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Dedication

I would like to dedicate this thesis to my wife Deborah. I cannot express my thanks to her for encouraging and supporting me through this process. To paraphrase Neil Chick's quote above, I too am one of the men that 'married excellent wives'.
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Chapter I: Introducing William Archer Snr:

The Archer family, of Longford Tasmania, hold a privileged position in the story of colonial Van Diemen's Land. Not only were they one of the largest landholders but, between the various strains of the family, they controlled an enviable amount of land and capital – both human and fiscal.

Fig. 1 - 'William Archer – The Miller of Hertford', Artist Unknown.¹

William Archer Senior was born in 1754, and is described as a 'pious man, level headed, demanding the best from himself, and expecting that others would act in the same manner as himself, with integrity and consideration'. In a social sense, William Snr’s position as mill owner and miller placed him squarely amongst the newly ascendant middling sort. At the age of seventy-three, William Snr emigrated to Van Diemen's Land. He arrived fifteen years after his son Thomas had disembarked in Sydney. He was also following in the footsteps of two other sons, Joseph who had arrived in 1821 and William Jnr who had arrived in 1824. Given the length of the passage to Van Diemen's Land and the many discomforts and dangers this entailed one is entitled to inquire into the factors that might entice or compel a septuagenarian member of the English middle-class to emigrate.

William Snr had considered emigrating to Philadelphia before in the wake of the American Revolutionary War. The subsequent decision to relocate to Van Diemen's Land appears to have also been informed by family factors, including the relative success of his son Thomas in the Australian colonies. No doubt he was also conscious of the fact that after the death of his wife in 1816 and now that all of his sons had emigrated, there was little to tie him to Hertford. Another factor that must have influenced the decision was the relative economic and social volatility of post-Napoleonic England. Whilst his trade in milling saw him profit during the worst years of the war with France, the demobilisation of troops brought both sharp drops in the price of consumer goods and commodities, as well as a marked increase in people

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4 Chick, *The Archers of Van Diemen's Land*, pp. 16.
unemployed and dependant on charity. On a more personal level, this time of instability coincided with a series of unprofitable business expansions undertaken by William Snr's milling business. Given all these factors, Van Diemen's Land represented a secure environment where he could expect to be well catered for in his old age.

The comparative late arrival in Van Diemen's Land by both William Archers was due to difficulty in extricating themselves from bankruptcy proceedings, and a subsequent defamation action pressed by William Snr. The bankruptcy arose from William Snr's capital investment in a paper production venture in 1822. Neil Chick argues that his disastrous venture into Colthrop Paper Mills was doomed by two factors. Firstly, the production was beset with technical difficulties inherent in an attempt to mechanise a previously highly skilled and specialised production process, and simultaneously hampered by the failure of machinery adapted for use. The other factor that influenced the failure was the actions of unscrupulous and incompetent business partners. Although William Jnr acted as his father's agent in this venture and was thus privy to the day-to-day operations, the actions of other partners sank the business into debt and ultimately saw William Snr insolvent and incarcerated in Fleet Prison. The debts incurred by the venture were exacerbated by the trading debts amassed in their father's name by Joseph and Thomas in Van Diemen's Land. The extent to which this affected the later arrival in the colonies by both Williams is

7 Chick, The Archers of Van Diemen's Land, p. 21.
8 Chick, The Archers of Van Diemen's Land, pp. 21-25.
evidenced in the December 1822 letter from son William to Edward Archer, in which the former wrote:

‘I felt great surprise that [Joseph] and Thomas should entertain an Intention of applying to purposes of individual gain the Sums which ought to be remitted to reimburse my Father & satisfy the Creditors yet unpaid for their Goods.’

It is clear that the relationship between the Archers that settled on the Norfolk Plains was influenced by the tension that emanated from the previous business failures.

The Brickendon diary – the main piece of physical evidence for this thesis – offers a remarkable insight into the Assignment system, and the ongoing relations between masters and their convict workers. Written in an even hand and lucidity that belies his seventy five years of age, the dairy dates from 11th August 1829, and includes daily entries until 24th February 1830. William Snr used the diary to document the daily tasks assigned to the convict workforce, the deployment of bullock teams, and the use of specialised labour from within the convict ranks.

