 SG, 6/9/1826, 3(b).

174 SG, 14/4/1825, 2(c-d).


176 C. Brooks, "Diary", Oct.1827, C. Brooks Paper, NLA, Ms 1559, p77; SH, 31/12/1835, 2(g); SH, 16/3/1835, 3(c); SH, 10/12/1835, 3(a).
from such dissolute parents.177

What the lower orders thought of this and what they expected from their children is difficult to gauge. Some evidence is given by newspaper reports of incidents and other evidence is available from the "cultural clashes" that frequently took place. Alexander Harris points out that even amongst the aspiring classes the discipline of the old world was not necessary and not desired.178 The lack of discipline amongst children of the lower classes was a constant editorial complaint. Certainly cleanliness was less important to the lower classes,179 drink was not seen as the evil it was supposed to be and its use amongst children was more accepted,180 language was peripheral,181 and truthfulness seems to have been less important than faithfulness, or sticking up for parents, siblings or friends.

Faithfulness seems to have been the most admired attribute amongst lower class parents, and even the higher ranks gave it some recognition. Parents were expected to support their children regardless of the child's activity182 and equally children were expected to support parents.183 The Gazette, in one 1820 case, praised a young man for thrashing the "high class" seducer of his little sister. In this case the editor seemed to imply that not all the lower class valued honesty for he wrote:

This brother was one of your coarse sort of creatures, who valued honesty ... and probably incorrectly, attributed the action to the moral nobleness of the youth. It was more likely done out of duty to his family.184


179 for example the practice of the factory mothers was reformed with marked success according to the "Factory Committee Report for 1825". NSWLCV&P 1824-5, Meeting 53, 18/10/1825, p24.

180 SH, 25/8/1834, 3(a); SH, 2/5/1831, 3(b); SH, 11/7/1835, 3(a).

181 Aust., 16/3/1826, 3(c); SG, 14/4/1825, 3(b); SG, 8/3/1822, 3(a).

182 SG, 3/2/1821, 2(a); Aust. 3/1/1827. 3(c); see also Ullathorne, The Catholic Mission. p29.

183 SG, 20/3/1827, 2(a); SG, 20/10/1836, 2(d); SH,12/9/1831, 2(d).

184 SG, 20/5/1820, 3(b).
In another case, two native youths aged about 16 were redeemed from the gallows by a numerously signed petition collected in the hour between judgement and sentence. They had been sentenced for murdering a man who made familiar overtures to the ex-convict, cohabiting mother of one of the boys. The Gazette noted:

We hope this very narrow escape will not be lost in influence on the rising members of our Community, as, even in the event of parents being insulted and abused, children are not illegally to take the law into their own hands.\footnote{185}

Faithfulness demanded, in some cases, the bending of honesty. In one court case it appears that a child was influenced to perjure himself in defence of friends.\footnote{186}

Lower class parents also seem to have demanded a certain amount of obedience although they were often inconsistent. They occasionally demanded instant obedience, in some cases with cruel punishment if it was not forthcoming, and at other times merely shrugged their shoulders in defeat.\footnote{187} It is doubtful that they would have expected this obedience to be translated into "love and duty" nor would they have expected that duty to continue once the child left the family home other than at the basic level of solidarity against opponents. They seem to have had very little tolerance for physical incompetency even in very young children.\footnote{188} Finally they desired their children to be out of the way if they could not be of use. The children were thus quite neglected and permitted to run about the streets in idleness.\footnote{189}

Idleness was a constant fear of aspiring class parents and friends. Play, unlike other childish traits, was accepted but a thin line

\footnote{185}{SG, 20/3/1827, 2(a).}
\footnote{186}{SH, 5/2/1835, 3(a); see also SH, 22/7/1833, 2(e); SH, 27/6/1831, 3(b).}
\footnote{187}{SH, 13/11/1837, 2(e).}
\footnote{188}{Aust., 4/11/1826, 3(c-d).}
\footnote{189}{F.L. MacLeay to Archdeacon Broughton, 16/12/1831, Applications for Admission into the Orphan Schools, 1829–32, NSWAO 4/331, ff237-9; SH, 10/12/1835, 3(a).}
divided childish play from idleness and dissipation. Those of the extreme evangelical strain sometimes failed to see the distinction. Thomas Hassall, while in England training for the clergy, wrote to Jane Marsden warning against the dangers of play.

But now another thought crosses my mind which is the great many hours I spent in play or in reading useless books, when a little boy. O my dear Jane let me beg of you not to spend too much time in play but spend as much time as possible in doing something that may be useful to yourself or to others.\textsuperscript{190}

Play was a concept that fitted into the much wider notion of leisure. Leisure, like all other human activities, was supposed to be well spent in preparation for this and the next life. Some leisure activities, most of those popular with the lower classes such as drinking, fighting and gambling, were inherently evil from the effects they had on the character (especially if indulged on the sabbath). Others, such as scientific and intellectual pursuits, were inherently good for the same reason. Because children were unable to pursue the higher leisure activities, a certain amount of leeway was allowed. There is no evidence of the suppression of play amongst very young children even by those who might have been expected to be most rigorous. The evangelical clergyman the Rev. Wm. Cowper Sn., for example, was so happy to play with his granddaughter, Hannah Brooks, that he attempted to persuade her mother to leave the child with him for a while.\textsuperscript{191} Most parental letters delight not only in the amusement afforded the adults but in detailing the pleasure children gained in play activity.

Play therefore, was accepted but always considered secondary to education, duty, and the inculcation of virtue. Hostility towards children's play was not directed so much at the activity itself but at the competition it formed with the higher pursuits. When leisure took precedence play became idleness and dissolution. Thus the Herald railed against the number of children spending all day in the streets in idleness when they should have been at school.\textsuperscript{192} In early

\textsuperscript{190} Quoted in Yarwood, A.T., \textit{op.cit.}, p202.


\textsuperscript{192} SH, 11/5/1837, 2(e).
nineteenth century England one of the principal reasons for the establishment of Sunday Schools was to remove children from objectionable pursuits and to gain some control of their leisure time.\(^{193}\) No doubt the same motives operated in N.S.W. abetted by the desire to remove the children from the clutches of their parents during the traditional day of rest and "dissipation".\(^{194}\)

Play had the direct utilitarian purpose of promoting good health, and amongst the Tories this seems to have been paramount in their acceptance of a more relaxed attitude. The Orphan Institutes, the School of Industry, and even, after 1826, the Carter's Barracks' boys, had a recreation break each day. The *Australian* attributed the failure of the pre-1826 Carter's Barracks' system partly to the lack of regulated recreation given to the boys. On Sundays, their only day of rest, they were schooled for four hours then allowed free rein. The result was antipathy and dissolution "for, after a weeks labour, they looked for a day of partial rest, at least, and not of laborious application of mind".\(^{195}\)

Even more subtly play could be used as an educative tool well before formal education began. Role differentiation, which seems to have begun well before the sexes were clearly distinguished (no doubt to the confusion of the children), was promoted by play and toys. Boys were inevitably engaged with wheelbarrows, horses, and tools while girls were given dolls, musical instruments, books and needlework requisites.\(^{196}\) The *Australian* continued to report the adventures of gangs of "native boys", most about or over the age of 14, who contested pitched battles to determine which part of town had the most "pluck". They made plain their attitude that such activity was a bit excessive but could be excused as natural youthful exuberance.\(^{197}\) On the other hand, even the *Australian*, that lover of "all gay and

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\(^{194}\) SG, 6/9/1826, 2(c).

\(^{195}\) Aust, 25/3/1826, 2(d)

\(^{196}\) see C. Blomfield to her in-laws, 2/6/1825, Blomfield, C.E., *op.cit.*, pp47-8; Morton Herman, *op.cit.*, p41; F.L. Duguid to his mother 4/9/1833, Duguid Family Papers, ML, Ms 2199, f5; Mary Brooks to Wm. Cowper, 2/5/1833, *Cowper Letters*, ML, Ms 3315, Letter 13.

\(^{197}\) Aust, 27/5/1826, 3(d).
lively intercourse", warned young girls to avoid "the bold and boisterous deportment of boyish playmates" as injurious to "that self retiring modesty which makes the woman so amiable in the estimation of mankind". 198

Moral and character lessons could also be taught through play. Harriet King mentioned how her eldest son, about 6 years old, was monopolising all play activity.

I endeavour as much as possible to counteract this tendency, and he is aware of his failing and sometimes I can see he strives to subdue it, but we have frequent battles about it. 199

The lower orders failed once more by not seeing the secondary importance of leisure for children and neglecting to use leisure to advantage.

In the eyes of the aspiring classes it was therefore inevitable that this would lead, amongst the lower orders, to an even more miserable failure in the area of child sexuality. The assumption amongst the aspiring classes was that pre-pubescent children were, at least, asexual while others held that children had an "inbred chastity". This was particularly true of girls. 200 This may help explain the use of the pinafore for both sexes until the age of four or five. The pinafore was supposed to be asexual, a symbol perhaps of the asexuality of under fives, but in the colony was basically feminine, a symbol perhaps of the male passions being subdued by the woman's touch.

Some of the confusion that surrounds the Tories' attitude to the question of the inherent virtue of mankind is due to their insistence on the natural sexual innocence of girls and young women, even though they often did not believe in the moral neutrality of the infant. The Gazette frequently alluded to the destructive example of concubinage on the "innocence" of the currency lasses.

Concubinage strikes at the root of every moral virtue, by unhinging that respect for its laws and institutions in the female breast, which was, and is, and ever will be, the surest guarantee for the morals of the rising generation. 201

198 Aust., 21/7/1825, 3(a).
199 H. TO P. King, 1827, H. King Letters, ML, Ms 1793, f42.
200 Cleverly and Phillips, From Locke to Spock, Melbourne, 1976, p47; SG, 20/5/1820, 3(b).
201 SG, 22/3/1826, 2(c).
Other correspondents spoke of base human efforts to undermine female innocence\textsuperscript{202} and one even warned of the hot colonial climate "dissipating" female delicacy leaving "the credulous and innocent heart of a young female ... unguarded by masculine egis ... susceptible of the vicious adulation of deceit".\textsuperscript{203}

This confusion was not restricted to the Tories as the example of the \textit{Australian} mentioned above illustrates.\textsuperscript{204} A correspondent in the same \textit{Australian} came close to the Rousseauean notion of natural goodness with the statement that a knowledge of the frailty of one held in esteem "weakened those motives to good, by which providence has linked the affection of mankind". Yet the same correspondent obviously had an exaggerated belief in the innocence of girls and the iniquity of boys.

In this indiscriminate association of the younger classes, female sensibilities when brought in contact with the asperities of harsh, surly, passionate and unruly youth, gradually lose the mildness and delicacy of feature, the essential to female characteristic: the frequent conflict of passion and petulance with boyish temerity, imperceptibly destroys that benignity of the female breast; and the heedless imprudence and impetuous folly of the young man, insensibly undermines virtue's best bulwark, modesty of demeanor.\textsuperscript{205}

Perhaps the most lurid example of the beliefs and fears of the middling classes is given by the author J. Byrne, writing in the mid 1840s. In his description the moral and physical climate of the colony, plus a dash of innate depravity, combine to draw the child into the "mysteries" of sexual depravity.

The young mind is pliable, open to impression, and readily imbibes the effects of the language and conduct of those around. The chamber of female youth, as well as that of the other sex, is always open of necessity to [convict] servants, and there, in the very inmost recesses of home, vice is inculcated, and taught, until desire and ability produce practice.

\textsuperscript{202}SG, 17/2/1825, Supp., 1(d).
\textsuperscript{203}SG, 10/2/1825, Supp., 1(b); See also Reid, T., \textit{op.cit.}, p324; \textit{Re climate and degeneracy of British character see Henderson, J., \textit{op.cit.}, pp44-45.}
\textsuperscript{204}Aust., 21/7/1825, 3(a).
\textsuperscript{205}Aust., 21/7/1825, 2(d).
Young, tender, fair, and beautiful, the daughters of Australia present a choice ground ... [for] morality and religion, but such alas! is not their lot; before childhood dawns into maturer age and womanhood, the book of vice and sin stands open before them ... The impassioned feelings of women, born beneath the bright and sunny skies of southern climes, need but little to excite them; and if the body does not soon become as polluted as the mind, want of opportunity, in most cases, is the only cause.206

Sexual knowledge amongst children was destructive to the child and to the moral fibre of society. Again this was particularly true of girls for "the moral character of men depends so much upon the impression they receive in their association with the opposite sex".207 Once a child was made aware of its sexuality or engaged in sexual activity, whether through some traumatic event like rape or by experience such as masturbation or witnessing adult behaviour, its mind was poisoned forever.208 Editorial and other comments upon child rape cases, or incidents involving child sexuality, frequently indicate that sexual awareness in children was also regarded as dangerous to the good order of society and to the humanity of its inhabitants. The Gazette, in 1827, responded to the prosecution of a 15 year old girl for keeping a house of ill fame by thundering:

But, when we see a mere infant, a child of not yet 15 years of age, keeping an open abode for the most depraved we cannot but lament ...

It is obvious that the editor did not think it normally possible for a 15 year old girl to fall so low, a fall which increased "the moral depravity of society", making it impossible for families to preserve the humanity of their children.209

The frequent references to examples of child sexuality in the various Select Committees reveal more of the obsessions of the participants than real facts. They do, however, illustrate both beliefs concerning child sexuality. Surgeon John Russell was shocked at the

207 Aust., 21/7/1825, 2(c); S. Marsden to Mrs. Stokes, 8/10/1814, Mackennes, G., op.cit., p53
208 SH, 2/9/1833, 2(c).
209 SG, 1/3/1827, 2(e).
"depravity" of a 5 year old daughter of a settler who "called every part of man and woman by the most beastly names", and who acted as a lookout while her 13 year old sister carried on with a male convict. J. Barnes claimed that many parents did not believe it possible that their daughters were engaged in that sort of activity or that they were being sexually corrupted by convict servants. E.A. Slade claimed that many convicts accused of corrupting the morals of children were summarily dealt with rather than publicly prosecuted. This avoided ruining the character of the child by, presumably, not publishing the child's sexual awareness. Ullathorne attested to the innocence of Irish convict boys who were unaware of unnatural sexual crime, in fact all sexual crime, until they came to the colony.

The Law assumed asexuality, paradoxically especially with regard to the boys. Boys below the age of 14, according to the Law, were mentally and physically incapable of being active sexual partners. Laws existed to protect the abuse of boys but the Law held that no boy below the age of 14 was capable of sexual intercourse regardless of the proofs of his physical prowess. Similar legislation limiting the legal obligations of sexually active girls cannot be found, possibly because sexually active girls were assumed not to exist but more likely because of a double standard which sought to protect boys and not girls from the consequences of youthful sexuality. In cases of rape and carnal knowledge involving girls below the age of 10 years, however, the assumption was that the girl not only could not, but would not, assent.

This sort of ideology made it extremely difficult for the lower orders to avoid criticism. Their children often shared bedrooms and

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210 Select Committee on Transportation, 1838, Minutes, pp55-58.
211 ibid., p47.
212 Select Committee on Transportation, 1837, Minutes, p63.
213 Ullathorne, Catholic Mission, p17; Select Committee on Transportation, 1838, Minutes, p16.
214 Howard, C., Australian Criminal Law (2nd Ed.), Sydney, 1972, pp345-7. As late as 1864 the majority of judges in a N.S.W. case dismissed a charge of rape against a 14 year old and upheld the validity of the law "so well adapted ... to prevent those particular statements of indecent things ..." which if acknowledged to exist among under 14s would tend to corrupt the majority. Regina Vs Willis (1864) 4 S.C.R. (N.S.W) pp59-60.
beds with adults. Besides the inevitable sight of nudity, adults did not restrict their sexual activity while the children were around.\textsuperscript{216} Other writers make it plain that the mild climate and the closeness of the sea promoted frequent ablutions often in sight of the passing human traffic.\textsuperscript{217} Mixed bathing, presumably nude, was popular amongst children and young people of the lower orders.\textsuperscript{218} This much more relaxed attitude must have bred familiarity with sexual differences and functions, a familiarity which caused consternation amongst the upper ranks. The "indiscriminate and promiscuous familiarity now too generally tolerated among the younger classes" was, however, put down to the practice of co-education in the colony's schools, probably in genteel deference to the sensibilities of the readers.\textsuperscript{219}

One of the best illustrations of infiltration of bourgeois values into the thinking of a great number of lower order families is the acceptance of an extended childhood. The infiltration was aided by demographic and economic conditions in the colony, a point taken up in later chapters, but the Whig notions on the importance of childhood on adult behaviour and the possibility of adult reformation were most appealing to the lower orders striving to better themselves. Both Whigs and Tories recognised that the experiences and lessons of infancy and childhood were of enduring importance for the formation of self and the creation of proper modes of behaviour and belief. Neither side truly acknowledged that the things learned in childhood, whether good or bad, could be undone. The Tories were strongest in this sense, looking "with suspicion upon any man who has ever been a convict, until he is satisfied, from personal knowledge, that that man is really reformed."\textsuperscript{220}

This attitude changed somewhat when transportation ended and the evils of the convict system were quickly subsumed by the economic ills of the depression. John Wild (Jn) changed his opinion and in 1839

\textsuperscript{216} The \textit{Australian} reported the murder of the wife of a constable who returned home to find his wife in bed with the lodger and the couple's children. \textit{Aust.}, 22/8/1827, 3(c).

\textsuperscript{217} \textit{Aust.}, 19/10/1827, 2(b); \textit{SH}, 18/2/1833, 4(c).

\textsuperscript{218} P. Cunningham, \textit{op.cit.}, p208; \textit{SG}, 30/10/1823, 4(a-b).

\textsuperscript{219} \textit{Aust.}, 21/7/1825, 2(d).

\textsuperscript{220} \textit{SH}, 19/6/1837, 2(e); \textit{SH}, 19/1/1837, 2(c); See also Reid, T., \textit{op.cit.}, pp22-23.
was writing to William Cox

I may safely say from some years experience that the proportion of 2 out of 3 are in a measure reformed here - the kind of life they are compelled to lead - the separation from their old haunts & associates - the certainty of punishment if they misbehave - and of reward if otherwise, act very powerfully on them.221

The attitude may not have been a deep belief, therefore, which would apply to all classes in all circumstances, but would still have led to great suspicion of irreclaimability. In effect this was a permanent suspicion. Even the "arch-Whig" Bourke acknowledged that while the exconvict may "conduct themselves in such a manner as to keep out of the hands of the police and the clutches of the law" this did not allow one to conclude that he was reformed for "real reformation of the heart and disposition can be known to Him only who is the Searcher of Hearts".222 The female convict in the anonymous poem "The Female Convict to her Infant" speaks of her guilt and irreclaimability for she acknowledges that her remorse will not prevent her doom in this or the next life.223 The Whigs held only slightly less determinist views. The Australian wrote that adult convicts were "irreclaimable". Almost all that could be practiced was "a certain portion of control ... for punishment and example are the primary objects - correction of morals being in most instances only a remote possibility".224

The two groups differed slightly in their assessment of the ease with which this childhood training could be thrown off. This depended largely on their view of man. For the tories a fall from grace and a renunciation of the lessons of childhood was much easier than the Whigs would acknowledge. The Tories were in constant fear for the morals of their more mature children, refusing to allow them to attend Scott's boarding schools, for example, because of the influence of the contaminated lower orders.225 The Whigs on the other hand argued

222 Select Committee on Transportation, 1838, Bourke to Glenelg, 4/12/1837, Appendix C, No 41, p235.
223 SC, 5/2/1824, 4(a).
224 Aust., 21/7/1825, 3(a) and 25/3/1826, 2(d).
225 Scott to Darling, 1/9/1829, HRA, I, xv, pp220-221.
It cost the well taught understanding many a struggle to throw off the trammels of virtue, while the untutored mind becomes easy victim to the entanglements and snares of the profligate, before the discretion of years is of any avail.226

In defence of the Tories it should be stressed that they were worried only about their children whose moral education was not complete. The fall of an adult they usually attributed to inadequate moral education and to the self-will of the person not having been fully broken. Their opinion, therefore, was probably not far removed from that of the Whigs.

Both did not consider the learning process, the fixation process one could almost call it, to be complete until well into the child's teens. The Herald sometimes pointed to the "juvenilé depravity" of children as young as 6 or 8 years of age227 but still recognised that erring youths of 14 or over could be reformed. They continued to advocate the judicious use of corporal punishment instead of gaol for it is much to be feared that the lessons of depravity ... learnt in the Gaol ... will have a melancholy influence on his future life.228

F. Macleay, of the School of Industry, wrote of one unsuitable girl that

she has been quite neglected and permitted to run about the streets in idleness, and it is feared, has contracted habits which may render her a dangerous associate for those whose minds are comparatively uncontaminated.

Macleay stated that the Orphanage would be a more suitable place. There she could receive rectifying instruction to a standard which was presumed in the girls admitted to the School of Industry.229 Robert Cox also wrote concerning the 11 year old orphan daughter of a former employee. Because her mother had been "of the most depraved caste"

226 Aust., 21/7/1825, 3(a).
227 SH, 13/3/1837, 3(c); 19/12/1836, Supp. 1(d).
228 SH, 30/4/1833, 2(g).
229 F.L. Macleay to Archdeacon Broughton, 16/2/1831, Application for Admission into the Orphan Schools, 1829-1832, NSW AO 4/331, ff237-239.
regular people were unwilling to take her in service, but Cox had not abandoned hope of her reformation or salvation because he was not willing to desert her or to engage her to "worthless elements". 230

It is notable that the Rules of the orphanages restricted, theoretically, the age of entry to females between the ages of 5 and 8 years, and boys between 7 and 10 years. The Orphanages were seen as moral refuges as much as physical lifesavers and one wonders if these restricted ages indicate that children below the minimum were considered too young to be influenced by an immoral environment and those above the maximum too old to be effectively "treated". The difference between the sexes is thus of interest; girls obviously were seen as being more vulnerable or maturing more rapidly. 231

The Australian argued the Whig position when speaking on behalf of the Carter's Barracks' boys, the male convicts aged below 17 years. Although the boys showed early inclinations to vice this was due "to the dissoluteness of their parents and to neglect [rather] than to bad and vicious disposition". Only "some efforts at least are necessary to effect a complete reformation". 232 These efforts needed to concentrate on admonition, instruction, and the teaching of a useful trade.

Some, again from both sides of the political debate, thought that some lessons in vice were too severe, too traumatising to allow effective rehabilitation. This was particularly the case with issues involving child sexuality. The judge in a child rape case upbraided the guilty party for poisoning the minds of the two children "it was to be feared for ever, and it would be fortunate for them if they ever forgot the vicious lesson he had taught them". 233 Wentworth in an 1824 case (while he was still a fervent Whig) also cast doubt on

230 R. Cox to Archdeacon Broughton, 16/4/1832, ibid., ff273-274.
233 SII, 2/9/1833, 2(c).
the morality of a female witness because she had been raped as a young girl. Although he would not impute blame on the girl the lingering suspicion of acquiescence and the lessons learned in that event cast doubt upon her reputation. 234

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It is obvious that there were quite wide differences in the models used to train children and in the behaviour levels expected by parents. There were also important points of concurrence. Few regarded the moral education of the child as complete until it was well into its teens. Few believed that the child's first sign of rebellion, its first sign of self aggrandizement, would, if allowed to succeed, fix it into a downward spiral from which it could not extricate itself. Similarly few believed in the innate depravity, and fewer in the innate goodness, of children. The majority of parents were Whiggish or uninterested in the moral debate surrounding the colony. Their assessment of the moral climate of the colony, especially within their own homes, was far more favourable than that of the Tories. The Whig's and the uninterested's assessment of the deleterious effect of this climate was less pessimistic and they did not feel it was necessary to eradicate the temptations to self and evil from the world in order to preserve the moral man. Indeed the moral man was of secondary importance to the provision of practical knowledge and the establishment of a political and economic climate which would remove the necessity for people to steal, drink, cohabit, and generally indulge in the worst vices of the colony. The concentration of the majority was on practical education through love, example and the disciplines of everyday life, within the home and at schools, to fortify the child against any temptation it might encounter in its adult life.

234 Aust., 30/12/1824, 2(b).
CHAPTER TWO

CARE, MAINTENANCE AND EDUCATION
There are few things that please a parent more than the knowledge that their child is taller, more handsome, more healthy, and more intelligent than another child that the parents may have used as a yardstick. In N.S.W. during the early colonial period that yardstick was the children of England. Constant comparisons were made, not only between the Currencies and the Sterlings but between colonial children and the children at home in England. Most often the comparison, especially with regard to health, was most favourable to the colony while that of intelligence and education was often (unfairly) unfavourable. The practices at home and at school which produced these children are worthy of close examination for they tell one much about the colony itself, its attitude towards children, and its implementation of the principles enunciated in the previous chapter.

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Among the more frequent observations made about N.S.W. were those on the physique and good health of the white colonial born, and their rapid development to physical maturity. These descriptions must surely have applied to most of the children in the colony whether colonial born or emigrant. The colonial born constituted a huge majority of the children in the Colony during the period under study and many of the very young immigrant children would have been subjected to the same environmental factors that induced these physical characteristics in the native born. Only in those families where English dress, food and exercise continued unaltered could the child have avoided moving towards the general description applied to the native born. Cunningham speaks of perceptible differences between those born in N.S.W. and those born in England, but this would apply only to adults who came to N.S.W. as adults or relatively mature children. The numerous, often humorous, incidents the writers relate of Currencies being confused with Sterling, or vice versa, indicate that the difference was not as great as they would lead us to believe.1

The physical characteristics of both sexes were often described in similar fashion but the boys were sometimes considered to be of

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1 P. Cunningham, Two Years in New South Wales, London, 1827, p207; On the other hand H.W. Haygarth, Recollections of Bushlife in Australia, London, 1848, pl23 says "It would be difficult to distinguish an Australian from an Englishman by his appearance."
slightly finer development than the girls. At maturity, usually at about 14 or 15 years of age, both sexes were considered to be tall. As children they were considered to grow rapidly and to be tall for their age. As well as being tall both sexes were considered to be straight, heavy boned, but slightly built, bordering on thinness. A general opinion that the boys were handsome and the girls pretty also prevailed. Alex Harris wrote of the lasses

The very general prettiness of the native white girls, struck me very forcibly. I do not know how to account for it, but there is common to them, in all points, a singularly marked feminine character; a gentle, simple womanliness that is peculiarly agreeable.

No doubt some of this was due to the natural dotage of adults upon

2 H.W. Haygarth, *op.cit.*, p123. Perhaps the opinion most quoted is that of Peter Cunningham, who wrote:

The Currencies grow up tall and slender, like the Americans, and are generally remarkable for that Gothic peculiarity of fair hair and blue eyes which has been noticed by other writers. Their complexions, when young, are of a reddish sallow, and they are for the most part easily distinguishable - even in more advance years - from those born in England. Cherry cheeks are not accompaniments of our climate, any more that that of America ...

Cunningham, P., *op.cit.*, p207.

3 McLeod, the Inspector of Hospitals, estimated, in 1830, the average height of the boys at 5'9" and girls at 5'4". These figures, the only ones that we have, may err in the colony's favour as these heights make the boys, on average, taller than contemporary Australian males, and about 3½" to 4" taller than the average convict. HRA, I, xv, p372. Based on figures in D. Denholm's *The Colonial Australians*, Melbourne, 1979, p25. This is not beyond the realms of possibility but such a huge difference is highly improbable. Haygarth contents himself with estimating that the average height "was probably more than that of the English", *op.cit.*, p123 - (my accent).

4 Elizabeth Bate exemplifies many of the proud mothers of the period when she wrote, in 1840, of her two year old daughter:

My little girl continues to improve very fast. She is as tall as most children are in England at four years old and far more precocious.

E. Bate to Miss Mary Ann Mossop, 6/9/1840, *Bate Family Papers*, ANL, Ms 5839 (no item no.). Haygarth also notes the rapidity with which both sexes shoot up at an early stage of their youth. A native white, at the age of fourteen or fifteen, appears destined to attain the utmost perfection of form; but from that age to twenty years there is not usually that expansion nor development which the previous growth had promised.

*op.cit.*, p123.

children and any comparison between convicts and currencies undoubtedly flattered the latter. The healthiness of the colony also helped, for the *Gazette* pointed out (in what, we hope, was a tongue in check comment):

Some view the disease called the small pox, as a curse, come when it may; but if it could be well cured in this climate, and could be introduced into the humble sphere of life, it would prove a great safeguard of the virtue of poor men's wives and daughters in this Colony of scarcity of females, could their faces be well indented; for although clothed in dungarees, slender limbs and pretty faces surmount the obstacle of shabby habiliment.  

No doubt the same applied to the boys.

Most writers went on to caution their readers against thinking their subjects were perfect. The three chief defects were their gangliness, their lack of colour, or sallowness, and their bad teeth. Gangliness not only included a lack of fine motor co-ordination but a thinness which, according to Haygarth, was most noticeable in the girls' "want of ... depth of chest". Presumably this meant they were thin rather than less buxom, but it could mean both. One possible explanation for the loose co-ordination of the colonials was the lack of necessity for custody of limbs in the wide open spaces and the primitive homes of the colony, compared to the refinement needed in the urban environment, crowded with people and fragile objects, familiar to the writers.

The colonials "want of colour" was noted by many. Their references to the pale hair, eyes, and complexions probably meant that the children's hair and eyes were more a lighter shade of a particular colour, rather than all children being blue eyed blondes. McLeod notes that their hair often darkened after puberty. The lack of colour as far as the complexion was concerned meant that the English "blooming complexion", with its characteristic contrast of white skin and rosy cheeks, was replaced by an overall reddish-brown colour. Today this would be considered "healthily tanned" but was then regarded as "sallow" with definite overtones of sickness.

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6 *SG*, 23/1/1828, 3(c).
7 H.W. Haygarth, *op.cit.* p123.
8 *HRA*, I, xv, p372.
Teeth were considered one of the less flattering aspects of colonial youth. Both sexes, but particularly the girls (probably because commentators expected better of them), were prone to early tooth decay. Cunningham attributed it to the climatising process, as we see nearly all plants and animals suffer considerable change in appearance on transportation to a different latitude.

The early decay was more likely due to the huge consumption of sugar, a foodstuff considered a luxury in England, by all classes in the colony. The environmental influences, the root of each of these physical characteristics, are obvious and the healthiness and defectiveness of the children can most often be traced to these influences. Most notable were the isolation of the colony, the salubrity of the climate, and the quality of the food. It is difficult to separate the general effects of the colony's climate, the environment of the town and the home, and the food, for all worked together to produce a situation which was claimed to be so advantageous to children that it was credited with almost miraculous powers. McLeod acknowledged this when he attributes the healthiness of the colony to the generally good ventilation of the dwellings, the exercise which is taken by People in the open air, and the frequent Bathing that is resorted to by all Classes. It may also be borne in mind that one great predisposing cause of disease, arising from an inadequate Quantity and an inferior quality of Food, is not known here; while on the other hand the effects of intemperance and the dissolute lives of many are moderated by the Salubrity of the climate.

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10 P. Cunningham, op.cit. p207.
11 Darling estimated that each person in the colony consumed over Thirty pounds each year (HRA, I, xiv, p131) but the 1828 import figures indicate that over one hundred pounds was consumed either directly or indirectly by every man, woman and child in the colony. NSW Blue Book 1928, ff88-9.
12 The Herald, 3/8/1835, 2(g) reported that a seven year old boy who had arrived mute in 1834 was now able to distinguish sounds and dance to his father's flute playing.
13 HRA, I, xv, p374.
There is little one can say about the climate in general other than the fact that the temperate situation of most of the area settled during the period contrasted with the extremes to which the English were accustomed in the home land and the Indian colonies. The climate did not favour the spread of many of the diseases and sicknesses associated with either extreme. The only problems most visitors had with the weather were the summer humidity and the sudden transition in summer when the Southerly change arrived following a hot day. Darling, after a traumatic period when one M.L.C. successfully and one magistrate unsuccessfully suicided, thought this sudden change might be the cause of the peculiarity "which affects the spirits and produces extraordinary depression amongst some people."

The environment was also relatively free of contaminants. While small towns could quickly turn a limpid stream into a fetid cesspit the real problems caused by urban living occurred only in the one substantial town; Sydney. Unlike the villages of Parramatta, Windsor, Richmond, Liverpool, Maitland, and even Newcastle, Sydney lacked a substantial source of freshwater and the porous soil necessary for effective operation of the widely used cesspit sanitation system. By 1820 Sydney's main source of fresh water, the Tankstream, was polluted beyond redemption by rubbish, slops, the overflow from cesspits and the water closets of the more affluent which flushed directly into the Tankstream via open drains. The stream was totally abandoned as a source of water in 1826 and from then until 1830 the townspeople depended on wells and expensive water carted from the Lachlan Swamps. Busby's tunnel, commenced in 1827, began delivering seepage water in 1830 but it, too, was expensive and available only at a limited number of outlets.

Sydney was saved, as McLeod points out, by the harbour. The use of the harbour to wash bodies and clothes must have relieved some pressure on the fresh water system and contributed to the higher than expected level of personal hygiene. The increase in the size of Sydney in the 1830s once again caused problems as readily accessible

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secluded spots suitable for ablutions disappeared and the police cracked down on the "depravity" of bathing in public places.16

Housing was exceedingly primitive and for the lower classes not as well ventilated as McLeod indicated. Leaving aside those who lived in tents or "portable habitations", the most primitive houses were the one or two roomed huts made of slab, wattle and daub, or brick, with either mud or 6" x 1" timber floors, and bark or shingle roofs. Many adopted the front verandah, and a skillion at the back to house the utility rooms. Most had as many blind walls as possible to prevent burglaries, and the few windows were unglazed with sawn hardwood shutters which were closed tightly at night. The more affluent rose to a four room house which separated the children's sleeping quarters from the parents'. They also often had an attached skillion containing the utility rooms.17

The positive attribute of the normal colonial house of this period was that it was detached or semi-detached and it was probably this, rather than the internal ventilation of the house, which prompted McLeod's comment. Indeed the interior of these small often crowded houses must have been a veritable furnace on a hot day. Again the situation deteriorated in the 1830s, at least in Sydney, with the detached and less crowded aspect giving way to abutting and higgly-piggly development in the more closely settled areas of Sydney such as the Rocks. These humble houses, however, were probably better than the dank terrace, basement, and tenement dwellings of the poor in the large English cities.

The furnishing and facilities within the houses were often more primitive than the house itself. Coarse deal furniture or plain slabs set into the walls or floor were common. The basic bed consisted of wooded boards or stretchers, and possibly iron bedsteads, with mattresses stuffed with seaweed, or kangaroo skins over straw.18

Into these houses crowded the characteristically large families

16 SH, 18/2/1833, 4(c).
often supplemented by a hired servant or a lodger. In 1828 less than a third (30%) of families with children appeared to live in a house by themselves. The heads of some of these families were servants and unless provided with separate accommodation they too probably resided with their employer or other servants. 13% of families lived with another family, 39% had at least one male or female servant or lodger (and over half these had more than one), and about 18% had both male and female boarders or servants. The explanation for this lies in the shortage of housing and the large number of effectively displaced single men who needed accommodation. In the same year Sydney boasted only 1,409 houses, 176 cottages, and 188 skillings and small wooden tenements to house a population of about 10,000 or just over six persons per dwelling. In the country the situation was probably worse. In the 1824 trial of the murderers of constable Michael Minton it was revealed that Minton, his wife, his two children, and four servants lived in a two room house. The family retired at night to the "inner room" leaving the servants to the living area.

Space was, therefore, at a premium, and it was common for children (even the Female Orphanage slept three children to a bed), parents and children, and servants and children, to share not only the same room but the same bed. This crowding at least had the advantage of keeping the house and beds warm in winter. In summer, it appears, the country lodgers often slept outside in the open or in a barn. It was probably the lack of privacy in these houses, rather than the often repeated claim that convicts actively taught children vice and depravity, which produced the openness amongst children of the lower ranks towards sexual matters.

Clothing was often as scarce and as primitive as the furnishings of

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19 Based on 1828 census.
20 SG, 2/9/1824, 2(d).
22 Aust, 10/11/1825, 3(c); J. Backhouse, A Narrative of a Visit to the Australian Colonies, London, 1843, p448.
24 see P. Cunningham, op.cit., p208; J. Russell, Select Committee on Transportation, 1838, Minutes, pp55-58; Aust. 31/8/1827, 3(b).
the house, but fortunately the mildness of the climate, for most part of the year, made the question of adequate clothing less important than in the home country. Swaddling of infants does not appear to have been practised and light clothing was the norm for babies. The only indication of baby's wear that was found was a reference to two infants abandoned in 1827 "clothed only in flannel".25 Young children of both sexes appear to have been dressed in cotton "frocks" or pinafores and very little else until they were three of four years old and presumably fully toilet trained. The boys then graduated to trousers although pinafores were sometimes worn at a much later age by boys of the higher ranks. Harriet King wrote in 1828 that her 7 year old son had graduated to "Jacket and Trowsers", while J.S. Hassall noted that at King's School the boys wore pinafores over their clothes until they were at least 9 years old.26

The clothing set aside for the sons of convicts on board transport ships consisted of a blue kersey jacket, waistcoat, raven duck trousers, shirts, (4), stockings (2), a woollen cap, a neck-handkerchief and shoes. The girls received brown serge jackets, petticoats, linen shifts, linen caps, stockings, shoes and neck-handkerchiefs.27 The male orphans were issued with two pairs of blue cloth jackets and trousers, a heavy pair for winter and a cotton pair for summer, shirts, stockings, shoes, and a straw hat.28 Unfortunately, we have no equivalent for the Female Orphans, however, it was probably a similar adaptation of the ship clothing. A report of the funeral of an orphan girl in July 1826 mentions that her orphan mourners wore "white hoods and scarfs" so these may have been additional winter wear.29

These were probably the normal garb of all children with variations in the quality of the garment rather than the quantity. The less affluent, and many of the better off, abandoned the use of shoes and

25 SG, 16/1/1827, 2(c).
26 SG, 10/6/1820, 3(c); Harriett to Phillip King, 7/5/1828, Harriett King Letters, ML, Ms 1793, f50 (cross); J.S. Hassall, In Old Australia, Brisbane, 1902, pl4.
27 T. Reid, Two Voyages to New South Wales, etc., London, 1822, p17.
29 Aust., 15/7/1826, 3(b).
socks. The Rev. John Cross of Port Macquarie noted that about half of the children attending the local school wore no shoes even in the midst of winter. Consequently "their countenances were pale and they were shivering with cold, besides several of them had Coughs". This school was unusual in that it had a stone floor, less conducive in winter to bare feet than the normal mud or wood. 30 One fourteen year old girl abandoned the School of Industry in a "coarse bib, and altogether in a working dress, and without shoes ...". 31 A 14 year old boy went missing wearing "white jean trowsers, white waistcoat, a kangaroo skin hat, and was without shoes". 32 This last example highlights one other features of children's clothing, the substitution of home made skin and leather clothes for cloth, especially in winter. This, according to one Gazette correspondent, was common amongst the small settlers. 33

It would appear, from several comments, that the hallmark of success was the dress of the children. Mudie was most vitriolic about the daughters of the wealthy emancipists.

You will see them dressed in the most ridiculous way possible, in sort of showy, tawdry stuff: they are wretched creatures. 34

The apparel shops abounded in children's clothes of all varieties, including some that were horrendously expensive, obviously pandering to the tastes of the nouveau riche. Young ladies of breeding were quickly introduced to society necessitating the early purchase of quite expensive clothes. Annabella Boswell remembers a wedding held in 1838 when she was twelve years old.

Two dances were given in honour of the happy occasion; to the second of these, given by Mrs. Evernden (a sister of the bride), four little girls were invited, ladies being scarce. I was much delighted at being one of the number, though too shy to show my pleasure by dancing. I wore a white silk dress with pale blue sprigs on it. 35

31 SH, 23/3/1837, 3(c).
32 SG, 3/6/1824, 4(b); also SG, 3/5/1826, 4(e).
33 SG, 29/1/1824, 4(a).
34 Select Committee on Transportation, 1837, Minutes, p110.
The inappropriateness of some of this clothing for the weather and the environment was equally a point of comment. Annabella again tells of tearing the trimmings off her fifth birthday dress while walking home through the bush.\[36\]

The same superficiality, or crassness, seems to have held sway towards food, for the premium was on quantity rather than quality or variety. The comments about the good quality of the food eaten in the colony have to be viewed as relative statements, difficult to verify and assess on objective grounds. The official ration list for a child consisted of a weekly amount of 3 lbs of bread, (or the equivalent in flour), $1\frac{3}{4}$ lbs of beef, $1\frac{3}{4}$ lbs of maize meal, salt and, for the very young if it was available, 7 pints of milk. In the Factory, children under one received bread and milk while those over one were given some meat as well.\[37\] In the Female Orphan Institute bread and tea were the breakfast and supper fare with meat and vegetables (when available) for dinner.\[38\] This is the only time vegetables are mentioned. Fruit is never mentioned so the diet was very restricted and obviously deficient in minerals and vitamins, vitamin C especially.