Robert A. Fothergill argues that diary writing as a ‘flourishing autonomous activity’ springs from no-single motive, and that diaries are ‘best regarded as the coalescence of a number of pre-diary habits’. William Snr's diary could be described as a farm management journal as well as a personal chronicle of his trials and tribulations in dealing with his assigned servants. Fothergill argues that such 'public journals' are undertaken as a 'self-appointed [task], performed for the sake of its... usefulness'. Although such diaries (and diarists) do not resemble Samuel Pepys' prodigious distillation of the self, and at best become the 'unedited masterpiece' of

12 Robert A. Fothergill, Private Chronicles, p. 16.
Landon Carter, they do however 'convey a picture of life being lived day to day' interspersed with private concerns.\textsuperscript{13}

As a narrator William Snr was generally very timely in recording his entries. For example, the entry for Friday 9 October 1829 reports the appearance of John Welch ‘before the Police Magistrate Capt. Smith’.\textsuperscript{14} Welch's conduct record also records that he was brought before the bench on the same day, and the offences with which he was charged and the punishment received are the same in both accounts.\textsuperscript{15}

The main exceptions to this rule are the entries for some Saturdays and Sundays, which are possibly recorded in one sitting on the Sunday as they share the same nib and page. One practice that provides a useful insight into the construction of the diary is William Snr's habit of correcting entries when new information came to light. In other cases, he removed incorrect data from the account. For example, he recorded that ‘Turnip Seed: Soaked about 3 pints of the Swedish about 2 Hours and Dried it in the Shade’, but with a different nib – and obviously at a later point – he added that ‘this [seed] was too old and did not come up’.\textsuperscript{16} Similarly, other entries for quantities, places, and personnel are underscored and left blank with the intention of being filled in at a later point, and in many cases the information is amended retrospectively.

Likewise, some entries include retrospective data that refers to events occurring on previous days. William Snr's actions suggest that he strove to keep the most accurate account of the daily happenings at Brickendon by removing or correcting erroneous data from his account as well as by augmenting entries with newly discovered

\textsuperscript{14} Diary of William Archer Snr, 11 August 1829 till 24 February 1830 [Hereafter referred to as W.A.D.J], 9 October 1829. William Snr's grammatical style reproduced throughout.
\textsuperscript{15} 788, John Welch, per Asia (2), Con. 31.
information. This endeavour is reinforced by his recording pertinent data in a timely fashion. In this sense, the diary appears to have been an active record. It was a working tool which William Snr employed in the course of the routine management of the estate.

It is clear from the data in the diary that William’s gathering of information was both empirical, and was also garnered through contact and collusion with the convict labour force. The empirical nature of William’s data gathering is evidenced by the amount of entries that have a semi-conversational quality, and clearly indicate that William is an active participant. One example that illustrates this point occurred on 11 December 1829. In describing an act of trespass, William wrote ‘I told the man to inform his Master that I should bring an Action against him’.\(^\text{17}\) William Snr was clearly present and participated in the argument. However within the same entry, he also wrote that he asked ‘Ditchfield to count them [a herd of bullocks] and to remember what he had seen’.\(^\text{18}\) Perhaps with an eye to future court action, William Snr used his diary to record, not just his actions, but to confirm that the trespass was witnessed by Ditchfield, one of his assigned servants. The relationship between William Snr and convict William Mackay is particularly interesting. It is clear from the diary that Mackay frequently made reports to William Snr about the actions of other assignees in his role as overseer. Many entries are thus not a record of events as seen by William Snr, but an account as reported by Mackay.

\(^{16}\) W.A.D, 12 December 1829.  
\(^{17}\) W.A.D, 11 December 1829.  
\(^{18}\) W.A.D, 11 December 1829.
In more general terms the diary is a strange mix of confessional narrative and almanac-like recording of events. As with many colonial diaries there is regular attention to natural phenomena. Many entries deal largely with the weather, for example 'Showers during the night and the day, but merely showers'. Others relate such phenomena as the rising and falling of river levels, the state of different paddocks, and snow levels on neighbouring mountains. The structure and manner in which the tasks assigned to the labour force can best be described as methodical. Whilst many entries are succinct, such as 'Fencing: Fennell Lowen & Fetton' or 'Plows: One Team Six cross plowing the fallow by Whytes Garden', others are more expansive and reflective, often noting techniques employed by the assigned labour. Towards the end of this diary, William begins to record some aspects in greater detail, namely the weights of mutton carcass and flour bags for convict victualling, and in some instances, the names of the individual bullocks in various teams.

The diary contains other journal style entries that relate to the running of Brickendon. These include a list of William Snr's correspondence in and out, certain details of accounts, and a societal dimension in the recording of visitors to and from Brickendon and neighbouring farms. Complementing these entries that are not wholly production related is narrative that could be described as confessional. On 21 September 1829 after the district was overrun with 'BUSHRangers. Seven of them', William Snr secretly rebuked his son William for wasting 'ten or twelve days at

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20 W.A.D, 22 September 1829.
21 W.A.D, 10 November 1829.
22 In the first few entries of the diary William talks of a bullock named 'Roger' – and on one occasion in a more affectionate sense as 'Old Roger' - and does refer to some of the bullock team by name early on. However, towards the end, William recites detailed memberships of different bullock teams. See W.A.D 11 August 1829–12 August 1829, W.A.D, 22 December 1829.
Willis's Harrison's & Clark's when his presence was especially required to look after his own affairs at Home against a villainous set of thieves & felons. In a similar manner, he noted that he 'Quarrelled with William', and within the same week 'Quarrelled with Thomas'. These tensions were resolved by letters that William Snr wrote to his two sons which he also recorded in the diary. The confessional element of the diary transforms William Snr's diary habit into an almost cathartic experience.

With access to such vivid detail of assignment era Van Diemen's Land there are manifold applications for the data. This thesis will focus on the opportunity to investigate how the data in the diary can be used to enhance our understanding of the daily lived experience of convict lives and especially how this differed to, and complements currently held views of convictism. This thesis will argue that life at Brickendon differed from accounts that attempt to understand, quantify, and empower convicts utilising official records. Such accounts, as noted by Alan Atkinson and acknowledged by Ian Duffield, tend to 'deny the diversity of convict experience'. To achieve this, the diary will be transcribed, and transposed into a database to allow manipulation of relevant entries and to subject some portions of it to basic quantitative analysis.

23 W.A.D, 21 September 1829.
24 W.A.D, 14 August 1829 and 19 August 1829.
25 W.A.D, 19 August 1829.
Chapter II: Literature Review

The diary kept by William Archer Snr at 'Brickendon' offers a valuable insight into agricultural practices in Van Diemen's Land during the assignment era. The information it contains demonstrates how convict labour was organised and managed at a micro level. It also sheds light on the manner in which William Snr approached a range of issues relating to agriculture and agronomy. The diary also provides evidence on, not just the means by which William Snr sought to exert his power, but the manner in which his authority was challenged by the property's convict labour force. The Archer diary is an important source not only because of the level of detail it provides, but because it presents the opportunity to test some of the claims made in the wider literature through a detailed study of colonial agricultural and labour management practices at a local level.

When it comes to discussions of the nature and efficiency of assigned agricultural labour the existing literature is divided. In *Land Settlement in Early Tasmania*, Sharon Morgan argued that farmers in the colonies faced additional problems to those left at home in Britain.²⁷ Whilst acknowledging the transplantation of European methods of farming into a literally "antipodean" context was compounded by the number of settlers with 'little or no previous agricultural experience', Morgan argued that the 'greatest troubles came in human form' noting that 'there were problems...with the convict labour force'.²⁸ While the two chapters in which Morgan chronicles colonial agricultural and pastoral practices contain no

²⁸ Sharon Morgan, *Land Settlement in Early Tasmania*, p. 3.
references to the assigned workers, in the chapter entitled 'Farming in a Convict Colony', she dwells in some detail on the consequences of employing labourers drawn overwhelmingly, as she sees it, from a residuum of professional criminals. Morgan devotes little or no space to issues of labour relations, management and organisation, and instead she chronicled a list of masters' complaints such as bushranging, disciplinary issues, sheep stealing, rape, and the 'lack of reliable labour'.

Robert Hughes is similarly disparaging of convict labour, arguing that labour output was moderated to a level that 'kept you out of the hands of the flogger' and subsequently that the 'mediocrity of convict labor drove free workers' wages up'.