Between the official ration and the average family it was a case of more quantity, slightly better quality, but not much more variety. All classes restricted themselves to the staples with few enjoying a varied or luxury diet. Christiana Blomfield, for example, seems to indicate that her children, like those in the orphanage, had only tea and bread and butter for breakfast.\[39\] Porridge and milk appear to have been more common for breakfast and were urged upon the Female Orphan Institute as a substitute for bread and tea.\[40\] The maize meal given in the official ration was initially unpalatable but Darling observed that with copious amounts of sugar, and time, it became bearable.\[41\] The poorest reverted to maize meal when wheat was scarce and they also used it to make "ommaney cakes", a type of fried bread.\[42\]

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36 ibid., pl75.
37 HRA, I, xiv, pp655-6.
38 HRA, I, xii, p163.
40 HRA, I, xii, p163.
41 Darling to Huskisson, 10/4/1828, HRA, I, xiv, pl41.
42 SG, 29/1/1824, 4(a).
Meat, whether lamb, beef, or pork, was plentiful and cheap. It was usually boiled, even if it was not salted, for few had ovens capable of roasting joints. Sydney householders often used the local bakehouse to roast joints.43 The most frequent accompaniments were potatoes, yorkshire pudding, or the hominy cakes. Pigs, goats and fowls were raised by most small landholders, and many townspeople, to provide eggs, milk and fresh meat. Pork and fowl seems to have been the standby of the poorest people.44 Few bothered to cultivate vegetables or fruit and they were reasonably expensive. Besides the recognised fishermen, many boys spent their leisure hours catching fish and game for their own family's tables and for sale.45 The "luxuries" of tea and sugar were in "general use by every class of the community".46

One element in the diet of children was less beneficial. It was inevitable in a society which consumed so much alcohol that some children would be directly affected. The Herald thundered:

Number (sic) of parents are continually in the practice of putting into the mouths of their children, those pernicious poisons which have entailed accumulated miseries on themselves; in their wretched habitations may be found cups and other vessels reeking with the deadly poison, and within their reach.47

Besides the occasional giving of spirits to children to provide sport (which in one case ended in the death of a 6 year old boy)48 some parents and more often convict servants, seemed to have used alcohol as a sleeping draught to rid them of bothersome charges.49 In other cases the parents were obliged to take their children with them when they were drinking or partying and undoubtedly the children imbibed of their own volition or were given a draught to keep them quiet.50

43 E. Walker, "Old Sydney in the Forties: Recollections of Lower George Street and 'The Rocks'." in JRAHS, 16 (4), 1930, p310.
44 SG, 29/1/1824, 4(a).
46 Darling to Huskisson, 10/4/1828, HRA, I, xiv, p132.
47 SH, 6/2/1834, Supp.2(b).
48 SH, 25/8/1834, 3(a).
49 SH, 29/6/1837, 2(f); 22/4/1837, Supp. 2(e); Bathurst Bench Books, 31/1/1826, NSWA0, 2/8323, ff57-58.
50 SH, 11/7/1833, 3(c).
Alcohol was apparently a popular medicine during childhood disorders, for doctors frequently stressed the need for "the most rigid abstinence" as part of the treatment. \(^{51}\) Few children would have been as badly affected as the three girls (all under the age of 7 years) who began to pilfer in order to buy rum and frequently got drunk. \(^{52}\)

More probably took advantage of a free drink when the occasion arose, as for example when a puncheon of spirits fell off the back of a dray. \(^{53}\)

Despite its deficiencies the diet of the average colonial child was probably better than that of the average English child. In the 1830s controversy arose over the relative wellbeing of the convicts and the poor of England with the English poor running a bad second. Bourke in answering these charges, pointed out

> the only feature in which the Condition of the prisoner can be plausibly represented as something superior to that of the most suffering class of the poor at home, is in the article of food and clothing ... \(^{54}\)

Bourke's response only highlighted the relatively good position of all colonials for his judgement was based on the compulsory ration only and he attempted to play down the additional "luxuries" of tea, sugar, tobacco, and milk given to well behaved convicts ("many" by his own estimate). It must have been comforting for the English poor to know that they had their freedom even if it was only the freedom to die as a result of malnourishment.

Less acknowledged as a factor in the health of the children but probably of greater importance, was the colony's distance from other ports. The trip to N.S.W. acted as a natural quarantine period. Carriers of epidemic diseases could be identified on the voyage and further quarantine measures introduced upon arrival in the colony. This prevented many diseases reaching the colony. It was not until 1828 that the first minor epidemic of whooping cough was introduced to the colony by the children of soldiers guarding a convict ship.

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\(^{52}\) SH, 11/7/1833, 3(c).

\(^{53}\) SH, 2/5/1831, 3(b).

\(^{54}\) Bourke to Stanley, 15/1/1834, HRA, I, xvii, p326.
ironically under the supervision of Peter Cunningham.55

Although the general health of the children was good the colony was not devoid of health problems, especially by the end of the 1830s. William Rae's 1828 assessment of the colony's health was mirrored by many commentators:

The diseases incident to the settlements in Australia are very few. The whole train of Intermittents, or mass of fevers are there unknown - as also Thyphus, Scarlatina, Smallpox, Measles, Hooping Cough and cramp - The sudden changes of temperature, however, about Sydney and the country adjacent are very great ... Such vicissitudes are injurious to the constitution and I have witness their harmful effects in Pthisis and in Catarhal fever - They are, however, chiefly confined to the low lands between the Coast and Blue Mountains - Beyond these and the Nth (at Port McQuarrie for instance) the temperature is more equable - Dysentery tho' not very prevalent is yet ... fatal and often induced by intemperance & dissipation. Phthisis Pulmonalis, or Consumption, begun in this country has been cured by a voyage to Sydney but when acquired there it proceeds quickly to a fatal termination. The Youths born in the Colony are rather prone to this Disease from their rapidity of growth. Tho' it does not appear that they are so after having attained the age of manhood - ... All the diseases found in the colony are trivial and seldom of serious importance.56

These reports, or comments, are notable for their concentration on the lack of epidemic diseases, or, more accurately, epidemic manifestations of diseases resulting in numerous and spectacular deaths. To say that these diseases did not occur is slightly inaccurate for many of them were endemic, rather than epidemic, and in a less virulent form, but they still succeeded in carrying off a fair number of children over the years. Colonial symptomatic differences often lead to a confusion in identifying the disease. Cumpston, for example, concludes that as far as can be judged from the available information, measles did not appear until the 1850s. Yet he cites an 1857 report of the Health Officer for Port Jackson which mentions a measles like infection of

55 HRA, I, xiv, p347.
56 W. Rae, "Australia or New South Wales", Rae Papers, NLA, Ms 4269, pp6-7. It is Rae who notes that Cunningham was the incompetent surgeon who introduced whooping cough.
the Illawarra district in 1835.\(^{57}\) This is an obvious reference to a "cutaneous disorder prevalent amongst the children of the colony" which caused some professional disagreement in the pages of the Herald in early 1835. The quack Dr. Boston had "no hesitation in stating that it is a form of the measles"\(^{58}\) but this assertion was not allowed to go undisputed.\(^{59}\) The apparently mild nature of the disorder is also questionable for several deaths were attributed to the disease.\(^{60}\)

Smallpox was similarly reputed not to have broken out amongst the white population before 1850. A variant, called "native pox", devastated the aboriginal tribes around Sydney in the early years of the settlement and spread with settlement to the outlying tribes. The slight variations in the symptoms between smallpox and native pox, as well as an unconscious desire to avoid apportioning blame for its introduction to the whites, led many to deny that this disease was smallpox of a less virulent form; destructive to the totally susceptible aborigines while only a passing irritation to the more immune white population. By the 1820s the second generation of colonials were being born and it is interesting to note that these children began to catch not smallpox but native pox. The Herald of November 1831, for example, reported that a type of smallpox was rampaging through the natives around Bathurst and that one white child had also died.\(^{61}\) Again in 1835 The Herald had to assure its readers that the

\(^{57}\) Cumpston, J.H.L., The History of Diptheria, Scarlet Fever, Measles and Whooping Cough in Australia 1788-1925, Canberra, 1927, pp200-204

\(^{58}\) SH, 1/1/1835, 2(d).

\(^{59}\) "Amicus", SH, 12/1/1835, 2(c).

\(^{60}\) That it was a little more severe than just a cutaneous disease is apparent from a letter of James Wemyss to John Humphries in February 1835.

Since we last wrote we have had the misfortune to lose our youngest Daughter (Priscilla) she departed This Life on 13th Jan. - aged 4 years & 5 weeks occasioned by the Measles.

Wemyss Family Letters, NLA, Ms 686, Item 9.

Another death notice in the same year stated that Tom, son of Capt. Jos. Moore, also died as a result of measles acting upon a protracted diseased state of the mind. SH, 26/2/1835, 3(a); J.W. Donovan, "Measles in Australia and New Zealand, 1834-1835", reaches the same conclusion. Medical Journal of Australia, 1970, I (1), pp5-8.

\(^{61}\) Introduced probably by the "Bussorah Merchant" which on arrival in 1828 was discovered to be carrying smallpox after the ship had established extensive contact with the shore. Darling to Huskisson, 28/8/1828, HRA, I, xiv, p348-9; SH, 28/1/1831, 4(b).
rumour of a smallpox outbreak in Sydney was incorrect, but that one small boy had caught native pox.\textsuperscript{62}

It is obvious, from an 1865 article in the \textit{Australian Medical Journal} by a Dr. Thomas, that this complaint became more general in the 1840s. Speaking about the period 1839-1853 he wrote:

A skin affection which many suffered from was the 'native pock', as people called it. Children were very liable to it, and it frequently occurred as an epidemic. At first it had all the appearance of the chicken-pock; when mild it did not go beyond the vesicular state, but frequently, especially if the patient was out of health, it proceeded to the pustular stage, incrustations formed, and it presented all the characters of impetigo. If not treated properly it becomes a very troublesome complaint, lasted for months, was very difficult to cure, and sometimes proved fatal from derangement of the alimentary canal, with which it was almost invariably allied, and to this part of the system the treatment should be directed.\textsuperscript{63}

The lack of definitive classification evident in Dr. Thomas's report is also present in McLeod's work where, it appears, he lumps native pox with chicken pox and impetigo under the general heading of "Erysipelatous affections". According to him, these were common in summer, but never serious enough to warrant more than a common purgative. The only complication arose when the patient ruptured vesicles by scratching.\textsuperscript{64} The similarities indicate that Dr. Thomas's complaint was common in the 1820s as well as at later times. It seems that a mild smallpox variant was beginning to be endemic amongst the white population as it became less immune to the disease and that, as population centres expanded, occasional epidemics occurred.

The great fear of an outbreak was prompted by the knowledge that vaccination had not been widespread. In 1804 the Government was successful in persuading many parents to vaccinate their children, but after this the lymph died. Minor vaccination campaigns took place in

\textsuperscript{62} \textit{SH}, 17/9/1835, 3(b).

\textsuperscript{63} Quoted in Cumpston, \textit{Smallpox}, p5.

\textsuperscript{64} \textit{HRA}, I, xv, p374.
1821, 1825, 1828 and 1835 but parents were still very complacent. A letter from "Vaccinator" to the Herald in 1831, argued that the prejudice of parents, who claimed that a child could still catch smallpox after inoculation and that it was thus worthless, was harming their children's future. The incidents upon which these beliefs were based followed inoculation with spurious matter by unscrupulous doctors. Good matter was now available and he urged all parents to take advantage of the free service available to all. Obviously many disregarded the offer.

One potentially disastrous epidemic did occur during this period. In 1828 whooping cough was introduced by the children of the guard on the convict ship "Morley". Darling had the distressing task of writing to the Colonial Secretary to report its introduction and the death of several children including that of his own son. By February 1829 the disease had spread to Hunter's River. Again confusion reigned as to whether this was the genuine product. The Australian for example wrote:

A cough, which resembles the hooping cough, is now taking the round of the children of Sydney. There is scarcely a family in Sydney, the younger branches of whom are not affected, more or less, by this cough. Some are disposed to attribute it to a returning species of influenza. It strongly approaches the English hooping cough.

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65 SG, 20/10/1821, 3(b).
66 SG, 10/3/1825, 1(b).
67 Aust, 1/8/1828, 3(a). Evidently Harriet King was prominent in persuading many people to receive inoculation. J.T. Ryan, op.cit., p17.
68 Lardner's Account Book chronicles the vaccination in Sept.-Oct. 1835 of all adults and children on the Elyard's farm and surrounding properties. Details of where the lymph came from and on whom it was effective are given. Elyard Family Papers, ML, Ms 594/1, item 12.
69 SH, 13/6/1831, 3(d) & 18/7/1831, 3(b).
71 Aust, 11/7/1828, 2(c).
72 Aust, 10/2/1829, 3(c).
McLeod did not think it was true whooping cough and reported much dissension amongst the medical profession as to its true nature. McLeod concluded that "It proved fatal to a few children, the Numbers are very small, compared to those attacked". The disease thereafter remained endemic with less extensive epidemics occurring about every three or four years particularly affecting the girls under the age of one. Again the long journey isolated the colony from the more virulent strains of the disease and the general health of the children was sufficient to overcome the more dreadful effects of the disease, but the colony did not miss out completely on the disease.

The number of deaths from these diseases, however, was insignificant compared to the number who died from the four major killers of children; endemic intestinal disorders (usually lumped together as Dysentery), influenza, accidents of birth, and accidents during childhood. It is possible, however, that the arrival of these diseases, even if in endemic and less virulent forms, accounts for some of the increase in the child mortality rate for the years between 1820 and 1840.

Birth was the first and one of the highest hurdles the child had to clear. Naturally past writers have concentrated on the dangers of childbirth to the woman, but in the early nineteenth century more children than women died as a result of primitive delivery techniques and the other dangers attendant upon childbirth. Particular attention has also been given to the Female Factories in recognition of their role as lying-in hospitals and because they provided the most information, but the proportion of colonial babies delivered in the hospital would have been minimal.

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73 HRA, I, xv, p375.
74 Cumpston, Diphtheria, pp.289-90. Occasional death notices attributed the death of a child to whooping cough.
75 The Factories were available only to convict women, i.e. less than half the female population, and by 1826 regulations were in force which discouraged convict women in private assignment being sent back to the factory to deliver their babies. Darling to Bathurst, 3/9/1826, HRA, I, xii, pp526-7. After 1826, according to Mudie, various subterfuges were used by employees and cohabitants to ensure their convict women were in the hospital when the child was due. Mudie goes so far as to hint that men deliberately refrained from marrying convict women so that the hospital could be used free of cost to the putative father. This could also indicate that the Factories, bad as they were, were better than the care provided by private individuals. J. Mudie, The Felony of N.S.W., London, 1837, pp76-77.
The most common assistance rendered to mothers at delivery was by relatives, or experienced, but not trained, midwives. Most women, except the very remotest pioneers, seem to have had several people present during delivery although it appears it was still a fairly private "women's affair". Harriet King mentions that during the confinement of Mary Copeland the doctor, Mary's cook/maid, and herself were present and the men and other interested parties were allowed entry an hour after delivery. Many did without the doctor. The fee for a surgeon's attendance was too high for many families and it appears that at least some surgeons would not attend unless they were guaranteed their fee.

Some trained and highly experienced midwives were available and occasionally advertised their services in the newspapers, but the majority of midwives were untrained, and according to the surgeons, ignorant. In evidence given in 1838 to the Committee on the Medical Practice Bill, most surgeons were critical of midwifery standards in N.S.W. Dr. Black of Penrith, for example, claimed that the profession was often followed by ignorant women who interfered with natural labour and caused misery and destruction. Some of this criticism may have been due to a desire to denigrate professional rivals, but there does

76 Harriet King to P. King, 17/3/1828, H. King Letters, ML, Ms 1793, f45.
77 Five guineas according to Michael Hayes - M. Hayes to Patrick Hayes, 4/4/1817, Michael Hayes Letters, NLA, Ms 246.
78 A Coroner's inquiry into the death of Eliz. Richardson, a convict, while giving birth to twins, was told "a surgeon was sent for, who refused to attend, unless he had a written document from some respectable person, insuring his fee to him." SH, 10/10/1831, 4(a). [Their emphasis]
79 Such as Mrs. Burnell for example:
Midwifery: Mrs. Burnell, from the Lying-in Hospital, Dublin, respectfully announces that she continues to practice in her profession, in Sydney and its vicinity, under the patronage and approval of several of the most respectable gentlemen of the faculty.

Mrs. B's character, and long practice in the Lying-in Hospital, Dublin, from which institution she has a certificate, will, she trusts, be sufficient to continue to her a due share of public support.
Commands addressed to, or left at No. 7, Prince-street, will be immediately attended to.
SH, 29/8/1831, 1(d).
80 Committee on the Medical Practice Bill, 1838, Minutes, p12.
appear to have been some genuine concern for the mothers. Most surgeons reflected the opinion of Dr. Hill of Liverpool, who argued that the colony was too scattered for doctors to attend all labours and that midwives were thus necessary, but only those accredited, after training by a doctor or at the Female Factory, should be allowed to practise. The Doctors, however, recognised the difficulties inherent in any attempt to regulate midwives and restrict neighbourly assistance and therefore, urged that no action be taken at that time.81

The assistance that most surgeons and midwives could render during delivery was minimal. In difficult births the main efforts of the attendant seems to have been directed towards calming down the mother. The accent, as Dr. Black pointed out, was on natural labour with as little interference as possible from the attendant. If this meant the mother laboured for a day or even longer, then that was acceptable. The detrimental effect of prolonged labour on babies is now well documented and it is evident from the number of still-births attributed to difficult and prolonged labour that it was also recognised by the surgeons of the day. There was, however, little else they could do. We know, from a note in D'Arcy Wentworth's medical notebook of 1817 that the technique of Caesarian Section was known, at least to him, but for obvious reasons it was only used after the mother had died.82 The destruction of the child, usually by craniotomy, was more common in difficult births. Where instruments were not available the most barbaric methods were used to destroy the baby.83

The difficulties presented by lack of professional assistance were often supplementary to the poor condition, both physical and moral, of the mother. Many of the worst convict women were diseased, and if they fell pregnant, and fortunately many did not, the baby, if it was born alive, had little chance of continued survival. A Coroner's inquest into the death of Ellen Grenshead, for example, found that she died

81 *I do not see, however, that a penalty can be attached to the occasional assistance afforded by women in the country; very often all that can be obtained is the presence of an experienced female without pretensions to skill of any kind." Ibid, p15.

82 J. Hagger, Australian Colonial Medicine, Adelaide, 1979, p123.

83 In 1821 Surgeon Bowman was still complaining that he had only five sets of midwifery instruments to cover the whole colony. HRA, I, x, p668.
while giving premature birth to a still born child. Her bowels and stomach were found to have been greatly inflamed.\textsuperscript{84}

Unfortunately the period of major organo-gensis, when most of the major abnormalities occur, takes place between the second and the eighth week when the mother is usually unaware that she is pregnant. Drinking and smoking, the particular vices of colonial society, have their most detrimental effects at this time. No doubt the prevalence of these habits contributed to prematurity, neonatal deaths, mental and physical retardation, and in some extreme cases death through withdrawal problems.\textsuperscript{85} Examples of the results of these abuses abound.\textsuperscript{86}

Hazards of the environment also contributed to the problems preventing normal delivery. Mrs. Bonner of Bathurst had to survive the effects of a snake bite which induced premature labour. In this case both mother and baby survived.\textsuperscript{87} In some cases the mother, whether convict or free, was forced to continue work right up to time of delivery, and a period of confinement, usually about ten to fifteen days,

\textsuperscript{84} SH, 7/8/1834, 3(c).


\textsuperscript{86} James Backhouse noted during his visit to the Male Orphan School that many of the young boys showed "the effects of the drunkenness and profligacy of their parents; many of them are unhealthy for two or three years after coming to the institution." \textit{Op.cit.}, p418. A Coroner's inquiry into the death of a very young baby in 1835 found that it had died not, as was first thought, as a result of a head-wound, but from "syphilitic wastage". SH, 21/9/1835, 3(e). The 1836 Sydney Free Dispensary report for 1836-7 noted that 34 cases of syphilis and 12 cases of gonorrhoea were treated that year, making these two diseases very close to the most popular in the colony. SH, 29/5/1837, 2(c). One wonders at the fate of the baby of the convict Mary Duncan. She, while "advanced in pregnancy", went on a binge of drink and sex, both highly dangerous to mother and foetus in late pregnancy, in the men's hut on her master's Bathurst property. \textit{Bathurst Bench Book}, 5/2/1833, NSWAO 2/8324, f204.

\textsuperscript{87} SG, 20/1/1825, 2(d).
was not possible. Mrs. Street’s assigned servant, Mary Nagle, for example, worked until 9 p.m., went to bed in good health and was found at 6 a.m. the next morning lying on the floor with her still-born baby beside her. Work of this kind would have destroyed many marginal babies, like Mary Nagle’s, whose safe delivery demanded maternal rest for some time before the due date.

Some women were hardly allowed the time to recover from one pregnancy before another began. The effect this could have is shown in the case of Sarah Noble. In 1842 in a letter to her brother she wrote:

You would have heard from me long ago only that I have been in very delicate health since my miscarriage which is now a twelve months since which wd. have been a fine boy only for that occurrence you would have heard from me, I would have answered your kind letter long ago but my Husband would not allow me until I got over my confinement & which I have done by a still born Daughter ... It was in consequence I was a fortnight bad during the time I had a Midwife and two Doctors thanks to God for his great mercies towards me and mine.

Falling pregnant during a period of delicate health within three months of a spontaneous abortion did not augur well for the chances of the second pregnancy reaching fruition.

The outrageous actions of those around the mother sometimes contributed to delivery difficulties. The story of a convict woman who appeared before the Police Bench in 1833 with her newborn baby to

88 "Journal of J. Marsden", in Marsden Family papers, PRO 3580, VII, Item 18. Genteel husbands often expressed amazement and pride when their wives spent less than this in bed. Francis Duguid, for example, wrote:

We all dined together on the 13th and Mrs. D. was singing "Alice Grey" in the course of the evening. The Doctor was however roused during the night & in a couple of hours it was all over and My Lady again at table on the 24th.

F.L. Duguid to his Mother, 27/3/1833, Duguid Family Papers, ML, Ms 2199, ff1-2.

89 SH, 8/8/1833, 3(d).

90 Sarah Noble to J. Humphrey, Dobroyd, 16/1/1842, Wemyss Family Letters, NLA, Ms 686, ff5-6.
issue a complaint against her mistress is an example of what could happen. The woman, who resided with her mistress, wanted to return to the factory to have her baby, but the mistress refused as it would cost her 5/-.

She did agree, however, to allow the convict woman to transfer to another mistress who might have been able to help on delivery day. Both women went to the intended new mistress to discuss the arrangements but a brawl erupted between the two free women.

The convict mother-to-be went into labour, abandoned the brawling mistresses, delivered the baby in the street with the aid of some passersby, was carried back into the house and left on the floor, recovered sufficiently to crawl to the Police Office for assistance, and was eventually sent to the Hospital. While all this transpired the brawl continued. This case is a testimony to the hardiness of some mothers and their babies for it appears both survived.91

It is impossible to determine how many miscarriages and births of still born babies took place and what proportion of total births they represented. Still born babies did not seem to warrant inclusion in official tables of figures and one of the few indications is that in the Female Factory at Moreton Bay, between 1832 and 1835, of 22 births three deaths were recorded.92 Whether this means they were still born or died after birth is not stated.93

The next chapter will show that the child mortality rates in the colony were lower than other contemporary countries but still very high by modern standards. Besides the dangers inherent in pregnancy and childbirth the first twelve to fifteen months of the child's life were strewn with obstacles to continued existence. The evidence indicates that nearly two thirds of children who died did so in the first twelve to fifteen months and that those who survived this period, barring accidents, had a reasonably good chance of reaching adulthood. The two worst periods in the first fifteen months appear to have been the first few weeks after delivery where most deaths were probably

91 SH, 1/7/1833, 3(e).
93 Unfortunately the much larger Parramatta Factory provides no clues as to how many stillborn children were delivered in its hospital. The 1836-7 Dispensary report lists one abortion, presumably spontaneous, but did not deliver babies, so no figures are available there. SH, 29/5/1837, 2(c).
endogenous and, given the state of medicine, unavoidable, and between six and ten months during teething and weaning.\textsuperscript{94}

There are two obvious reasons for the initially lower infant mortality rate: the absence of puerperal fever and the widespread use of breastfeeding. It appears that puerperal fever, one of the major immediate killers of both baby and mother in the later half of the nineteenth century, was not widespread. A report by T.D. Dempster claimed that puerperal fever appeared for the first time amongst convict women in Tasmania in 1833. The comparatively low death rate in the female factories, where the crowded conditions suited the spread of this disease, indicates that it was not present during our period.\textsuperscript{95}

Another major reason for the lower initial death rate in N.S.W. may have been the almost universal practice of mothers breastfeeding their own babies, or, if this was not possible, employing servants to breastfeed the infant in the parent's house. There was little real alternative to the breast of some woman. Bottles were not invented until the late 1830s in France\textsuperscript{96} and the only alternative to the breast was to feed the child with milk on a spoon, usually supplemented by crushed biscuit or some other farinaceous product, such as sago or rice. Soups were also considered proper food for infants as well as children.\textsuperscript{97} These "artificial" methods were entirely unsatisfactory, and only reverted to in cases of absolute necessity. There is no evidence of baby farming, the grossest of various devices to avoid the responsibility of feeding and caring for infants short of actual

\textsuperscript{94} In the years 1834-1836, 59 death notices for children are found in the Sydney Herald. The ages of most of the children were given in the notice and the ages of others were found by checking the birth notices. 31 of the 59 (52.5%) were aged below fifteen months, 13 were known to be above fifteen months of age, and the ages of 15 were unknown (9 of whom were classified in the notices as infants - indicating that the majority of these fifteen were probably below 15 months of age). 7/31 (or 28%) died in the first month, while 17/31 (or 55%) died between six and ten months of age. The sample from the Mutch Index, used in Chapter I, showed that 72% of children listed as having died in childhood, died before they were fifteen months old. Of these 47% were aged under three months and 27% between six and twelve months.

\textsuperscript{95} J. Cumpston, \textit{History of Diptheria}, p305.


\textsuperscript{97} See Enc.I, Glenelg to Gipps, 30/12/1837, HRA, I, xix, p215.
infanticide, and much evidence of the acceptance by all classes of society of breastfeeding.

Even the government of N.S.W. recognised the maternal responsibility of its convict women, especially during the breastfeeding period. In the Factory the diet of the feeding mother was supplemented, although it was probably still inadequate, and they were absolved from the responsibility of much of the work in the Factory. In the 1830s children were kept in the Factory until they were three years old and were then sent to the orphanages. In the Hobart Factory, depending on the health of the child, weaning took place between nine and twelve months so the more lenient Parramatta Factory probably followed suit.

Outside the Factory, amongst the more respectable members of society, the position was probably very similar. Although they would probably have said that they did not have the luxury of the idle in the Factory, the majority of married women would have been given the time to engage in a lengthy breastfeeding period without the absolute necessity of abandoning it for work to supplement the family income. One major reason women of this class fed their children appears to have been fear of

98 In 1829 a minor scandal arose with the death of Elizabeth Morris, a convict woman's infant, on a transport ship to N.S.W. Elizabeth was only eleven weeks old when she embarked and had been weaned at three weeks to comply with Peel's request that no child or mother embark until the baby had been weaned thirty days. Her death and the resulting inquiry brought forth new laws preventing the embarkation of women who were breastfeeding babies under the age of six months. Darling to Twiss 13/8/1829, HRA, I, xv, p117, and Hay to Darling, 6/4/1830, HRA, I, xv, pp392-3. No doubt a similar policy towards the assignment of women with babies from the Factory was in operation.

99 About thirty convict women were appointed to look after the children but initially they only assisted the mothers and then took responsibility for the child when breastfeeding finished. In 1832, 84 women were nursing 112 children, which means that about 54 mothers were caring for their child. The 1835 return shows that 92 women were caring for 134 children, that is about 30 nurses and 62 mothers. 68 of these children were under the age of one, very nearly the equal of the mothers employed so the vast majority of the babies must have still had their mothers in attendance and presumably breastfeeding or weaning them at age twelve months. Select Committee on Transportation, 1838, Appendix, p342.

100 B. Gandevia, op.cit., p25.
moral contamination by the wet nurse. John Norton writing to his debilitated wife described the difficulties of finding a reliable and respectable wet nurse.

hardly any thing would overcome the just fear I entertain of such women as are met with - she [Mrs. Ross a wet nurse agent] does not at all recommend that you should have a woman from the factory. I can hardly endure to think of such a thing myself.101

Whatever the reason the written evidence of breastfeeding, admittedly from a middle, or higher, level of society is fairly extensive.102

The death of the mother almost immediately placed the life of the child in jeopardy. The artificial methods of feeding would have been as disconcerting to a newborn baby as the food being offered. The practical uselessness of these measures is shown not only by the death rate of newborns who had lost their mothers but by circumstances disclosed in desperate newspaper advertisements for wetnurses.103 The fate of Elizabeth Murray appears to have been sealed when her mother died in 1836. She was taken in by a neighbour but began to decline, despite the efforts of a surgeon, and died of "natural causes" a week after her death.104

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102 T.V. Blomfield, writing to his brother, notes that his wife has just weaned their ten month old baby. T.V. to E. Blomfield, 7/4/1822, C.E. Blomfield, op.cit., p32.
103 Jane Cox in her "Reminiscences", writes of her children: "There were Eight in Number and I nursed them all; no Nasty Bottles were used in those days." C. Brooks Papers, NLA, Ms 1559/3, p19. Many others of similar bent could be quoted.
104 In 1821, for example, the Gazette announced the death of Mrs. Isaac Wood, and in the next issue, a week later, an advertisement is found seeking a wet nurse to commence immediately at Mr. Woods. SG, 7/7/1821, 2(b). Presumably the artificial feeding or the present wet nurse was not proving satisfactory. Similarly, in 1824, there is a notice of the birth of a daughter to Edward Riley and in the same issue an advertisement calling for a wetnurse. It is difficult to know if the mother decided not to feed and the baby came early catching them unprepared, or the mother made attempts to feed the baby but was unable. SG, 22/4/1824, 2(d) & 1(c).
Isabella Maria Gill, whose mother died during her birth, was far more fortunate. She was taken in by Mrs. Muir, the wife of the Chief Constable of Newcastle and put to the breast immediately. Mrs. Muir continued to feed her for eight months until the child was weaned and sent to the Female Orphan Institute in February 1827. This is a dramatic example of the kindness of some women and also the acceptance of breastfeeding amongst the community.

Unfortunately the quality of the milk received from some of the mothers must have left a lot to be desired. Medical advice to post partum mothers was sometimes not conducive to good milk flow. Eleanor Stephen wrote:

I was kept on tea and Gruel for six days at the end of which time I felt pretty considerably weak. I was however very well in every other respect.

Dr. Black recommended that the mothers' bowels be kept in proper order (with purgatives) and that they abstain from "vegetable food". Some other mothers' milk would have been well laced with spirits. The Herald in 1835 wrote, somewhat exaggeratedly as the comment was based on one example:

Here [Sydney] young wives may be met, at the earliest period of the day, in a state of perfect intoxication, with their infants dangling on their arms in momentary danger of having their brains dashed out on the payment (sic), to the terror and dismay of such passers-by as are still under the happy influence of moral principle.

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104 SH, 2/5/1836, 2(d).
105 Applications for Admission to Orphan Schools, 1825-28, NSWAO 4/330, ff71-73.
106 E. Stephen to Minnie, 14/8/1839, Stephen Family Papers, ML, Ms 777/6, f25.
108 In the case of Elizabeth Manuel versus Mary Walker for assault tried in 1825, Mary claimed that Elizabeth came to her house drunk demanding more spirits. Mary refused and reminded Elizabeth that she had a "baby at Breast" and that she should not drink any more than she already had. Elizabeth took exception to this advice and abused Mary who then threw Elizabeth down the steps. Clerk of Peace Papers, Sydney Quarter Sessions, 10/11/1825, NSWAO, 4/8442, ff267-284.
109 SH, 5/3/1835, 3(f).
110 SH, 6/4/1835, 2(g).
It also appears as if some of the women in the Factory kept their children sickly, or breastfed for too long without supplementing the child's diet, so that the mother could continue in the nursery.\footnote{111}

One danger unique to breastfeeding was overlying. In England this was often a popular way for the mother to rid herself of an unwanted baby. On many occasions in the colony, whether accidental or intended, the mother was drunk. Sometimes the overlying was a genuine accident especially as many babies slept with the mother for several months after birth, not only to facilitate night feeding but also to provide the baby with warmth.\footnote{112} It was a rare occurrence in N.S.W.\footnote{113}

Generally, however, the improved diet of many of the mothers, and it seems indisputable that a greater proportion of women in N.S.W. than in England ate a more adequate diet, would have enhanced their chances of successfully commencing breastfeeding and being able to continue until the child was teething and considered capable of progressing to solids.

Weaning and teething usually occurred at the same time and this constituted the period of greatest danger for the child. Weaning appears to have generally taken place between the ages of six and twelve months, most often at nine or ten months.\footnote{114} This was also the usual time of teething, a time that most parents who left records approached with great trepidation. There seems to have been a certain mystique attached to the problem that is hard to understand today, and

\footnote{111} The Factory Committee in 1825 reported that since the separation of the children from their mothers during the working hours, and their diet changed, a very great difference is manifest in their health and cleanliness.\textit{NSWLCVP}, Meeting 18/10/1825, Session 1824-25, p24. This was certainly true of the Hobart Factory, B. Gandevia, \textit{op.cit.}, p24.

\footnote{112} John Norton to Jane, 15/1/1834, \textit{Mackenzie & Norton Papers}, ML, Ms 1389/2, f105.

\footnote{113} I was only able to find three cases of this during the period, two in 1833 and one in 1835. \textit{SH}, 11/7/1833, 3(e); 2/12/1833, Supp. 2(e); 17/12/1835, 3(d). The Juries at the coronial enquiries all returned verdicts of accidental death and in one case only, that of five weeks old Catherine Russel, did suspicions of foul play arise, but the evidence was insufficient to prove malice. \textit{SH}, 17/12/1835, 3(d).

\footnote{114} This is so universal in the available literature that it is superfluous to give more examples than those mentioned above.
children and mothers who had successfully weathered the storm were cause for pride.\textsuperscript{115} The death of a great number of children in the nine to twelve month age group was attributed in part, or in toto, to teething. The death of Robert Howe's son, for example, announced in an 1824 \textit{Gazette}, mentions a seven month decline attributed to teething.\textsuperscript{116} The pain of teething was often relieved by rubbing the gums with honey or sugar syrup; the rubbing probably being the beneficial aspect of the treatment and the syrups an additional cause of the premature decay of colonial children's teeth. Sometimes incisions were made to relieve the pressure of tooth on gum.\textsuperscript{117}

The real killer during teething was the diarrhoea, which always accompanied teething, developing into enteritis or another of the intestinal disorders grouped under the term "dysentery". It is impossible to distinguish the various diseases grouped under this term or to see how often the disease could be attributed to dietetic or infective causes. All we know is that "Dysentery [was] the most prevalent and most fatal disease, to which the Colonists [were] Subject".\textsuperscript{118}

Diarrhoea associated with teething was exacerbated by suddenness of weaning, which appears to have been common. John Norton, for example, wrote that a relative of his

\begin{quote}
was very anxious to go up ... and as she wished to wean her own child she was rather glad of this opportunity of leaving it.\textsuperscript{119}
\end{quote}

On top of this, breast milk was often replaced by an inadequate diet.

\begin{footnotes}
\item[115] e.g. E. Bate to Aunts; 19/8/1839, \textit{Bate Family Papers}, NLA, Ms 5839, Item 24.
\item[116] Death: This morning, Robertus Mansfield Howe, infant son of the Government Printer. This sweet little infant was only 16 months old, seven of which had gone by in such acute suffering from the effects of teething, that he was not seen to smile for the whole period ... \textit{SG}, 26/2/1824, 3(d).
\item[117] J. Hagger, \textit{op.cit.}, p180.
\item[118] McLeod, HRA, I, xv, p375.
\item[119] J. Norton to Jane, 11/1/1834, \textit{Mackenzie & Norton Papers}, ML, Ms 1389/2 ff97-99; This was a common complaint of surgeons of the 1850s, a possible indication that it was also frequent during our period. A.W. Gardner, \textit{The First Few Months of Infancy, etc.} (2 ed), Melbourne, 1888, p20.
\end{footnotes}
Impure milk, impure water, and a diet that was deficient in vitamin C all added to the natural danger of teething. It also seems probable that teething diarrhoea was seen as something natural and few initial attempts were made to alleviate the resulting dehydration until the baby was in rather bad shape.

The treatment usually applied was to give laxatives, enemas and opiates. Dr. Black, of Penrith, initially prescribed

frequent recourse to the use of Enemas composed of two desert spoonsful of oil of turpentine intimately mixed with the yolk of an egg then add three table spoonsful of warm water.120

When this proved ineffective and the condition of the baby deteriorated, in addition to the enemas he prescribed

5 grains of finely powdered aloes, two of calomel & 3 of ginger. As an anodine emboliation use one ounce of the tincture of Scop. [Scopolamine] with one drachm of Tincture of opium one teaspoonful to be rubbed on the surface of the belly morning and evening. This continue in lime water for a time substituting now and then 4 or 5 grains of prepared chalk added to the calomel.121

Favourite "native" anti-dysenterics were the gum of Acacia decurrens and the resin of the "red gum".123 These, at least, did not have the effect of the purgatives, which, unless offset by copious fluids, only worsened the situation by further dehydrating the baby.

The problem of dysentery was not restricted to teething children as all children were prone to the disease. The death rate of children over two years, however, was not as great as it was amongst teething babies. In Sydney in the 1830s water was in short supply and of poor quality and the incidence of dysentery seems to have increased. On the frontier the problem of bad water was heightened by the availability of basic foodstuffs only, such as salt beef, bread and tea.

120 Dr. Black to Jane Norton, 15/3/1834, Mackenzie and Norton Papers, ML, Ms 1389/2, f131.
121 Ibid., ff132-3. See also Wentworth quoted in J. Hagger, op.cit., p102.
122 McLeod, HRA, I, xv, p372.
No sources in the period offer any clues as to the importance attached to toilet training or to the methods involved. The veritable conspiracy of silence indicates that tradition and hearsay dominated this aspect of childrearing. The accent on the regularity of the bowels as a prerequisite of good health is strong so one cannot imagine that toilet training was regarded lightly. The absence of binding and the use of light clothes in the colony probably enhanced the possibility of early attempts at toilet training, but most other clues point to a fairly relaxed attitude. Flannels (or nappies) appear to have been used until the child was old enough to get about in a pinafore when pants were probably dispensed with and children allowed a fairly free rein outside the house.

Another major killer of children, but less important than dysentery, was influenza or "catarrh infections". The first recorded epidemic of influenza occurred in 1820 and it reappeared in 1826-7 and 1836. Observers indicate that only elderly people suffered the ultimate fate but McLeod notes that in the 1820 epidemic most families had one or more severe cases and that it proved fatal in both infancy and old age. During the 1826 epidemic the Australian reported "there

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124 See L. DeMause, op.cit., p40.
125 SG, 16/1/1827, 2(c).
126 T.V. Blomfield gives some indication of the nature of the complaint when he wrote in September 1820:
For this last month we have had a most extraordinary complaint throughout the colony. It comes on in the shape of a violent cold, with a great pain in the ear and gathering in the same. It swells the head and face to an enormous size, quite closing up the eyes. It has been fatal to some - not very many. I have escaped pretty well as yet, with only a little cough. Most people have had dreadful coughs, with inflamed throats, the children especially. Those to whom it is more severe or fatal, have been of a gross habit of body.
T.V. Blomfield to Thomas Blomfield, Sydney, 4/9/1820, C.E. Blomfield, op.cit., p26...Blomfield's last sentence is probably a little harsh. Christiana Brooks was a little more charitable when she observed during the 1826 outbreak
That it has been felt most severely by the native born youth of both sexes, but there has been few, if any, deaths from this cause among them - those who have died (about 30) have been old persons with worn out constitutions.
"Diary", 20/11/1826, C. Brooks Papers, ANL, Ms 1559, pp53-54.
127 HRA, I, xv, p375.
have been not fewer than six men, women and children, buried in the town of Parramatta" within the space of ten days.\(^{128}\) The 1836 epidemic, which the Gazette first reported as an outbreak of "severe colds",\(^{129}\) was recognised a week later, by the Herald, as a "species of influenza".\(^{130}\) If a melancholic piece of purple prose in the Gazette can be believed the death toll was quite high.\(^{131}\) Just how many died, and what proportion of them were children, is impossible to determine but at least one child died. It is interesting to note the Gazette mentions that the child had been sick for a long time so the mortality amongst children may have been conditional upon an already existing sickness.\(^{132}\)

Once an outbreak of this sort started there was little chance of it not spreading to every member of the family because of the crowded housing.\(^{133}\) While the mortality of children from this disease may not have been great the morbidity certainly was, and many, according to J.S. Hassall, carried "the remains of the visitation still as a

\(^{128}\) Aust, 6/7/1827, 3(b).
\(^{129}\) SG, 4/10/1836, 2(d).
\(^{130}\) SH, 10/10/1836, 2(c).
\(^{131}\) The Gazette wrote:

The angel of death is flapping heavy wings over Sydney: the rich and poor are alike subjected to his influence; Coroner's Inquests are being convened, two or three per diem; troops of mourners are almost hourly to be seen following their departed relatives to that bourne from whence no traveller returns. The Church Yard yawns with new made graves, while the tolling of the bell, whose melancholy sound grates harsh upon the ear, gives note of another passed away from this world, and yet these scenes make but little impression as to the necessity of looking beyond the grave. Alas! how truly ignorant is man - blind to his eternal happiness!

SG, 11/10/1836, 2(g); SH, 13/10/1836, 2(g) gives their reaction to this report.

\(^{132}\) A coronial inquiry into the death of an infant, Mary Taylor, who was attacked by "the prevailing cough" seemed to get better and then went into convulsions and died.

SG, 15/11/1836, 3(a); SH, 14/11/1836, 2(g).

\(^{133}\) Backhouse noted during one epidemic that:

In one family ... the father, in a state of high fever, was in the same bed with two of his own children. The crowded state of some of the huts of the poorer settlers, renders them extremely uncomfortable in the time of sickness.

J. Backhouse, *op.cit.*, p448.
painless companion".  

Treatment varied considerably. For sore throats, the Gazette, in 1803, advised gentle purgations, the application of a flannel, preferably impregnated with a liniment of oil and hartshorn (ammonia), to the throat, gargling with two teaspoons of saltpetre in a quart of barley or rice water, and an inhalation of warm vinegar steam.  

In 1820 the doctors advised people to take warm acidic drinks and to clear their chests by the expectoration of phlegm, a skill all parents were urged to teach their children. It was the inability to clear the chest that made infants even more prone to suffer death from this disease. This advice would have been far more beneficial, and humane, than that offered in 1836 when the medical practitioners prescribed "bleeding, blistering and cupping".  

A disease that was most prevalent in children of all ages, but fortunately not fatal, was ophthalmia. This took two forms; the more serious trachoma and the less serious inflamed eyelids, although it is often difficult to separate them in contemporary accounts. Both were highly infectious summer conditions associated by the colonists with hot weather, dust and dirt, or flies and mosquitoes. It raged in child institutions and any house whenever introduced by one member. It was also a common complaint amongst frontier families and often associated with scurvy so an inadequate vitamin intake, common to child institutions and frontier areas, seems to be a major consideration in its cause and cross infection in its rapid spread.

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134 Quoted in Cumpston, J., Influenza and Maritime Quarantine in Australia, Melbourne, 1919, p1.
135 Quoted in E. Ford, op.cit., p46.
136 SG, 19/7/1820, 3(b).
137 SH, 10/10/1836, 2(c).
138 The report of the Board of Enquiry on the Female Orphan School in 1826 gives a very good idea of how the disease spread so rapidly, at least in institutions.
   It is very probable the disease was propagated by a number of the children washing their hands and faces in the same water and wiping their faces with the same towel, which is the mode at present practised.
   HRA, I, xii, p163.
When untreated the disease could lead to blindness. Peter Cunningham advised people to shade their eyes and bathe them in a weak solution of lead acetate. Dr. McLeod advised:

Cold Water, Vinegar, or Brandy and Water are the common domestic applications, and if used in time and with care and a little attention to the state of the bowels, little more is required to effect a cure.

Dr. Black recommended a lotion of half laudanum (opium) and half water applied frequently to the eyes with a wet rag. Wentworth, on the other hand, was far harsher when he advised people to apply fomentations, leeches, blistering, cayenne pepper and bleeding.

Another major irritant that children were subject to was round worms which Cunningham seems to indicate, through his juxtaposition of this with Phthisis, was partly to blame for the consumptive look of the colonial children. Various folk remedies which involved fasting and laxatives were used with marginal success and reinfestation was almost immediate. Head lice, ringworm, and scabies were also common irritants especially in the institutions. W.M. Cowper mentions that in 1815 "a poor working man" found a cure for these irritants consisting of the condensed vapours of burnt couch grass.

139 Lady Franklin in her journal of a trip from Port Phillip to Sydney in 1839 mentions a visit to a pioneering emigrant family at Money Money Flats. They had two children, both girls, "the eldest has lost eye and other seemed diseased. He advised her to be guarded from the sun". Franklin Papers, NLA, Ms 114/3, Mon. 29 April, Vol. 2, p112. The treatment Lady Franklin offered usually constituted part of the treatment advised by more humane doctors.

140 P. Cunningham, _op.cit._, p95
141 HRA, I, xv, p373.
142 J. Norton to Jane, 10/5/1837, Mackenzie & Norton Papers, ML, Ms 1389/2, f183.
143 J. Hagger, _op.cit._, p81
144 P. Cunningham, _op.cit._, p94.
rubbed onto the affected spot. A more professional prescription contained coal tar, whale fat, olive oil and various sulphur compounds. The only real remedy was frequent bathing.

The other disease that needs to be mentioned is consumption (Phthisis Pulmonalis). There is conflicting evidence on this disease with some contemporary writers claiming that those who came to the colony with consumption were often cured, while others claimed that the trip brought the disease to a more rapid fatal conclusion. The same conflicting opinion is also found about its occurrence amongst the native born with some writers arguing that it was not common, but more frequent than one would expect given the mildness of the climate, while others claimed that it was frequent and the result of too rapid physical development. The paucity of figures makes it difficult to know which opinion was the correct one. Gandevia seems to think it was uncommon and one is tempted to believe that the observers were misled by the unusual physical characteristics of the colonial born. J.O. Balfour, writing of the mid 1840s, comes close to diagnosing consumption from the physical appearance of the youth when he writes:

the colonial youths have nearly all a most consumptive appearance, their persons being generally very thin, while their features, often handsome, have for the most part an unhealthy look.

This sort of observation was frequent and may have prompted the opinion that consumption was more common than it actually was.

After surviving the weaning/teething period the child faced greater danger from the physical environment than from any of these

147 J. Lardener Record Book, Elyard Family Papers, ML, Ms 594/1, item 13.
148 e.g. W. Rae, op.cit., p5.
149 McLeod, HRA, I, xv, p375.
150 J. Backhouse, op.cit., p290.
151 McLeod, HRA, I, xv, p375.
152 W. Rae, op.cit., p5; P. Cunningham, op.cit., p94.
diseases. The morbidity and mortality from accidents was great at all ages because the primitive state of medicine could not stop infections, lockjaw (tetanus), and other complications setting in following the slightest accident. A certain amount of blame was always attached to the parents or caregiver. Throughout the whole period the papers abound with pathetic little notes detailing the fate of some "innocent" and a call to parents to be more careful. Specific ages seemed to have been more prone to certain accidents than others. The two greatest killers were water and fire.

Burns resulted from naked flame or boiling water. Cheap cotton clothes were highly inflammable. They burst into flames as soon as a spark from a fire touched them or the cloth inadvertently touched naked flame. Two or three year olds seem to have been most susceptible to this accident probably because of the frocks and pinafores they wore and because they were at an age where the danger was not fully appreciated. The frequent absence of parents, even if only momentary, was enough to allow many accidents to occur. In the country, where long parental absence was common, the danger was even greater.

The frequency of these accidents is illustrated by a note in an 1823 Gazette.

No less than three poor infants have been terribly burnt within the last fourteen days; one of the little sufferers was buried on Monday last; and the other two are but slowly recovering. Why are not parents more careful of their offspring?

More severe blame was heaped upon parents who allowed their children to be scalded, apparently because the editors considered this was more easily avoided. The Gazette, in 1825, attributed the death of five

155 Elizabeth Turbot, just under three years old, was burned to death when she went too close to the fire while her mother was drawing water from the well outside. SH, 18/3/1833, 3(b). Eliza Lewis, 4, burned to death while locked in the house, with the two younger children, while her mother went to the markets. SH, 15/7/1833, 3(a).

156 Sarah Sells "a promising young girl", from County Argyle, was burnt to death while her parents were away from the house. Aust., 16/3/1826, 3(d). Anthony Steening, 5, was also burnt to death after being left in the charge of a 12 year old girl while his parents came to Sydney from their home in Liverpool. SH, 18/7/1836, 2(d).

157 SG, 5/6/1823, 2(a).
year old Agnes Campbell to the "carelessness of the cook, while pouring boiling water from an urn, or fountain, into some other vessel". The Herald was more charitable to the mother of a child who, while the mother reached for some cups, pulled a kettle of water onto itself.

The mother is an industrious sober women, and does not incur the blame which usually, though justly, attaches itself to such cases.

A severe burn meant almost certain death to a child. Mercifully many died quickly from the shock, but some lingered for days and even weeks while an infection, which ultimately killed the child, set in. The treatment usually given would today be considered not just undesirable but counterproductive. Those children who survived probably did so in spite of the treatment rather than because of it. Immediate, and effective, relief was sometimes given by immersion in cold water, but more often the initial treatment meant further pain for the child. Archibald MacLeod mentions that when his son was scalded "flour was applied and he lay without much apparent pain; never almost complaining until the evening before he died".

The usual first step was to apply cold cloth dressings soaked in one of a variety of oils such as linseed, hogs lard, or butter. Sometimes this would be overlaid with a warm poultice again made from a variety of ingredients ranging from cow's dung to vinegar. The pain produced by these remedies must have been unbearable without the aid of an opiate or some other pain killing, but addictive, drug. The removal of the bandages, if indeed they were ever removed, would have

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158 SG, 15/12/1825, 3(b).
159 SH, 9/4/1835, 3(d).
160 Such was the case with Agnes Campbell whose burn was restricted to her right leg, but an "inflammation was produced, and the poor little sufferer lingered in extreme pain" for five days. SG, 15/12/1825, 3(b).
161 see for example the case in the Diary of George Poyes of V.D.L. quoted in J. Hagger, op.cit., p63.
162 A. MacLeod to G. Ranken, 15/2/1829, Ranken Family Papers, ML, Ms 1153, Item 9.
163 SG, 18/12/1803, 2(c) - 3(a).
been sufficient to send the patient into secondary shock. The frying effect of the oils and poultices and the risk of infection from unclean dressings were added to by the flies, which must have swarmed around such a smelly, oily, mess.

If the child was lucky enough to survive the initial shock and any infection that might have arisen, they were often left horribly scarred and deformed. The chances of this were increased when the parents were unable or unwilling to pay the surgeon's fee and either allowed the healing to take its own course or went to a quack.164

The other great accidental killer was drowning. Older children were prone to drown, or nearly drown, as a result of sport or play165 or from occupational hazards,166 but again the toddlers seem to have been particularly prone to this fate. By far the greatest number drowned in wells. The backyards and public places of all towns abounded with wells and every farm had a well, a stream, or a dam. Although the wells were supposed to be covered at all times, many small children fell in and many either drowned or broke their necks. The papers in all cases heaped censure not only on the parents who were "so destitute of consideration as to allow their infants to roam about in search of premature death"167 but also on the wellowners.

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164 Surgeon Russell, in evidence to the 1838 Medical Practices Bill Committee, told of one ten or twelve year old girl who, after pulling through the initial danger periods, was progressing well under his regime of daily dressings. The father however: Thought that he might himself do as I had done, and save the expense of surgeons visits; after some time, finding that his daughter did not get well, he consulted the Publican Doctor, who it seems undertook the case; but on examining the patient a short time since, I found the Arms which at the time I left off visiting were straight, had become contracted, in consequence of want of judgement in arranging the proper position of the limbs.

Committee on Medical Practices Bill, 1838, Minutes, p20.

165 Such as diving into the sea, falling out of boats, playing by swollen rivers. SH, 9/5/1831, 4(b).

166 Such as six year old Margaret McSweeney who fell into a boiling distiller's vat while taking lunch to her father who worked at the distillery. SH, 2/10/1837, 2(d).

167 SC, 27/3/1823, 2(b).
for their "extreme criminality" in leaving the wells open, especially in populous places. This was probably a bit harsh for it often happened so quickly, while the mother was drawing water for example, and it sometimes took considerable time to reach the child who was often unable, either because it was stunned or too young, to cling to a rope or bucket while awaiting assistance.

There are an endless string of other childhood injuries and deaths some of which have parallels with today's conditions such as transport accidents involving horses, bullocks and carts. Others seem to be either unique to the period or to be more severe parallels of today's conditions. Dog attacks, now a rarity, were very frequent and attacks by rats, while less frequent, were still a problem. The only remedies against rats were, ironically, a dog or arsenic. The use of arsenic was common and inevitably led to some children being poisoned. The indigenous and often unfamiliar berries and fruits also caused a few deaths, and many more upset stomachs. Boys were prone to accidents while engaged in the very popular pastimes of throwing stones or making "squibs" from gunpowder. Occasionally

168 SG, 10/2/1825, 2(d).
169 Aust, 3/5/1826, 3(a); SH, 14/10/1833, 3(a); SH, 9/4/1835, 3(d).
170 It appears that most houholders kept a dog to ward off burglars and, besides these licensed dogs, hundreds of strays roamed the streets, SH, 23/9/1833, 2(d), contrary to the Dog Act. Many were the victims of inhuman treatment and were particularly savage. SG, 18/11/1820, 3(b). They frequently attacked both adults and children with the most horrendous results. The Australian, for example, reported in 1827 that a boy on his way to school was attacked by a dog, which had attacked two other children in the space of a few weeks. At first the boy was given little chance of survival but eventually pulled through, although he was crippled for life. Aust, 17/3/1827, 3(b).
171 Reports of huge rats attacking children in bed, causing great fright and the loss of large amounts of blood, are sprinkled through the newspapers but they were infrequent compared to dog attacks. SG, 4/12/1824, 3(c); SG, 24/10/1827, 3(b).
172 SH, 11/7/1833, 3(e).
173 SG, 7/6/1826, 3(b).
174 SG, 27/5/1824, 2(c).
175 Aust, 7/12/1826, 3(c).
a child was killed or injured by a gun, but guns were not in great supply and too rare to be entrusted to children.\textsuperscript{176}

Snakes were another danger with modern parallels but again the severity seems to have been greater. Floorless, windowless, doorless, and often gaping slab houses in partly cleared bush invited the entry of snakes who often sought the warmth of an infant's bed.\textsuperscript{177} In agricultural areas children often had to be taken to the place of work with the parents or caregivers where they were again open to attack from snakes.\textsuperscript{178} Barefooted children wandering the bush were also prone to attack. Because most people, even the 11 year old son of M. Hayes,\textsuperscript{179} knew the process (adopted from the Aborigines) of excision and ligature, many of the bites were not fatal.

McLeod also mentions "the exercise which is taken by People in the open air" as a contributant to the good health of the colony.\textsuperscript{180} This is certainly a factor in the health of the children. Relieved of the arduousness of prolonged education and the stultifying effect of excessive child labour, the early years of childhood in the colony were a fairly free time. It appears as if the majority of children were allowed to run free in both the country and the city. The results in each place were quite different with gangs, or "crowds of urchins" roaming the town while in the country the solitary child or group of siblings were often left to entertain themselves.

In the cities the number of free roaming children often caused comment. In 1837 one paper wrote:

Any person walking the streets of Sydney must be struck with the number of children in the lower ranks of life that are to be seen roaming about, imbibing vice of all descriptions from the more adult population.\textsuperscript{181}

\textsuperscript{176} Aust, 20/8/1826, 3(b); Aust 23/4/1828, 3(a).
\textsuperscript{177} Aust, 13/2/1828, 3(a).
\textsuperscript{178} The infant of Mr. Herbert was left to play in a hay heap while the servant worked. When the servant returned she found a snake lying beside the child. She attempted to snatch the child away, was bitten, but recovered. Aust, 9/3/1826, 3(c).
\textsuperscript{179} SG, 9/1/1823, 2(e).
\textsuperscript{180} HRA, I, xv, p374.
\textsuperscript{181} SH, 11/5/1837, 2(e).
It certainly did not take long for a crowd of children to form around any interesting spectacle, whether it be a puncheon of rum breaking open in the street, a pieman's tray being upset, the lamplighter on his rounds, a drunken sailor showering pennies, or the frequent brawls, dogfights or cockfights.

Comment was also made about country children who in their solitary existence were allowed to "run wild". "A Pioneer" tells of a clergyman in the early 1840s who, in an attempt to baptise the children in the backblocks of Port Phillip, was obliged to ride them down for they were as wild as kangaroos, and, on our approach, had bolted into and concealed themselves in the scrub.

James Ryan, the son of a small settler, tells how he neglected his schooling, and spent all his spare time fishing and shooting; at first with a bow and arrow and then a variety of guns. Later he talks of the work he did earning his breakfast but he gives no real idea how much work and how much leisure was involved. The impression is that he had plenty of leisure. Annabella Boswell, the daughter of a large landholder, spent most of the time out of doors with the animals, the blacks, the convict servants, and gardeners. She and her sisters assisted in making flour, jam, bread and candles, in milking and collecting eggs, but admitted that they were mainly observers.

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182 SH, 2/5/1831, 2(e).
183 SH, 5/9/1833, 3(a).
184 SG, 15/3/1827, 2(e).
185 SH, 19/1/1835, 2(e).
186 P. Cunningham, op.cit., p211; Aust, 10/8/1827, 3(b); SH, 23/5/1831, 3(a); J. Mudie, Select Committee on Transportation, 1837, Minutes pp108-9.
190 M. Herman, op.cit., pp37-8.
Most of the evidence deals with boys' recreations, and again the accent in the towns is on group activities, usually in the streets, the markets, or the wharf area, where they were calculated to cause the most mischief. An Australian correspondent described the Carter's Barracks' boys at play

in all the hilarity of youthful mirth, enjoying the government swings and playing at cricket, batt and ball, leap-frog and prisoner's base.191

Obviously these were common "institutional" games for J.S. Hassall notes that at King's School the popular recreations were cricket, rounders, leap-frog and "steal-cloth".192 Governor Macquarie's son was given bats, balls, boats and endless other toys from his earliest days.193 Obviously small time gambling was also popular. One ten year old boy found with no means of subsistence survived by getting his "victuals" from boys who won "shiners" at "tossing in the hole".194

The activity most frowned upon was fighting, which, according to Cunningham, was extremely popular

Sets-to between Currency urchins may frequently be witnessed in the streets, attended by their seconds, on whose knees they drop at the termination of each round, and who eagerly mop their little bloody faces with their shirt sleeves, and on time being called, jirk them off again with loud shouts of encouragement.195

Stonethrowing was also popular, especially when a group of boys surrounded some object, to them, of scorn, derision or dislike. The Gazette tells of a mob of boys who surrounded "Billy Blue", a well known eccentric, and pestered him to such an extent that he took up a stone and killed one of the boys.196 Massed fruit stealing raids on orchards, vineyards, and Campbell's Wharf, were popular,197 as

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191 Aust, 17/3/1827, 2(b).
194 Aust, 18/7/1827, 3(d).
195 P. Cunningham, op.cit., p211.
196 SG, 8/7/1824, 2(c). See also Aust, 27/5/1826, 3(d); SG, 3/2/1821, 2(a); SH, 27/6/1831, 3(b).
197 Eliza Walker, op.cit., p297; SH, 20/2/1837, 2(c); SG, 31/1/1827, 3(a).
were excursions in pursuit of the native fruits, the geebung, (Persoonia sp.) and the "five corners" (Styphelis sp.).

Guy Fawkes Day and the King's Birthday were usually accompanied by riotous conduct with firecrackers alarming horses and people and on some occasions causing serious injury to the rioters.

The dangers of playing in the street were manifest, but most of the land surrounding the towns was equally out of bounds as private property and the few common areas were often infested with cattle.

The popular "bush" games for town boys were "bushrangers and soldiers" or "French and English" played usually in the Domain or nearby scrub, by two gangs of rivals. Boys were also keen on swimming and boat-ing, especially as they got a little older and could begin to take part in the numerous regattas and carnivals.

In the country the games were more adapted to the solitary existence. Thus fishing, swimming, shooting and horse-riding, were the favourite past times of the boys. Whenever district events such as a carnival or race meeting were held the games of the town boys were copied.

Toys do not seem to feature much in the life of boys, the only reference, other than to bats and balls, being to the two Blomfield boys and their favourite wheelbarrows.

198 P. Cunningham, op.cit., pl11; W. Hughes, The Australian Colonies (Etc.), London, 1852, p74.
199 SH, 1/6/1837, 3(g); SH, 11/11/1833, 2(d); SH, 23/9/1833, 2(d); _Aust_, 7/12/1826, e(c).
200 e.g. SH, 14/10/1833, 3(a) when a boy was run over by a cart while playing in the street.
201 SH, 13/4/1835, 3(e).
202 _SG_, 11/10/1826, 2(c).
203 Dymphna Cusack, "Mary Reiby and Her Times" in F. Eldershaw, The Peaceful Army, Sydney, 1938, p42.
204 "those living near the sea can usually swim and dive like water-hens", Cunningham, op.cit., p208; SH, 9/5/1831, 4(b).
205 Barry, Past and Present, and Men of the Times, Wellington, 1897, pp11-12.
206 see J.T. Ryan, op.cit., pp6-7.
207 Christiana Blomfield to her in-laws, 2/6/1825, G.E. Blomfield, op.cit., p47.
toys, books and pianos in the life of girls. Annabella Boswell tells of one convict carpenter who

made us a beautiful bedstead for our dolls, and many other charming, if clumsy toys, which delighted us. 208

Most prosperous settlers encouraged their daughters to read and to learn to play a musical instrument. James Backhouse noted that most prosperous settlers, of whatever rank, had a piano "to relieve the mind from that sense of vacuity". 209 Other than an occasional ride on horse or gig the other chief amusement of aspiring girls was "The Walk" and "The Visit". 210 Girls of breeding were quickly introduced to proper society appearing, as 10 and 12 year olds, at dinner parties and dances to make up the numbers. 211 One can only assume that many girls of lower origin were also quickly caught by the adult world, for many married at 15 or 16 to men much older than themselves. Ryan writes of his courtship of "Jane M" whom he first met when he was about 13 and she younger, and who was seriously considering marriage by the time he was 16. 212

Cunningham notes that many of the traditional children's games and pastimes adopted in N.S.W. 213 and some of the rhymes popular in the forfeit games were adopted by the colony's children. 214 Children's entertainment at gatherings were equally traditional, with "Punch and Judy", conjurers, balancing acts, and skittles, all popular attractions. 215

The environment, this time the financial and employment environment, was also put forward as part of the reason for the intelligence of the native born.

208 M. Herman, _op.cit._, p41
209 J. Backhouse, _op.cit._, p151; N. Bartley, _Australian Pioneers and Reminiscences_, Brisbane, 1896, p63.
210 "Reminiscences of Jane Maria Cox", _C. Brooks Papers_, NLA, Ms 1559/3 p8.
211 M. Herman, _op.cit._, p15; J. Tourle, "Log of Journey to Australia" 27/5/1839, _Tourle Papers_, NLA, Ms 18, Letter I, p16.
212 J.T. Ryan, _op.cit._, p38.
213 P. Cunningham, _op.cit._, p211.
214 J.B. Cleland, "The Old Woman from Botany Bay" tells of one game that was adapted to the colony, _JRAHS_, 43(3), 1957, pp137-139.
Here, it should not be forgotten, we have sources of mental improvement apart from the endless incitements and attractions to accomplishment and almost irresistible vice, that are so much the fashion in Europe.216

The currencies were variously described as "shrewd and good natured",217 "kindhearted, intelligent men",218 with "tact and ability,"219 an "alert memory"220 and with a "quick appreciation of the monetary value of things".221 Perhaps the most flattering opinion was that of D. Mann who wrote in 1811:

They are remarkably quick of apprehension; learn anything with uncommon rapidity; and greatly improve in good manners, promising to become a fine race of people.222

Others were less flattering but concentrated on the lack of education, especially religious and moral education, rather than the natural talents of the subjects.223

A general realignment of educational aims, from strictly religious to social objectives, took place during the eighteenth century. Morality was still the prime consideration but this involved both individual morality and social worth by fitting the person for his or her proper role in society.224 The emphasis on morality was constant in the education of all social classes but the practical side of the child's education was dependant on one's station in life. This was most explicitly spelt out in the Rules and Regulations of the orphan institutes. The female rules, for example, read:

216 SG, 24/6/1824, 2(c).
217 A. Harris, op.cit., p90.
218 H. Haygarth, op.cit., p114.
220 Mary Brooks to William, 2/5/1832, Cowper Papers, ML, Ms A3315, f13.
221 W. Hughes, op.cit., p114.
223 For example, W.W. Burton, The State of Religion and Education in New South Wales, London, 1840, p11; Aust, 31/8/1827, 3(b); J. Mudie, Select Committee on Transportation, 1837, Minutes, p110.
The children of this Institution are to be educated only in View of their present Condition in Life, and future Destination; namely, as the Wives or Servants of common Settlers, Mechanics and labouring People. They are therefore only to be taught to read and write, so as to be able to read and understand the Holy Scripture, but they are to be well instructed in common Needlework; in making up their own Cloaths; in washing of Cloaths and Linens; in Spinning and Carding; in the Management of a Dairy; in Baking, Cooking, and all Species of Household Work: They are also to be worked, occasionally, in the Garden and Field, as an useful and wholesome Exercise, as well as with the View to fit them for Wives of Farmers.225

Elizabeth Windschuttle argues that the same practicality infected the education of the daughters of the colonial elite.

It was primarily concerned to teach girls the customs, morals and style of their parents. Second, it aimed to reinforce the roles decreed for the girls on the basis of their sex. Third, it attempted to impart a limited number of skills, some of which were 'useful' (literacy and numeracy) but many of which were 'ornamental' (Music, painting and French).226

The level of practical education was low and, except for a few of the elite, never aspired to impart intellectual values. It was always secondary to individual and social morality. Thus the debate between proponents of the innocence versus the depravity of children was still most evident in the authorities' attitudes towards education, although the practical effect of both attitudes was the same. Very early in the colony's history the need to educate all children was accepted by those in authority both in England and the colony itself. As Cleverley points out, the close questioning of Bligh and Hunter on their education policies by members of the 1812 Select Committee on Transportation gave de facto recognition to the notion that government aid for public education was justifiable. This was in marked contrast to the state of affairs in England where no government money was spent on elementary education before 1833.227

225 Rules and Regulations etc of Female Orphan Institution: Sydney, 1818, pp7-8.
Punishment and deterrence were the major reasons for confining convicts to N.S.W., but there were vague hopes that the journey to N.S.W. and the inducements of a new land would somehow reform the convicts. These hopes were quickly dashed and the notion that the colony could be saved only by the "rising generation" transformed reforming zeal towards the convicts into protective desires towards the children.

A.J. Cornell argues that the education of the period was based on the principle of a natural predilection in children towards evil which could be overcome only by an education based on religious and moral instruction provided by the Anglican Church, the true dispensers of Truth. J. Cleverley, on the other hand, argues that the majority were influenced by the Lockean idea of the child as a tabula rasa. It was possible for children to grow up to be good men and women despite their parentage and their environment if they were given the right education.

The argument of Chapter One was that the majority favoured the latter view but the practical result of both positions was similar. The "rising generation" needed to be separated from their environment in order to foster their natural abilities and avoid contaminating their innocence. The most impassioned called for complete physical separation through orphanages or boarding schools. Archdeacon Scott, representative of this faction wrote:

I was anxious to detach the Children as much as possible from such constant scenes of iniquity; and altho' this may have at the first view a tendency to destroy the natural ties between the parent and the offspring, yet when that offspring must necessarily become contaminated at so early a period of life, and imbibe all the horrid (sic) passions of its vicious parents, I cannot conceive that such arguments ought to avail here, whatever they might and unquestionably should avail in a Country differently populated.

The failure of Scott's boarding school proved the impossibility of this dream but if physical separation was impossible at least moral separation could be achieved by an education system which subordinated


\[229\] Scott to Darling 11/9/1829 in Darling to Murray 18/10/1829, HRA, I, xv, p.220.
learning to virtue. Bigge followed this line and recommended in effect that schooling concentrate on "moral improvement with a subdued minor theme of vocational training".

Of course there was quite a gap between the authorities' views and those of the children's parents, on, first parental virtue and ability and, second, the quality and quantity of education needed or desired. There seems to have been a consensus of opinion, other than the occasional bitter word from miscreants like Mudie, that the aspiring classes desired education for their children, but there was much dissension about the quality of the education. Very few parents probably agreed with the authorities' assessment of their ability and few felt, on moral grounds, the need to send their children away from their "disastrous influence". Some, like Christiana Blomfield, felt a school would be good for it separated the children from their convict servants. Some Catholics and other Protestant denominational were upset at any notion of their children attending Anglican Schools. As early as 1810 the Catholic Michael Hayes was writing to his Irish parents decrying the lack of Catholic education and imploring them to send books - Latin grammars and religious texts - so that he could continue his children's education. The ultimate result was that by 1836 the colony had two major, an Anglican and a Catholic, and two smaller denominational public funded school systems.

The exclusivist elite were equally upset at having to send their children to schools frequented by emancipist children. Even the smaller private schools were not immune from this class animosity. In 1826 the Gazette became the battleground between Dr. Thurston of

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230 J. Cleverley, _op.cit._, pp9-11.
232 _Select Committee on Transportation, 1837_, Minutes, p110.
234 C. Blomfield to L. Edwards, 5/1/1828, C.E. Blomfield, _op.cit._, p51.
235 see letters of M. Hayes, NLA, Ms 246 where nearly every letter repeats these themes.
236 see Scott, _HRA_, I, xv, p220.
the Parramatta Commercial Academy, and some parents who, at first, threatened, and then carried out the threat, to remove their children from the Academy because Mr. Raphael enrolled his adopted orphan son.237

Finally the debate raged over the need for practical schools not devoted to high literature but teaching

as much instruction as serves to guard the mind from error, and to answer all the ordinary purposes of an ordinary situation in society.238

This attack upon "higher education" was two pronged. The upper classes were afraid of the democratising effect of the colony's education, or more precisely, the lack of appreciation of one's place in society it supposedly engendered in the young. Even the School of Industry, set up to produce the meekest of domestic servants, was objected to on the grounds

that the children are brought up to a style of living that disqualifies them from becoming wives for settlers ...239

On the other hand, as many were wont to point out, the parents of the children desired only practical education.

The rich emancipist, although a shrewd man, is perfectly illiterate, and his children, who are brought up, for the most part, to regard a knowledge of cattle, sheep and horses, together with sharpness in making a bargain, as the grand desideratum, seem to have a great contempt for wisdom acquired through the medium of books, and to regard wealth as the standard by which mankind are alone to be valued.240

Some, like Solomon Wiseman, even argued that the acquisition of wealth was the main aim in life and no formal education was required, merely experience.

I have four sons; and I say to Richard, 'There's a herd of cattle for you,' and to Tom, 'There's a flock of sheep - look after them:' so in five years' time they become rich, each the owner of large herds of cattle and flocks of sheep. Now that's what I call education, for by it they acquire means to live.241

237 SG, 23/8/1826, 1 (d); 2/9/1826, 4(d).
238 Aust., 22/12/1825, 2(b-d); see also SG, 12/8/1826, 2(d).
239 SH, 1/8/1831, 3(d).
240 J.O. Balfour, op.cit., p69; see also Burton, op.cit., pp297-8.
Probably the most practical schools were the private schools where the accent was still on moral instruction but the concentration was on reading, writing, arithmetic, book keeping, geography, navigation and a range of other practical skills. Capt. John Beveridge's "Mercantile and Naval Academy"\(^{242}\) and Nott's "School for Moral and Practical Education"\(^{243}\) incorporated these desired qualities into their names as well as the curriculum, but many others such as Mr. Bradley's School at Parramatta,\(^{244}\) taught similar subjects. The Gazette boasted in 1824, with some justification, that some of the private schools were as good as their counterparts in England\(^{245}\) but the quality of other teachers in some of the small private schools left a lot to be desired. The Herald quoted one board outside a school which read:

> Children taught to read here and keep accounts ... Payment taken in whate or pitatis for the present.\(^{246}\)

Then again, as the Gazette pointed out, the teacher's character was "of equal if not greater importance than intellectual endowments". The man may not have been able to spell but he may have been "animated by the feelings of piety and benevolence" and a wizard at communicating "much important admonition and valuable knowledge".\(^{247}\)

The state financed schools used the Madras system of older school children monitoring the younger. There is little doubt that the Gazette and the Australian, reflecting the thinking of the upper ranks, thought this system sufficiently practical for the lower orders. School started at 9 a.m. with prayers and a hymn followed by one hour of instruction, or reading from the monitor, an hour of reading and spelling and an hour of writing and arithmetic. A two hour lunch break was followed by a repetition of the morning's program ending at 5 p.m. with prayers and hymns. It was in these schools that virtue took precedence over instruction to an extent where the latter was almost non-existent. The lessons were restricted almost totally to the memorising of huge

\(^{242}\) SG, 14/6/1826, 1(d).
\(^{243}\) SG, 14/10/1820, 4(c).
\(^{244}\) SG, 30/12/1820, 4(b).
\(^{245}\) SG, 24/6/1824, 2(b).
\(^{246}\) SH, 21/9/1835, 3(c).
\(^{247}\) SG, 15/4/1826, 2(c-d).
chunks of appropriately uplifting material.248

The only schools to rival the public schools in promoting virtue over instruction were the Sunday Schools. These taught the children of parents unwilling to commit their children to five days a week education, or to an Anglican protestantism. The Gazette report on the Parramatta Church Sunday School examinations in 1826, where everyone was highly gratified with the result, illustrates the quality of the teaching. The winner of the examination was a 9 year old girl who had memorised a staggering 276 hymns and 42 chapters of the Bible. One 4 year old boy had memorised 52 hymns.249 One ship's surgeon, using the same techniques on his trapped charges, was proud to announce that his senior class "not only ended up committing the catechism to memory but also had a clear understanding of it".250

Private tutors were often used by the well-to-do and middle ranks. Elizabeth Windschuttle argues that this was the most desired mode of educating the daughters of the elite, but practical difficulties often made it impossible for more than a few years.251 Where it was used it served as a preparation for advanced study at a private academy in order to avoid those numbing elementary schools and to overcome the difficulties of distance. Convicts were often favoured for these tutoring positions although they were usually teachers and never became governesses or companions.252 Annabella Boswell's daily regime under a free governess consisted of reading the histories of England, Scotland, Greece and Rome, singing and guitar or piano, grammar and spelling by rote learning Murray's Grammar, drawing, geography, as well as moral instruction by rote learning all of Magnell's Questions.253 Christiana Blomfield, in one of her frequent displays of inconsistency towards convict servants, complimented the work of her son's convict tutor.

248 D. Smart, op.cit., p486 ff.
249 SG, 1/4/1826, 2(e).
250 J. Lawrence, Committee on Immigration, 1838, Minutes, p11.
252 F. Forbes, Select Committee on Transportation, 1837, Minutes, p22.
253 M. Herman, op.cit., pp9 & 16.
I have got a tutor for my boys, and he goes on well at present. They have their school in a small verandah room, so that I can step in now and then and see that everything is going on right. The young man has been well brought up, but has unfortunately committed some crime of no very serious kind, which has brought him to the country. He teaches them English, grammar, geography, arithmetic, history and French. He was sent to me by a friend of ours whose children he had been instructing for two years; they are now too old to require his services any longer. His method is good and our children obey him, and at the same time are fond of him. They all take their meals with him, and three boys sleep with him in one of the back rooms which I have roughly fitted up for them, but which is weatherproof and comfortable, though not plastered. Their religious instruction I take upon myself.254

In most cases the private tutor was followed by more education in a private school. Blomfield's sons were eventually sent on to Mr. Wilkenson at Newcastle, for example. Others used a mixture of all three methods either for an individual child or for different children within the one family. Geo. Best explained to Bigge that two of his sons went to school to Mr. Crook, a missioner schoolmaster, his daughters went to school in Sydney, while his other sons were taught by a schoolmaster he hired.255 James Ryan, the son of a small emancipist landholder, neglected his public schooling even though the teacher slept in his family's house. He was sent to weekly board, when about 13 or 14 years old, at the Rev. R. Fulton's school at Castlereagh. He stayed for a year. He mixed only with the children of his own age and class while he was taught by Mr. Fulton's subordinate Mr. Fraser and did not mix with the higher class pupils who remained with the Reverend Gentleman.256

The varieties of education offered make it extremely difficult to estimate the proportion of children who received some education. This is further complicated by differences over the quantity of education seen as desirable by parents and authorities at that time, and by modern commentators. It has to be acknowledged that while the authorities feared the democratising effect of too much education

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parents equally failed to see the need for too much education. The poor educational standard of the times, or what moderns would consider poor, was the result of both forces and cannot be attributed wholly to the authorities' desire to keep the masses in their place. One cannot look, as one would today, at the 5 to 14 age group and expect a sizable proportion to be at school. A list of children attending schools in January 1821, compiled for Commissioner Bigge, reveals one 2 year old, about half a dozen 3 year olds, and a few more 4 year olds. Most of the very young children were in the small private schools but in all schools the overwhelming majority were aged between 7 and 9 years. Of the 62 children identified as being at school in the 1828 census the age range was from 4 to 18 years although over half were aged from 7 to 10 years inclusive. These were the boarders, however, and probably uncharacteristic in that few day pupils would have been older than 10 and a lot more would have been 5 and 6 years old. It is obvious that for the majority of parents the supposedly nine year education period was in reality restricted to five years, at most between 5 and 10 years of age.

Within that five year period a parent might decide that two years was quite sufficient for any child to learn the necessaries, and that regular attendance was not necessary within those two years. Once or twice a week may have been considered enough. This would have especially been the case with those parents who were indisposed towards the methods and aims of the schools and the authorities, or could not afford the cost of 3d per week or ½d per day. Thus in 1828 only 1,256 pupils were enrolled in the church schools and about another 900 were in private schools. Average attendance at the church schools was about 65-70% thus about 1750 children attended school on any one day. This represents about 45% of the children of modern

257 Bigge, Ecclesiastical Establishments and Schools Etc., Appendix, ff230 et seq.
258 Aust, 31/8/1827, 3(b), seems to imply that there were a few thus inclined.
259 Blue Book 1828, ff83-4.
260 Scott's estimate of the 1825-6 period; "Report on Church and Schools Establishment (1826)", Darling to Bathurst, 22/5/1826, HRA, I, xii, p314.
school age (5/13 years inclusive) and 67% of the children aged 5 to 10 inclusive. If all the enrollees are included the figures jump to 56% and 83% respectively. By 1836 the number of enrollees in Church and Catholic schools numbered 3,391 or about 44% of the children under 13 years. 262

In English terms these are extraordinarily good figures, although not good enough for Scott and likeminded people. When all the qualifications are taken into consideration, especially parental desires, it is probable that the great majority of children received some practical education amidst the plethora of moral instruction. Goodin's use of the marriage registrations shows a much higher literary ability amongst the native born than the convict and emancipist classes at least. 263 One cannot imagine too many colonial parents being impressed by a daughter's ability to sing 276 hymns and recite 42 chapters of the Bible nor would they have desired the refinement and social graces incumbent upon the middle class urban dwellers, but as Alex Harris pointed out

In the solitary bush she [the mother] had never had to drill her children into the many unnatural habits of old societies, and they loved her all the more. 264

Education would not have played the major role in the life of the colonial child that it plays in today's world. It may have been important for a small part of their childhood but it certainly would not have dominated all their childhood days.

* * * * *

The colony had some justification for its pride in the healthiness and intelligence of its children. The general picture of child mortality and morbidity during the period is good by contemporary standards. It was probably attributable to the environment, the climate, the food, the recreation, the isolation of the colony, as well as the higher than average

262 Blue Book, 1836, f92.
264 A. Harris, op.cit., p111.
standard of living shared by the majority of children. That environment changed in many ways during the period and this may be part of the reason for the increasing child mortality. First, as Sydney and other towns grew, the risk of epidemics and the risk of catching even an endemic disease increased. Water supply problems, other waste disposal problems, the loss of bathing facilities around the harbour foreshores, and closer and less adequate housing, were all attendant on Sydney's rapid growth and to the detriment of the health of its inhabitants. The inadequate streets were invaded not only by more pedestrians, but by carriages, horses and carts resulting from the increasing affluence of the better classes and the need to service this large town. This meant an increase in traumatic injury to children who persisted, because there were so few other recreation areas free of grazing animals, in playing in the street.