When Morgan does engage with the issue of convict labour her understanding and approach to convictism and colonial labour is problematic. In a relationship described as 'complex', Morgan relates that post-harvest, George Hobler - a neighbor of William Snr's Altamont grant near Quamby - not only found the efforts of his convicts praiseworthy, but saw fit to reward the workers 'with a haunch of roast mutton and "abundance of strong wiskey [sic] grog"'. Similarly, Morgan relates that James Sutherland gifted a departing convict with money and 'a written character reference, noting that he had never had occasion to find fault with the man'. Such testimonials of masters' satisfaction are ignored, however, in Morgan's final assessment. She concludes that 'we should perhaps be surprised not that so many settlers failed, but that so many prospered'. In dealing with convict labour, Morgan's positivist approach leads her to assume that because convict masters and middle-class

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31 Sharon Morgan, *Land Settlement in Early Tasmania*, p. 133.
33 Sharon Morgan, *Land Settlement in Early Tasmania*, p. 142.
commentators have labeled convicts as 'recalcitrant and lazy', that is the way they must have been.\textsuperscript{34} Such assertions on behalf of the masters are accepted as unproblematic facts by Morgan, and are given primacy over accounts that represent convict labourers in favorable terms, such as the examples by Hobler and Sutherland cited in her text. Morgan's assessment of such accounts was made without reference to the wider literature of unfree labour societies, in which similar cases are stated.\textsuperscript{35} Further, it completely ignored the profitability of colonial farming ventures. These assertions are made with no attempt to ascertain motive on behalf of convict masters and commentators alike.

This analysis (or more accurately, lack of analysis) of convict labour and the colonial labour market is based on the assumption that convict labour was inefficient and differed from free labour.\textsuperscript{36} This is inherently flawed. In the extensive analysis and data modeling Stephen Nicholas has performed on the colonial labour market, he concludes that 'the greater the quantity of coerced labour available, the fewer the number of free workers [that were] hired'.\textsuperscript{37} Nicholas bases this argument on the premise that the "wage" convict labour received in the form of a ration remained relatively constant no matter how much demand was placed upon the market, and that this "wage" fell below the convicts' 'marginal revenue product' — the amount they could expect as free labourers.\textsuperscript{38} Such was the extent of the demand for convict labour, that in 1830, 801 applicants had outstanding requests for 2500 convicts — a figure that does not include applications for desirable labourers such as mechanics.

\textsuperscript{34} Sharon Morgan, \textit{Land Settlement in Early Tasmania}, p. 132.
\textsuperscript{37} Stephen Nicholas, 'The Convict Labour Market', p. 117.
and tradesmen. As a result, the increasing numbers of convicts in the assignment system and in public works reduced, rather than raised, the level of free wages. The result of this lowering of the effective wage bargaining position is reflected in the prevalence of free migrant labourers and ex-convicts in bodies devoted to ending assignment and transportation. In Van Diemen's Land, journeymen and tradesmen formed the nucleus of early petitioning to limit work undertaken by assigned convicts.

Complementing the narratives that dismiss convict labour as unproductive and recalcitrant are accounts that argue that there was a lack of technological innovation in the early years of colonial Australia. Such arguments draw upon the notion that an abundance of unfree labour removed the economic imperative to boost productivity through innovation. Fogel and Engerman argue that on-farm technological innovation in antebellum Southern U.S.A was limited to the development of 'organizational methods'. Whilst off-farm innovation in the form of transportation was embraced, Fogel argues the preference for steamboats over railways was interpreted as slaveholder's 'antipathy toward new technology'. In an agricultural context, the argument extends to whether production was boosted through increased allotments of

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land, or improved cultivation methodologies. Geoff Raby, whilst dispelling the notion that early technical change was limited, still argues a similar line. According to Raby, the propensity for Australians to innovate rose 'when the share of free immigrants in the population began to rise'. As a component of his argument, Raby identified the demands the Victorian gold rush placed upon the labour market a major factor in increasing the use of agricultural technology. Evidence in the diary indicates that William Snr was both an active technological innovator and also played a part in the wider dissemination of farming technology through informal networks.