As settlement widened and thinned on the edges, increasing numbers (although a decreasing proportion of families) became subject to the problems of pioneer life. Isolation during sickness, trauma, or childbirth as well as bad water, disease inducing diets of salted beef, and other durable foodstuffs, inevitably led to a deterioration in the chances of a child's survival. Families dependant upon the goodwill of absentee squatters, motivated principally by a desire for profit, often faced periods of near starvation as supplies were delayed or had to be destroyed because they were so bad. At no stage during the whole period did the child mortality rate reach that of the home country, a point to which this work will return in Chapter Three. Most parents unafflicted by some genetic incompatibility or physical weakness, could confidently look forward to seeing all their children reach adulthood.

Again it is probable that the 1830s saw an improvement in "quality" education but a deterioration in the universality of common education. Although an increasing proportion of children lived in closer settled areas, the distribution of schools was better and, in absolute terms, the numbers of children were more manageable in the early period. So an increasing proportion of children were probably denied even the basic education desired by the government. During the period, however, the quality and generality of education added to the pride felt by parents in their colonial offspring.
CHAPTER THREE

DEMOGRAPHIC INFLUENCES

ON THE FAMILY AND CHILDREN
One of the most profound influences on any society is the demographic structure of that society. This not only affects society in general but also has both direct and indirect effects on children. The direct effect is to set the parameters within which the child, as an individual, operates. While the life cycle of an individual is controlled to a large extent by biological processes of growth and decay, overlying this is a cultural heritage which helps determine appropriate ages at which the growing individual enters the next phase of the life cycle. When, for example, he or she ends any formal education they may have received, leaves the parental home, enters the workforce, marries and retires. The sex and age structure of any society to a large extent determines the chances of an individual participating in activities, some of which have the profoundest effect not only on the individual but also on society. The number of females within any society, for example, sets the upper limits to the number of marriages which, in turn, sets limits to the birth rate which in turn can affect the whole structure, both physical and social, of society.

Of course the child operates most often, almost exclusively during infancy, within the family. Thus the structure of the family rather than that of society as a whole is more important in any study of children. But the demography of a society affects the nature and structure of families so, in practice, it is difficult to separate the direct and indirect impact of a society's demography. Because it is almost impossible to separate the child from the family and the family from society this chapter will concentrate on the family and upon the peculiarities of the colony's demography which directly influenced family life.

This chapter will set out to show that the stability and viability of the family unit in N.S.W. was enhanced by the population structure. The small proportion of children in the population also improved the individual worth of each child while the small number of children, in absolute terms, made it possible to introduce relief measures for those children who were victims of the moral and physical conditions of the colony.
During the period 1820-1836 N.S.W. was characterised by a rapidly increasing population, but a remarkable stability in the composition of that population, especially after 1828. Thus throughout the period the civil status of the population, the religious patterns, the abnormal numerical preponderance of adults over children, the huge sex imbalance, the steady rate of free immigrant and convict arrivals, the relatively high birth rate, and the relatively low death rate all remained fairly uniform. The only major demographic influence which changed during the period was the effect of the increase in the size of the population.

This is important for much that follows will be based upon a detailed examination of the 1828 census, and it needs to be established that what is there revealed is representative of the period 1820-1837.¹

¹ Few changes occurred in the N.S.W. population, especially after 1828, other than a rapid increase in the size of the population.

Between 1820 and 1836 the population of the colony more than tripled from about 24,000 in 1820 to 77,000 in 1836 (Table 1) with the pace of the increase quickening considerably in the 1830s.2

At no stage was the population large, a feature that not only enhanced the value of the individual but also made it extremely difficult to avoid the scrutiny of others. Most of this increase came from immigration. There was some natural increase, probably around six or seven percent3, but over ninety percent came from free or bond immigration.4 Although the numbers increased, the sex disparity and the heavy concentration of adults in the population were not greatly affected.

Population pyramids, which give an idea of the age and sex structure of the colony, are extremely difficult to construct from the available information.5 A pyramid based on the 1828 census illustrates the pattern that prevailed throughout the 1820s to the mid 1830s. A decline in the convict arrivals and an increase in family migration after 1837 produced a slightly more normal pyramid based on the 1841 census. It still preserves most of the features of the 1828 pyramid and both contrast strongly with the "normal" pyramid of England and Wales in 1841 (Table 2). The more important features of these colonial populations were the insignificance of the child population, but, paradoxically, the great

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2 In the five year period 1820-1825 the increase was a modest 33.7% while in the five years 1828-1833 the increase was 66.3%. In the eight years 1820-1828 the increase was 52% while in the eight years 1828-1836 the population more than doubled (110%). In the three year periods 1825-1828 and 1833-1836 the increases were 17.9% and 26.7% respectively.

3 Between 1828 and 1836 out of a total increase of 24,264 only 1,266 (the total number of recorded births minus the total number of recorded deaths) or 5.3% can be directly attributed to natural increase.

4 Between 1820 and 1836 42,243 convicts (36,576 males and 5,667 females) and approximately 13,910 emigrants (about 5,880 males, about 5,180 females, and about 2,850 children) arrived in the colony. Shaw, A.G.L., Convicts and the Colonies, Melbourne, 1977, pp366-7.

5 The only census that gives some sort of age and sex breakdown is the 1841 census but an analysis can also be made from the raw figures provided by the 1828 census. Both are very crude; the 1828 because the age of so many convicts is not given, and the 1841 because the age divisions are very wide and several age groups have to be averaged out to gain some idea of the reality.
significance of the female child in the female population, the sex imbalance, the dominance of adult males, and the very low dependency ratio.\(^6\)

The sex imbalance is crucial to understanding the structure of the family. The ratio in 1828 was higher, but not significantly different from any other stage of the period under study (Table 3). The proportion of women in the population remained around 25% and the proportion of adult females in the adult population remained around 20% with variations of only one or two percentage points either side of these figures.

Changes in the civil composition of the colony over the sixteen year period were only slightly more significant than those of its sex composition (Tables 4 and 5). The population was divided into four civil classes; convict, emancipist, colonial born and free emigrant. Amongst the women the proportions in each group remained roughly equal, especially when the children are removed. The greatest change took place in the proportion of emancipist women. Their share halved between 1820 and 1828 but this was followed by a steadier and less substantial change in the second eight year period. This was characteristic of the whole civil pattern, but the changes were not significant. A person arriving in 1836 entered a colony which was less than nine percent freer than it was in 1820 and whose civil composition was similar to any other time in the period under study.

Tables 4 and 5 also reveal how the differing civil composition of the sexes exacerbated the unbalanced sex ratio. The proportion of free females and free males was close but there was a huge disparity between

\(^6\) The dependency ratio is the ratio of dependants, children and the aged, to the working population.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>BCM (Colonial Born Males)</th>
<th>CFM (Free Emigrant Males)</th>
<th>EM (Emancipist Males)</th>
<th>CM (Convict Males)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1820</td>
<td>46.0</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>11.4</td>
<td>4.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1822</td>
<td>41.1</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>12.2</td>
<td>7.8</td>
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<tr>
<td>1825</td>
<td>38.7</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>16.8</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1833</td>
<td>39.3</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>32.8</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 4**

*The Civil Structure of N.S.W.: 1820 - 1836*
the unfree males and females. Obviously in marriage the real losers, if civil status were important, were the convicts. If three-quarters of the males remained unmarried the majority would probably have been convicts or exconvicts because of their low civil status. One would therefore expect the civil composition of married males to be heavily weighted towards the minority free element in society.

The class structure which evolved in the colony was a composite of this civil status and occupational status. The occupational divisions within the population are difficult to assess because of the huge proportion of convicts. It is best to concentrate on the free male workforce, for which we have, from the 1828 census, the most accurate
information (Table 6). The most numerous occupational group was, as one would expect, the labourers. If one accepts that a proportion of the so-called mechanics and tradesmen were little more than semi-skilled labourers and adds to them the servants, over half the free population was unskilled or semi-skilled workers. The addition of the convict and ticket of leave men undoubtedly boosted this proportion to well over threequarters.)
allowing for the skills of some convicts. The rest can be divided into those directly involved, by land ownership, in agriculture and pastoralism and the self employed, the skilled, and the government officials who were basically servicing the agricultural and penal economy.

The class structure described in Chapter One cannot be compared with any other contemporary society and cannot be called a true economic class system. Society was divided into three economic groups, the higher, middle, and lower groups with two vertical lines dividing the free, the freed and the bond. This confusing situation was to have a deleterious economic effect upon most of the colonial born when they reached adulthood.

The marital status of the population is as difficult to assess as its class structure. The only census upon which we can work is the 1828 census and it gives no idea of the marital status of single people listed in the books. The only measure that can be used is the number of adults married, cohabiting, or with children. The figures (Table 7) show that a tiny 14% of males and a more respectable but still small 59% of females over the age of 12 were married, cohabiting, widowed, or separated. The surprisingly small percentage of married women was caused by a combination of some women who were married in the home country and therefore refused to remarry in the colony, some 13 to 20 year olds who were only just becoming marriageable, and some newly arrived convicts who had had little opportunity to select a mate.

The religious affiliation of the population was another demographic feature of N.S.W. which remained remarkably stable (Table 8). Unfortunately there is no sex or civil breakdown of the religious affiliation.

7 The convicts theoretically were quasi slaves filling the most menial positions but in practice they were divided into status groups determined by occupational skills. The educated convicts, for example, were treated differently to the unskilled labourer and between them were the tradesmen who were much in demand and could wrinkle better conditions from both master and government. The free female workforce was so tiny it too is difficult to assess. This leaves only the over 14 free male workforce with which to try and gauge the occupational distribution of the population. This can be analysed with a fair degree of accuracy from the 1828 census. The reliability of the data is often questioned and the occupational information is brief in the extreme but the data is not so unreliable as to be insignificant. The census remains a valuable source of information when combined with material from other records.
but we do know that a much higher proportion of the female convicts were Catholics and that the overwhelming majority of Catholics were convicts or exconvicts.\(^8\) If religion was considered unimportant in the colony (as many commentators believed it was) one would expect to find it a secondary factor in the selection of a marriage partner. The religious structure also meant that the colonial authorities faced administrative, legal, and religious problems unknown in England and ones that could not be lightly dismissed.

Finally what was the distribution of the population throughout the colony? The population spread slowly and more thinly as the boundaries of the settlement were pushed west, and even in 1836 the majority of people

---

\(^8\) Robson's sample of male convicts had a 40% rate of unlisted religion but of the convicts who stated a religion 68% were Protestant and only 32% Catholic. This contrasts with the female convicts where, of the 57% who stated religions, 51% were Protestant and 49% were Catholic. Robson, I. L., *The Convict Settlers of Australia*, Melbourne, 1965, pp211 & 213.
Convicts and single men bore the brunt of pioneering for some counties had less than 0.1% of the total female population and 84% of women (compared

9 In 1828, 68.7% of the population lived in County Cumberland and the neighbouring areas of County Cook. Another 6.7% belonged to the colonial marine and the road gangs centred on County Cumberland. Most of these lived in the towns of Sydney, Parramatta, and Windsor. By 1836 the proportion of the population in County Cumberland had dropped to 51.6% with the closest counties taking the total to 65.9%. The remaining 34.1% were spread out amongst the other fifteen counties, the area outside the boundaries, the penal settlements, the colonial marine and Port Phillip.)
with 59% of men) lived in the five counties closest to Sydney; Cumberland (with 69.6% of the female population alone), Cook, Camden, Hunter and Northumberland. On the other hand these counties had only 46.4% of the convict population and in some of the far flung counties the great majority of the population was convict.10 Isolation and distance were still features of life even within the settled counties, but by 1836 37.3% of the total population and 51.4% of the female population lived in towns and villages of over 500 people while 25.6% and 35.3% respectively lived in Sydney alone.

The child population displayed many of the features of the total population of the colony. It increased rapidly in numbers but maintained uniformity in structure throughout the period.11 Between the 1822 and

10 County Brisbane, for example, was 72% convict.
11 It is difficult to judge the real number of children in the colony at the beginning of the period for the muster numbers vary widely. The 1819 muster gave a figure of 7,824 children, the 1820 5,668, the 1821 7,347, and the 1822 4,359. After 1822, when Van Diemen's Land was administratively separated from N.S.W., the situation improved, thus the 1822 figures are probably the most accurate for this early period. Even the 1825 muster included 392 children "unaccounted for" raising the total to 5,116.
AGE-SEX STRUCTURE: N.S.W. 1828
CHILDREN 0-13 YEARS
1836 the number of children under 12 in the colony rose from 4,359 to 14,171 a threefold increase in just fourteen years (Table 10). The major increase took place between 1828 and 1833 when the child population increased by 77% in five years compared to the 32% increase in the six years between 1822 and 1828. Unlike the adults most of the increase came from natural increase and not from immigration. Fewer than 20% of children in 1836 were free emigrants. Unfortunately the only census from which adequate data for an age pyramid can be reconstructed is the 1828 census, and the only way this can be done is by tallying the individual entries in the census returns. Almost inevitably a tally arrived at by this means differs from the figures given in the official census returns, but the difference is not great enough to invalidate the figures based on the tally (Table 11).

The pyramid shows the difficulties of using single year steps.

---

12 In the 1828 census only 547 children (or 9.5%) were listed as having come to the colony as emigrants. Between 1828 and 1836 about 2,850 children arrived in the colony. Presuming that all were still under 12 by the time of the 1836 census (a highly unlikely prospect) these children would have constituted a third of the 8,450 increase in the child population, and just under 24% of the child population would have been emigrant in 1836. N.S.W. Blue Book 1836.

13 The official census figures give 2,835 boys and 2,936 girls, a total of 5,771 children. My tally yielded 2,835 boys and 2,778 girls, a total of 5,613 children and a difference of 158 girls. The census also lists, in family groups, 65 boys and 60 girls whose ages are not given, 50 children whose age is given but whose sex is unknown, and 17 children whose age and sex is unknown. There are also at least 85 double entries (that is where the child is entered at least twice). How the census clerks dealt with these figures is unknown but this undoubtedly contributes to some of the discrepancy in the figures. Included in the age structure are the 12 and 13 year olds. This brings it into line with the 1841 census and also into line with the legal definition of the age of criminal culpability. It also allows one to see if the 12 year mark was regarded by the colonials as the true age of economic and social independence and responsibility.

14 Where the date of birth is not available the age of the child is often an estimate. There is ample evidence of this in the double entries where the same child is often listed with age variations of one or two years. Similarly using the 1825 muster and the 1828 census often shows a wide gap between the expected age of a child listed in 1825 and the actual age recorded in the 1828 census. In this figure many children of age 6 and 8 have obviously been placed in the 7 years age group, an indication that 7 may have been considered a significant age. The low number of 8 year olds may also be partly due to the first influenza epidemic of 1820 which adversely affected the children born in that year. It is also probable that a number of babies age less than one year have been classified by their parents as one year olds, while some more mature one year olds were listed as two year olds. The evenness of the female side of the pyramid contrasts with the raggedness of the male side, which might indicate that a knowledge of the real age of girls was considered more important than a knowledge of the real age of boys.
Given these difficulties the structure still reveals some interesting points. It is apparent that N.S.W. was not typical of early nineteenth century populations which were characterised by a pyramid with a wide base, large steps between the first three age groups, and then a gradual incline to a wide summit, a shape caused by a very high infant mortality and high child mortality. It is even more surprising that this was not the case in N.S.W. for one would expect the increasing number of women arriving in the colony to swell the ranks of the newborn and make the steps significantly larger. The expected shape could only be offset by the arrival of immigrant children but, as was noted above, they were an insignificant proportion of the child population and when they are removed from their age groups the differences between the two pyramids are not great.

It is extremely difficult to explain this figure except by proposing that a rapid decline in the birth rate and/or a catastrophic increase in infant mortality coincided with the beginnings of the 1828 depression following a period of five or six years in which the birth rate remained steady and infant and child mortality low. Another possibility is that, because of the very small numbers involved, the errors in tabulation and the estimated ages have been responsible for the strange slope. If the single year steps are reduced to two year steps, thereby reducing the chances of tabulating error the figure takes on a more normal shape but the narrow base still remains. It is probable that a combination of a lower birth rate, a higher death rate (even though there is no indication of either from other sources), and clerical error has contributed to the narrow based pyramid. Unfortunately the age cohort cannot be followed through to the next census to see which was the major contributor.

Table 2 showed the small proportion of children in the total population and it remained small for the whole period. Table 12 reveals the stability of this proportion and how much lower the proportion was compared to a normal contemporary population, namely England and Wales in 1841. The very low significance of boys amongst the males and the more normal proportion of girls amongst women are also illustrated. The small number of children and the small proportion of children in the total population compared to a normal society meant that the focus upon children was more concentrated. The absolute small numbers made State measures aimed at curing or preventing the exploitation and
TABLE 12
CHILDREN 0-11 AS PROPORTIONS
OF POPULATION; 1820-1841

England & Wales

ALL CHILDREN
TO
TOTAL POPULATION

1822
1828
1833
1836
1841*

10
20
30
40
percent

Boys to Male Population

1822
1828
1833
1836
1841*
e&w 1841*

10
20
30
40
percent

Girls to Female Population

1822
1828
1833
1836
1841*
e&w 1841*

10
20
30
40
percent

* includes 12 & 13 year olds.
mistreatment of children more effective and more accessible. It is here
that the increase in the absolute number of children had its impact. In
the 1830s the machinery and the institutions of a paternal state strained
to continue to give to children, as their numbers increased, the service
that the State could, and did, give in the 1820s.

The more important immediate effect of the small proportion of child-
ren was the very low dependency ratio, with a huge workforce existing to
support a small number of dependants. The dependency ratio in N.S.W.
in 1828 was around 28 per 100 breadwinners compared to 66.4 per 100 in
England and Wales in 1841. The situation in N.S.W. is a little atypical
for the colony was still a consuming rather than a producing society
with a large number of people, convict mainly, in the prime age bracket
not engaged in productive occupations. Even allowing for this the depend-
cy ratio was still very low and this indicates that society as a whole
should have been able to maintain adequately its dependants. The low
dependency ratio and the structure of the workforce contributed to the
shaping of the child labour market; a point taken up in the next chapter.
It also partly accounts for the flourishing benevolent institutions, both
private and state, within the colony. The state system and many
private individuals were willing and able to support children when their
family, the primary economic support system, collapsed.

The small number of children probably induced in them a sense of
separateness. The realisation that adults were not only authoritatively
dominant but numerically overwhelming undoubtedly contributed to the

15 The modern proportion of the population aged 20-44 years, the prime work-
ing age, is about 35%. In England and Wales in 1841 it was about 34.1% but
in NSW in 1828 it was 72.6% and in 1841 55.7%. The dependency ratio is
usually calculated as
\[
\frac{\text{No. of under 20s + number of over 65s} \times 100}{\text{Number 20 to 64}}
\]
For this exercise the following formula was adopted
\[
\frac{\text{No. under 14 + no. over 60} \times 100}{\text{Number 14-59}}
\]
This was done because the majority of 14 to 20 year olds in N.S.W. were at
work or married even though the majority of free youths were not. If the
formula is strictly adhered to the figures are 33.7/100 for NSW and 106.9/10
for England and Wales. See D.J. Bogue, Principles of Demography, New

16 Such as the Benevolent Asylum, the Benevolent Societies, the orphanages, the
School of Industry, the Sydney Dispensary, the Ladies Committees, and the
public schools. One would search in vain for a town in England with a
population of about 50,000 with comparable facilities.
reputed strong sense of sibling and peer unity, or clanishness, and the reputed precociousness of children in N.S.W.. This clanishness may well have had adverse long term effects as a closely knit and relatively pampered minority struck the competitive world or adulthood.

As one would expect the distribution of children in the colony closely follows that of the women. In 1820 (Table 13) about 97% of children and 92% of the population lived on the Cumberland Plain. Governor Macquarie's policy of containment and family grants of land had obviously succeeded in keeping all areas of the colony as close to average as was possible. The percentage of children in the population of each district (except for the very recently opened areas) was only a few percentage points each side of the colonial average of 18%. This even distribution did not persist once the boundaries were opened. While the majority of children remained in County Cumberland, the proportion of the population of the colony residing in County Cumberland declined rapidly during the rest of the period (Table 14-17).^{17} By 1836 the variation in the percentage of children in the population of each county was huge, with a difference of 61 percentage points between the highest and the next highest counties. The result was that in most areas the already unnatural population structure was exacerbated.

The trend for new arrivals to be urban is apparent, with the families from the farming districts being the ones to move on into the interior. Whereas in 1820 the majority of children could be classed amongst the farming pioneers, by 1836 very close to a majority were town or village dwellers, still no doubt suffering the traumas of primitive development but on a less severe level than those of the early 1820s.^{18}

^{17} By 1828 87% of children but only 67% of all the population lived in County Cumberland. Between 1828 and 1833 the change was less dramatic with 74.6% of the colony's children and 58.9% of the population still living in County Cumberland. By 1836 67.3% of children compared to only 51.6% of the population lived in the County. In the same year over 34% of the population but only 16% of the children lived outside the 5 counties closest to Sydney.

^{18} In 1820 the Windsor district had had about 23% of the child population. By 1828 it contained only 17%, a drop of 6%, yet the proportion of children in the colony living in the Sydney district had declined by only 1%. The proportion of children residing in towns and villages of over 500 people was, by 1836, over 45%, and Sydney alone had 31.7% of the colony's children. It is impossible to compare this accurately with the situation in 1820 for it is highly likely that only Sydney and Parramatta would have been large enough to be classified as towns at that time. In 1820 over half of the children were within the Sydney-Parramatta region but the difficulty is trying to estimate the proportion in each district who actually lived in the town. As only 56% of the child population lived in the two districts it is highly unlikely that anywhere near 45% of the children of the colony lived in the townships.
By 1836 a significant minority of children was being raised in an environment totally devoid of peer group contact and probably isolated even from significant contact with adult society. The detrimental effect
that this had on the social development of these children was noted by many writers of the period, but some alleviating features are discernible. Many of the pioneering families were seasoned veterans, well used
to raising children, or having been raised in similar circumstances themselves, in primitive and isolated conditions. The parents of the great majority of children, whether urban or pastoral, were dealing
with environments not totally alien to their own background and this might have lessened the possibility of children suffering at the hands of inexperienced parents coping with new surroundings.
The remaining major demographic feature that should be examined is the birth and death rates of the colony. A study of this aspect of the colony is fraught with dangers posed by the inaccuracy of the

19 See Appendix A for a detailed argument on the birth and death statistics. The following is a summary of that argument.
available information and the obvious "unnaturalness" of the colony's population. Both make comparisons, whether they be internal comparisons over time or comparisons between N.S.W. and other countries, an extreme problem but one that can be surmounted.20

Very early in the colony's history a belief arose that emigration to N.S.W. greatly enhanced the fertility and fecundity of women.21 These impressions cannot easily be empirically verified; first, because the birth figures are only recorded baptisms and before 1833 Catholic baptisms were not included and, second, because the normal birth rate, expressed in terms of births per thousand population, is thrown awry by the huge number of adult males. Even the other commonly used rate, births per thousand women of childbearing age, is thrown out by the advanced age of many of the convict women and the high proportion of fecund women who were not married. Even within the colony the difficulties caused by the constantly fluctuating structure of the population make comparisons over years highly complex.

Take the comparison between England and New South Wales first. The available data is summarised in Tables 18 and 19.22 The early colonists' belief that the colony had a high birth rate, in absolute and in comparative terms, was justified. While the crude rate did not resemble that of England until the late 1830s the rate per thousand fecund women was,

The birth and death statistics in the colony were as good, and arguably better, than those of Britain. In Britain adverse comment about the discrepancy between the reality and the picture presented by church registrations led to the introduction of civil registration in 1836. Similar comments are not made in NSW, indeed comments to the opposite were being made about the high fecundity, the healthiness, and low death rate amongst children.

Twins were reputed to be common, previously barren women produced, and women considered past childbearing age regained their fertility.

It should be noted that the birth rate in England at this time was at an historic high, although the official figures only partly reflect this. Krause argues that there was a 70% increase in the birth rate between 1780 and 1820 from whence it began to fall slowly. His estimate of a rate of 40/1000 is for the highest rate achieved in that period. In the earliest years of the colony the birth rate has been estimated at about 150-200/1000 fecund women which compares most favourably with the English figures of 1840 and must have been considerably (some 70%) better than the English figures of the 1780s. The NSW rate had obviously fallen for by 1825 the rate was somewhere between 84-120/1000 fecund women.
### TABLE 18

**BIRTH RATE NEW SOUTH WALES: 1825-1841**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>NUMBER OF BIRTHS</th>
<th>POPULATION</th>
<th>CRUDE BIRTH RATE</th>
<th>FECUND BIRTH RATE /1000 F.F.</th>
<th>PROPORTION OF F.F. IN POP.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1825</td>
<td>442</td>
<td>31,016*</td>
<td>14.3</td>
<td>5,260</td>
<td>84.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>21,711#</td>
<td></td>
<td>3,682</td>
<td>120.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1828</td>
<td>634</td>
<td>36,598*</td>
<td>17.3</td>
<td>6,051</td>
<td>104.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>25,362#</td>
<td></td>
<td>4,235</td>
<td>149.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1833</td>
<td>1,560</td>
<td>60,794</td>
<td>25.6</td>
<td>11,220</td>
<td>139.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1836</td>
<td>2,120</td>
<td>77,096</td>
<td>27.5</td>
<td>14,550</td>
<td>145.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1841</td>
<td>4,892</td>
<td>130,856</td>
<td>37.3</td>
<td>27,145#</td>
<td>180.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>24,395+</td>
<td>200.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Total population. # Protestant Population. @ 14 and over. + 14-44 yrs.

### TABLE 19

**BIRTH RATE ENGLAND AND WALES: 1835 and 1841**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>NUMBER OF BIRTHS</th>
<th>POPULATION</th>
<th>CRUDE RATE</th>
<th>FECUND FEMALES</th>
<th>BIRTH RATE /1000 F.F.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1835*</td>
<td>405,000</td>
<td>14,724,000</td>
<td>27.5</td>
<td>3,274,000</td>
<td>123.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1841</td>
<td>512,400</td>
<td>15,877,411</td>
<td>32.3</td>
<td>3,925,828</td>
<td>130.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>571,800*</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>36.0</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>145.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>635,100©</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>40.0</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>161.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Population estimate; births based on Parish returns. # According to Glass's estimate of 36/1000. @ According to Krause's rate of 40/1000.

By 1828, equal to or greater than that of England. It appears that the birth rate per thousand women in N.S.W. was higher in the very early years than during the early 1820s. Thus while in N.S.W. the birth rate declined between the 1790s and the 1820s, in England it increased by 70% to an historic high. Yet England in its most fecund years was only just higher than N.S.W. at its lowest. It is also beyond doubt, even allowing for all the problems of measurement and regardless of which method is used to measure the rate, that there was a substantial increase in the birth rate between 1820 and 1836. There may have been a decrease in 1827-28, indicated by the age/sex pyramid, but these figures do not show any supportive evidence.

The colonists' belief may also be due to a lower child death rate creating a favourable impression of the fecundity of the colony. The colonists had a strong belief in a high birth rate and a low death rate. The skimpy evidence that is available indicates that the 1820s and 1830s had the highest rate of child deaths to that time and that it declined during the 1840s. The favourable impression created by the pre-1820 period was probably maintained even through this period when the first infectious diseases were introduced and a rapid increase in the proportion of children living in towns and villages, with concomitant increases...
### Table 20

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>CHILD NUMBERS</th>
<th>CHILD DEATHS</th>
<th>DEATH RATE /1000 CHILDREN</th>
<th>TOTAL DEATHS</th>
<th>CRUDE DEATH RATE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1825</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>502</td>
<td>16.2&lt;sup&gt;x&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1828</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>593</td>
<td>16.2&lt;sup&gt;x&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1829</td>
<td>6,400*</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>21.8</td>
<td>615</td>
<td>15.0&lt;sup&gt;x&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4,480*</td>
<td></td>
<td>31.25</td>
<td></td>
<td>20.5&lt;sup&gt;o&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1833</td>
<td>10,187</td>
<td>363</td>
<td>35.6</td>
<td>1,150</td>
<td>18.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1834</td>
<td>11,640*</td>
<td>302</td>
<td>25.9</td>
<td>1,164</td>
<td>17.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1835</td>
<td>12,640*</td>
<td>489&lt;sup&gt;#&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>38.6</td>
<td>1,453</td>
<td>20.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1836</td>
<td>14,171</td>
<td>461</td>
<td>32.5</td>
<td>1,628</td>
<td>21.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1837</td>
<td>16,800*</td>
<td>559</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>1,799</td>
<td>20.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1841</td>
<td>33,058</td>
<td>1,223</td>
<td>37.0</td>
<td>2,543</td>
<td>19.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1843</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1,115</td>
<td>20.7</td>
<td>2,293</td>
<td>13.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1845&lt;sup&gt;z&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>803</td>
<td>11.4</td>
<td>1,787</td>
<td>9.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Estimate. <sup>x</sup> Based on total population. <sup>o</sup> Based on Protestant population. <sup>#</sup> Possible carry over of some 1834 deaths. <sup>z</sup> Cumpston gives alternate figures.

in the risk from bad water, milk, and housing, took place. Even so the rate in N.S.W. was considerably below that of England.

Table 20 summarises the most reliable N.S.W. figures<sup>23</sup> The figures for 1833 and 1836 are almost comparable with that of England and Wales in 1841 (Table 21) but the English figure is underrepresentative.<sup>24</sup> After 1833, when Catholics were included in the official numbers, the reliability of the N.S.W. figures is much more acceptable. Another measure of death rates is the proportion of deaths per births in a given year (Table 22). This shows the comparatively better situation in N.S.W.,

It also appears, from a sample taken from the Mutch Index, that the deaths per thousand births may have been lower in the colony than in England.

<sup>23</sup>The only contemporary support for these figures is the estimate made by McLeod, the Inspector of Hospitals, in 1830. He put the crude rate at 15-16/1000.

<sup>24</sup>Krause puts the real crude rate at about 26-27/1000 which would give a child death rate of around 42/1000 for boys and 37/1000 for girls. In addition the English figures, unlike those of NSW, contain 12 and 13 year olds who add significantly to the number of children but very little to the number of deaths thereby reducing the ratio favourably.
The colonists' belief in the low mortality of N.S.W. has, therefore, some justification.

There can be little doubt, even allowing for the error that was introduced by the increased accuracy of the figures, that the death rate increased by about 25% between the 1810s and late 1830s. What is surprising is that there is no adverse comment upon this. One can only assume that the

**TABLE 22**

**CHILD DEATHS AS A PROPORTION OF BIRTHS: 1829-1836**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BIRTHS</th>
<th>CHILD DEATHS</th>
<th>PROPORTION OF BIRTHS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1829</td>
<td>680</td>
<td>140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1831</td>
<td>879</td>
<td>118</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1833</td>
<td>1,560</td>
<td>363</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1836</td>
<td>2,120</td>
<td>461</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E.&amp; W. 1841</td>
<td>512,000</td>
<td>156,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

estimated 50% increase in mortality in England between 1780 and 1830 overshadowed the N.S.W. rise making the higher rate acceptable to the new majority in N.S.W.; the post 1835 free and bond immigrants.
It is argued that a low child death rate augers well for early parent-child attachment.\textsuperscript{25} Parents who are confident that a child will reach adulthood are willing to take the risk of forming an early emotional attachment to the child. They are also more willing to take measures to protect the child from any injurious elements in the environment when they know that the least amount of effort will virtually ensure survival. If such be the case then the position in N.S.W. was more favourable to the advancement of early parent-child relationships. It is difficult to know if a perceived belief in the excellent chances of a child surviving was sufficient to prompt such emotional investment or whether it was offset either by the realisation that one child in five still died or the actual loss of a child within a family. It seems that this lack of involvement would operate most during pregnancy and the first crucial month of life. It is difficult to imagine, and there is very little evidence, that no emotional bonds were formed with a child who survived the early months of life. The rate of exogenous deaths may therefore be the crucial factor in this debate. We cannot estimate the proportion of infant mortality due to exogenous deaths. As we saw in Chapter Two it appears they may have been less than a third of all infant deaths.

The favourable comments about the fertility and healthiness of the colony focus upon the relative safety of childbirth for mother and child and these comments coupled with the absence of puerperal fever indicate that the proportion of exogenous deaths might have been small or at least smaller than expected. The climate therefore appears beneficial for the fostering of early parent-child relationships in N.S.W.

Finally some analysis of the caregivers of the colony's children is necessary. Again we have to rely totally on the 1828 census and it shows the children of the colony in the care of four major groups; two parent families, single parent families, extr familial private caregivers, and institutional caregivers. These will be examined extensively in the next sections of this chapter. It need only be mentioned briefly that the tally of children yielded 6,526 under the age of 14, 110 of whom were double entries. The correct number of children is therefore 6,416.

4,742 children (or 73.9%) lived with their parents in two parent homes, representing about 75% of all the dependants listed in two parent homes.

Another 638, or 9.9%, were listed with single parents, and these under 14s represented 72% of all children in single parent families. A total of 1,036 children were in extrafamilial care, 720 (or 11.2%) in private care, and 316 (or 4.9%) in institutional care. At first these figures tend to support the opinion, so often expressed by contemporary observers, that many of the children were the abandoned byproducts of brutish convict intercourse. On closer examination, to which we will now turn, this cannot be sustained.

The overwhelming majority of children under the age of 14 in the colony (73.9%) lived in a two parent family. Because the proportion of the colony's children residing in families is so large it is pointless treating the children of this group as a separate entity. This section will therefore concentrate on the families within which the children lived, looking at the marital, civil, and economic status of the parents and then at the size and structure of the family.

The 1828 census does not indicate in any formal way the legality of the bond between spouses in a family group, but the identity of some cohabitating parents can be ascertained by clues left by the clerks who compiled the census. On the basis of these clues it appears that the

---

26 There are 3,733 family units listed in the 1828 census, but 409 are single parent families and only 2,045 of the two parent families have children listed with them. The remainder consist of 698 young childless couples (that is, couples where the wife is still of childbearing age) and 581 aged childless couples (that is, couples where the wife is beyond childbearing age). Over 6,000 children are listed in these families but only 4,825 are below the age of 14. 83 of these are double entries and should thus be excluded.

27 The tabulations needed to measure these variables on a population basis were too complex so two random samples were taken: two to avoid too much reliance on the one sample. The first, of 537 families containing 1,499 children, concentrated on the occupational distribution of the families, family size, and structure while the second, of 589 families containing 1,753 children, concentrated on the civil status of families and children and on aspects of parental status, age, etc.

28 The two best clues were where the wife entered with the family has an alternate name, or alias, noted in the comments column by the clerk, or more commonly, where the wife is listed under her transported, or maiden, name as the "wife of" or "housekeeper to" the father and children. It is pointless attempting to verify the legality of these marriages by using other musters for they invariably enter the women under their transported names. Using marriage registers would have involved endless search.
overwhelming majority of the parents of these families (90.2%) were married. This is so at variance with contemporary opinion that the figure must be treated with the greatest caution.

It is interesting to note that couples with children were far more reticent to acknowledge they were cohabiting than aged or young childless couples.\textsuperscript{29} It is possible that the large number of cohabiting childless couples influenced opinion to such an extent that couples with children were tarred with the same brush. Equally the noted cohabiting couples came mainly from the convict and exconvict class. They were underrepresented in the couples with children compared to earlier periods of the colony's history, so the overall incidence of cohabitation was probably much higher at earlier times. The reputation for cohabiting may have lingered on well into this period when the changing civil structure of married society, more than the government's promotion of marriage, had lowered the incidence of cohabitation.\textsuperscript{30} It is also likely that the incidence of cohabitation amongst couples with children was actually higher than the figures reveal. Cohabitation appears to have been noted more accurately for the bond than the free.\textsuperscript{31} The known examples, not noted in the census, of well born men cohabiting with servants indicates that many have been missed.\textsuperscript{32} The popular

\textsuperscript{29} While only 9.8% of couples with children are indicated as cohabiting the figures for aged and young childless couples were 33% and 20% respectively.

\textsuperscript{30} The largest groups of cohabiting couples with children were emancipists cohabiting with emancipists (39.7% of all cohabiting couples) and emancipist males cohabiting with convict females (12.6%). The rest were fairly evenly divided amongst all other classes. These two civil classes thus represented over half (52.3%) the cohabiting couples with children, and nearly a quarter of the couples in these two classes were cohabiting. Between them they account for only 22.4% of all couples with children. This is a low percentage compared to the childless couples. In the aged childless couples 57% of all couples belonged to these civil classes, and 35% of them were cohabiting. Amongst the young childless couples the respective figures were 32% and 31%.

\textsuperscript{31} The greatest proportion of cohabiting couples with children was found amongst convict couples (25%) and the least among couples who were not touched by convictism.

\textsuperscript{32} The simplest reason for this is that the census clerks had, through the convict indents, the information necessary to identify cohabiting convict couples and little compunction in publicising the information. They had relatively little information on free people and a greater reluctance to make known disturbing fact.
notions of marriage may also have contributed to the lower acknowledge-
ment. While the onset of pregnancy may have prompted some to be legally
married just as many considered their union to have been cemented by
such an occurrence without the aid of the law. They may have been willing
to acknowledge their cohabitation when no children were concerned but
less willing when the children arrived. 33

It appears that the reputation for cohabitation was worse than the
reality but that the incidence of cohabitation was higher than the census
intimates. Between 1828 and 1836, as the proportion of convict women in
the population declined and free women increased, and similar movements
in the civil status of the male population took place, the proportion of
couples consisting of two convicts or exconvicts would have declined.
The changes, however, were marginal and the rate of cohabitation may
have remained at the level of 1828 until the end of the 1830s.

The occupational distribution of free males (Table 6) showed that
the majority of the free male population belonged to the low income or
low status occupations. In a normal society one would expect this to
be mirrored by the occupational distribution of married males. The
scarcity of women, however, left them in a position to bargain for an
economically advantageous marriage. The social division between the
exclusivists and the emancipists, the high number of undesirable or
unavailable women who arrived in the colony "encumbered" by marriage,
children, or disease, and the number of men in the higher occupational
brackets who were already married or did not desire permanent
settlement in N.S.W. restricted the bargaining position of women. Even
so one would still expect a clustering effect around the high occupational
categories and this is indeed the case (Table 23). The domination of
the labouring class in Table 6 is gone and amongst the more economically
advantaged groups there exists a disproportionately large number of
married couples. 34

For a discussion of the differing forms of "marriage", especially
popular as opposed to legal marriage, see the articles by A. Atkinson,
S. Wilson, and M. Aveling in *The Push From the Bush, Vol.2*, Nov. 1978,
pp92-124. See also M. Sturma's "Eye of the Beholder; the Stereotype
of Women Convicts, 1788-1852." in *Labour History, No.34*, (May 1978),
pp3-10.

Amongst the landholders, for example, the proportion of married men
is almost twice that one would expect if the married men were
distributed in similar proportions to the distribution of free men.
### Table 23: Occupations of All Heads of Families: 1828

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 24: Occupations of Heads of Families with Children: 1828

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 25: Percentage of Free Men in Occupational Categories Who Were Married: 1828

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 26: Children Distributed According to Parents' Occupation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In families with children (Table 24) there is an even lower percentage of mechanics and labourers compared with that of Table 23. Obviously many married labourers were either aged couples, whose economic status had declined with age, or young, as yet childless, couples. This latter group reflected a trend towards a larger percentage of married unskilled labour brought about by free emigration of married couples, changes in land policy which restricted the poors' access to land, an increasingly severe attitude towards the convicts, and a change to a pastoral based economy. All these restricted the choice of women looking for economically advantageous marriages, and the possibility of establishing normal family life.

Table 25, which shows the percentage of free men who were married in each occupational group, is an even more dramatic illustration of this clustering. The chances of a labourer, that is the great majority of men, getting a wife and having a family appear to have been very remote. For the women of convict origin, the least "desirable" but most available, the lower echelon civil and police establishment, the small landholders, the shopkeepers and the innkeepers seem to have made the most desirable husbands and offered the best basis for a normal family life. Theoretically this clustering augers well for the economic welfare of the children of the colony, a point taken up in the next chapter. Even though some of the families were very large there was a positive correlation between the higher status occupations and the larger families. While this is not immediately apparent in Table 26, Table 27, and especially the summary, make it obvious that as family size grows the proportion of children in families belonging to the more lucrative occupational categories increases and the opposite is the case amongst the lower status occupations. The overwhelming majority of children from families with seven or more children come from the high status occupations. Table 28 also illustrates this trend but shows that there were still a lot of children in families with four or more children even in the lowest occupational group.

A rough division of the occupational categories into two groups was made; one representing the higher socio-economic classes comprising the Civil Establishment, the Merchants and Professionals, the large and medium landholders, the innkeepers and half the shopkeepers and dealers (for many would have been very small), and the other representing the lower classes comprising the other occupational groups.
TABLE 27

OCCUPATIONS AND FAMILY SIZE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>D</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PROPORTION OF FREE MALE POPULATION IN</td>
<td>PROPORTION OF COLONY'S CHILDREN IN FAMILIES BELONGING TO</td>
<td>PROPORTION OF CHILDREN IN FOUR OR MORE CHILD FAMILIES BELONGING TO</td>
<td>PROPORTION OF CHILDREN IN SEVEN OR MORE CHILD FAMILIES BELONGING TO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CIVIL ESTABLISHMENT.</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>10.1</td>
<td>11.75</td>
<td>11.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MERCHANTS.</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>5.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LARGE LANDHOLDERS.</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>8.4</td>
<td>9.5</td>
<td>11.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MEDIUM LANDHOLDERS.</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>9.3</td>
<td>13.0</td>
<td>21.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SMALL LANDHOLDERS.</td>
<td>10.9</td>
<td>18.8</td>
<td>17.1</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LANDHOLDERS 'UNKNOWN.</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>2.25</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SHOPKEEPERS.</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INNKEEPERS.</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>7.6</td>
<td>16.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HOUSEHOLDERS.</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OVERSEERS.</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MECHANICS.</td>
<td>18.1</td>
<td>13.0</td>
<td>9.9</td>
<td>9.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LABOURERS.</td>
<td>37.4</td>
<td>12.7</td>
<td>9.9</td>
<td>8.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SERVANTS.</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>1.75</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNKNOWN.</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>99.9</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>99.95</td>
<td>99.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TABLE 28

OCCUPATIONS AND FAMILY SIZE

SUMMARY OF PROPORTIONS OF CHILDREN IN HIGH AND LOW STATUS OCCUPATIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>D</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HIGH STATUS</td>
<td>15.2</td>
<td>38.6</td>
<td>47.5</td>
<td>68.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LOW STATUS</td>
<td>84.7</td>
<td>61.4</td>
<td>52.45</td>
<td>31.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TABLE 28

OCCUPATIONS AND FAMILY SIZE

PERCENTAGE OF CHILDREN IN EACH OCCUPATIONAL GROUP BELONGING TO FOUR OR MORE CHILD FAMILIES: 1828

---

Average colonial
Part of the reason for the difference between family size could be that the older children and even some of the children under 14 in the lower economic classes had already left home. There can be little doubt that this had actually happened but because the numbers involved are small (about 3% of all children under 14 living in two parent families) and because so many of these children were double entries already included in the calculations (55%) the effect on Tables 27 and 28 is minimal. The loss of children over the age of 14 is more likely to have occurred and much more difficult to trace. This would have been natural, and does not reflect adversely on the ability of the parents to support their children.

The clustering of families around the higher occupational groups is paralleled by a clustering of married couples around the free and freed civil classes. The civil status of male society was dominated by the convict classes but the female population was entirely different with an even distribution among the four classes (Tables 4 and 5). The sex ratio within the colony was grossly unbalanced and, more importantly, in all civil classes men outnumbered women (Table 29). All men would have had to struggle to secure a wife but the free man looking for a wife, both within his own civil class and outside it, had a better chance than the freed or bond. All women could be accommodated with a husband from their own civil class. One would thus expect to find, first, a much higher proportion of married men to be free or freed, while the proportion of married women in each civil class more closely reflected that of all women, and, second, the civil status of married couples to be rigidly exclusivist. These expectations could be upset only if economic considerations and the desperation of some men for a wife became stronger than the repugnance towards a "demeaning" marriage. Some free men, deprived of the opportunity of marrying one of their own civil class might look eventually to freed and bond women for a spouse. Equally the economic benefits of a marriage to a freed or bond man might overcome some free women's social objections to such a marriage. Some inter-class marriages may, in consequence, be expected while the majority stuck closely to partners of the same civil class.

36 Amongst the women, the colonial born were slightly ahead but only because of the inclusion of many 12-16 year olds, ages only rarely present in the other three groups.
TABLE 29
SEX RATIOS AND CIVIL STATUS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>MALES</th>
<th>FEMALES</th>
<th>MALES PER FEMALE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FREE EMIGRANT</td>
<td>2,561</td>
<td>1,565</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BORN IN COLONY</td>
<td>1,923</td>
<td>1,580</td>
<td>1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EMANCIPIST</td>
<td>6,137</td>
<td>1,393</td>
<td>4.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONVICT</td>
<td>14,155</td>
<td>1,513</td>
<td>9.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>24,776</td>
<td>6,051</td>
<td>4.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TABLE 30
CIVIL STATUS OF MARRIAGE PARTNERS
AS PERCENTAGE OF ALL COUPLES.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>FREE EMIGRANT</th>
<th>BORN IN COLONY</th>
<th>FREE BY SERVITUDE</th>
<th>PARDONED</th>
<th>TICKET OF LEAVE</th>
<th>CONVICT</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FREE EMIGRANT</td>
<td>15.8</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>23.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BORN IN COLONY</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>9.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FREE BY SERVITUDE</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>16.6</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>34.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>PARDONED</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>11.7</td>
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<tr>
<td>TICKET OF LEAVE</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>12.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONVICT</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>8.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>28.6</td>
<td>22.9</td>
<td>31.6</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>13.1</td>
<td>100</td>
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</table>

TABLE 31
CIVIL STATUS OF SPOUSES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>TWO FREE</th>
<th>ONE FREE</th>
<th>ONE FREE</th>
<th>TWO FREED</th>
<th>ONE FREED</th>
<th>TWO BOND</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ALL COUPLES</td>
<td>28.6</td>
<td>16.3</td>
<td>10.8</td>
<td>24.4</td>
<td>14.7</td>
<td>5.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WITH CHILDREN</td>
<td>35.6</td>
<td>18.7</td>
<td>13.1</td>
<td>18.9</td>
<td>10.3</td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% OF CHILDREN</td>
<td>40.1</td>
<td>21.8</td>
<td>8.7</td>
<td>18.8</td>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
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</table>

TABLE 32
FAMILY STATUS ACCORDING TO PARTNER WITH LOWER CIVIL STATUS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>ADULT POPULATION</th>
<th>MARRIED POPULATION</th>
<th>CHILDREN IN FAMILIES</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FREE</td>
<td>24.7</td>
<td>35.6</td>
<td>40.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FREED</td>
<td>24.5</td>
<td>37.6</td>
<td>40.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOND</td>
<td>50.8</td>
<td>26.8</td>
<td>19.3</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
This is indeed the picture that emerges from Table 30. First a disproportionately large number of married men were free or freed. 23.4% of married men, compared with 10.3% of all men, were free emigrants.

At the other end of the social scale 20.7% of married men, compared with 57.3% of all men, were convicts (the majority Ticket of Leave men). The colonial born held their own while the freed almost doubled their representation. As expected, the civil status of married women more closely mirrors that of all women. Convict women, because of the number of new arrivals and the inherent disabilities of convictism, and colonial born girls, because of the young age of a great number, are underrepresented but the picture is nowhere near as askew as the male comparison.

Table 30 can be reduced, for convenience, to six categories along a continuum between two free to two convict parents (Table 31). The status of the married couples with children differs significantly from that of all couples. There is a higher proportion of couples with at least one spouse free of convictism. The trend is continued into Row C where the proportion of children belonging to families in each group is shown. Positively one can thus argue that over 70% of children in the colony had at least one parent who was untainted by convictism (columns 1, 2 and 3). On the other hand nearly 60% had one parent who had undergone the punishment of transportation (columns 2 to 6), and 19.3% had at least one parent who was still a convict (columns 3, 5, and 6). This can be further reduced so that the families are classified as belonging to the group corresponding to the status of the lower partner then compared with the adult population in the same categories (Table 32). The civil status of the parents and the children was much higher

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37 This reflects the number of parents who had children before they arrived in the colony, the large proportion of aged childless couples of ex-convict origin, the lower fertility of many convict and ex-convict women, and the recent nature of many of the marriages involving a convict spouse. The families of free emigrant males had an average of 3.3 children and of free emigrant women 3.2; both well above the colonial average of 2.8. 54% of aged married couples belonged to the two ex-convict category compared to 24.4% in all families. Families with ex-convict women had an average of just over 3.0 children but the highest proportion of childless couples. Families with convict women had an average of just over 2.2 children, well below the average.
than the general population. It is difficult to compare these figures with the results of other musters and censii. The 1819 muster lacks the subtlety of the 1828 figures but it shows that the proportion of children of free parentage had increased rapidly by 1828. No comparable figures are available after 1828 but one can only assume that the proportion of children belonging to untainted families continued to grow.

Amongst the free males exclusivity was an obvious factor for there is very little straying of free males into marriage with freed or bond women (Table 33). Men who came free to the colony as adults and those who came as boys and were raised in the colony shunned the convict stain. At first the extent of the exclusivity is staggering with 86% of emigrant men marrying either an emigrant or a colonial born woman. The level of exclusivity is inflated by the number of men (about half of all free emigrant men) who arrived in the colony with a wife. They were denied the opportunity to display any attitude to freed or bond women they might have possessed. If these men are removed from the calculations the exclusivity of the free emigrants is still apparent for nearly 80% married only free women. This trend is even more noteworthy when one considers that if emigrant men and women already married are removed from Table 29 the ratio of males to females in this class rises to one female for every 2.8 males. The exclusivity of the colonial born men is even more remarkable. 91% of their marriages were to either a colonial born girl or a free emigrant (the overwhelming majority of whom had been raised in the colony from childhood). A tiny 9% married freed or bond women. The youth of many colonial born men explains some of this

38 The 1819 muster comes closest to satisfying this demand. It classifies 19.2% of the children as the children of convicts. 74.9% as children of pardoned or expired convicts, and only 5.9% are listed as having come free or been born in the colony of free parents.

39 Over two-thirds of the couples made up of an emigrant man and woman came to the colony as a married couple. These represent 45% and 37% of married emigrant men and women respectively. The picture is further complicated by the married men who came to the colony to join a convict or emancipist wife. They represent about 4% of all married free emigrant men and about a third of the free emigrant men married to tainted women.
exclusivity but by no means all of it.\textsuperscript{40}

The female side shows much less exclusivity (Table 34), the free women were much more willing to marry emancipist and even convict men, although many showed a marked preference for the free. Just under half the colonial born women married an untainted male but over half had no compunction in marrying an exconvict and over 7\% even married convicts. The situation with women who came free to the colony is confused, as with the men, by the number of women who came to the colony already married. Over 30\% of all free emigrant married women came to the colony to join a husband and, combined with the 37\% of emigrant women who came

\textsuperscript{40} The overwhelming majority of colonial born males was below the age of 25 whereas the bulk of the female population, except for the colonial born and emigrant girls raised in the colony, was as old or older than them. The colonial pattern was for men to be on average eight years older than women at marriage and only in less than 12\% of the cases were women older than men. Significantly in the case of married colonial born men the average age difference was a low 4.9 years and the proportion of marriages where the woman was older than the man was the highest of all classes at 16\%.
with an emigrant husband, less than a third of the emigrant women were available for marriage. Amongst these the pattern established by the colonial born girls was followed but in this case a slight majority married untainted males; the reverse of the currency situation. It is obvious that civil status was not the prime consideration amongst the ladies, but that it was of great importance amongst the free males. One suspects that the untainted women looked first to economic security rather than civil status but that the men were strictly exclusivist.

Civil status was important not only in social stratification but also in the legal and economic life of the colony. The legal disabilities of convicts and exconvicts depended on the nature of their crime. Doubts and anxieties were raised by their dubious status, but most related to property matters and the questions that are of real importance to this study, the status of the parents as guardians of their children and the legal understanding of the relationship between husband and wife, are even more vague. It is difficult to find any codification of the status of the convict and exconvict as it directly affects these questions and the practice in N.S.W. was far from clear or consistent. Even after 1823 magistrates were often confused and lacked any legal precedent for guidance. It is probably correct to say that the legal niceties were peripheral and disregarded by the great majority of families.

41 It is interesting to note that although on conviction in England the proportion of females who were married was higher than the proportion of males, only 4% of all free male emigrants came to join a convicted spouse while over 30% of all free emigrant women came to join their convicted husbands. Patently of those deprived of a spouse by transportation males could survive much better than females. Thus in the female's case the economic argument overrode any objection to the new civil status of her husband and she came to the colony to join him.

42 An individual, while a convict, had few legal rights and no access to the Courts of Justice, but upon expiration of his or her sentence, except if conditionally pardoned, the ex-convict was supposed to have, after 1823, all the rights of a free man.

43 See F.E. Forbes, in HRA, IV, i, pp. 419-422; 4 Geo. IV, c96, s34 & 35; The Australian of 1828 reports the case of a man who was called to the Bench to answer a charge of denying maintenance to his convict wife. He claimed that he was previously married and upon transportation had married again only to find his English wife had also been transported. He now sought a reconciliation with that wife. The Court thought this was bigamy but he claimed that he was considered legally dead because of the commuted sentence of death passed upon him. The Bench did not know what to make of this argument so it sent the colonial wife to the Factory and the man home. Aust. 9/11/1828, 3(d).
and that regardless of the relative status of the partners in a marriage the husband still asserted his authority. The lack of legal definition, however, allowed the government much greater freedom to interfere in matters that were held sacrosanct in the Home Country. Conversely the government could disregard legalities that might have interfered with the tranquility of some families.

Most problems were caused in families where one partner was a convict. Amongst the "mixed marriages" the more numerous were free females married to convict males (507 to 334). This made, as Alexander Harris pointed out, "a strange legal jumble as to authority in the marriage state, but therewithal, it is said, some very happy marriages". The situation allowed for some redress by the woman against prevailing patriarchal practice. Until it was removed in 1833, the right of assignment to a free wife meant that the wife had legal control over the husband; control that could be reinforced by court proceedings. Free men married to convict wives were even more adept, as the Herald pointed out in 1837, at using the courts to uphold their conjugal rights.

44 In 1837, the Sydney Herald complained about the "disgraceful anomaly" which arose when "a convict woman married to a free man, is not only his wife, but, if the practice of the Magistrates be legal, she is also looked upon in the light of his Convict servant". Husbands applied to the courts to punish domestic rebellion by the wife and the Herald argued that these cases should be summarily dismissed unless the wife offended against the public as well as the husband. This not only applied to free men married to convict women but also to free women married to convict men, although the Herald only mentions the former as "immoral and unnatural". SH, 10/8/1837, 2(c-d).

45 A. Harris, "Religio Christi" in Harris & Chisholm, (eds), Secrets of Alexander Harris, Sydney, 1961, p136.

46 HRA, I, xvii, p341; 2&3 Wm IV, c62.

47 Thus the wife of a ticket of leave man was convicted of debt despite the defence's plea that she acted as a married woman not responsible for debt incurred during her coverture. [SC, 29/7/1826, 1(e).] Jane Gunning advertised in 1825 cautioning the public against buying goods and property from her ticket of leave husband as she had sole control of the family's assets. SC, 17/2/1825, 4(c). Another free woman, and she is typical of many others, had her ticket of leave husband arraigned for cruelty and illtreatment. SC, 30/8/1826, 3(b).

48 The most extreme example was Mary Bigden who was sentenced to one month in the factory for not getting her husband's meals. SH, 12/12/1831, 3(a). More frequently the courts were used, usually unsuccessfully, to correct "wanton women" who had fled their husbands for another man. Aust., 12/12/1827, 3(d).
more confusing were the rights of two convict families. In these cases neither partner had access to the law, but their master presumably could, and in a few cases did, discipline the excesses of either partner.

The legal right of convicts and exconvicts to the custody of their children was equally confused. The cases involving government interference in family life were most frequent in the two convict marriages with children being removed from families to the orphanage or to the hospitals for medical care. Single convict mothers were given custody of their children but again their claims, while still convicts, were tenuous. The state had no compunction in instituting laws that separated mother and child.

While the civil status of parents led to problems of various kinds, the civil status of the children in relation to their parents and to society in general also created difficulties. The children lived not only in a predominantly adult and male society but within that society they had a higher civil legal status than the convict adult majority. In addition, because they were free, they sometimes had a higher civil and legal status than their own parents. In practice this probably did not have a marked effect on the running of the colony or on families, but it did introduce subtle changes to both the legal structure and the social mores of the colony.

The legal ramifications are treated more fully in Chapter Five and the detailed argument about the social effects will be left to the concluding chapter. Briefly, however, this clash of civil statuses led to the brutalisation of some children, who, almost inevitably, took

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49 In 1827 a decision of the Court of Chancery in England refused a widower the custody of his children because he lived in an adulterous relationship with the wife of another man. Pinchbeck and Hewitt, Children in English Society, Vol II, p365. If this principle had been implemented in NSW there would have been many parents with dubious custody rights to their children. The policy of the government towards the religious education of children placed in the orphanages also ran contrary to the custody law of England and was obviously only enforceable because of the uncertain custody rights of the parents of these children. On the one occasion that the waiver of custody, signed by parents on entry to the orphanage, was tested, the authorities succumbed without a fight. See Chapter Five for a more detailed argument.

50 The widow of a murdered man had been allowed to leave the Factory on her marriage but her husband’s death meant that she was regarded as a convict at large. Although she had a large young family to tend, she was sent to the Factory. Aust, 9/2/1826, 4(b); see also Aust, 22/6/1827, 3(a).
advantage of their position. Alexander Harris quotes a friend as observing:

But the fact is, flogging in this country is such a common thing that nobody thinks anything of it. I have seen young children practising on a tree, as children in England play at horses.\(^{51}\)

This may have been the case with some of the children while they were children and a few in adult life but it is more likely that for the majority of children the situation strengthened paternalistic attitudes towards the "less fortunate", and reinforced many middle class mores. It also contributed markedly to the facade of egalitarianism within the colony. Harris wrote of one of his friends:

My mate and his father spoke to each other quite on terms of equality, but still with the utmost of good feeling. It was a simple consequence of the son having been always free and the father once a prisoner, and it is quite customary.\(^{52}\)

Many of the legal and cultural underpinnings of patriarchal autocracy were thus tempered.

As changes took place in the civil status of both parents and children, and in the English Government's attitude towards the purpose of the colony, a change also took place in the governors' attitudes towards children and the family. There was increased pressure upon government from the growing free section of society to protect innocent children from the convict stain. The motive of the government changed from a desire to temper the system and to isolate all children through institutional care or the promotion of caring parents to a desire to separate the tainted, including their children, from the rest of society. This led to a decreased commitment to convict marriage and to their children. As the custody rights of parents became more clear there was a reversion to the English principle of non-interference, a decline in state involvement in child welfare and education, and a gradual handover to voluntary organisations. The pendulum did not swing back to the original English position but came to rest at the bottom of its arc. The impetus of the "interfering" governors was not carried on and in the 1840s and 1850s the lot of many children was thereby worsened.

Religious affiliation also suffered somewhat under the onslaught of...

\(^{51}\) A. Harris, Settlers and Convicts, London, 1847, p11.

\(^{52}\) Ibid, p92.
of economic interest. The religious affiliation of the married couples differs significantly from that of the total population (Table 35).\textsuperscript{53}

The overwhelming majority married or at least appeared to marry a member of their own flock, but the number of Protestant marriages was much higher and the number of Catholic marriages was much lower than one would expect. Even though the proportion of Catholics amongst women was higher than that of Catholics amongst men, in absolute terms there were still sufficient men to monopolise the Catholic women. The lower civil and occupational status of Catholic males obviously hindered their chances in the competition for a wife.

Only 24.3\% of the married women professed a Catholic faith, much lower than one would expect, and this could indicate that a number of nominally Catholic women adopted their Protestant husband's religious nomenclature when they married. Some Catholic women married to Protestants maintained their religion, at least nominally, and in 58\% of these cases the children followed the religion of the mother. A much smaller proportion of Protestant women married Catholic men but almost exactly the same proportion (56\%) of children followed the mother's religion. Both instances were completely contrary to English custody law and it appears that the religion of the children was determined by whoever of the partners was more interested in religion. One can conclude only that there was a certain amount of fluidity in religious matters with the higher civil and economic status of the predominantly Protestant higher classes attracting a disproportionately large number of women, regardless of their religion.

By now it should be obvious that a deal of deliberation went into marriage or cohabitation, with the economic status of the male the

\begin{table}[h]
\centering
\begin{tabular}{|c|c|c|c|c|c|}
\hline
 & PROT. & CATH. & OTHER & PROT. & CATH. & OTHERS \tabularnewline
\hline
PROT. & 68.9 & 20.6 & 0.3 & 3.7 & 1.9 & 0.1 \tabularnewline
CATH. & & & & & & 4.5 \tabularnewline
\hline
\end{tabular}
\caption{Religious Affiliation of Husband and Wife in Families with Children}
\end{table}

\textsuperscript{53} It is fairly safe to assume that most of the 4.5\% unknowns were Protestants for nearly all were government officials or higher class immigrants.
factor. This deliberation is even more dramatically illustrated by the age structure of the partners in colonial marriages. One of the characteristics of instrumental marriages (that is marriages where financial, social and inheritance factors overrule emotional attachment; the most dramatic example being arranged marriages) was the age disparity between husband and wife. In N.S.W. the overall position bears many of the demographic characteristics of instrumental marriage. The average age difference between husband and wife was about eight years and over 59% of partners were more than ten years older than each other (Table 36). The average and median age at marriage for males was around 29 years, while for women the average was 23 and the median 21.5 (calculated by reducing the male and female age at the birth of the first child by one year) (Table 37). Once again the abnormal demographic structure of N.S.W begins to play its part.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE 36</th>
<th>AVERAGE AGE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN PARTNERS BY CIVIL STATUS OF PARTNER</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FREE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MALES</td>
<td>7.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FEMALES</td>
<td>5.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE 37</th>
<th>AVERAGE AGE OF PARENT (BY CIVIL CLASS) AT BIRTH OF FIRST CHILD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FREE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MALES</td>
<td>28.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FEMALES</td>
<td>23.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

54 There were a number of assumptions involved in these calculations, which were eliminated as much as possible; a) that the child was the child of both parents; b) that the first child was actually the first child and not preceded by another who had died or left the family.

55 In some 18th century French villages the number of marriages where a husband was more than five years older than his wife ranged from 14% to 23%. In England the situation was unlike that in France and the gap between husband and wife was a low 3½ years in 1800 rising to 4½ in 1870. Amongst Europe's small property owners and labourers - the ones who had most to guard against an injudicious marriage - the median age at first marriage was in the late twenties for both males and females. Ed. Shorter, The Making of the Modern Family, New York, 1975, p337; L. Stone, op. cit., p50.
Only two groups, the colonial born males and females, can be considered free of demographically inhibiting factors and amongst them the picture was different. In these groups men married at an average age of 22-23 and girls at 17, while the average age difference

**TABLE 38**

**AVERAGE NUMBER OF YEARS IN COLONY BEFORE BIRTH OF FIRST COLONIAL CHILD**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>FREE EMIGRANT</th>
<th>FREE BY SERVITUDE</th>
<th>PARDONED</th>
<th>T.O. LEAVE</th>
<th>CONVICT</th>
<th>COLONIAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MALES</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>8.9</td>
<td>9.3</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>6.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FEMALES</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>3.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

between the two groups when they married each other (only 8.7% of all colonial marriages with children) was a relatively low 5.6 years. As was the case in the civil status the exclusivity of the currency lads and the catholicity of the currency lasses is apparent. While the average age difference between currency lads and their partners from all civil groups was only 4.9 years (the lowest of any group) that for the currency lasses was 9.2 years (and 43% were married to men ten or more years older than themselves), the highest among women.

Amongst the other classes, inhibiting factors were at work. The majority of both males and females in the colony came to the colony as adults, a minority as free emigrants but the bulk as convicts. Most of the free emigrant marriages were celebrated in England while most of the male convicts had to serve their sentence and financially establish themselves before they could contemplate marriage. The average exconvict male was 32 years old at marriage and had to wait eight years after arriving in the country to marry (Table 38). The small number of convicts

56 Emigrant partners who had spent their childhood in the colony, colonial born partners, and partners with no colonial born children were eliminate

57 Interestingly the average age difference between free emigrant spouses is about six years; almost twice the average in the home country and a pointer to the social aspirations of the emigrant class.

58 Amongst emancipated males the average age at marriage was 32 for those who served their sentence and 34 for those who were pardoned. Some were lucky and were married soon after their arrival but others had to wait up to 32 years. On average they waited eight years (calculated by reducing the time between arrival and the birth of their first child by one year) between arriving in the colony and their marriage, indicating that they not only had to wait till their sentence expired but also until they were in a financial position to support a family.
and ticket of leave men who were allowed to marry, or had been allowed to rejoin their wives in the colony, had an average age of 27 years at marriage. The waiting period for these men also ranged from almost immediately upon arrival to 30 years, but the average was five years.

The more advantageous position of women is immediately apparent from the comparable figures. The average age of emancipist women at marriage was 26 and they had to wait an average of only three years after arrival (well before their sentences expired) to marry; in fact, over two thirds were married within four years of arriving in the colony. Convict women who married did so at an average age of 25 and waited only one year to marry. The exconvict and convict women married men between eight and nine years older than themselves, a reflection of the number who married exconvict men.

It is obvious that instrumental factors were at work in the marriage market. Colonial born girls and newly arrived convict women did not allow age differences to inhibit an advantageous marriage. This does not exclude the possibility that these marriages were also companionate marriages for the overwhelming numbers of men probably made it possible for the woman to seek a companion even amongst an eligibility list which excluded most of those her own age.

The possible effects of this age structure on family life are difficult to assess. Modern studies have shown that family solidarity decreases as the parent-child age gap widens with less intimate parent-child relationships and less intimate husband-wife relationships. "Paternalization" (or even "Patriarchalization") of the relationships between husband and wife and father and children increase as the age gap widens. Conversely men are less demanding and have a more positive evaluation of the worth of their wives if there is a wide gap between the partners, and both parents are more indulgent, less likely to use physical punishment, and unwilling to make strong demands upon the children if the age gap between parents and children is wide.59

In the far less stable conditions of 1820-30 some of these findings may not have relevance. The strong link between parental age difference and increased family instability for example is partly due to the social pressure applied today to couples whose age difference is considered unacceptable. There were a number of cases of marital infidelity because of the age disparity between the partners in the period under study so the problem did exist, but in the colonial period, when wide age gaps were common, and socially acceptable, there were probably fewer problems.

The age structure of these families may help to explain several features of colonial life. The decrease in sexual inclination on the part of middle aged men, decreased fertility in both parents and the shortened fertile period of the wife may have combined to contribute to the small size of the average colonial family. The advanced age of the male breadwinner would have increased pressure upon young children to contribute to the family economy. The sacrifice of the youngest girl to a life of caring for aged parents may explain the high rate of spinsterhood amongst colonial women in the 1850s and 1860s. It partly explains, also, why there were so many widows with young children and so many extrafamilial children in the colony. No doubt the less intimate and more relaxed parent-child relationship contributed to the sibling and peer group clannishness of the native youth and to their reputed precociousness. The fact that the mother was in most cases considerably closer in age to her children than the father may have contributed to the supposed matriarchal characteristics noted by modern analysts of the Australian family.

60 See Aust, 2/12/1828, 3(b-c) for example.
62 Many fathers would have been over 45 before the first child was of economic benefit to the family, over 50 before they could expect their first child to marry or leave home, and well over 60 before the last child was ready to leave.
63 McDonald, P.F., Marriage in Australia, Canberra, 1975, chpts 3 & 5
It now remains to look more closely at the demographic structure of the families in the colony. The average colonial family consisted of between 4.8 and 5 persons or two adults and three children. There was, however, a huge variation in family size from one child families to some of eleven and twelve children. Table 39 shows that the majority of families (54.9%) in 1828 had only one or two children and that families with one child were the most numerous (30.5%). Just over a quarter (28.2%) of the families could be considered large having four or more children, but only a small 4.4% had very large families of seven or more children.

These figures do not give the full picture. In fact they can be misleading especially from the viewpoint of the child. If the frequency distribution in Table 39 is converted into numbers of children in their respectively sized families, it is apparent that the majority of children in N.S.W. (53.2%) belong to the minority of families with four or more children. The number dropped off rapidly, however; and only 13.1% of the children lived in families with seven or more children.
Theoretically the average family size should be a good indication of the normal completed family size, but because there were a disproportionately large number of young families in 1828 the average does not give a good indication of the normal sized completed family. To try and estimate the size of the average completed family a sample of 162 families, who appeared to be complete, was taken from the Mutch Index. Most births in these families had taken place between 1820 and 1839. This sample showed 61.7% of families had four or fewer live births with the most popular size being three or four children. The average family had 5.3 children. When the children who had died in infancy were removed, 48.3% of the families had three or fewer children. However a massive 73.3% of children lived in families of four or more children and 16.4% lived in families of seven or more children. The average family had 4.1 children. This seems to have been the maximum for most families as 69% of families, and very nearly 50% of the children, lived in families of four or fewer children (Table 40).

These figures demonstrate the youth of many of the families in the 1828 census. The majority of families in 1828 had two or fewer children and in two thirds of the two child families the age of the first child was less than four years. Even amongst larger families the age of the first child was low. Consequently families did not have a great age range amongst the children except in the very large families. No absolutely reliable data on birth intervals is available but the Mutch Index sample shows overwhelmingly a two year interval between births (Table 41). Only 22% of children were born within twenty months of a previous birth while 44% were born within 21 to 26 months of the previous birth. This was true for the 1820s and 1830s and for women above and below the age of 30. This confirms the argument in Chapter Two about the

65 In the sample used (Sample B) the average age of the first child in all families was only 10 years. The average age of the first child in the two child families was only 6 years and in over two thirds of the families the oldest child was aged less than 4 years. In the larger four child families the oldest child had an age ranging from 5 to 25 years but the average was only 11 years, and over half the families had no child over the age of 10 years.

66 The four child families, for example, had an average of seven years between the age of the oldest and youngest child, as against an expected six years if the regular two year cycle was observed.
widespread use of breastfeeding for at least ten to twelve months. The majority of families was therefore small, very young, and would probably only be completed after the birth of the fifth or sixth child. The majority of children lived in families that had four or more young children, most of whom were compatibly aged.

The effects of this type of family size and structure are again difficult to isolate. One possible effect could have been the lowering of the economic viability of larger families who from the occupational

### TABLE 41
BIRTH INTERVALS: 1820 - 1839

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INTERVALS (MONTHS)</th>
<th>NUMBER</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9-10</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23-24</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35-36</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N = 466*

*Another 50 birth intervals were over 37 months.
status of the father would otherwise be considered sound.\textsuperscript{67} The estimation of other effects depends heavily upon modern sociological and psychological research much of which may not be appropriate to the period under study.\textsuperscript{68} Large modern families are characterised by a group consciousness which dominates individualism, they are more patriarchal and authoritarian with earlier resort to physical punishment as a mode of discipline (but often the threat is sufficient) and more regimented in work and household schedules. The parent-child relationship is less intense, but this is compensated by a more intense sibling relationship especially if the children are close in age. Because the parent-child relationship is less intense there is also a tendency towards judicious neglect by the parents which allows each child to develop at his or her own pace. One is tempted to think that these characteristics, attributed in the twentieth century solely to family size, would have been reinforced by the relatively lower economic status, the more rigid and patriarchal mores of family life and the age structure of the families in the early nineteenth century. Thus the characteristics, if present at all, might be found in families of at least four children.

Indeed these characteristics are quite clearly recognizable not only in the large families but in many with four and sometimes fewer children, but they are not unaltered. The authoritarianism and patriarchy of most families in early nineteenth century N.S.W. were less the result of an ideology and more of a management technique. Management was tight when the family was large and young, but relaxed as children were launched into adult society and the pressures on the

\textsuperscript{67} The higher socio-economic status of the colony's families may have been offset by the household being denied the services of a working wife and older children. While there existed a positive correlation between the larger families and the higher occupational groups one cannot doubt that the large and young composition of some families placed them in an extremely vulnerable position.

\textsuperscript{68} Modern studies have shown that large families (with six or more children) are noticeably different to the small family (with two children) in mode of operation and in the character of the children, and that families with four children bear more of the characteristics attributed to the larger families than the smaller, especially amongst closely spaced, low income families. Bossard, J. and Bold, E., Sociology of Child Development (4th Ed.) New York, 1966, pp38-43.
family's finances were relieved. The ideological component was reinforced by the desire on the part of many families for respectability but the low class origin of most parents probably left them unaware of the ideology of patriarchy while their confused civil status dampened legal support for a patriarchal system. The individualism of the population, the colonial born especially, was renowned but it was not an anarchic individualism rather one based on mutual respect and a sense of communality in adversity; clearly the result of family influences and an anti-authoritarian attitude only towards the state apparatus. This was assisted by the early economic independence of sons, the early marriage prospects of daughters and less dependence on children for the economic survival of the family. The originally low status of many parents and the nature of their work probably increased judicious neglect and more brutal physical punishment when it was inflicted. Finally, sibling clannishness may have been reinforced by the isolated life of many families and the overwhelmingly adult structure of the population.

It is difficult to gain an accurate picture of family stability. The impression created by some contemporaries was that most parents were neglectful, profligate, and that many families were crushed by the moral deficiencies of one or other partner. Many husbands and wives were reputed to have been left to fend for their children by the desertion or reconviction of their spouses while numerous children were abandoned to the care of the institutions or reluctant foster parents. Some estimate of the accuracy of this picture can be gained by examining the single parent families and the extrafamilial children listed by the census.

In the census there were many hundreds of single parent families but after a process of eliminating "fakes" only 409 remained. These

Where the male head was listed with the children the spouse was often easy to find as she was frequently listed under her surname as "wife of" or "housekeeper to" the male head. Where the situation was reversed and the children were listed with the female head the spouse was much more difficult to trace. The number was reduced to 450 by this process. In an attempt to discover the fate of the other partner in each of these families a series of crosschecks were carried out using the 1825 muster, the Australian Dictionary of Biography, the death and desertion notices in the newspapers between 1820 and 1828, and Johnson, K. and Sainty, M., Gravestone Inscriptions of N.S.W., Sydney, 1978. The first result was to discover another 41 cohabiting couples, 21 male heads and 20 female heads, where the cohabitants were responsible for at least some of the children listed with the single head. These were thereafter excluded reducing the number to 409.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>MALE HEADS</th>
<th>FEMALE HEADS</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
<th>PERCENT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>KNOWN TO BE LIVING APART FROM SPOUSE</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>11.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POSSIBLY LIVING APART</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WIDOW OR WIDOWER</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>12.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPARENTLY ONE PARTNER ONLY CAME TO COLONY</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>9.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPOUSE UNLISTED 1825 AND 1828 NO ADDITIONS 1825-28</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>21.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPOUSE UNLISTED 1825 AND 1828 ADDITIONS 1825-28</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>4.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPOUSE LISTED 1825 BUT NOT IN 1828</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>16.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPOUSE IN GAOL OR OTHER INSTITUTION</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>5.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNKNOWN</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>16.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

409 families represent 10.9% of the total number of family units in the colony and 16.8% of the number of families with children. An attempt was made to trace the missing spouse (Table 42). The fate of only about 30% could be positively established but in many other cases the spouse had disappeared prior to the 1825 muster or between it and the 1828 census. If the missing spouse was still alive one would presume that more would have been listed and traced.

The ones that are most interesting, because they fill the expected stereotype of the abandoned family, are the deserted families, the families with a spouse in jail and the last column which consists mainly of convict women who had become pregnant without the pregnancy resulting in marriage or cohabitation. There are probably more hidden in Rows 5, 6 and 7. Most suspicion is aroused by those few families who seem to have lost a spouse and one or more young children listed.
in 1825, but unlisted, (at least not under the same surname) in 1828.70

This was sometimes found amongst the couples who advertised in the papers, between 1820 and 1828, warning the public of the desertion

70 97 of the family groups, 54 with female heads and 43 with male heads, had no children below the age of 14, and were, therefore, disregarded when the fate of the partners was being investigated. The results are not entirely satisfactory, for in the majority of cases the fate of the spouse is still unknown, but some trends are discernible. The fate of about 30% of the missing spouses was determined, with 12% separated, 13% dead and 5% in gaol or some other institution. The fate of the other 70% is unknown, but some suggestions can be hazarded. The groups in Row 4, family units who came to the colony apparently with only one parent, include some convict parents with one or more children and many indented servants to the Australian Agricultural Company. Some others undoubtedly came to join a convict spouse who, because of reconviction or failure to be assigned to the spouse, had not yet joined the rest of the family. The convict spouse thus remained undetected. In Row 5 most of these families appear to have lost their other parent before 1825 (whether from death, desertion, or some other cause remains unknown) and the remaining parent was unable to remarry. In Row 5 the spouse is not listed in either the 1825 muster and the 1828 census and reflects one difficulty in using the 1825 muster. It continued the practice of listing married female emancipists and convicts under their transported names. This is probably the reason for the huge difference between the number of males and females found in this Row. The figures also indicate that women were more successful in remarrying. If the spouse had still been residing with the head after 1825 one would expect more families to be in Row 6. This Row reflects the clerical inaccuracies of the 1825 muster even more than Row 5. Obviously the spouses have been lost between 1825 and 1828 and therefore join those in Row 8 as the most perplexing. Here the spouse has disappeared without a trace and unless they are included in the estimated two thousand (mainly convicts) who were allegedly missed by the census collectors, one can only presume that they had died. Finally Row 9 contains those adults, mainly with one child families, who were single and childless in 1825 or who arrived after 1825 and subsequently had a child. Women dominate this group and many were convict women who were abused by masters and fellow convicts. Given the middle to late age of the parent in a high proportion of the 97 single parent groups with no child under 14, the majority of the families was probably the result of the death of one spouse. This further reinforces the argument of this chapter; that natural, rather than moral, forces affected the majority of families.
of a spouse or against giving credit to a partner. About half these couples were found to have had children at the time of the notice. At the time of the 1828 census the family was still together in some cases (8), in others all the children were with the mother (11) or father (11), in others the children were split between father and mother (the mother usually taking the youngest) (4) while in others the children had matured and left home or were in institutional or private care (13). The children and families in a further seven cases had disappeared from the census, the most likely cause being the mother and children reverting to her maiden name or assuming a new name on remarriage.

In some cases it is obvious that physical and mental disorders had led to some problems. In ten cases one of the partners had died or been admitted to the lunatic asylum between the notice and the census. In others it is apparent that the break had come when the children were quite mature and the parents were well into late middle age; an indication of senility brought on by a less than temperate past and/or a reversion to old habits. This is even more notable among the aged childless couples who made up nearly a third of all the couples. Not all the separations listed in Rows 1 and 2 of Table 42 were due to parental laxity. It is obvious in some cases that the separation of the parents was only a temporary affair brought about by the need to go "up country" to manage a property or to earn a wage. Other women seem to have discreetly lost their husbands, and their landholdings, in attempts to circumvent an expected poll tax based on the findings of the 1828 census. While acknowledging that the census and the notices of caution probably represent only a small proportion of the real desertion rate, the small numbers involved in both cases add weight to other evidence which indicates that desertion or parental abandonment was not as rife as one might expect.

The small number who had spouses in gaol indicates that crime amongst married couples was also not as prevalent as one was led to

130 notices appeared in that time. 110 of these or remnants of them could be traced and 54 were found to have involved families with children. Cautions against extending credit do not necessarily mean that one partner has deserted, indeed 31 of the 130 were found to be still living together in 1828, but they do imply a certain amount of marital disharmony. The overwhelming majority of the notices was of husbands warning against wives so the sample is quite biased although the number of mothers who took children with them when they deserted indicates the husbands were at fault on some occasions.
believe. To gain some idea of the true picture of crime within the colony and its effects on family life two samples, taken from newspaper reports of trials, were taken; one of women and one of men. These samples showed that only 6.5% of the men charged were married with children. If the number charged is averaged for a year, only 8.5% of the colony's married men with children were charged with a more serious offence in any year. The few men in this sample faced 15 charges but because of the small time period no reappearances were noted. In the year 1826 married women with children made up 20.9% of the women charged (considerably less than their proportion in the female population) and those charged represented only 2.5% of all married women with children. The 60 women faced 81 charges. Only eleven women with children made more than one appearance in the two years, most for drink related crimes. The most notorious were Letitia Hilton and Mary Grady both of whom were arrested four times for drunkenness. Both were in late middle age and their youngest children were about 10 years old.

In the first sample all the criminal cases involving women mentioned in the Australian and the Gazette in the two years 1825 and 1826 were noted. 286 women committed 360 crimes. In the second sample the crimes mentioned by the Gazette in January and February 1828 were noted. These involved 189 men in over 220 crimes. A search was made to identify the marital status of each man and woman. About 50 women and 40 men could not be found. The large number of unfound women tends to throw the figures out for one presumes that many were probably married or cohabiting and were tried under one name and listed in the census under another. Most of the unfound men had names which made several men possible candidates. Amongst these were 8 men who were married with children.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Cohabit., single, married with child</th>
<th>marr., cohab. no child</th>
<th>single</th>
<th>unknown</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>women</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>men</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The great majority of male cases were disciplinary matters but in the women's cases the majority were minor criminal offences, most notably drunk and disorderly behaviour, and stealing and robbery.
The charges were often of a minor character (Table 43) and in nearly 20% of these cases the defendant was discharged and in another 30% the culprits were punished by methods (fines, bonds, or the stocks) that did not occasion separation of parent and children for any length of time. These crimes really only represent the more serious breaches and the number of cases of "tipplers and runaways" not mentioned in the papers greatly exceeded the number which were. What proportion of these were married with children is difficult to estimate, but this was most probably the prevailing "crime" amongst the parents of the colony's children.