At times convict masters were forced to "make silk purses" out of unsuitable, ill equipped, and difficult-to-manage workers that were supplied by the state. Sharon Morgan relates that George Hobler upon finding an assigned carpenter a 'poor tradesmen', put the man to work as a 'haymaker'. The episode encapsulates popular perceptions of how the assignment system is thought to have functioned (or perhaps more appropriately, not functioned). The master, lucky enough to be assigned a highly valuable carpenter, found the convict had inflated his skillset, and thus had to be relegated to manual work. The Molesworth Committee concluded that the assignment system was akin to a 'giant lottery' — a charge that until the late 1980's was accepted by the majority of historians. Most arguments have focused on the distribution of skilled labourers. The perception was that the distribution of desirably skilled labourers versus those without skills readily required by masters was inequitable, with

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50 The text 'giant lottery' is quoted from the *Report from the Select Committee of the House of Commons on Transportation, 1837-1838 (69) XXII*, p. viii. See also Norma Townsend, 'A "Mere Lottery": The Convict System in New South Wales Through the Eyes of the Molesworth Committee', in *Push From the Bush*, 21 (1985),pp. 58-85, p. 58.
accusations ranging from the system being 'arbitrary', to one of downright 'favoritism'. As A.G.L Shaw argued, by 1832 in New South Wales 'one tenth of the settlers had nearly half the "mechanics" who were available'. The other thrust of 'lottery' rhetoric was that the severity of the "convict experience" was in part determined by the master they were assigned to, and not by the seriousness of the offense transported for, and as thus was seen as an 'uncertain punishment'.

The operation of the assignment system was one of the key areas of convictism that the Convict Workers team sought to reexamine. The conclusion they reached was that the organisation of labour in the colonies was not a 'giant lottery', but highly organised and adept at both recognising the skills convicts possessed and placing these convicts within suitable positions in public and private workplaces. In addressing convict masters' vocal dissatisfaction over the quality of convict labour, Nicholas argues that with the absence of a 'free market to differentiate skill through different wage rates' a 'fixed maintenance wage' for convict workers created an environment where masters would naturally prefer to receive 'mechanics over unskilled workers'. Thus, the complaints of masters can be seen not as a commentary over the quality and distribution of convict labourers, but more correctly as dissatisfaction over 'the government's pricing policy of convicts'. On the issue of urban workers whose skills did not suit the largely rural colonial economy, Nicholas

52 A.G.L Shaw, Convicts and the Colonies: A Study of Penal Transportation from Great Britain and Ireland to Australia and other parts of the British Empire (Faber and Faber, 1966), p. 217.
argues that such convicts underwent 'the painful process of job restructuring'.\(^{57}\) One numerous group of skilled workers who were not required by public and private sectors were weavers, of whom forty-two percent were converted into agricultural labour.\(^{58}\) As such, job restructuring for such groups was little more than blatant de-skilling – a process by which they were converted into little more than raw muscle power. As a result, their value to masters was limited to their effectiveness at both bending their back and keeping a still tongue in their head.

The Convict Workers' analysis of the labour market has been further explored by Hamish Maxwell-Stewart, who has argued that the manner in which employers used the magistrates' bench was major component of how the colonial labour market functioned.\(^{59}\) This use of magistrates functioned in two ways. First, Maxwell-Stewart argues that beyond the regulatory control and punishment function of the magistrates' bench, colonial masters could utilise the bench as a mechanism to chastise unruly but valued labourers, but also to fire unruly but useless or surplus labour.\(^{60}\) The subsequent relegation of the latter to the lower echelons of the Vandemonian labour hierarchy, such as road or ironed gangs, increased the exposure to measures of coercion and surveillance, and added to the probability of such unskilled or de-skilled labourers attracting further punishment on their record. Not only did the threat of demotion serve as a "negative incentive" to curb "wage" bargaining by the higher echelons of labour, it could also be used to "restructure" the useless and unruly labourers to exploit their only value to the system in the form of 'repetitive manual

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\(^{60}\) Hamish Maxwell-Stewart, 'Life at Macquarie Harbour', p. 146.
tasks'. As such, Maxwell-Stewart argues, road and ironed gangs served a similar function to "nigger breakers" in US slave states — "white trash" who rented extra labour from larger slaveowners who in turn 'wanted [the rented slaves] cured of "impudence"'. Thus, by identifying the bench as a mechanism to "fire" labour, as well as recasting road and chain gangs as 'punishment squad[s]', Maxwell-Stewart argues that the Convict Workers conception of the assignment system as 'efficient' and 'not a lottery' is a little simplistic.