There are several other indications that the numbers involved in desertion were small and that the majority of these families was the result of the unconfirmed death of one partner. The age difference between spouses and the middlish age of many parents of young children, shown by Tables 36 and 37, point to a high degree of risk in many families. Additionally, the incidence of single parent families is, in fact, highest (and not lowest as one would expect) amongst the families who emigrated to the colony and lowest among the convict

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73 SG, 29/2/1828, 2(e).

74 Proportionally few deaths were recorded in the Sydney based papers, so without a search of all parish records these deaths are unconfirmed. It is also obvious from Row 3 that, according to the press, the death of a prominent male was more important than the death of a prominent man's wife. The deaths of ordinary people were not worth reporting.
TABLE 44
COMPARATIVE CIVIL STATUS OF SINGLES, MARRIEDS, AND SINGLE PARENTS: 1828

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Male</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>free</td>
<td>colon</td>
<td>emanci</td>
<td>convict</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>all women</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>married or</td>
<td>25.9</td>
<td>26.1</td>
<td>23.0</td>
<td>25.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cohabiting</td>
<td>28.6</td>
<td>22.9</td>
<td>33.1</td>
<td>15.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>single</td>
<td>34.2</td>
<td>20.6</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>11.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>parents</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>all men</td>
<td>10.3</td>
<td>7.8</td>
<td>24.8</td>
<td>57.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>married or</td>
<td>23.4</td>
<td>9.3</td>
<td>46.6</td>
<td>20.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cohabiting</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>single</td>
<td>27.0</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>51.6</td>
<td>12.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>parents</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

PERCENTAGES

TABLE 45
OCCUPATIONAL DISTRIBUTION OF SINGLE PARENT FAMILIES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Male Head</th>
<th>Female Head</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>C.E.</td>
<td>M&amp;F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L</td>
<td>NL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S&amp;L</td>
<td>L&amp;U</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S&amp;D</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>H</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O</td>
<td>M&amp;F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L</td>
<td>S</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Moreover, there is a very close correlation between the civil status of single heads of families and all heads of families for both males and females (Table 44). Similarly, Table 45 shows that there is clustering of male headed families around the higher occupational classes and a relatively good occupational spread amongst the females. Unless one is willing to argue that the desertion 'disease' spread to all classes in similar doses (a conclusion the contemporaries were not willing to concede) then these figures exclude the possibility that the majority of these single parent families was the result of parental desertion. Finally, the proportion of single parent families in 1828 was about 10% of all families and nearly 17% of families with children. This is not an extremely high figure by modern standards, nor, one suspects, amongst contemporary societies.

The prospects for the children in these families were not as dismal as one is led to believe by contemporaries. A majority of these families did not "dump" their children, or force the State or private benefactors to take them into care. Table 46, the result of tracing the co-residents of the single parent families, shows that many women had either taken up a new relationship with a member of the opposite sex or at least had male adults to help support and protect them. Even some of those not listed as residing with a male are known to have been established in houses at the expense of a male. The majority of single men, on the other hand, carried on unassisted or with the help of an older daughter only.

75 Single parent families with an emigrant male head represent 6.4% of all families with a male emigrant head, while single parent families with a male convict head represent only 2.9% of all families with a male convict head. The female equivalents of 7.7% and 4.9% are equally substantive.

76 One needs only to refer to the preceding few pages to find plausible explanations for the minor variations in the two sets of figures. The lower rates for single parent convicts and colonial born, for example, could be due to the youth of these two groups who were thus less susceptible to the loss of a partner.

77 In 1972 "in more than 10 per cent of all Australian families, only one parent cares for the dependant children." Commonwealth Government Social Welfare Committee on the Needs of Lone Parent Families in Australia, Queanbeyan, 1976, p26. The 1828 figure is therefore, not so alarming.
There was also a clustering of male headed families around the higher occupational groups, as with the two parent families, and a higher proportion of female headed families with some property and thus good remarriage prospects. The higher status males were in a good position to maintain their orphaned/deserted children once the initial disruption was overcome. Their wage and status ensured quick governess-ship of the children and a speedy remarriage.\textsuperscript{78} The landholders (except for some of the very smallest) were also in a reasonable position to continue maintenance. As 60\% of the landholding families had at least one child 14 or over, the majority of younger children had some domestic care and the chance of continued family maintenance.

It is difficult to see how the lower status mechanics, labourers, and servants whose occupations took them out of the home, and often out

\textsuperscript{78} Isaac Woods, the proprietor of the Sydney Academy, lost his wife in March 1821. The next issue of the Gazette contained an advertisement for a wet nurse and a general servant. \textit{SG}, 7/4/1821, 2(b). In 1833 another father of three sons advertised for a middle-aged woman to undertake the management of his house and children. \textit{SH}, 14/2/1833, 3(e). One widower even placed an advertisement for a new wife to replace his recently deceased partner. It is difficult to know if this was a joke or a genuine appeal. \textit{Aust}, 6/2/1829, 2(a).
of the neighbourhood, continued to provide domestic care and a maintenance wage for their children, but it is obvious in some cases that they did. The position of the women was far more tenuous, especially in the immediate circumstances of death or desertion, but again there are a sizable number who had some assets or could depend on relatives or friends until the crisis was over. The only real options opened to those without assets were a quick remarriage, needlework, or washing. 79 These last two at least had the advantage of being home industries which allowed some domestic maintenance to be carried out at the same time as the work.

The demographic features of these families also enhanced their prospects of continued existence. The average number of children per family was only 2.2 and over two thirds of families had only one or two children. 45% of families had one child aged over 14 who could render domestic or income assistance while amongst the families with no child over 14 (the ones most at risk) the dominance of the one and two child units is even more pronounced (Table 47). 73% of male and 77% of female headed families had only one or two children. Some of these families, especially the larger ones, were in fact smaller than the impression given by the census. 80 Conversely many of the smaller units with one

79 Mrs. Armytage, whose husband died in extreme debt, is a good example. In 1822 after her husband's assets were seized she placed the following in the paper:

Mrs Armytage begs to acquaint her Friends that she has declined the Public Business laterly carried on by her in Pitt-street, and is removed to the upper-end of Elizabeth-street, Corner of Bathurst-street, where she undertakes plain needle-work. Mrs. A. flatters herself, that by assiduity and neatness of work, added to moderate charges, she will be enabled to ensure that support which will be her utmost endeavour to merit. SG, 5/7/1822, 4(c).

She quickly remarried the wealthy widower Charles Thomson and went on to have a huge family.

80 Constable Alexander Campbell had five children, aged between 16 and 3 years, listed at home with him, but the two youngest are obviously not at home for they are entered again in the census apart from the family. Alice, 7, is listed as a servant to John Stewart of Sussex St., and Flora, 3 (or 4), is living with John Ellam of Pitt St., Alexander seems, therefore to have to support only three children, the youngest 9 and the eldest a very useful 16 years. Similarly Thomas Campbell, a settler at Minto, had four children all under the age of 10. All are listed at home but the three daughters Harriet, 9, Jane, 7, and Matilda, 5, are also listed in the School of Industry.
### TABLE 47

**SIZE OF SINGLE PARENT FAMILIES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>NO CHILD &lt;14</th>
<th>AT LEAST ONE &lt;14</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
<th>NONE 14 OR OVER</th>
<th>NO CHILD &lt;14</th>
<th>AT LEAST ONE &lt;14</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
<th>NONE 14 OR OVER</th>
<th>NO CHILD &lt;14</th>
<th>AT LEAST ONE &lt;14</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
<th>NONE 14 OR OVER</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MALE HEADS</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>13</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>47</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>23</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>54</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>10</td>
<td>9</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>104</td>
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<td>34</td>
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<td></td>
<td>10</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>10</td>
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<td>4</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>144</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### TABLE 48

**AGES OF CHILDREN IN SINGLE PARENT FAMILIES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>&lt;1</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
<th>11</th>
<th>12</th>
<th>13</th>
<th>NA</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MALE</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FEMALE</td>
<td></td>
<td>9</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>8</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Includes three of unknown gender. ° Includes one of unknown gender.

### TABLE 49

**NUMBERS OF CHILDREN IN SINGLE PARENT FAMILIES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHILDREN IN FAMILIES WITH</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MALE HEADS</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>408</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FEMALE HEADS</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>515</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>179</td>
<td>192</td>
<td>171</td>
<td>148</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>923</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PERCENTAGE</td>
<td>19.4</td>
<td>20.8</td>
<td>18.5</td>
<td>16.0</td>
<td>10.8</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>99.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
or two children had only reached that small number by shedding some of their children. Necessity was not always the prompt for these moves.

Table 48 gives the ages of the children below 14 in these families. There are slightly more boys (53% to 47%) than girls in both male and female headed families and slightly more boys in these families than in the colonial child population. There are notable differences between the male and female headed families. The male headed families have a much smaller proportion of children below the age of seven years (nearly 37% compared to 52% in the female headed families). These points reflect the better provision of aide facilities for girls, boys of employable age being retained for their economic benefit to the family whereas girls of employable age were shed and fathers being less adept at caring for very young children which mothers could retain. Because the dominance of the one and two child families is so overwhelming, the majority of children also belonged to one or two child families. The minority belonged to single parent families with more than four children (41.2%). In all the very large families (six or more children) and most of the medium sized families (three to five children) at least one child was aged over 14 years (Table 49).

The resilience of some of these families is evident from the number

81 If the figures for the extrafamilial children are examined, a large (67%) proportion of those whose parents were found belonged to single parent families. While 205 of these were actually residing with the parent, a further 117 were not. This means that at least 25% of the extrafamilial children with identifiable parents, and 16% of all extrafamilial children in private care, were shed by a single parent presumably in most cases to ease the burden of family maintenance and to possibly supplement the head's income. These figures should be higher for some of the children identified as having both parents alive lived with one parent only. They thus contributed to the 205 children listed as residing with a single parent and lowered the estimate of the number of children from single parent families shed by those families. John Grant, for example, had kept his son Jeremiah, 13, with him on his grant at Bathurst, but his daughters were not. Mary, 10, is with Thos. Wills, and Ellen, 7, is with Dr. Redfern's family.

82 Constable Edward Fletcher of Upper Minto had three children from 18 to 5 years of age at home, and one daughter, Susan 13, in service with the Rev. Hassall. The fact that he also had his 5 year old nephew, William Boyle, living with him seems to indicate that Susan could well have stayed at home.
who remained intact between 1825 and 1828 at least. More families had lost only elder children in the interim, while still others had regained children lost in 1825 to the orphanages or private care. Amongst the families that remained intact there are a high proportion of male headed families and if one adds to these the men and the women who have remarried and retained their children, it is evident that single parent families had a reasonable chance of survival until better times arrived. It appears that all parents were temporarily disadvantaged by the loss of a spouse but that economically advantaged males had few problems securing a housekeeper and eventually a new wife, women had very good prospects of attracting another partner, while the lower class males had little money to employ a servant, little prestige to obtain an assigned female, and few prospects of attracting a new wife.

The small size of the average family unit, the generally higher than average socio-economic status of the male heads, the high incidence of co-residing males in female headed families, and the many examples of single parent families remaining intact over some years, indicate that most of these families, in their listed form if not as they were originally constituted, were in a reasonable position to continue to function as a unit. The difficulties should not be minimised however, especially the emotional problems which are not accessible to the same sort of treatment given here. One can only argue that the majority of single parent families were not the result of parental disharmony leading to desertion and that most children at least avoided the trauma of such an occurrence; the majority of children belonged to families who were able to survive, albeit

83 Geo. Lane, stonemason (and thus one of the middle income mechanics), had no wife but five children listed with him in 1825. In 1828 not only are his five children listed with him but also 4 year old Harriet Berry.

84 Joseph Bayliss is an example. In 1825 he is listed without a wife but with seven children between 20 and 7 years of age. In 1828 four of his children, including the two youngest (now 11 years of age), are listed with him. The other three, William, 22, Jane, 15, and Maria, 13, are listed as servants to Thos. Kite of Bathurst.

85 Sarah Brown's four eldest children are listed in 1825 as being in the orphanage following the recent death of their father Richard. By 1828 all six children, all of whom were still below the age of 14, are back with her plus three month old Jane McCarthy (probably the daughter of convict Rose McCarthy who was in the Factory).
after some pruning, thus the majority of children avoided the emotional as well as physical effects of economic deprivation; and in many cases the children were not long deprived of some close contact with an adult of the opposite sex to the parent with whom there at least existed the possibility of an emotional bond to replace in part the lost parent. Finally the difficulties that were encountered and overcome by the parent to keep these families together attest to the positive bonds that existed between parents and children.

By modern standards a large proportion of the child population was apparently living apart from their family. 1,036 children, or 16% of the child population, were in institutional care or in the care of an apparently unrelated person. The children came from a wide age range and there were nearly equal numbers of males and females (Table 50), which excludes the possibility that they were all child workers and

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE 50</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AGES OF EXTRAFA~1ILIAL CHILDREN: 1828</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>&lt;1</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
<th>11</th>
<th>12</th>
<th>13</th>
<th>NA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ALL CHILDREN</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>29</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IN PRIVATE CARE</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INSTITUTION CARE</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

supports the impression of a high rate of abandonment. But, as was the case with the single parent families, much is revealed by closer examination.

The children in institutional care would appear to be the most obvious examples of parental laxity. 316 of the extrafamilial children, 4.9% of the child population, were in institutional care; the Orphanages, the School of Industry, and the Female Factory. It seems highly

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86 By rights 93 of these children should not be counted as being in institutions for the 57 residing in the Factory were with their mothers, and the great majority of these would have departed with their mothers when they returned to assignment or their "husband". Similarly the 36 girls in the School of Industry, while usually the objects of charity, should really be categorised with those listed as being in boarding school. As all these children, however, were supported by the government or public subscription, and their parents would have found it most difficult to manage without that assistance, they will continue to be counted amongst the institutional wards.
unlikely that a proportion of children as large as this was in institutional care in any other country at that time or at present. This high use of institutional care was prompted by parental and government expectations, which made this kind of care more acceptable, and by the vagaries of colonial life.

Colonial parents demanded state welfare, or at least state assistance, in all manner of areas not dreamed of by the home government. The colonial government was better able and more positively motivated to meet these demands, especially when it came to providing relief for the orphans, the children of convicts, and the children of economically distressed families. The facilities were made available because the desire of the authorities was to rescue as many children as possible from the clutches of what to them were depraved parents and to isolate the children from an equally depraved society. A large number of parents saw the orphanages as child care centres where children of an economically distressed family could be sent until the family's fortunes improved. Parental contact was not lost. Nearly a quarter of the children who entered the orphanages were returned to their parents when the family's economic position improved. More returned, some legally and others by

87 That percentage of children would represent, in 1841, over 265,000 English children in institutional care; a highly unlikely figure. The number of children in workhouses in Counties Norfolk and Suffolk was 1,847 out of a child population of about 267,000. Even if the children in private charitable orphanages and other such institutions are included, it hardly seems likely that the proportion would have risen much above 1%. "Return respecting the Children Maintained and Educated in the Workhouses in Norfolk and Suffolk in the Week ending 9th of December 1837", Appendix to 14th Report from the Select Committee on the Poor Law Amendment Act, 14/3/1838, p32. The estimated under 17 population in NSW in 1973 was 1,400,000. The number of State wards was 5,903, with about 73% in foster homes, about 0.4% of the under 17 population. N.S.W.Year Book, No.64, 1976, Sydney, 1978, p79; Report of the Department of Child Welfare and Social Welfare 1973, Sydney, 1974, p7. The estimated under 14 population in 1891 NSW was 276,359 and the number of children in care was 5,090 or about 1.8%. T.A. Coghlan, N.S.W. Statistical Register: 1891, Sydney, 1892, pp355,458,460.


89 Between 1817 and 1833, 379 boys and 181 girls were entered in the Orphan Admission Books. The fate of 234 boys and 75 girls is detailed in the books and 26.9% of the boys (with a further 6.8% who absconded) and 21.4% of the girls were returned from the orphanage to the care of their parents. Female School Admission Book, 1817-32, NSWAO, 4/350-Male Orphan School Admission Book, 1819-33, NSWAO, 4/352.
bolting after they were apprenticed.\(^90\) Many parents unable or not allowed to have their children returned to them were instrumental in having their orphanage children apprenticed to people close to the family home presumably so that some contact could be maintained.\(^91\) Many letters to the Orphanage authorities showed a continuing interest by parents, or siblings, in the fate of one or other of the inmates. The authorities on several occasions had to severely restrict the visiting hours of parents and relatives to the orphanages as they were disrupting the orphanage and the children.\(^92\)

Not all children admitted were the victims of economic distress. The letters requesting admission to the orphan schools and the admission books reveal that some children were callously dumped on to the orphanage itself or on to a caregiver who could not continue to support the child. Some letters were probably deliberately coloured to arrest the attention and excite the pity of the authorities, but many undoubtedly were true chronicles of the parents' fortunes.\(^93\)

There is very little evidence other than these admission books of parental abandonment. The Herald reported several cases in 1835 and


\(^91\) See for example, the request by Malaky Ryan (12/8/1828) for James Donahoe, or Maurice Kelly requesting his sons Michael and Maurice be apprenticed to Maurice Sn's. employer S. Lord (8/3/1833) Ibid, ff 395-6 and Applications for Children out of the Orphan Schools 1833, NSWAO, 4/335, ff 13-14.

\(^92\) SG, 3/11/1821, 1(b).

\(^93\) In 1833, for example, fifteen letters requesting admission are extant. Of these two detail acts of desertion, one by a father and the other by a convict mother. One other claimed that both parents were dead but an alternative source of information claimed both were alive; the father in Ireland, and the mother up country for the sake of prostitution. In 1826-27 thirty letters are available and about half of these indicate some sort of parental neglect such as the mother or father being confined to the common or debtors jail, the mother or father deserting, both parents being worthless convicts (one 7-year-old was found destitute in the streets), or the mother who now had three children by her new husband and could not support the three children of her deceased first husband. Applications for Admission to the Orphan Schools, 1825-28, & 1833, NSWAO, 4/330 and 4/332.
one in 1837 but there are few others and very few reports of abandoned children wandering the streets.\textsuperscript{94} It appears then that the colonial authorities were successful in relieving the distress of abandoned children by taking the great majority into orphanages. The rescue facilities of the state because they were available were used to a greater extent in N.S.W. than in other countries. If all the children in England who were thrown into untenable economic positions by the loss of one or both parents, whether through parental death, abandonment, or separation in gaol, were totalled only a tiny minority would have been offered institutional care and would have been forced to find other means of supporting themselves. In N.S.W. it appears that of those suffering the same fate a majority were given state assistance. Table 50 shows that of those young extrafamilial children under the age of seven, and presumably too young to be of any real use to their caregiver, 43\% were in institutional care. 57\% of the very young under 4's were in institutional care.\textsuperscript{95} The high proportion of institutional children was therefore, a result first, of the parents' and the authorities' attitudes towards, and the use of, the State means of child maintenance and, second, the vagaries of a convict colony only one of which was the low morale of great numbers of its inhabitants.

Does the same hold true for the extrafamilial children in private care? Amongst them there was still a wide age range but there was a greater concentration of economically helpful 10 to 13 year olds.\textsuperscript{96} 720 extrafamilial children (11.2\% of all children) were in private care. The census itself gives few clues to the relationship of the child to its caregiver, to the parentage of the child, or to the fate of the parents. It sometimes defined the relationship but more often left its exact nature very vague. Table 51 gives the relationships as listed

\textsuperscript{94} SH, 23/11/1835, 2(g); 7/12/1827, 4(b).

\textsuperscript{95} As shall be shown a significant number of the very young non-institutional extrafamilial children were in reality living with one of their parents. If they are eliminated from the ranks of the extrafamilial the above proportions would be even more impressive.

\textsuperscript{96} 45.8\% of the extrafamilial children in private care belonged to the reasonably useful 10 to 13 age group, compared to the 21.3\% belonging to this group in the whole child population.
### Table 51
**Relationship of Extrafamilial Child to Caregiver According to 1828 Census.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Related</th>
<th>With At</th>
<th>Lives With</th>
<th>Resides At</th>
<th>Lodger</th>
<th>School</th>
<th>Pupil</th>
<th>Servant</th>
<th>Apprentice</th>
<th>Other</th>
<th>Convict</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Boys</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girls</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>196</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 52
**Parental Status of Extrafamilial Children in Private Care.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Both Parents Alive</th>
<th>Father (at least) Living</th>
<th>Mother (at least) Living</th>
<th>Neither Parent Alive</th>
<th>Parent Identified but Unlisted</th>
<th>Possible Parents Identified</th>
<th>Parents Not Identified</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Boys</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>134</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girls</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>154</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>257</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>21.3</td>
<td>9.0</td>
<td>35.8</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>11.7</td>
<td>6.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 53
**Relationship of Extrafamilial Child to Listed Caregiver.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>With Mother (at least)</th>
<th>With Father (at least)</th>
<th>With Married Sibling</th>
<th>With Unmarried Older Sibling</th>
<th>With Other Kin</th>
<th>At School</th>
<th>At Work</th>
<th>Relationship &amp; Occupation Unknown</th>
<th>Convict</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Boys</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girls</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>189</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>157</td>
<td>170</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the census, only 21.8% (2.4% of the total child population) were listed as working away from their parents. More significantly the Table shows that 92 were with relatives of one kind or another (12.8% of extrafamilial children in private care) and another 30 (4.2%) were at school. Already

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140 servants, fourteen apprentices, and three convicts seem to make up the child workforce, or at least that part of it that worked apart from parental control.
the picture is, at the same time, becoming clearer, but more complex. To further clarify the situation the parents of the 720 children had to be traced, where possible, and an attempt made to ascertain the parents' whereabouts and to identify the child's relationship to the caregiver.

The results (Table 52) show that for the majority (66.1%) at least one parent could be found (columns 1, 2 and 3) and 21% had both parents alive and, in the majority of cases, still living together. Only 23 genuine orphans could be traced although more of those in columns 5, 6, and 7 were probably orphans. Again this Table seems to confirm the view that these children were not the victims of natural disasters but, except for those few listed at school and those listed with a mother or father, they were the progeny of still living parents who had abandoned them to the care of another or had forced them into taking up early positions in the world of work. This Table and the preceding ones, can only be truly interpreted in the light of the results of the attempt to identify more accurately the child's relationship to its caregiver (Table 53). This forces one to reassess the abandonment theory.

Column 1 in Table 53 shows that 189 of the children were living with their mother at least. Column 2 of Table 53 on the other hand, shows only sixteen children were living with their fathers, compared to the 65 who were known to have a living father. The children listed in Columns 1 and 2 were most commonly the children of the parent by a previous spouse. In the case of the women the parent was most commonly the wife of the listed caregiver. The huge imbalance between Columns 1 and 2 in Table 53 can be partly explained because the mother-child relationship was much easier to identify from the musters and census information than that of the father-child relationship. Children left in the care of their father retained the father's surname and were therefore more likely to be listed as a family unit. Children left in the care of a mother were less likely to have the same surname. The approach of parents in changed circumstances to the retention or

98 This contrasts with the 92 listed as living with relatives in Table 60 and is nearly 75% of the number of children found, in Column 3 of Table 52, to have at least a mother alive.

99 Sometimes the census lists the children as "children of [wife's name] by a former husband", but more often they are simply listed as "living with" the caregiver and one has to check to determine
relinquishment of the child's original surname was very vague. Children sometimes retained their mother's "maiden" name, or their departed father's name, while others changed whenever a new relationship was formed by the mother.  

Children and mothers were less likely to be listed as a family unit. Column 1 of Table 53 illustrates this. The majority of the 189 children (121 or 64%) living with their mother belonged to 52 sibling groups of between two and seven children, and only 68 were apparently single

if the children are actually the children of the caregiver's wife.
Daniel and Fredrick Boyle, for example, are listed as "lodgers with Thos. Ward". They are, in fact, the sons of Mrs. Mary Ward and the deceased William Boyle. In other cases the children of a previous cohabiting couple are listed with the mother (the father having died, deserted or been gaoled), the mother has reverted to her maiden name and the children have retained their father's surname. The Allen children, for example, Sarah 13, Richard 5, Eliza 2, and William 8 mths, are listed as living with the widow Jane Fletcher, who is listed in the 1825 muster as the "wife of John Allen". The last major category, and this is also the major category for children residing with their fathers, is where the children's surname differs from that of the mother, but both lodge at the residence of the child's listed caregiver. The Caregiver himself does not seem to have any relationship with the parent or children other than as employer or landlord. The Adcock children, Margaret 7, and Esther 4, for example, are listed as "lodgers with Rbt. Moore" a tailor of Cumberland St. Also listed as "needlewoman residing with Rbt.Moore" is Elizabeth Griffiths. Elizabeth is listed in the 1825 muster as the wife of Thomas Slater of Liverpool with daughters Sophia, 8, Margaret, 3, and Esther, 2, Griffiths. The children are the result of a previous liaison with Henry Adcock. Adcock in pecuniary circumstances took to drink and Elizabeth deserted him in 1822 (SG 10/12/1822). He committed suicide in May 1823 (SG 1/5/1823, 2(e)). There is probably, therefore, some justification for the children being entered again in the 1825 muster as Sophia, Margaret and Esther Slater. By 1828 the children are back to Adcock and Elizabeth could be in a new relationship with Moore but the picture is complicated because a Sarah Holmes is also listed as "a servant to" Rbt.Moore. Slater is still carpentering at Parramatta. The constant changes have obviously been too much for Sophia who is listed as a patient in the Liverpool Lunatic Asylum.

From the highest to the lowest classes there are many examples of children retaining the surname of their deceased (or otherwise disposed of) fathers, or the maiden name of their mother. There are also many examples of children adopting the new surname whenever a new licit, or illicit, relationship was entered upon by the adults. It is possible that many new fathers were unwilling to accept children of a previous encounter as part of their family. The more obvious reason is the guardianship laws of early nineteenth century England. It was well nigh impossible to change legally the name of legitimate children even after the death of the father, especially if testamentary law reinforced guardianship laws. The situation with illegitimates was more flexible but it is obvious that law and tradition played a major role in the naming and retention of surnames of many illegitimate children. A.H. Simpson, Treatise on the Law and Practice Relating to Infants, London, 1875, pp118-9, 129-32, 138-47, 120-121. See Chapter Five.
children. 101 The 68 single children residing with mothers would appear to be the ones most affected by parental instability. The larger sibling groups, even allowing for a certain amount of surname flexibility, indicate that the relationship of mother and father was stable for a number of years. As can be seen from Table 54 the proportion of fathers who are known to be dead is much higher amongst the sibling groups than amongst the single children. Many of those fathers who are identified in the 1825 muster but are unlisted in the 1828 census were probably dead. Finally in the "Unknown" category, Column 5, over half of the mothers were cohabiting or married to the 1828 spouse at the time of the 1825 muster. All this indicates more family stability than is at first imagined. In the few identifiable cases of desertion it is impossible to determine who had left whom. 102

101 The difficulties in identifying the composite families and the problem of differentiating between children who belonged to single males or single female family units before remarriage, are immense and make the task of overcoming the bias introduced by this surname confusion very nearly impossible. One would have to ascertain the number of children in family units with a male head and a wife who was not the mother of some of the children, the children in family units with single women as heads, and the children who have adopted the surname of the mother's new partner. There do appear, however, to be more composite families to make up some of the leeway between Columns 1 and 2.

102 Thomas, 8, and Mary, 10, Carter, for example, are listed in 1828 as living with Charles Greenwood a Cumberland St. barber. Also living with Charles (and presumably cohabiting) is Mary Duncan, a washerwoman. She is listed in the 1825 muster as the wife of John Carter, landholder of Windsor, with four children; James, 10, John, 9, Thomas, 7, and Mary, 5. In 1828 husband John and son James are listed as labourers to James Cowan of Patersons Plains. John Jn. has disappeared without trace. It appears as if John Sn. has lost his holding and the fall in economic fortunes may have prompted the family split. The loss of John Jn. is a disturbing characteristic of many of these disrupted families.

TABLE 54
WHEREABOUTS OF FATHERS OF CHILDREN RESIDING WITH MOTHERS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SIBLING GROUPS</th>
<th>CHILDREN CAME FREE WITH MOTHER</th>
<th>FATHER KNOWN TO BE DEAD</th>
<th>FATHER FOUND 1825 BUT NOT LISTED 1828</th>
<th>FATHER NOT RESIDING WITH CHILDREN</th>
<th>FATHER UNKNOWN</th>
<th>RETAIN SURNAME OF MOTHER</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SIBLING GROUPS</td>
<td>6 11%</td>
<td>14 26%</td>
<td>12 23%</td>
<td>4 8%</td>
<td>16 30%</td>
<td>1 2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SINGLE CHILDREN</td>
<td>18 26.5%</td>
<td>7 10%</td>
<td>4 6%</td>
<td>8 12%</td>
<td>20 29.5%</td>
<td>11 16%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The origins of the single children and the whereabouts of their natural fathers was much harder to determine. The situation is again complicated by surname and christian name changes of the most baffling kind. What at first appear to be single children turn out to be part of a sibling group some of whom have retained the original surname while others have adopted the surname of the new father.103 There is a more obvious element of parental instability in these cases with a smaller proportion of the fathers found to be dead, proportionately more fathers found to be apart from the mother, a greater proportion retaining the mother's surname or coming free with a convict mother, and only a small proportion of the women having a relationship that can be traced back to 1825.

The situation of the mother at the time of the census also confirms that the children in sibling groups had a better chance of continuing family stability. Table 55 shows that in both categories the majority of mothers were apparently married104 to the child's listed caregiver. About equal proportions were cohabiting openly, but a lower proportion was apparently married and a greater proportion was still single (and usually convict) amongst the mothers of single children. Overall, however, the situation does not appear to have been as bad as one is led to imagine and it appears that having children did not present a great barrier to

103 James Brady, 10, for example, is listed in 1828 as the son of Sophia Windred. Sophia is listed in 1825 as the wife of Patrick Brady of Windsor (who may already have been dead for there is no applicable Patrick Brady), with sons Thomas, 9, James, 6 and Joseph, 4. By 1828 Thomas has disappeared (but could be either the Nathaniel, 14, or James, 15, who seem to have miraculously appeared between 1825 and 1828). James is still listed as Brady but Joseph has become Joseph Windred.

104 "Apparently" for they had the same surname as the husband but this does not necessarily mean that it was a licit marriage.
remarriage for women who were deserted, widowed, or had deserted a husband.

A few children residing with their fathers sometimes retained their mother's surname but most often had their father's surname. What is confusing is that they are frequently listed as residing with the employer of the father. One presumes that the father cared for the child when not at work and during the day entrusted the child's care to the wife or servants of the employer, probably in return for a cut in pay. Some of the older children were employed by the householder for whom their parent worked.

For all intents and purposes the 62 children listed as being at school (column 6 Table 53) should also be subtracted from the extrafamilial children. These were the boarders who came mostly from the top echelon of colonial society. Although they lived apart from their parents they could hardly be classified as abandoned children. Surprisingly some parents could not be traced so a few children may have been orphans sent to school by guardians. One of the principal schoolmistresses, Mrs. Love, was wildly astray in spelling many of her pupils' surnames so the problem may also be partly due to this.

Not all the 122 extrafamilial children residing with siblings or other kin (columns 3, 4, 5; Table 58) can be classified as having been abandoned by unfeeling parents to unresponsive caregivers. In many cases the care offered by kin was short term; to relieve home pressure during a domestic crisis such as a confinement or the loss of one of the parents. Eighteen of the children are also listed with their parents,

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105 Mayann Cruiss (or Crump, or Cruize) who lived with her father Wm. Fowler at Hunters Hill, for example.

106 Judith Field, 4, lived with Richard Saunders of Liverpool, for example, and her father Thomas was a labourer on Saunter's property. There is probably a greater amount of employer adoption in this case for the Saunders were a middle aged childless couple.

107 10 year old Elizabeth Lefranè, for example, was listed as a servant to W.C. Wentworth's "housekeeper" Ann Laws, while her father, William, worked on one of Wentworth's properties. Helen Walker, 8, as well as being listed with her family was also listed as a servant to her father's employer John Atkinson.

108 Six were traced from the 1825 Muster but could not be found in the 1828 census while another eight were untraced in either.

109 John Atkinson, for example, was staying with his Grandmother, Mrs. Reiby, during the confinement of his mother Jane. Christiana Blomfield mentions in one of her letters that her father took her two sons for three months during her confinement. C. Blomfield to Mrs. Edwards, Nov. 1828; C.E. Blomfield, Memoirs of the Blomfield Family, Armidale, (N.D.), p.44.
an indication that their stay was short term. In all three groups over half the children had a living parent (Table 56) and a higher than average number had both parents alive. The total proportion of children with a traced parent is slightly less than the 66.1% found in Table 52;

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PARENTAL STATUS OF CHILDREN WITH KIN</th>
<th>BOTH PARENTS ALIVE</th>
<th>FATHER (AT LEAST) LIVING</th>
<th>MOTHER (AT LEAST) LIVING</th>
<th>NEITHER PARENT ALIVE</th>
<th>PARENT IDENTIFIED BUT UNLISTED</th>
<th>POSSIBLE PARENTS IDENTIFIED</th>
<th>PARENTS NOT IDENTIFIED</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WITH MARR'D SIBL.</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WITH UNMARR SIBL.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OTHER KIN</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

so these children were parentally worse off than the average extrafamilial child. The higher than expected number of children in the identified but unlisted category (Column 5) and in the parents unidentified category (Column 7) indicates that the number in long term care was quite large.

No doubt some of the care bestowed upon these long term wards by their relatives was less than satisfactory. There is evidence that some of the children were shuffled around from one relative to another, but there is also evidence from the same sources that some children had been with their relatives for many years. There is a marked difference in the nature of the relationship between child and caregiver within the three groups. The care offered by brothers and sisters to younger siblings seems to have been a mutually beneficial arrangement between parents and

10 year old John Pearson, for example, is listed in 1825 as an orphan (grandson) at Roger Connells (sic Connors) Wilberforce, while in 1828 he is listed as a lodger (nephew) to Thomas Norris of Cornwallis. He would presumably be of more assistance to Thomas who was a young married farmer with no servants to assist on the landholding.

Henry Cunningham, 10, had been with his grandfather Henry Marr between 1825 and 1828.
children, often relieving the parents (or parent) of the care of another child while granting the older sibling the value of a useful assistant. This is less apparent amongst children residing with another kin. The children residing with siblings were exclusively older (no child was below 6 years and only 31% were below 10 years) and, as the next chapter will show, obviously at work. Those residing with other kin were younger (27% of children were below 6 years and 70% were below 10 years) and thus less likely to be at work, although no doubt some of the older ones were placed with families because they could be of use.

It is difficult to determine the quality of the care given to children by their kin. Those who took children as assistants probably did not make many concessions to the youth of the worker. The only redeeming feature may have been that when the drudgery was over the child was considered as kin thereby softening some of the worst aspects of the master-servant relationship, especially the social and class alienation. The child probably lived and worked as the master did. Those children who were not workers probably faced treatment that could range from that of a doting grandparent through indifference to outright cruelty. On average it was probably no worse, nor better, than that meted out to children within their own families.

157 of the extrafamilial children appear to have had no relationship to their caregiver other than employer-employee or master-servant (Column 7, Table 53). These are not the same 157 that are listed as "servants", "apprentices" and "convict" in Table 51. Some children listed as servants were residing with older siblings or a relative and were excluded, and others were added for various reasons.112 As the next chapter will deal in detail with the role of the child in the economy of the family and the colony only a brief summary will be given here.

112 These 157 consist of 122 children from the original 157 who were listed as servants (or some other synonym for a work situation) a few children who were in the orphanages in 1825 and were probably orphan apprentices (for example Amelia Browne, 13, listed as in the Female Orphanage in 1825 but in 1828 listed at Percy Simpsons), and some other older children who lived with the type of family, for example large young families, that would obviously require assistance (for example Lucy Simpson, 10, is listed as "living at John Singles" a farmer with six children under the age of 10 or, more frequently with the boys, as an assistant or apprentice with a single mechanic or tradesman (for example, John Scott, 11, is listed as "with A. Little", a single farmer at Hunter's River and a former neighbour of the Scott family).
The 157 children listed here, and the 35 children listed as servants but residing with kin, represent the only identifiable child labourers in the colony. They constitute 26.7% of the extrafamilial children in private care, only 18.5% of the total extrafamilial children, and a tiny 3% of the total child population. It would be naive to think that this represents the total number of child workers, but it does indicate the small number who laboured outside the family environs or without parental management. It is also notable that all the children listed as servants were over the age of six and that only 16% were below the age of 10. It is obvious that children below the age of 10 were considered to be fairly useless for the type of work available, or at least not worth paying a wage. It is also apparent that the children often left for work because the parents had difficulty maintaining their family, or because the parents were dead.

The last group, (Column 8, Table 53) are the most perplexing. After extensive searching no relationship could be definitely established between 171 children and their caregivers. This is nearly a quarter of the extrafamilial children in private care and they seem to represent the real outcasts of society, separated from kin if not friends. Some of the older children were probably acting as servants but, only slightly more than a quarter (28%) were at an age where they could be of use to a paying employer. It is also possible that some were residing with a parent, especially the natural father, or other kin but the relationship remained unconfirmed mainly because the parents of the child could not be identified and the children were untraced in the 1825 muster.113

Some clues showing how the child came to be residing with its caregiver are given. There are examples of children staying with adults who came to the colony on the same convict ship as one of the child's parents.114 There are many examples of children residing with a past or

113 Rosetta and Charlotte Prentice, who lived with James Cross of Cumberland St., for example, are listed in 1825 and the children of the widow Prentice who is not listed in 1825 or 1828 but may be James' wife Elizabeth.

114 6 year old Margaret Jilks, listed as at Wm. Bennett of Parramatta, was the daughter of Maria Jilks who came to N.S.W. on the same ship as Wm. Bennett's wife.
present employer of their parent or parents.\textsuperscript{115} Some employees were
convicts, both male and female, who either worked on another of the
master's properties or had departed from the caregiver's employ.\textsuperscript{116}
Some children were apparently placed in the care of a neighbour when
the family moved or was split.\textsuperscript{118} Others, such as the six children
listed as boarders with James Smith, a Parramatta publican, were
obviously in boarding houses, possibly attending school during the
day while their parents resided or were employed elsewhere. Finally
there are the genuine orphans who resided with neighbours of the dead
parents.\textsuperscript{119}

The parents of a much higher than average number of these child-
ren (56.7\% compared with 34.8\% of all extrafamilial children) could not
be traced (Table 57). Also a much higher than average number of the
children (15.2\% compared with 6.5\%) had traceable fathers. This con-
irms the impression that lower class males had the greatest difficulty,
especially long term difficulties, in maintaining personal care for the
child in the event of the mother dying or deserting. The high rate of
untraced parents and single fathers also tends to confirm the view that
the majority of these children were in the care of foster parents
because of the inability or unavailability of parents to continue care.

The children were residing with a wide variety of people (Table 58)
compared with the servants and siblings whose caregivers tended to be
found amongst the young childless couples or young families. In this
case the aged childless couples were the most numerous; an indication
that some of the wards may have been grandchildren, or that middle aged

\textsuperscript{115} Mary and Ellen Grant resided with Thomas Wills and Dr. Redfern
respectively. Both men employed John Grant, the girl's father,
as their agent in Bathurst.

\textsuperscript{116} The mother of one year old John Evans, who resided with Archibald
Bell at Segenhoe, was in the Factory, and two year old Margaret
Dugen's father was at Moreton Bay while she continued to live with
James Cowen of Paterson's Plains.

\textsuperscript{117} 4 year old John Cooper lived with James Blackman who in 1825 employed
John Cooper Sn. as a blacksmith. John Sn. is not listed in 1828.

\textsuperscript{118} Thomas Cope (or Capp) the son of Charlotte Starley (or Stanley, or
Capp) is listed as living with Charlotte's neighbour of 1825, Thomas
Miller, while she resided with her new paramour Andrew Loader at
Paterson's Plains.

\textsuperscript{119} Such as Michael and Eleanor Minton, children of Mrs. (murdered 1821)
and Michael (murdered 1824) Minton. They resided with James McCarthy
a former neighbour of the Mintons.
couples were favoured by those seeking foster parents. It is also interesting to note that nearly two thirds (64.9%) resided in households with no other children. In the majority of cases there would, therefore, have been no conflict between the caregiver's children and the adopted child nor any division of any affection the caregiver might care to bestow.\textsuperscript{120}

Once again it is extremely difficult to give any sort of assessment of the quality of care bestowed upon these children. The examples that can be found range from good to worse than disastrous. The Australian noted, in 1826, the grief of an "industrious couple" at the accidental shooting of a little girl who had been left in their care for over twelve months by an army officer. The paper claimed they were exceptionally devoted, "as parents", to the child.\textsuperscript{121} On the other hand, a Sydney Herald report told of a widowed father who, when his son was gored by a bull, gave the child into the care of his drunken

\textsuperscript{120}At first it appears as if 119 of the 171 children resided with adults who had no other children. The real figure, however, was 111, for some of the single men and women had children (although only two were below the age of 10) and some of the childless couples had other boarders.

\textsuperscript{121}Aust, 26/8/1826, 3(b).
neighbours. They failed to treat the boy and he eventually died.\textsuperscript{122}

In many other examples it appears that the economic advantages of parent-child separation outweighed the emotional bond, but that economic advantage had to be coupled with affectionate bonds between ward and guardian to be acceptable to the parents.\textsuperscript{123} Unfortunately this was probably more a characteristic of the higher classes of society rather than a general rule.

Although by modern day standards a large proportion of the child population was in extrafamilial care, the conclusion that these children were the abandoned byproducts of criminal intercourse cannot be sustained. Unfortunately it is impossible to compare these figures with any other contemporary country.\textsuperscript{124} The 1828 census exposes the problems and the solutions as does no other material. It is difficult to imagine many children, regardless of their status, being missed by the census collectors, a quality that cannot be attributed to comparable censuses in England. There the problem of displaced, homeless, orphaned and abandoned children remains hidden and only estimates of the number of children employed outside the home can be made.

Those children residing with a parent (205), those at school (62), those residing with kin (122), those with their mothers in the Factory and those in the School of Industry (93), should really be excluded from the ranks of the extrafamilial for they show continued family interest and maintenance. They represent 46\% of all extrafamilial children or 7.5\% of the child population. There are, therefore, only 8.5\% of the colony's children who can really be classified as extrafamilial. The bulk of the very young children were in institutional

\textsuperscript{122} SH, 9/4/1835, 3(d).


\textsuperscript{124} The 1851 census of Great Britain reveals that 12.9\% of male children under 15 years were at work, but how many worked at home, how many lived at home but worked outside the home, and how many lived and worked apart from their parents is impossible to determine. The census claims that 36.4\% of all male children were at school, that only 0.4\% were displaced paupers and vagrants, and reveals no children in the care of unrelated adults. These figures can only be treated with the greatest of skepticism. Census of Great Britain, 1851, Report, Population Tables II, Vol I, pp CXXVIII-CXLIX.
care and the majority of the remainder were living with a parent. It is, therefore, impossible to argue that a large number of these children were unfeelingly abandoned by parents. On the other hand some were definitely the victims of parental instability even though they continued to remain with one of their parents.125

Most importantly, of the 476 children who had a living parent traced in Table 52, 205 (or 43%) were still residing with their parents or a parent. No doubt some of those children listed in Column I of Table 53 were also residing with their natural father as well as their mother but for some reason were listed under a different name. Some of the children, especially the very young ones, whose relationship to the listed caregiver defied clarification (Column 8 of Table 52) were probably living with one parent, quite possibly in the majority of cases with the father.126 Notwithstanding this, the 205 children represent 20% of all extrafamilial children and 3.2% of the child population. Of the original 1,036 extrafamilial children only 831, or just under 13% of the child population, can be classified as truly extrafamilial, reinforcing the conclusion that parental responsibility was not lightly dismissed in colonial N.S.W.

The extrafamilial children were influenced by, and in part the product of, the low morale of many of the colonists, the uncertainty that surrounded convict status, the dangers associated with the pioneering nature of colonial life, and the vagaries resulting from the advanced age of their parents. With significant attitudinal changes on the part of the government towards the provision of aid facilities and on the part of parents towards the acceptability of temporary separation for economic and social benefit, and conditioned by the greatly exaggerated reports of the period on the quality and quantity of abandoned children, it is extraordinary that such a small number were in extrafamilial care.

There is very little evidence of total parental abandonment, and it is obvious that only a tiny minority of parents were unwilling or

125 The Adcock children are a prime example.
126 The eight Westbrook children, for example, whose ages ranged from 14 to 2 years, are listed as living with Wm. McQuirk an aged cohabiting brickmaker of North Richmond. Their mother was not traced but their father is listed separately as a "brickmaker at Richmond". It is possible that Westbrook Sn. also resided with McQuirk.
unable to continue to care for their children even after a natural or moral disaster had deprived them of their partner. Those who were unwilling or unable sought government assistance first, possibly because many parents with young children had no kinship structures to support them, second from amongst kin, and last, amongst neighbours or friends. In many cases it appears as if the placing of these children were mutually beneficial to the child, the parents, and the caregiver.

*   *   *   *   *

The demographic features of the colony enhanced the status of children and also help to explain many of the characteristics of the children. The study has shown that, contrary to the impression created by some contemporary commentators, at least 87% of the children were under parental management and that many more were under a parent's watchful eye or in the care of kin. These children belonged to families whose economic and civil status were higher than average, enhancing the prospects of a normal family life free from the disturbance of summary convict justice and economic hardship. There was, however, a high degree of family instability, some caused by the low morale of the convict colony but more often by the difficulties of pioneering life exacerbated by the age patterns of parents and families.

In these cases there seems to have been an abundance of private and public facilities to care for the children sometimes temporarily while family problems were rectified or at other times permanently by adoption, the result of the disproportionately large number of adults in the population. This population abnormality focused the attention, slight though it may have been in each person, of a large number upon a comparatively small number. In a small population, evenly spread over vast areas, it would have been difficult for anyone, and even more difficult for a child, or anyone maltreating, neglecting or abandoning a child, to avoid the scrutiny of another. Surrounded by adults, many of lower civil and economic standing, children developed a strong sense of peer group identity and precociousness. Both qualities were
enhanced by the less intimate parent-child relationships resulting again from the age pattern and civil status of their parents. It is possible, however, that even though parent-child relationships were less intense than we see as desirable, they were more intense than normal in other contemporary societies, the result of a higher economic status and the lack of inhibition created by high infant mortality. The children of the colony, therefore, bear all the hallmarks of a closely scrutinised and privileged minority.
CHAPTER FOUR

THE CHILD IN THE ECONOMY OF THE FAMILY AND THE COLONY
In any attempt to analyse the role of the child in the economy of
the family and the Colony, the first task is to examine the direction
of the economy. The period is characterised by an initially slow but
relentless change in the direction of the colonial economy during the
1820s which set the stage for the pastoral boom of the 1830s.¹

Until 1821 and the Bigge Report, the colony's economic policy
could best be described as a subsistence or self-sufficiency economy.
The original intention of the Home Office was for the convict population
to support themselves through public farming, and for emancipated con-
victs to be given a plot of land, not just as an incentive to stay in
the colony, but in order to become self-sufficient and possibly even
employ and victual convict labour. The size of the holdings was deter-
mined by previous English policy both at home and in their other
colonies, and by their desire to maintain merely a self-sufficient
proletariat. This avoided capitalist exploitation which could lead to
capital formation and the possibility of convicts returning to England
and thereby destroying the deterrent effect of transportation. The
holdings were too small, however, and led to many of the smaller lot-
holders selling out. By 1820 much of the "chaff" had been blown away
leaving the more astute to carry on, most with enlarged farms of over
50 acres and a few with very large holdings.

The failure of the public farms, the other arm of government
policy, led to government protection and encouragement of small scale
farming through the Commissariat which provided access to the market
for the livestock and grain of all producers. The Commissariat ensured
that a proportional share of the benefits of supplying government went
to all. It also meant that the chief function of local agriculture

¹ The following account is based on: R.W. Connell & T.I. Irving,
Abbott, G.J. & Nairn, N.B. (Eds.) Economic Growth of Australia
1788-1821, Melb. 1969.
G.P. Walsh, "The Geography of Manufacturing in Sydney: 1788-1851"
A.C.L. Shaw, The Economic Development of Australia (5th Ed.), Melb.,
1966. S.J. Butlin, The Foundations of the Australian Monetary
G.J. Linge, Industrial Awakening: A Geography of Australian
Manufacturing 1788 to 1890, Canberra, 1979.
remained the meeting of the internal needs of the colony for meat and grain which led to little diversification into capital accruing export crops or livestock products. Macquarie also exercised more care in assessing the suitability of land grantees and the quality and quantity of land granted. By 1821 the vast majority of landholders on grants of more than fifty acres, and many on less than fifty acres, especially those who boasted an occupational skill to supplement farm income, were well on the way to economic independence.

Only an embryonic labour market is discernible within the ranks of the landless. The labour market was severely curtailed by the dominance of convict labour but free, and freed, labourers, and more especially skilled or semi-skilled mechanics, clung to the contract system, established cottage industries and manufactories, or engaged in profit sharing enterprises, rather than engage in a pure wages system. By thus preserving their independence they tended to merge with the independent small businessmen (such as shopkeepers or innkeepers) lacking only the solid assets of both the landed and the small businessman.

The period up to 1820 was one of economic expansion but only in the sense of total output increasing to keep pace with the increasing population and to produce a slight rise in the standard of living for the majority of free people. All the capital from surplus output went on consumer goods which were mostly imported, thereby keeping internal capital formation at a low level and removing the possibility of any internally generated economic boom. Factors such as the lack of raw materials and the relative cheapness of imported durables combined with capital outflow to prevent the establishment of factory style secondary industry in N.S.W. Even by the end of our period the colony could only boast about 62 private manufactories of which only a few employed more than ten men. Most dealt with the treatment of agricultural and pastoral products; the two largest groups being tanneries and flour mills. Some home industry in building requirements (brickmaking, timber production, and glass making), clothing and shoemaking (mainly the production of cloth or leather), and foundry work (blacksmiths, tin-smiths, brass founders, iron founders, nailors) supplemented the Government owned factories producing these items. It appears that
any surplus income went directly into consumer goods and secondly into asset accumulation especially stock, homes and more land. No doubt asset accumulation would not have been seen as capital formation (as a prelude to capital expansion) but rather as accumulating assets necessary to secure tenure at a level of self sufficiency.

Commentators of the time, tended to place some blame upon the colonists for their lack of frugality, especially in regard to drink, which, they claim, was the main reason for the lack of capital formation. But the period bears all the characteristics of an economy made up almost entirely of the equivalent of today's wage earning, working class, consumers involved essentially in earning enough to subsist with some asset accumulation. The commentators also complain of the outmoded agricultural and industrial methods, and claim that these restricted capital accumulation. These methods probably reflected the residual knowledge of farming and the incomplete grasp of industrial techniques amongst the urban emigrants who made up the bulk of the convicts, and the disinclination for hard work which characterised the majority of emancipists. Again, however, the vast majority of any population is, and probably always has been, made up of the sort of worker whose desires go no further than the provision of a living and some comforts for the least amount of work necessary. What is probably unique about the period 1788-1820 was that the State economy was tailored to the needs of this class, not to that of the capitalist, accumulative class.

The direction of the State's support changed rapidly in the 1820s when Bigge's recommendations reflected the thinking of both the tiny capitalist class in N.S.W. and the Home Government. The Colony from now on must accept a:

Compact agricultural development by capitalist farmers employing labour, producing a commercial surplus and thereby accumulating capital. This, in turn, would encourage division of labour, diversification of occupation, a market, and very importantly, it would build a close-knit, ordered or hierarchial social structure in the mould of rural England.3

2 See Bigge, State of Agriculture and Trade: Report, ff84-85.
The Colonial economy was no longer to reflect that of the self-sufficient class and many of the props and incentives previously employed to shore up the economy were withdrawn. Land grants to emancipists and to the colonial born were severely restricted. Grants were given in proportion to the capital assets of the applicants, now almost entirely free emigrants. Grants were entirely abolished in 1831 and replaced by land sales at a basic price per acre which put viable properties beyond the means of all but the richest. A tendering system was introduced to cover Commissariat needs thereby excluding those who could not fulfil the tender requirements. Government no longer provided stock on loan or by grant for the commencement of flocks or herds and the capital required for pastoralism was too high for many of the old hands and most of the new arrivals even to contemplate. The free victualling of new settlers for their first six months was discontinued.

The ranks of the landless class thereby rose disproportionately in this period. Those who had been lucky enough to get land before the twenties were in a good position either to be involved directly in the squatting boom or share indirectly in its benefits through the provision of stock to the squatters and agricultural needs for the increasing population. Few capital-less men could hope to join the ranks of the pre 1820s farmers. Some reverted to raising stock on government land, from either licitly or illicitly gained herds, and some others became tenants. The vast majority retreated into the ranks of the labour market and awaited land reforms in the hope of gaining the security supposedly offered by land ownership.

Within the landless groups the same sorts of arrangements used in the pre 1820 period to ward off complete wage servitude and maintain a semblance of independence were continued.

There was a whole spectrum of relationships between those with wealth and those without, from mortgage financing through informal credit arrangements, contracting and profit sharing to truck payments and pure wage labour.4

Again those with desired skills and those with a small amount of capital to invest in a shop, a pub, or a leasehold property were best able to

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4 R. Connell & T. Irving, op. cit., p44.
cope and maintain the greatest amount of independence.

The economy was overwhelmingly agricultural and cannot even be classified as pre-industrial. It lacked a representative economic base. The colony, for example, was nowhere near self-sufficient in manufactured goods. The workforce could be roughly divided into, first, those who by land ownership were directly involved in reaping the profits of agricultural production, second, those Government officials and self employed involved in servicing the agricultural and penal industry, and, third, the labourers who worked in either area.

Many factors, including emotional, demographic, legal and socio-economic, determine the use of children especially in the paid workforce. The legal code today strictly forbids the employment of children in some work areas and enforces schooling to the age of 14 or 15 years, thus severely restricting the scope for employment of children. In N.S.W. in the period 1820-1837 the only laws that may have placed some restriction upon the employment of children were the English Factory Acts. They were irrelevant as no factories of the type covered by these Acts existed. The only other laws that dealt with children’s employment were those outlining the rights of parents and masters over their children and apprentices and these in no way hindered the placement of children in the workforce.

The demographic material showed that there was a huge preponderance of adult males, many of whom could be employed for the cost of their upkeep alone. This would have reduced the need for widespread use of cheap male child labour unless there was an overall shortage of labour and providing employers were willing to employ convict or ex-convict labour. A general consensus occurred amongst employers of the time that an overall shortage of reliable labour did exist although there has been some debate as to the validity of this perceived shortage. However, the two occupations where the shortages were supposed to exist were the skilled trades and the agricultural or pastoral labourers.

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The first required a prolonged apprenticeship and could not be filled by unskilled children. The second was not generally suitable or available for those under 13 years of age. The opinion that emigrant children were useless in the bush, especially compared to the colonial born, also contributed to the unavailability of child labour. The only advantage of this shortage of labour for children seeking work was that men were kept out of the less arduous positions and these were sometimes made available to younger boys. Thus some of the piece work around large properties, such as gardening, fencing, grass cutting, yard sweeping and hurdle moving, was made available to boys under the supervision of an adult, instead of a gang of men.

In addition there supposedly existed a general reluctance to employ unreliable and morally contaminating convict labour. There was an element of hypocrisy here, for the demand for convict labour always outstripped the supply. Even in 1833 the Herald lamented that Carter's Barracks' Boys were being apprenticed on board whaling ships to the great injury of the "Native youths". When convict labour was finally withdrawn in the 1840s the cries of economic ruin did not take long to rise above the previous intonations of moral repugnance.

The demographic material also showed that there was a great shortage of female labour. Even though nearly a third of all women were unmarried a great number were removed from the labour market in the Factory. More were convict or ex-convict and supposedly employed only with the greatest reluctance in domestic service. The demand for female child labour should, therefore, have been considerable. Unfortunately the moral repugnance at the thought of employing female convicts in the home tended to exclude the children of convict parents from respectable homes. These sorts of

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7 Geo. Cox, Select Committee on Immigration, 1838, Minutes, p146, & W. Macarthur, ibid, p17.
8 SH, 7/10/1833, 2(e).
9 Robert Cox, for example, writing to Archdeacon Broughton in 1823 explained that the death of one of his employees had left him with two orphans one an 11 yr old girl. She was too old to be put into the orphanage but because her dead mother was "of a most depraved caste" regular people were unwilling to take her into service and he was not willing to permit her, because of the esteem he held for the late father, to be engaged to "worthless" elements or to abandon her. Cox to Broughton 16/4/1832. Applications for Admission to Orphan Schools 1829-32, NSWAO 4/331, ff273-4.
conditions severely restricted the availability of paid work for young girls seeking employment even though the demographic conditions were favourable.

There appears to have been a paucity of work suitable for children other than within the confines of the family or in domestic service. The lack of factories meant that many positions thought to be eminently suitable for children were not available. The wide use of children in England to work looms in cotton mills and in minor positions down coal mines arose from the particular "aptness" of these jobs for children. Other positions particularly popular for children in the old country also seem to have been non-existent. The *Australian* of 1828, for example, lamented the fact that there existed a paucity of chimneysweeps because people, rather than employ a sweep, insisted on setting fire to their chimneys; a practice both foul and dangerous.10 William Johnston appearing before the 1838 Immigration Committee noted that the "green crop husbandry" (peas, beans, carrots, turnips etc.) was not widespread in N.S.W. and employment for children in picking was therefore scarce.11 Service, on the other hand, could be entered at a very early age. Marsden had, in 1796, a 6 year old native boy waiting on his table, but this seems to have been an exception.12 The Orphan Institutes ruled that no child was to go into service until they could read the Bible, write "tolerably well and correctly", do simple arithmetic, as well as have a competency in domestic duties and a practical skill such as needlework or shoe-making.13 In realistic terms this meant that no child under 10 was allowed to go into service. The requests by employers for orphan apprentices show that they required children to be at least 11 years of age and most wanted them to be 13 or 14 years. The School of Industry kept its girls until they were 14 or 15 years old, but expected a much higher standard of domestic ability than the orphanages.14

10 *Aust.,* 15/8/1828, 3(c).
11 Committee on Immigration, 1838, Minutes, p216.
13 Subenclosure No.5, Darling to Bathurst, 7/5/1826, NLA, I, xii, p282.
Contemporaries' references to the early maturity of many of the colonial born and their reputed physical prowess should not be exaggerated. Many proud parents, for example, made claims about the horsemanship of their children as early as 7 years of age, but it is not until they were 11 or 12 years old that one finds references to boys actually managing cattle from horseback or seriously engaging in the care of large animals. Even then they were considered less than suitable. The Herald often castigated adults for letting "weak" youths take charge of horses thus endangering the youth and the public.

It is almost impossible to determine the wage rates for children but one can assume that they were much lower than that of adults. Hugh Gordon wrote that he had employed "a very nice little boy" of unspecified age as a personal servant on a wage of £6 per annum.

Macarthur claimed, in 1838, that children of 7 or 8 should have been able to earn enough to pay for their own maintenance by work such as shifting hurdles, tending lambing ewes, assisting flockmasters and domestic service. He provided such jobs for children from 6 to 16 years on his Camden estate. His claim that they could maintain themselves seems a little far fetched for he admitted he paid a daily rate of only 3d to 1/- per day according to age and ability. Presumably only 3d a day would be paid to those less than 10 years old and this would only just cover the cost of maintenance if rations were also included. These low wages should have acted as an incentive to the employment of children but it does not appear to have had that effect. Charles Campbell noted that he paid the boys of the families on his property between £12 and £15 per annum and a full ration if they were over 14 years. He gave the father £20 per annum and a single ration (or a double ration if his wife was living) for the same job of sheep-tending. This is not a great difference but he, and many others, made it clear

15 For instance Christiana Blomfield wrote that her 7 year old son was a most competent horseman. C.B. to Mrs. Edwards, 27/11/1828. C.K. Blomfield, Memoirs of the Blomfield Family, Armidale, (N.D.), p44.
16 Aust. 6/6/1827, 3(c)
17 Sh. 5/10/1837, 2(e)
19 Committee on Immigration, 1838, Minutes, p11.
that only lads over 14 years were capable of doing the work and that he
would not employ younger boys regardless of how much he saved on his
wages bill.\textsuperscript{20} George Cox claimed that he had one 9 year old boy attend-
ing a small flock of rams while other children of the same age worked as
yard cleaners or in the house as house or nursery maids.\textsuperscript{21} The ages of
some of these child workers cannot be accepted unquestioningly. The
youngest person listed in a shepherding occupation in 1828 was 10 year
old Thomas Long, who, as a product of the Orphan School, was probably older
than 10 years. Confusion about child workers' ages is typified by the
Gazette when in 1825 it reported on a burglary in a house which had been
left in the charge of Patrick Maguire. Patrick, who was obviously acting
as a hutkeeper's assistant, was reputedly aged 6 or 7 years.\textsuperscript{22} A later
report, however, puts Patrick's age as 10 or 11 years, a much more realistic age.\textsuperscript{23} Even more confused was the case of Anna Fowler who was
burned to death in her mistress's kitchen. The report of the accident
put her age at 10 years but the report of the coronial inquiry put it at
14 years and an advertisement praising the efforts of the "Burns Doctor",
publican Andrew Byrne, put her age at 15.\textsuperscript{24}

One way of making sure the employer did get his money's worth was
to apprentice the child. The child then received no (or minimal) wages,
was strictly controlled through domestic and legal discipline, and had
to remain with the master for several years after he or she became useful,
that is, learnt the trade sufficiently and matured sufficiently for the
master to get a good return on his investment. This scheme was not without
its problems. Masters of apprentices, especially orphan apprentices,
constantly complained that their charges were enticed away, just as they
were becoming useful, by ne'-do-well employers or families.\textsuperscript{25} Again it

\textsuperscript{20} Ibid, p26.
\textsuperscript{21} Ibid, p146
\textsuperscript{22} SG, 10/10/1825, 3(c)
\textsuperscript{23} SG, 31/10/1825, 3(a).
\textsuperscript{24} SH, 9/5/1831, 4(b); SH, 16/5/1831, 4(a); SH, 16/5/1831, 1(d).
\textsuperscript{25} Simeon Lord, for example, wrote to the Schools Corporation request-
ing orphan boys of 11 to 15 years for his weaving factory, but
insisted that the Corporation compel the boys to serve their full
term. In the past he had clothed and fed three or four boys for 3
years only to have them leave him when they were just becoming useful.
Application for Children out of the Orphan Schools 1825-1829
is important to note that most masters sought apprentices from those aged 13 or 14 years when they were of sufficient maturity to be, in reality, useful from the first day of employment.

Perhaps the most comprehensive lists of positions which children were deemed capable of filling can be gained from the letters sent to the orphanages requesting orphan servants. In 1833 the requests for boys showed that employers wanted wool weavers, printing apprentices, apprentice bakers, agricultural labourers, gardeners, houseservants and shoemakers. Only a few specified an age, ranging from 10 for one agricultural labourer to 15 for an apprentice baker. In the same year the girls were needed for needlework, to look after children and be generally useful, and to be household usefuls. Again few specified an age but amongst those who did the majority wanted 13 or 14 year olds. The 1826 requests are even more illustrative. The boys were wanted as protectors for a dealer's house and business, as apprentice tailors, builders, wheelwrights, carpenters, shoemakers, tanners, blacksmiths, millers, hat manufacturers, tobacco manufacturers and woollen weavers, to man whaling boats and other seagoing craft, as agricultural labourers, gardeners, ploughmen and carriers. Amongst the girls the requests were for nurses, domestics, needleworkers, companions and household help. Again the overwhelming majority requested 13 and 14 year olds although some went as low as 11 year olds. 26

Positions advertised in the papers also showed a bias towards children about or over 14 years. The captain of the barque Nereus wanted "three Stout Currency Lads, not under fourteen years of age". 27 "A steady lad, from twelve to fourteen years of age ... who was able to read and write" was needed to serve behind a bar. 28 The type of young girl desired by employers is well illustrated by the advertisement in the Sydney Gazette of 1825 which read

Wanted, a Colonial Girl, from 12 to 14 years of Age, from industrious Parents; one from the Country, or

26 Applications for Children Out of the Orphan Schools, 1825-1829, NSWAO, 4/333; Applications for Children out of the Orphan Schools, 1833, NSWAO, 4/335.
27 SH, 12/12/1833, 1(f)
28 SH, 10/10/1833, 1(c)
Parramatta, will be preferred. Liberal wages will be given; her principal employment will be in the house, and with children... Apply to Mrs. Willshire, Brickfield Hill, Sydney.29

The advantages of some child labour and the reluctance to employ convicts made some employers keen to engage on their properties families with older children.

As an example of the advantages to the master in employing steady men with large growing families of from 15 to 16 years of age downwards - I will suppose such a man to be a shepherd, and to have several boys of nine or ten, and upwards, he might, with his boys, undertake the entire duties connected with a sheep station, consisting of three or four flocks. It will not surely be contended that such a family would be more expensive to their master, than four or five convict servants, much less an equal number of young married emigrants. Even the females may with propriety be employed, such as shifting the hurdles, tending ewes with young lambs, &c.30

Macarthur was probably one of a minority, however, for the more common opinion was that families with young children were a nuisance and the most common advertisement was for single men or couples "without encumbrances".

So far the accent has been on the child as an individual providing its own maintenance and contributing to the economy of the employer and, indirectly, the state. But because of the life cycle of the individual intrinsically involves periods when he or she is unable to support him/herself (let alone be self-sufficient) a combination of the young, the productive, and the aged has always been considered the basic life support unit.31 There has been a tendency to equate this unit with the biologically defined family, almost inevitably as an extended, multi-generational, family, and to see the family in functional terms as the smallest self-sufficient unit possible.32 Ideally each family was a

29 SG, 27/10/1825, 4(d).
30 W. Macarthur, Committee on Immigration, 1838, Minutes, p17.
fully self contained unit combining family, home, and workplace and producing all the family needed. The unit consisted of both producers and consumers, the productive members of the family supporting the consuming aged and young; the latter until they reached the age when they could also contribute to the family's production. Thus the major contribution of children was not to their own maintenance or that of their employer, but to the maintenance of their family which was their employer and maintainer.

Sociologists have argued that at some state in human history, industrialisation is usually blamed, the nexus between workplace, home and family was broken and the family was turned into purely a unit of consumption within wider capitalist production. The father now became the dominant producer working outside the family with the wife, children and aged consigned to secondary domestic and consuming roles. Where the single producer could not support the family others (the wife or children) were forced out of the home, often out of the family, into productive positions, a move that destroyed the nexus between family, employer and maintainer.

In recent years an attempt to break away from the functionalist analysis of family life has turned the accent towards an understanding of the home and family as a calculated unit bound by the "norms of reciprocity" rather than the normative bonds of either the Natural or State law. In other words, kinship and residence is determined more by mutual welfare, one receives for what one contributes, than by the bonds of blood or feeling. Thus the family and home always remain both a consuming and producing unit but the nature of the contribution to production towards family upkeep is calculated less in terms of goods produced than in terms of the total task of successfully maintaining the family. The unit itself was never seen as a production unit nor as a consuming unit, nor was it relevant where the production was carried out. Some members of the unit produced and others consumed; sometimes with the possibility of production exceeding consumption (and at other times vice versa - at which time excess consumers might be removed) on the understanding that when one producer lost the ability to produce another would take his/her place and allow the retired producer to become a consumer.
This new approach has been attacked fairly for its almost complete concentration on economic motivation and its assumption that its sub-
jects were similarly motivated to the detriment of all other aspects of interpersonal relationships. Both approaches are based on the moral assumption that the ideal was an equation of workplace, home, and family; an equation that has never existed and certainly did not exist even in predominantly pre-industrial colonial society. One can argue that the normative rules define the family and the calculative norms define the home but the calculative norms have been too narrowly defined.

It is apparent that the vast majority of parents in the colony desired their young children to be with them for emotional as well as economic reasons. There were many examples, even amongst the supposedly most depraved convict class, of heroic parental protection and care under the most difficult circumstances and of the economic and personal hardships endured by parents in order to keep their children with them. Most parents apparently were reluctant to let the child go out of the family for any reason unless it was for the benefit of the child or the family as a whole, was unavoidable, and the proposed employer or caregiver was trusted by the parents. Interpersonal and other, rather than just economic factors must be taken into consideration when defining the home. At the same time no moral judgements can be made upon the family that sends its child members away, nor can aspersions be cast upon the nature of the relationships between parent and child in such a situation. Such actions may have been necessary not only for the welfare of the child but also for the family, and parental interest, control, and affection need not decline through separation.

It is obvious, in the colony at least, that the other great normative factor was the need for child labour to maintain the family. The need was greatly dependant on the cost of living and the occupational distribution on the parents. One has to determine the amount of money needed for subsistence level maintenance of various sized families, then using this as a base, identify three types of families. First, the number of children living in families where the single income of the head would have been sufficient to sustain the family. Second, when the head was involved in an occupation, for example freehold or tenanted small-scale agriculture, where the children were of immediate
benefit to the parent and, therefore, would have been liable to unpaid labour. Third, one must discover where the family was at risk from its youth, its size, the inadequate income of the parent or parents, or the loss of one or both parents. In the first category one would expect few labourers. In the second one would expect most children to make some contribution to family income, and in the third, depending on the nature of the family's occupation, one would expect extrafamilial workers or parent-child work teams. The three categories cannot be separated in reality as neatly as this thus all three will be examined together when the economic viability of the families in each occupational category are examined.

Two methods are available for assessing the basic wage and they complement each other. The first is to look at contemporary writings to see if any mention is made of the economic standing of large families and, more importantly, what was understood to be a large family. The second method is to attempt a family budget by assessing the minimum expenditure necessary for family maintenance.

The 1838 Legislative Council Committee on Immigration made a special point of enquiring of employers, first, if they were willing to employ the heads of large families, and, second, if they considered large families to be maintainable. Their answers show conclusively that the respondents did not think that the single income of the head of a family employed as an agricultural labourer was sufficient to maintain a large family. Some labourers were doing so because of the "forced" generosity of the employer with regard to rations. In their answers to the second query, on the difficulty of parents providing for the maintenance of a large family of young children, a small majority

33 Usually much of this comment centres upon the lower classes and one can therefore take this as being the cut-off point for economic viability.

34 Only 20 of the 82 respondents (mostly large landholders) did not think that it would be desirable to introduce, by emigration, large families, even those with some children of sufficient age to be of use to the employer. Another ten thought it a desirable aim but too expensive, while the rest (64%) thought it desirable only on condition that the majority of children were old enough to be able to work (and some wanted the power to make them work) to cover the cost of their rations. Committee on Immigration, 1848, Minutes, pp99-227.
(55%) thought that the parents would have problems maintaining their children and this was consistent with the respondents' answers to the first question.

It is difficult to judge what they meant by the term "large family". Lachlan Macalister, appearing before the 1838 Committee, told of being forced to take on, clothe, and maintain a "large uneconomic" family of nine children all of whom were useless. Newspaper reports of the death of a parent talk of the parent leaving a "numerous" family, a "large" family, meaning anything from three, four to five children.

Thomas Cowlishaw an employer of building tradesmen speaking before the 1838 Legislative Council Committee on Immigration, said:

At the present wages I think a good mechanic may live comfortably, and need not be under much anxiety as to the support of a family. If his family were very large, it would be quite as much as he could do to maintain them.

His words were echoed by David Taylor, a Master Mason and Builder and another large employer of mechanics and labourers. Luckily Taylor gave more precision to the rather vague terms "large" and "very large" which he and Cowlishaw used when he added:

55% thought that families with many young children had difficulties, while 43% thought they did not. (2 did not answer.) This surprisingly even figure (surprising, given the clear division in question one) may have had something to do with the respondents' often implicit, but sometimes explicit, opposition to the price of labour and the rationing laws then in force. Two respondents even claimed that large families of children could be supported by the least industrious of parents because of the present economic situation. ibid.

These problems did not stop some of the respondents, and others in responsible positions, from arguing that large families should come regardless. It was felt that the difficulties endured by the families, and the children in particular, were outweighed by the long term good, both moral and economic, accruing to the colony. ibid. and Bourke to Stanley, 6/12/1832, HRA, I, xvii, p300.

For example the report of the death of Walter Levi noted that he left a wife and "numerous" children; that is, three aged 3 to 7 years. Aust, 1/8/1828, 3(d).

Committee on Immigration, 1838, Minutes, p64.

Ibid, p95.
A man earning 8s a day may certainly lay by 2s6d out of it, if he have not more than two or three children. The chance of doing this is much greater in the country than in Sydney.\textsuperscript{41}

It would appear that in Sydney a worker would need at least 5s6d a day to support a wife and three dependant children. More children would obviously demand the introduction of income supplementation by the wife, or the children, or else schemes to decrease expenditure.

This contemporary evidence is supported by the results of family income and expenditure research.\textsuperscript{42} Using the convict ration and an allowance for rent, clothing and fuel as a base, Table One shows the average cost of maintaining each man, woman and child in the colony during the period under study. Table Two converts this into the weekly cost of maintaining a family of up to six children.

To make the list a little more realistic Table Three has some "luxuries" added, such as tea, tobacco and grog. All were considered necessities by the great majority of people. This budget was made for a family of five, that being the closest to the average family and it appears from the foregoing discussion that this was considered a "large" family, bordering on the uneconomic, for the lower classes.

\textsuperscript{41} Ibid, p97.

\textsuperscript{42} I have adopted and adapted the methodology of English social historians for assessing the absolute minimum income needed to sustain a family of a particular size. They do this by taking the cost of a workhouse diet for each member of a family for the year in question and add to that an allowance for rent, fuel, clothing and other sundries. In N.S.W. the same technique can be applied using the cost of a convict ration plus allowances. The ration varied during the period under study but more in variety than in quantity. "Luxuries" such as sugar, tea, soap and pease were dispensed with when times were hard or convicts troublesome, but the list is a combination of all the lists obtained and therefore, probably errs on the side of generosity. The government, because of its bulk buying power and its supply by tender system, managed to get some supplies more cheaply than the average free man. Thus a difference exists between the government cost and the average cost to a free man. To select people the government also gave money in lieu of rations. The amount appears to have been more than the actual cost to the government of the goods, but less than the actual cost on the free market. Although prices, where they were obtainable, fluctuated wildly throughout the 1820s and 1830s - mainly during periods of crop failure or cattle shortages - they always returned to a basic level which remained substantially unchanged for the whole of the period. A price list of 1820 does not show that much difference to one of 1840.
THE COST OF MAINTAINING
A PERSON AT SUBSISTENCE LEVEL

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<td>SOAP</td>
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FOOD TOTAL | 4/3 | 2½ | 1/4 | 6/5½ | 3/3½ | 2½ | 1- |

2 SETS SLOP CLOTHING | 11½d | 11½d | 5d | 1½ | 1½ | 6d | 6d |

SET OF BEDDING | 11½d | 11½d | 5d | 11½d | 11½d | 5d | 5d |

TOTAL | 6/2 | 4/1 | 2½ | 8/6 | 5/4 | 3/0¼ | 3- |

GOVT. ALLOWANCE IN LIEU | 6/7 | 4/3 | 2½ | 1½ | 1½ | 6d | 5- |

RENT (2 ROOM HOUSE) | 5- | 1- |

FUEL (½ ton/week) | 1½ |

1. Based on HRA, I, xiv, p574. 2. Based on market reports in Sydney Gazette and Sydney Herald various issues 1820 - 1840; HRA, I, xviii, p518; Enclosure from Secretary of State, NSWLCV&P, 1838, pl3. 3. Women were given "greens" in lieu of peas. 4. Valued at £2/10/- per annum; HRA, I, xi, p669. The figure for the children was estimated to be half that of an adult. Slop clothing and bedding consisted of two jackets (or frocks), two shirts, two pairs of trousers, two pairs of shoes, one blanket and one hammock per annum. Women received equivalent cloths. 5. Estimates based on the price of similar but better quality clothing in shops. 6. Market prices unprocurable so government figures adopted. 7. HRA, I, xvi, p631. 8. Enclosures from Secretary of State, op. cit., p7. In lieu of a house the government gave its higher officials £50 to £70 per annum and to its lesser officials 7½d per diem. Blue Book 1828, ff 43, 46, 49. 9. SG, 10/10/1825, 1(a-b)

TABLE TWO

WEEKLY COST OF PROVIDING SUBSISTENCE MAINTENANCE FOR VARIOUS SIZED FAMILIES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SOURCE</th>
<th>NUMBER OF CHILDREN</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NONE</td>
<td>ONE</td>
<td>TWO</td>
<td>THREE</td>
<td>FOUR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G'MENT</td>
<td>16/3</td>
<td>18/5½</td>
<td>£1/0/8½</td>
<td>£1/2/11¼</td>
<td>£1/5/2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALL'ANCE</td>
<td>16/10</td>
<td>18/10</td>
<td>£1/0/10</td>
<td>£1/2/10</td>
<td>£1/4/10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MARKET</td>
<td>19/10</td>
<td>£1/2/10½</td>
<td>£1/5/10½</td>
<td>£1/8/10½</td>
<td>£1/11/11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## TABLE THREE

**BASIC FAMILY EXPENDITURE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ITEM</th>
<th>AMOUNT AND PRICE</th>
<th>COST</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BREAD</td>
<td>181bs @ 3½d 1b</td>
<td>5/3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MEAT</td>
<td>181bs @ 4d 1b</td>
<td>6/0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CEREAL</td>
<td>4½lbs @ ¼d 1b</td>
<td>3½</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POTATOES</td>
<td>3lbs @ 10/0 cwt</td>
<td>3½</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GREENS</td>
<td>1½lbs @ ½d 1b</td>
<td>1½</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SUGAR</td>
<td>2½lbs @ 4d 1b</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SALT</td>
<td>1lb @ 1d 1b</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BUTTER</td>
<td>? @ 2/- 1b</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MILK</td>
<td>7pts @ ? pt</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TEA</td>
<td>5oz @ 2/0 1b</td>
<td>7½</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPIRITS</td>
<td>17.5gals p.a @ 6/0 g</td>
<td>2/0½</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DRINK</td>
<td>10gals p.a. @ 3/6 g</td>
<td>10½</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WINE</td>
<td>10gals p.a. @ 3/6 g</td>
<td>10½</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BEER</td>
<td>1doz @ 1/6 doz</td>
<td>1/6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EGGS</td>
<td>1½lbs @ 4½d 1b</td>
<td>5½</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOAP</td>
<td>1½lbs @ 4½d 1b</td>
<td>5½</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOBACCO</td>
<td>1lb @ 6d 1b</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CLOTHING</td>
<td>2 sets slop per year</td>
<td>3/8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BEDDING</td>
<td>Government issue</td>
<td>3/2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RENT</td>
<td>2 room house</td>
<td>5/0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FUEL</td>
<td>½ton @ 4/10 ton</td>
<td>1/0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EDUCATION</td>
<td>3d per week</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TOTAL** £1/13/4 **PER WEEK**

OR £86/9/0 **PER ANNUM**

1. Where possible these consumption figures are based on the average consumption per person per annum for the year 1828. This was calculated by dividing the local production and import figures for each item by the approximate number of people in the colony (40,000). Blue Book 1828, ff88-89.

2. The average consumption was over 100lbs but Darling estimated it at 34lb so his figure is adopted. HRA, I, xiv, pl31.

3. Average consumption only applied to adults. Married adults probably consumed less than the single. Select Officers working in civil positions were granted 6d per day in lieu of spirits i.e. 3/6 per week. Blue Book 1828, f62.

4. 3d per week was the rate applied in the public schools. Blue Book 1828, f36, private education ranged from £6 per annum for day pupils to £40 p.a. for boarders. SG, 14/6/1826, 1(d).

From this more realistic budget it is obvious that Taylor's estimate is fairly accurate. 5s6d a day for a five day week amounts to £1/7/6, while for a six day week (the more common work week) it amounts to £1/13/-; just enough to cover the cost of maintaining a wife and three children. Another indication that the figures are fairly accurate can be gained from the employers' claims about the cost of a ration to their employees. For a family of five, a total of two and two-thirds rations, the cost to the employer came to £32 per annum. If this is compared to the cost of equivalent goods in Table Three the difference in cost is only £1/13/10 per year. Employers claimed that their

43 The employers' ration consisted of bread, meat, sugar, tea, soap, and tobacco. It varied in the minor elements but a full ration was valued at £12 to £15 a year.
ration was luxurious, while employees felt it was less than adequate. The closeness of the cost to the employer and as estimated in Table One indicates that Table Three represents the minimum acceptable standard for a family of five.