The use of the magistrates' bench as a means of exerting workplace power was not limited to the masters alone. Kirsty Reid has argued that in the case of female assigned servants, certain trips to the bench can be contextualised as evidence of convict protest. Reid argues that the low rates of serious offences and a high proportion of 'relatively petty misconduct' recorded in bench records can be seen as supporting the thesis that assigned female servants were "disobedient rather than rebellious". Reid calculates that the serious offences such as 'Insubordination, threatened and actual assault, and the wilful destruction of property' account for a mere 2.5% of charges laid against female convicts in her data sample. In contrast, being absent without leave, drunk and disorderly, absconding, disobedience of orders, and neglect of duty – all areas with precedents in unfree labour resistance patterns –

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61 Hamish Maxwell-Stewart, 'Life at Macquarie Harbour', pp. 144-146.
65 See Kirsty Reid, 'Convict Women and Workplace Resistance', p. 108, and refer to Table 6.1 in same, p. 109.
represent 52.9% of all recorded convictions.\textsuperscript{66} What qualified these actions as protest-driven was the 'persistently high level of demand' for such servants in Van Diemen's Land, as well as the absence of fear of unemployment that might affect free wage servants from employing such tactics.\textsuperscript{67} As everyday forms of protest, the methods employed by such convict servants were 'particularly potent weapons when deployed by...workers who could constantly disrupt...routine'.\textsuperscript{68} Among the motives that Reid assigns to such protests are the loss of autonomy or control over the work process, the quality and composition of the ration and "indulgences", as well as the hours of labour demanded by the employer.\textsuperscript{69} Importantly, issues relating to the ration and hours of work can be construed as arguments about the state of their perceived wage, and thus as instances of workplace bargaining. As such, Maxwell-Stewart and Reid argue that they provide clear evidence that convicts actively sought to moderate the conditions of their "captivity".

Whilst Maxwell-Stewart and Reid have made a valuable contribution to our understanding of the assignment system, their reliance on bench and conduct records to demonstrate how lower-skilled workers could be "fired" by magistrates or negotiate and moderate their captivity represents a differing form of "statist" history to that

\textsuperscript{66} Figures from table 6.1, Kirsty Reid, 'Convict Women and Workplace Resistance', p. 109. The manner in which Reid lists offences begs the question of how many offences in her sample are doubled up. Listed are different offence names for similar actions, such as absent without leave, absconding, out after hours, refusing to return to her service and overstaying her pass — all offences that could conceivably be doubled up upon the master's decision to charge.


\textsuperscript{68} James C. Scott raises the interesting parallel between the 'everyday forms of resistance' he outlines and feminist literature which posits similar patterns of resistance that do not necessarily openly challenge the dominant regime. Kirsty Reid, 'Convict Women and Workplace Resistance', p. 110, James C. Scott, \textit{Weapons of the Weak}, p. 33n and p. 36.

\textsuperscript{69} Kirsty Reid, 'Convict Women and Workplace Resistance', pp. 10-114.
which *Convict Workers* was accused of pursuing. The "lived" experience of convicts can differ greatly to that as seen by agents of the state. The intention of this thesis is to use the data from the diary to demonstrate that the experience of all convicts on a daily basis differed greatly from matters brought to the attention of the state. Further, the thesis will argue that punishment as per the bench represented a smaller subset of "sharp shocks" of discipline, and that disciplinary measures that occurred on-farm were part of a mutually reinforcing system. In relation to the question of the quality of convict labour, this thesis will address Morgan *et al*., arguing that data in the diary demonstrate that convict work was regularly and readily rewarded. The thesis will also argue that as a component of this satisfaction with his labour force, the manner in which William Snr deployed his labour force provides evidence of both labour specialisation and investment in training and retraining.

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Chapter III: Colonial Farm Management Advice.