One must, however, work from the subsistence level rather than the perceived, acceptable level. Consequently, Table Four gives the yearly and daily wage required to maintain various sized families on

| TABLE FOUR |
| WAGE REQUIRED TO PROVIDE |
| SUBSISTENCE LEVEL FAMILY MAINTENANCE |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NUMBER OF CHILDREN</th>
<th>NONE</th>
<th>ONE</th>
<th>TWO</th>
<th>THREE</th>
<th>FOUR</th>
<th>FIVE</th>
<th>SIX</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>YEARLY</td>
<td>£52</td>
<td>£60</td>
<td>£68</td>
<td>£75</td>
<td>£83</td>
<td>£91</td>
<td>£99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAILY: 5 DAY WEEK</td>
<td>4/0</td>
<td>4/7</td>
<td>5/3</td>
<td>5/9</td>
<td>6/5</td>
<td>7/0</td>
<td>7/7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YEARLY</td>
<td>£16</td>
<td>£20</td>
<td>£24</td>
<td>£28</td>
<td>£32</td>
<td>£35</td>
<td>£40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAILY: 5 DAY WEEK</td>
<td>1/3</td>
<td>1/6½</td>
<td>1/10</td>
<td>2/2</td>
<td>2/5½</td>
<td>2/8</td>
<td>3/1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAILY: 6 DAY WEEK</td>
<td>1/0</td>
<td>1/3</td>
<td>1/6½</td>
<td>1/9½</td>
<td>2/0½</td>
<td>2/3</td>
<td>2/7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VALUE OF B&amp;L</td>
<td>£35</td>
<td>£39</td>
<td>£43</td>
<td>£47</td>
<td>£51</td>
<td>£55</td>
<td>£59</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

wages which included board and lodging and those which did not. This Table can act as a base for examining the economic viability of families within each occupational category.

The first point that must be made is that the concept of a single "wage-earning" parent was unknown to over half the children in the colony, at least. Those children who belonged to landholding, shop-keeping, innkeeping, or merchant families did not, strictly speaking, have wage-earning parents; rather they lived off the proceeds of a business enterprise often very dependant on the managerial skills of the family's head. This enterprise frequently assumed a full work commitment from the children at an early age. In the following discussion, therefore, single income will be used liberally to describe a wage or the proceeds of the family business enterprise. Where the enterprise shows signs of child participation this will be noted.
In many other cases the family had more than one iron in the fire. The census gives clues to some of the devices used by these groups to supplement the single income of the head. Sometimes the occupation of the mother is also listed. Many of the poorer occupational groups listed their wage earning occupations and also a tiny piece of land and a few cattle. Others had only a few cattle presumably running on the common or on vacant crown land. From other reports it appears that almost every family tended gardens, a milking goat, fowls, and sometimes pigs (livestock not included in the census records) made possible by the quarter acre blocks which dominated even Sydney town until the 1830s. The numbers using these schemes are difficult to judge but again some mention will be made where appropriate.

In the demographic chapter it was shown that the occupational status of married couples with children was much higher than one would expect given the occupational distribution of the colony's workforce. This meant that a large proportion of the children of N.S.W. belonged to economically advantaged families. Most children thus avoided the debilitating effects of poverty and the overwhelming proportion of children probably also belonged to families which either required no work from their children or, at most, household maintenance from the girls and assistance in the husbands' occupations from the boys. On top of this high occupational status the figures relating to family size showed the average family to have only 2.8 children and that over half the families had only one or two children, enhancing the parents' chances of providing adequately without resorting to child labour. In addition, as Table Five shows, the average size of families was much higher in the more lucrative and lower in the less lucrative occupational categories. The more lucrative, therefore, had a disproportionately large number of the children living in families of four or more children and over two-thirds of the children living in families with seven or more children. This becomes more apparent as each occupational group is examined, taking those occupations which more closely resemble the single wage-earning concept first and progressing to those which least resemble it.

44 Aust, 2/11/1827, 3(b) and W. Hughes, The Australian Colonies, London, 1852, p174.

45 The detailed discussion of each of these groups and the evidence upon which the following is based is contained in Appendix B.
TABLE FIVE

FAMILY SIZE AND OCCUPATIONAL GROUPING

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PERCENTAGE OF CATEGORY'S CHILDREN IN FAMILIES WITH</th>
<th>AVERAGE NUMBER</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 - 3 4 - 6 7 &amp; over</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C.E. HIGH</td>
<td>31 49 20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C.E. LOW</td>
<td>40 46 14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M. &amp; P.</td>
<td>34 40 26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L.L.</td>
<td>40 42 18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M.L.</td>
<td>25 44 31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S.L.</td>
<td>51 46 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L.U.</td>
<td>33 67 -</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S. &amp; D.</td>
<td>48 42 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I.</td>
<td>29 33 38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H.</td>
<td>53 47 -</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O.</td>
<td>47 40 13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>45 26 29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M. &amp; T.II</td>
<td>65 35 -</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III</td>
<td>67 33 -</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L.</td>
<td>58 33 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S.</td>
<td>62 38 -</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COLONY</td>
<td>47 40 13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Civil Establishment all received a wage, or fees for duties in some cases, ranging from £36/12/- per annum (for the lowest paid constable) to £4,200 per annum (for the Governor). A majority of the families in this group received over £100 per annum allowing them to support up to six children. Many of those on lower wages (the police, schoolteachers, clerks and law functionaries) held positions which included incentives and perquisites that contributed to the wage­earners' incomes, and nearly a quarter of the lower echelon had some land. The very lowest paid, without any perquisites, would have found it difficult to support more than three children.

It would appear that the great majority of the ten percent of the colony's children who belonged to families in this occupational group were well secured against poverty and forced early employment. Possibly the 15% of children in this group (0.7% of the total child population) who belonged to families with seven or more children, and some of those in smaller families who belonged to the lower echelons of the establishment, would have had to pull their weight. Many of the poorer families probably depended on the labour of the children to either supplement the family income by piecework, service, or by looking after the small farm while father fulfilled his official duties.
The smallest group on the occupational scale, the Merchants and the Professionals, were probably in an even better position to maintain their children than the better paid civil establishment. This is reflected by the many large families belonging to this group. When economic ills arrived, it was often a case of not being able to live in the manner to which the family was accustomed rather than genuine deprivation. This was often exacerbated by the refusal of the husband to accept a lesser position. As with the majority of children of the civil establishment the 2.5% of the child population belonging to families in this occupational category, barring absolute financial disasters, were well insulated from poverty and forced early employment.

One of the best paid private occupations was that of a property overseer. Good overseers on large properties earned £50 per annum with board and lodging, while lesser lights earned at least £30 per annum with board and lodging. The position also afforded many opportunities for an astute manager to commence his own flock in preparation for moving onto his own land. Not many married men took up the occupation, however, because employers were reluctant to take on expensive families unless the wife and children were willing to work.

The position, depending on the quality and quantity of the provisions, provided reasonable security for a family with up to three or four children. In the few families with more than four children there was a high proportion of older children in service or paid employment. The families of this group probably bore the brunt of opening up the land more than any other class, certainly much more than the landholders for whom they worked. Their very remoteness would have offset many of the advantages of their relatively well paid positions and probably explains why so few family men were willing to undertake the work. It may also explain why the older children were sent to service in more hospitable areas instead of staying to assist their parents. Notwithstanding this the parents in this group should have been able to adequately support their families. Their children would have been most advantageous to the parents in attempting to maximise their profits or in working the home plot rather than in supplementing a subsistence income. The pressure to force children into employment was thus less and most would have avoided labour until they were reasonably mature.
According to many employers the mechanics and tradesmen of N.S.W. were the best paid but worst behaved of the colonial population. The variety of trades in this group and the variety of modes of employment make it difficult to generalise about their families' fortunes but the tradesman whose skill was in demand was well off. The contemporary evidence that a good mechanic could support three or four children with comfort seems to be correct but some of the better paid mechanics could earn considerably more than 5/6d per day. Top class mechanics in trades that were in demand could earn from 7/6 to 10/- per day, while most earned from 5/- to 7/6 a day and a few semi-skilled earned less than 5/- a day. Many could earn considerably more than this by contracting, doing piece work, or engaging in speculative enterprises. It was often pointed out that colonial wages were only equal to and not better than those paid to good English mechanics, but equally often the argument was that the wages were higher but so were the costs. All agreed that the real advantage in N.S.W. was the continuity of employment even for the least skilled artisan. This was of immense advantage to a family man, removing the uncertainty of family maintenance and one of the major obstacles to a large family.

Only a minority of free mechanics was married and the average family was smaller than the colonial average. Over two-thirds of the families had only one or two children. Surprisingly, the wage differences between the various categories of mechanics had very little effect on the size of the families. All the families with seven or more children belonged to the best paid, otherwise the indications are that the better paid mechanics had only marginally larger families than the lower paid but were better able to support them. In fact a wage of more than £117 per annum, the first pay category, should have allowed maintenance of a family of eight or nine children. The wage of those in the second category should have allowed them to support at least three children while that of the lowest paid would have been insufficient to support more than three. While most families within this group were smaller than this, a sizeable proportion of the children in this occupational category, hence a sizeable proportion of the colonial child population, belonged to families with more than four children. It is possible then
that a large number of these children would have lived in some financial
distress. This financial stress, coupled with the home industry nature
of some of the trades, probably forced one or two children from a
minority of families into the workforce at an early age.

The uses of children in these areas is difficult to estimate.
There is very little direct evidence of children's involvement in the
trades. Most demanded a prolonged apprenticeship which usually did
not commence until age 12 or 14. Many of the less skilled trades
required considerable strength and children could have filled only the
lighter assistants' positions. Trades or crafts that formed the basis
of cottage industry in England were present in the colony but again
there is little evidence of children's involvement other than the few
examples of reasonably young children being trained by a father to
take over his trade. No doubt the families of the mechanics used many
of the techniques for maximizing family income such as taking in
washing, needlework and making straw hats. A little needlework was,
however, a far cry from the rigid discipline of the lacemaking trade.
Making the occasional straw hat did not compare with the squalor and
depprivation of the plaitmaking trade. Both these industries employed,
in England, large numbers of children from six years of age. There is
no evidence in N.S.W. of the "schools" which existed in England to
teach trades, if one excludes the orphanages and school of industry.
On top of this a lack of raw materials severely restricted both factory
and home industry. Weaving and spinning, for example, were restricted
to woollen yarn, the flax for linen being of fairly poor quality and
cotton non existent. Home industry had to compete with the Female
Factory and Lord's mill which, between them, provided nearly all the
coarse woollen cloth required by the colony. Similarly, too many
imported finished articles chased too few buyers to allow the develop­
ment of wide scale factory or even cottage industry.

The chances of a labourer attracting a wife were slim and only
about 20% of free labourers were married. The great majority of
married labourers were free although there were some convict families.
Again the mode of employment varied considerably but the average city
labourer received between 2/6 and 5/- per day in 1824, and an average
of 3/3 per day in 1836. The average agricultural labourer received between £15 and £20 per annum with board and lodgings. These wages could have supported a family of, at most, two children. 60% of labourers' families were within these limits but nearly 10% of the colony's, and 42% of all labourers', children lived with families with four or more children.

Indications of income supplementation, absent in many other occupational groups, abound amongst labourers' families. Wives often have an occupation listed against their names, lodgers are frequently listed, and the instances of children in service is higher than average. A policy of widely spaced births (or a higher infant mortality rate) is evident, leading one to suspect that the wife worked between children or the children were allowed to mature before another was added. There is little doubt that many children in this group belonged to economically and socially deprived families, especially the 42% of children belonging to families of four or more children. The schemes to maximise income and minimise expenditure depended, to a large extent, on the sobriety and goodwill of all members of the family and meant in many cases the breaking up of the family unit. The necessity for both parents to work long hours probably deprived the children of parental attention and affection. Most children probably received no education and once they reached the age of 8 or 9 would have been expected to make a wholehearted contribution to the family income as unpaid domestic help (freeing the parents and older children for paid employment), or as unpaid assistants to either parent in their employment, or as paid employees of some extrafamilial employer.

It is often difficult to distinguish between labourers and servant although the latter probably described, more accurately, contract and domestic workers. This group comprised some convict families and a large number of convict and free single women with children. The convicts received no wages, the free servants an absolute maximum of £20 per annum with rations, and the single woman between £8 and £10 per annum with board and lodgings. Most of the servants would have found it difficult to survive as individuals, let alone as a family, on these wages and conditions. Fortunately 58% of families had only one child and nearly three quarters had two or less. Nearly all the families
with three or more children were Australian Agricultural Company employees who were probably a little better off than the normal agricultural labourer and frequently had several members of working age.

Because so few of the servant families had more than two children, the chances of maintaining the family were greatly enhanced. One cannot, moreover, estimate how many children had already been forced into the workplace or into orphanages. The evidence indicates that all members of these families had to engage all their wits and talents in order to sustain the family, even if they could not maintain it as a co-residing unit. For a large proportion of the children, care, affection and education would have been minimal, with work, drudgery and deprivation a constant companion.

The first group for which the term "wagearner" is not applicable is that of "Householder". It is difficult to know what was meant by the use of this term in the colony. Its strict definition does not seem to apply to many of those listing themselves a householders. Over half were single women with children while the occupations of the males varied greatly. One presumes that the majority owned the house and rather than disclose their occupation, possibly because it was too low class or illegal, listed themselves as householders. The families in this group were on average the same size as those of the mechanics, another indication that many held poorer occupations. Because of this and the large number of single women it would be difficult to see this group supporting more than two or three children.

It is apparent that most of the shopkeepers' stores were small establishments selling a wide variety of goods although many single purpose stores, mainly butchers and bakers, also existed. The only indication of the return shopkeepers could expect comes from the butchers and bakers. The former could expect an average daily wage of 4/- while bakers received 4/6. Notwithstanding the advantages of self-employment, self provision and the combination of workplace and home, if the margin between the shopkeepers' returns and the daily wage was too great one would expect few to continue in self employment.

46 A person who holds or occupies a house as his own dwelling and is thus eligible to exercise the franchise.
These daily rates would, therefore, seem to represent the absolute acceptable minimum. A fairly high proportion of shopkeepers had paid or convict servants indicating a higher level of respectability and, therefore, economic status. Similarly many had young relatives or young boarders of indeterminate relationships residing with them, indicating that they were well able to support children who may have been at risk in their natural families.

The shopkeepers' families were slightly larger than average with most families having two or three children. Over 52% of children lived in families with four or more children but many of the larger families also employed free or convict servants. It would probably be safe to say that the proportion of shopkeepers, on a rough sample about half, who employed servants or convicts were capable of supporting their families. Of the rest some, because of the suitably mature age of their children, would not have needed servants, but may have been capable of supporting their families. Others were probably making enough to get by but not enough to employ servants, while the rest would have had difficulty supporting more than one or two children. To try and determine the proportion of children at risk in this group is highly speculative but one would guess that it was small.

It also appears likely that the children of this group would not have been forced into early employment. It was in the shopkeeper's interest for his children to receive a rudimentary education, at least reading and arithmetic, so it seems doubtful that very young children under 13 or 14 years of age would have been forced to do work other than house or shop cleaning and the care of their younger siblings. Younger children were used to mind the empty shop and alert the proprietor when a customer appeared and where the shop sold the products of the tradesman proprietor the children were probably invaluable assistants in the trade rather than in the shop.

In many ways Innkeepers resembled storekeepers although there are numerous indications that this was a much more lucrative trade. This is reflected in the size of the inkeepers' families. The majority of families had only one or two children but the other families in the category were large. The overall average was 3.5 children per family, but the better off publicans (those with land) had the highest
average family size (4.4 children per family) of any occupational category. A huge 70.8% of children lived in families of four or more children and 38.3% lived in families of seven or more children. There seems little doubt that a publican, even in the less affluent country areas, would have been well able to maintain a numerous family. Seven or eight children must have been getting close to the limit for the smaller publican as several of the larger families shed one or two of their children. One can safely say that the vast majority of children who lived in families in this occupational category lacked few of the essentials for existence.

The uses of children specific to this occupation group are few and similar in many ways to those of the shopkeeper's children. The anxiety to educate, evident amongst many innkeepers, meant that most young children were probably not subject to demanding labour, but because many of the publicans provided accommodation, the daughters, especially, would have proved an early asset as chambermaids, laundresses and general helps. Children of 9 and 10 were useful, especially if they had been raised in the right environment, and even younger children could be used to mind the bar and alert the innkeeper upon the approach of a prospective customer.

The Landholders are the last, the biggest and the most difficult group to assess. Although only 18% of the free male workforce listed themselves as landholders a huge majority were married and most had large families. This occupational category contained 38.3% of all children living with their families, 41.85% of children living in families with four or more children and 37.8% of children living in families with seven or more children.

For the purposes of this study they were divided into large landholders having more than 500 acres, medium landholders having between 100 and 500 acres, and small landholders having less than 100 acres. The common opinion amongst landed contemporaries was that few would and could survive on less than 50 acres and those with a little more had to maintain strict economies to prosper. This opinion was based on an inflated notion of the standard of living desired by most small farmers and a lack of recognition of mixed, basically subsistence, farming. For a man who was merely seeking to maintain his family and not to make a large profit, landholding, even on the smallest scale,
held many attractions. If one looks at the list of requirements for subsistence level family maintenance, both rent and fuel can be virtually eliminated, removing two of the most expensive items from the budget. The other great advantage was the self provision of much of the food and other items. It seems doubtful, however, that this self-provision would have amounted to much more than the equivalent of the board and lodging provided by employers. So it would be safe to say that a landholder with a wife and three children would have had to depend on a cash surplus of about £28 per annum to sustain his family and about £38 per annum to live realistically. Because of this the proceeds alone of even a well managed property of less than 25 acres could not have supported a family of more than two or three children while that of 50 acres could have supported three or four children.

There is little doubt that the children of the large landholders were well looked after. They had an average of 3.1 children, slightly more than the colonial average, 60.2% of the children lived in families of four or more children and 18.2% in families of seven or more children. Few children would have been forced into early employment. They probably assisted in the management of the farm during and after fairly extensive schooling either at private schools, public schools, or at home. Equally the vast majority of children belonging to the medium landholders would have been well supported by their parents. This group, with an average of 3.8 children per family, had the second largest families in the colony, closely rivalling those of the merchants. A huge 75% of children in this group belonged to families with four or more children and 31% to families with seven or more children.

It seems strange that the medium landholders had more children than the more secure large landholders. One reason was that the large landholders consisted mainly of two groups; those who had slowly acquired more land over the years while their families matured and departed, and those young capitalist emigrants who had only just commenced a family. The medium landholders on the other hand, were often middle aged men whose families were complete and still intact. The size of the home more closely resembled that of the family as
few children had left home to work or to attend private boarding schools. Another reason was that most medium landholders were emancipists who depended on family labour as they were unable or not allowed to keep convict servants. Probably some of the children in the families with seven or more children were deprived in some areas. It would also be accurate to say that a large proportion of the children, the boys especially, were engaged in unpaid farm work from an early age. To minimise expenses and to maximise income many parents utilized their children's labour at an early age, especially during peak labour periods such as sowing, harvesting, lambing or shearing.

With small landholders much depended upon the quality of the land, the landholder, and the willingness of the parents to restrict the number of children. Obviously some efforts were made to either restrict the family or launch children into the workforce at an early age for the average number of children was 2.7, below the colonial average, and only 49% of children in this category lived in families of four or more children. However, this 49% represents 17.1% of all the children in the colony living in families of four or more, by far the largest occupational percentage. A tiny 3.2% of children lived in families of seven or more representing only 4.5% of the total number of children in the colony in families of that size.

From the information provided to Bigge it appeared that the very smallest landholders could not hope to support more than two or three children and those with 60 acres or over could support about four or five. For those on plots too small to provide for their family (and there were many), the only option was for the landholder to hire himself out as a labourer of one sort or another to provide a cash income. Nearly a quarter of those included as small landholders, most usually those with less than twenty-five acres, listed themselves as having a second occupation, normally as a labourer or a mechanic. Even in these cases the landholding family had an advantage as the labourer's yearly wage of about £34, plus the advantages of some property, covered the amount required to sustain a family of three or four.

Notwithstanding all this those landholders on the smallest plots with large families must have found the maintenance of their families a daunting task. The slightest lapse from thrift, sobriety or physical wellbeing on the part of either parent must have rendered the continued
existence of the family highly doubtful. It seems likely that a majority of children from this category who lived in families of seven or more children would have been living in a degree of deprivation. A significant proportion of those living in families of four or more would also have felt some deprivation. Certainly most children belonging to this group would have been forced into work on the home farm and many into paid employment by piece work or service.

By drawing together the above information it is possible to gain some idea of the number of families and the number of children who would not have been adequately supported by a single wage. Table Six pulls together that information. Column B lists the number of children the wageearner or business could have supported without income supplementation schemes. As the above discussion showed, most who had land, whether they listed themselves as landholders or not, and many shopkeepers probably depended on a total family commitment for the business to survive so one should probably say "without income supplementation schemes outside the family business". The Table is extremely conservative and, by showing that the majority of families could have survived...
but that a majority of children belonged to families who would not have been viable on a single wage, paints a far worse picture than probably existed. The discussion above made it clear that half the low civil establishment, half the small landholders, half the shopkeepers, and many of the mechanics and tradesmen could support at least four children. Increasing these categories by just one child (the figures in brackets in Table Six) increases the proportion of viable families and children living in viable families quite dramatically to a far more realistic level.

This does not mean that a large number of children were required to go out to work. In many cases the additional income provided by piecework done by the wife or one older child would have been sufficient to make many more families capable of providing for the rest of the children. In fact the great majority of the children in families were incapable of meaningfully contributing to the family income because of their extreme youth. The families most at risk were those where there was a combination of a low basic income from the male head (from low occupational status, a lack of sobriety, or poor management), no additional financial support from land, cattle or other livestock, no possibility of income supplementation by other family members and a large family.

The above discussion also revealed that there were four, theoretically distinct, roles open to children, three of which contributed to family maintenance but only one of which required the child to leave home.

The first was to be purely a consumer of goods produced by the family and the State, and to be a non participant in the production of the family income. Examples may be the infant child or the child who was sent to boarding school for the whole of the year.

The second was an unpaid quasi-domestic servant, carrying out the functions of family maintenance, such as childcare, cooking, and washing, thereby freeing the parents and siblings for income producing labour. Children could of course do this within their own home or within the home of a relative (most especially that of a married sibling) or friend. In these cases the family was relieved of the maintenance of the child which was of economic benefit to the home.

The third was to be an integral part of an income producing unit, such as a brickmaker's son acting as his "pugger-up", or the child
participating in a home industry such as mantua-making, weaving, or bootmaking. The most obvious one in N.S.W. was the use of children on parental farms in the management of livestock, or the sowing, tending and reaping of agricultural produce. In this option the child was unpaid. The head of the unit, either by contracting to work as a unit, by selling the total production of all members of the unit, or by maximizing his output while minimizing his costs, received all payments which maintained the home or production unit.

In the fourth, the child was sent from the family either on a daily or permanent basis to paid employment in the workforce. If the position was permanent the child either severed all relationship with the family and kept the wage to itself, or it provided a supplementary income for the home. Either way it was relieving the family of the cost of its maintenance thereby making the home more economically viable. If the position was daily the child could use the wage to either maintain itself or, more probably, supplement the family income.

One is left wondering why, in so many cases, large families who must have been bordering on poverty kept their children at home though they were quite old enough to enter the workforce, relieve the family of their maintenance and possibly supplement the family's income. It appears that most families besides desiring for emotional reasons, to keep their children at home, saw more merit in options two and three rather than adopting option four. Most families could survive, apparently, with this type of assistance. This was especially true of farming families. Even the youngest children could be of help. The Sydney Gazette reporting a murder case gave some indication of children's occupations when it listed the jobs the children were undertaking at the time of the murder of their mother. The elder boy, about eight years old, looked after the pigs, the elder girl, about six years old, was sent to frighten the cockatoos from the maize crop and, at the same time, nurse the infant girl, and the other boy, about four years old, was used to run messages and to take food to his father and siblings.

People appearing before the Legislative Council's Committee on Immigration in 1838 spoke often of the disinclination to work of the

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47 SG, 17/2/1825, 2(d).
wives and children of agricultural labourers and undoubtedly the same sort of reasoning operated amongst all occupations. George Townshend, for example, said:

The children cannot often be made to do much, unless most of them are stout lads from 10 to 14 years old. the parents generally discourage the children from working.48

This sentiment was echoed by others but the nature of the work offered is made more obvious by other speakers. James Bowman noted that the women and female children
decline generally to do out-door work, even in harvest time. I was compelled to discharge three families last year, in consequence of the women refusing to do such work as was suitable for them; in one instance attending to the poultry.49

Thomas Hyndes, a town man, said that the burden of a large family was exacerbated

by the unwillingness of Parents, generally, to let those who were able, go to service and earn their own bread, and if they are willing to part with any of their females, they ask so much wages, and the children are so incapable of doing almost anything, that they seldom obtain situations.50

It is obvious from the foregoing that daily labour (in the house, the dairy or the poultry yard) and service were shunned by both the wives and children of the labourer and the lower class settler. William Macarthur pointed out that of the 30 women on his Camden property only five or six would accept employment at 1/- per day and the rest preferred to accept piece work, such as washing or needlework, from around the district which was more profitable.51 Macarthur also had about 100 to 120 children on his property and only ten to twenty, aged from 5 to about 16 years, were employed at from 3d to 1/- per day. More often they were employed on piece work and earned more than this.52 Piece work rates for males ranged from 30/- per acre for stumping to 10/- per acre

48 Committee on Immigration, 1838, Minutes, p199.
49 Ibid, p1.
50 Ibid, p212
51 Ibid, p17; see also John Esworth’s testimony, Ibid, p156.
52 Ibid, p17.
acre for tree felling. Fencing, another popular piece work, ranged from 2/6 per rood for posts and three rails to 3/6 per rood for posts and five rails.\textsuperscript{53}

It would appear then that many parents kept their families with them to help maintain their own plots or businesses and to provide additional income by allowing their children to engage in the more profitable piece work. No doubt this also allowed a certain amount of teamwork between parent and child which probably meant that the children never saw their share of the money.\textsuperscript{54}

There were only 157 extrafamilial children under the age of 14 years (3 convicts, 14 apprentices, and 140 "labourers" or "servants") listed as in the employ of a master in the 1828 census. Apart from these children the census gives few clues to the use of children in the workforce. Amongst the children living in two parent families no separate occupations are given for any child under fourteen years and only fifteen children listed with a single parent have a stated occupation. A close examination of the 157 workers showed that 35 were servants to, or with, a relative. An equal number, whose relationship to the adult caregiver was initially not classified, were presumed (for various reasons) to be employees. About a third of the children residing with older siblings (both married and unmarried) were listed as servants, so it seems reasonable to assume that most of these children can confidently be identified as working apart from their parents. Undoubtedly a number of the older, extrafamilial children listed in the care of adults, both kin and unknown, were servants. They cannot, however, be separated from those who were not; in fact, only three of the children tabulated as living with other kin were originally listed as servants.

The ages of these 217 children (Table Seven) confirms the opinion on the survival of these sorts of families but at a cost is evidenced by the example given in John Sidney's work A Voice From the Far Interior of Australia:

There was an emancipist at Summerhill, married with a large family of children. He cultivated about thirty acres of ground, including an excellent vegetable garden, a very intelligent man, but he could neither read nor write, and never spoke to me without regretting that he had no means of getting a little education for his children.\textsuperscript{op.cit., p24.}

\textsuperscript{53} Bigge, State of Agriculture and Trade: Evidence, ff104 & 105.
\textsuperscript{54} That these sorts of families could survive but at a cost is evidenced by the example given in John Sidney's work A Voice From the Far Interior of Australia:
that children below the age of 7 years were considered by employers

to be useless, and those below 10 years were considered only useful
for the simplest of tasks. Only 41 of the 217 (19%) were aged below
10 years while nearly a third were aged 13 years. If only those
listed as servants are included, the figure drops to 26 out of 157
or just under 17%. The Table also shows that there was no signific­
ants difference in the usefulness of the sexes, and neither appears
to have been more useful at any particular age.

If all the extrafamilial children in private care are regarded
as servants only 11% of the child population would have been at work
outside their family. The 217 in recognisable work situations represent
a tiny 3.4% of the total child population, but these figures should
only be compared within each age group to give a more accurate picture
of the proportion of the child population at work. Table Eight shows
that the proportion of extrafamilial children in private care, as a
proportion of all children in a particular age group, rises as the
children get older and the proportion of the child population in extra­
familial work also rises to a peak of just over 20% amongst the 13
year olds.

The extrafamilial children below 10 represent 7.8%, and the child
workers 0.8%, of the under 10 population. At age 9 a maximum of
14-15%, and more realistically 4 to 5%, were working outside the
family. If children below the age of 10 were used for work then the
overwhelming majority worked within their own homes or in the company
of a parent or sibling. Although, for example, it is presumed that
all the children residing with siblings were working, in fact only
two out of the fifteen (13%) aged below 10 years were listed as

### TABLE SEVEN

**AGE OF CHILD WORKFORCE: 1828**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AGE</th>
<th>&lt;6</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
<th>11</th>
<th>12</th>
<th>13</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MALES</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FEMALES</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>217</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TABLE EIGHT
PROPORTION OF CHILD POPULATION IN EXTRAFAMILIAL WORK

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AGES</th>
<th>&lt;6</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
<th>11</th>
<th>12</th>
<th>13</th>
<th>NA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NUMBER OF CHILDREN</td>
<td>3,175</td>
<td>419</td>
<td>517</td>
<td>369</td>
<td>395</td>
<td>368</td>
<td>336</td>
<td>327</td>
<td>343</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EXTRAFAMILIAL CHILDREN IN PRIVATE CARE</td>
<td>NUMBER</td>
<td>141</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PERCENTAGE</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>13.1</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td>16.8</td>
<td>14.2</td>
<td>22.8</td>
<td>17.3</td>
<td>26.3</td>
<td>29.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IDENTIFIED EXTRA FAMILIAL WORKERS</td>
<td>NUMBER</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PERCENTAGE</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>8.4</td>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>15.6</td>
<td>20.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

servants. This contrasts with the over 10s where 18 out of the 45 children were listed as servants (40%). Only two of the children living with a single parent, who have an occupation listed, were below the age of 10 and both were domestic servants in the same house as their parent. The small number of under 10 workers indicates that they were either not released for work by their parents or were not considered to be worth a wage by employers.

Amongst the older age group the overall picture is not very different. Even if all the 13 year olds in extrafamilial care were regarded as workers over 70% of 13 year olds were still living and working at home. The high proportion who stayed at home does not stop until after the age of 18. Amongst 16 year old free girls only about 35% were in extrafamilial work, about 12% were married, and the rest (53%) were still residing with their parents. Only 23% of all free girls aged 14 to 18 were in extrafamilial work, 25% were married and 52% were living at home. The picture for the free boys in the same age group differed in that very few (1%) were married, and 45% were at work, but like the girls, 54% were still at home. In the over 18 age group it becomes impossible to determine similar figures as accurately but the colonial situation obviously had some parallels with the 17th to 19th century English situation where there was no set age for children to leave home and over half of all children remained with their parents until their mid twenties.55 In the colony the proportion of over 20s remaining at home was probably less for the

great majority of colonial born girls were married before they turned 20. Only 71 women aged 20 to 24, compared to 167 youths, were listed as living at home in 1828 and this imbalance must have tipped the scales considerably. It appears safe to say that the majority of children had left home by the time they turned 20.

These figures reinforce the conclusion of the preceding section of this chapter on the proportion of families needing direct income supplementation from child labour. The 30% of the 13 year olds at work is close to the number of families at risk. It would be naive to think that this was the only factor operating, especially amongst the 14 to 18 age group, but it does show the small number of families who could not survive by minimizing costs and maximizing family production and did not need to call upon an additional cash flow created by extrahomial wage labour. This at least minimized the chances of the youngest members of the family (the 64% of the children in families aged under 10 years) being deprived or forced into early, arduous labour.

While the overwhelming majority of these children were listed as "servants" (88% of the girls and 54% of the boys) there were 24 job categories listed for the boys and nine for the girls. In some cases the children were listed with a trade, such as shoemaker, cordwainer, weaver, sempstress, tailor, cabinetmaker, painter, butcher and baker to which they were presumably apprenticed rather than being competent tradesmen or women. Others were more accurate and listed themselves as apprentice shipbuilders, bootmakers, dressmakers, teachers, cooks and even an apprentice to a publican. Once these few apprentices are removed there are few other occupations listed including brickmaker, groom, shopboy, limeburners, shepherds, gardeners and "stockkeepers". It is obvious that the majority were involved in unskilled domestic or agricultural labour.

This becomes even more apparent when the types of families (Table Nine) and the occupational status (Table Ten) of the employers are examined. The boys, especially those listed as servants, show a fairly wide range of employer types indicating that their responsibilities were wider than the clustered girls.
TABLE NINE
EMPLOYERS OF CHILDREN: MARITAL STATUS.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>AGED CHILDLESS COUPLE</th>
<th>YOUNG CHILDLESS COUPLE</th>
<th>YOUNG FAMILY</th>
<th>MATURE FAMILY</th>
<th>SINGLE MAN</th>
<th>SINGLE WOMAN</th>
<th>NOT KNOWN</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MALES SERVANTS</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WITH MARRIED SIBLING</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WITH UNMARRIED SIBLING</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FEMALES SERVANTS</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WITH MARRIED SIBLING</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WITH UNMARRIED SIBLING</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The largest number of male servants were with single men - an indication that they were acting as assistants or apprentices to the adult in his trade or occupation. The assistant nature of much of their work is also apparent from the number employed by aged couples.

TABLE TEN
EMPLOYERS OF CHILDREN: OCCUPATIONAL STATUS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>CE</th>
<th>M&amp;P</th>
<th>LAND</th>
<th>S&amp;D</th>
<th>I</th>
<th>H</th>
<th>O</th>
<th>M&amp;T</th>
<th>L</th>
<th>S</th>
<th>U</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td>MALES SERVANTS</td>
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<td>37</td>
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<td>4</td>
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<td>-</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WITH MARRIED SIBLING</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WITH UNMARRIED SIBLING</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FEMALES SERVANTS</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WITH MARRIED SIBLING</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WITH UNMARRIED SIBLING</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>13</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
young couples (presumably trying to establish themselves and expecting a child) and young families, all of whom were disadvantaged by the lack or loss of family workers either children and/or wife. The boys’ positions are more accurately defined by Table Ten. Most of those listed with the Civil Establishment and the Merchant employers (except the four weavers employed by Simeon Lord) laboured on their farms and not in their houses. These, combined with the children working for landholders, shows that over half (52%) were agricultural labourers of one kind or another. Some of those employed on agricultural establishments were apprenticed to a trade and these, combined with those in the employ of the tradesmen, made up the next largest group. Very few boys worked for employers whose occupation was lower than that of tradesman.

The girls were overwhelmingly placed with young families (62%). 85% of the girls were with families who were probably expecting their first child, had a very young family, or had a large number of young children. Patently the girls were employed to assist the young mothers, or mothers-to-be, with their children and their houses. Like the boys the largest group of girls worked for landholders, but there was a much greater spread across the range of occupations, although, as one would expect, a disproportionately large number were working for masters belonging to higher occupational groups.

Once again these trends are continued into the 14 to 18 years workforce. Amongst the boys there is a higher concentration on the trades with 29% apprenticed and further 16.5% listed as tradesmen. The most popular trades were tailoring, shoemaking and carpentry. Apparently trades or clerical and shop positions were the prerogative of the city youth, for only 5% of youths are listed as town labourers. On the other hand 35% were listed as labourers or servants on agricultural establishments. Most town labourers, however, were probably day labourers who resided with, and were counted with, their family in contrast to agricultural labourers who were mainly contract labourers forced to live apart from their family. Amongst the young women the range of listed occupations was even more restricted than for the 7 to 13 age group. 5% are listed as nurses and 73% are listed as servants. A tiny 2½% were listed as having a skill or trade. It is little wonder
that women snapped up the opportunities for early marriage.

Finally, something must be said about the family background of these children. Table Eleven gives a breakdown of the parental status of the child servants and compares them to the status of all extrafamilial children. When it is remembered that over 88% of the colony's children resided with one or both of their parents the small proportion of children with identified family connections is remarkable. The proportion is even lower for the servants, despite the fact that more children came from two parent families, so the parental situation for the child workers was totally atypical and worse than the average extrafamilial child. Over 13% of all children listed as servants in 1828, for example, had been listed either in the Orphan institutes in 1825 or had siblings in the orphanages in 1828. This is far higher than the incidence of orphanism in the total child population.

The parental status of the servant children aged 6-9 years is even lower than that of all servants. Only four (15%) of these children came from families with both parents still together, and of these only one was actually listed as a servant. She came from a medium landholder's family with eight children aged between 14 years and three months. Another eight children (30.5%) came from single parent families and the rest (54.5%) came from untraced parents. The unstable parental background partly explains another significant point about these young servants. Nearly half of all children, and over two thirds of the girls, were in the employ of mechanics, labourers and servants. This is very high for amongst all child servants less than a quarter were employed by these lower class occupational groups. Such employers were avoided by parents seeking a respectable position

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EXTRAFA M I L I A L</th>
<th>PARENTS TOGETHER</th>
<th>FATHER LIVING</th>
<th>MOTHER LIVING</th>
<th>NEITHER LIVING</th>
<th>IDENTIFIED BUT UNLISTED</th>
<th>POSSIBLE PARENT FOUND</th>
<th>PARENTS NOT IDENTIFIED</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CHILDREN</td>
<td>21.3</td>
<td>9.0</td>
<td>35.8</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>11.7</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>12.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SERVANTS</td>
<td>30.6</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>13.4</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>9.5</td>
<td>23.6</td>
<td>9.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WITH SIBLINGS</td>
<td>26.7</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>16.7</td>
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</tr>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
for their child. It appears that these very young children were

taken, first, because they were not in a position to refuse, and

second, because they were cheaper (in terms of maintenance and wages)
and thus within the means of the lower classes. Respectable employers
probably shunned these uneducated, immature children with poor and
unstable family backgrounds unless they were motivated by charitable
feeling. This may have been the position in a minority of cases where
the child appears to have been taken, as a companion and help, by
childless couples and single men and women.

The 52% of the servant children who could be traced to a parent
came predominantly from low status, and large, families. Table Twelve
shows the distribution of the occupations of the traced parents (the
children who were traced to two parent and one parent families). If the
high-low occupational division used earlier is again utilised it shows
that 83% of these children came from the low division compared to
the 61% of the children of the colony who belonged to these occupational
groups. There is very little overall difference between the children
who belonged to two parent families and the combined figures. Amongst
children from two parent families there are more from the small land-
holding and the lowest mechanic classes and less from the servant class
but this is only to be expected given the higher average occupational
status of the two parent family.
There is a far more significant difference in the size of the families from which the children came. The families were reconstructed to their original size, as best could be, and on average there was one child more than the cohabiting family. There were a number of children listed twice, once with and once outside the family, but these double entries were compensated for by some families who had lost more than one child. The reconstructed average size of all families was 3.9 children, considerably higher than the average colonial family. In the two parent families the average was 4.8 children which, even when the child living outside the family is removed, still leaves them considerably larger than the average family. It is also interesting to note that the children from the higher class families came from even larger (even huge) families.

The inescapable conclusion is that the majority of these children came from families that had been destroyed by natural or moral disasters or from families who were unable to continue as a cohabiting unit because of the low occupational status of the parents and the size of the family. The abnormal family background of these children reinforces the belief that normal families were most reluctant to permanently part with their children preferring to keep them at home. If the children worked at all they worked with the family, or on a daily labour and piecework basis, which did not require the child to leave home.

* * * *

Major trends have emerged which summarize the factors influencing the use of children in the colonial workforce. The first was that the relatively high socio-economic status of the colony's families ensured that most of the families and the children in the colony would have been well cared for without the need for debilitating child labour. At most one or two children from a minority of families would have been forced into taking extrafamilial work and these would have been the most mature children in the family. Secondly, most employers argued that children below the age of 14 years were not capable of significant work and they refused to take
a child of lesser age for a responsible position. Children younger than this were of some use to employers in positions of light work and responsibility, and children of 8 or 9 years were set to work by their parents usually within the home environment. Most of the employers' comments were restricted to the usefulness of boys, but there seems little doubt that young girls of the same age were even more useful in relieving the burden of domestic labour from either parents or employers. The great bulk of children in the colony was younger than 10 and thus fairly useless as employees.

The third was that the overwhelmingly agricultural, and later pastoral, nature of the colony and its unique demographic structure restricted the job opportunities for children outside the home while they expanded those required within the home. A large proportion of the child population belonged to families who were engaged in occupations which would have depended on the full support of each child from an early age. The semi-isolated nature of the life of many families would have meant a dependance on home production for many daily staples such as bread, butter, jams, cheese and candles. This would have increased domestic labour involving younger children in light, but time consuming and repetitive, activities. But in many cases it is apparent that more than just practical considerations tied the family together. Emotional bonds as well as practical considerations made the majority of parents keep their children with them. They were reluctant to let the children go into service with "strangers" until children were over the age of 14 and capable not only of making their own decisions but of looking after themselves.

Finally many of the wives and children of the lower echelon workers, when forced into paid employment, showed a marked preference for the more lucrative piecework. Piecework could be done either within the home or in the company of a parent or older sibling making it more preferable to daily or contract labour.