The relationship between masters and servants represented the nexus between technology, land, resources and capital. In societies that utilised unfree labour the manner in which these relationships were enacted took on a critical importance, and could represent the difference between relative harmony and dangerous volatility, as well as productivity and inefficiency. The critical nature of this relationship is expressed in two early nineteenth century descriptions of the colonies. In his account of agriculture in New South Wales, James Atkinson foreshadowed the difficulties these relationships would embody to potential émigré's. Atkinson's advice to his readership was that 'in the management of convict servants, the greatest care, firmness and circumspection are necessary', and that consequently the settler's 'future success must in a great measure depend'. 71 Edward Curr's bleak account of labour relations in Van Diemen's Land offers little in the way of praxis, instead it focuses on the many potential pitfalls in dealing with convict labour. In reading Curr's account, it is clear he viewed the convict as a 'slave, with no motive to impel him but fear'. 72 Curr argued that treating workers with generosity would result in the 'good nature [of the master being] imposed upon'. 73 Similarly he thought that treating the men with respect would breed disrespect, but that being strict with convicts would result in retributory acts such as tool-breaking, animal maiming and stock-loss. 74

72 Edward Curr, An Account of the Colony of Van Diemen's Land Principally designed for the Use of Emigrants, Facsimile Edition (Platypus Publications, 1967; originally published George Cowie and Co., 1824), p. 120.
73 Edward Curr, An Account of the Colony of Van Diemen's Land, p. 120.
74 Edward Curr, An Account of the Colony of Van Diemen's Land, p. 120.
Atkinson's account of master/servant relations argued that key strategies for keeping the convict labour force in line were consistency in conduct by both groups, not engendering familiarity between themselves and the convict servants, and making sure that the convicts were instructed as to the nature of regulations imposed by the State. The benefit of the latter, Atkinson argued, is that the convicts may then 'clearly understand what were their positive rights, and what part of their enjoyments they derived from their masters' indulgence'. Concomitant with this demarcation of "rights" imposed by the state and the "indulgences" bestowed by the masters' benevolence, Atkinson elaborated that whilst recourse to corporal punishment is integral to convictism, a more effective means of negotiation and labour extraction may lie in judicious acts of "kindness". Put simply; 'the belly is far more vulnerable and sensitive than the back'. This system of judicious "kindness" rested on the master furnishing a 'liberal ration of good provisions and necessaries' and the yielding of 'every well-merited encouragement within his power', and was motivated by the knowledge that 'though degraded, [these men] have still the same feelings and passions [as the master].

And thus it would seem that Atkinson neatly laid the foundation stone for colonial gentry hegemony, and squarely rooted it within a paternalistic mode of social transactions. Whilst not suggesting that Atkinson and Curr's accounts are responsible for creating the basis for colonial labour relations, the fact remains that their accounts articulated much contemporary thinking and through their wide dissemination amongst emigrants, would have undoubtedly shaped opinions and practices in the

colonies. Integral to this construction of gentry hegemony was a rhetoric intended to legitimate the masters' authority. The manner in which contemporary sources achieved these ends was by describing convict labour in highly derisory terms and was part of a larger schema of what can be loosely labeled the language of convictism. Within this context, contemporary observers believed that convicts were drawn from a distinct criminal class, and were thus "different" from their masters. Thus, their values, beliefs, and ambitions were somewhat "alien" to respectable society, and as such marked them as "undeserving". Such views were not limited to nineteenth century writers. The majority of convict historiography up to and including Robert Hughes' influential *The Fatal Shore* bought wholeheartedly into the "criminal class" argument. In what is arguably a distillation of the work of A.G.L Shaw, L.L Robson, and C.M.H Clark, Hughes describes the "criminal class" as:

'part mob, part tribe, and part guild, and it led a subterranean existence below and between the lower social structures of England, The criminal class had its own argot, its hierarchies, its accumulated technical wisdom. It preserved and amplified the craft of crime, passing it on from master to apprentice.'

It should be noted that Hughes' model of a "criminal class" extends to the notion that this social group was a producer of crime in the same way that craftsmen produced goods. From an ideological point of view, criminal class rhetoric functioned much like the language of racism did for the slave trade.

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79 I use the term influential in the context of *The Fatal Shore* being one of the most widely read works on Australian convictism, not in the context of it being a groundbreaking work.
80 It is interesting to note that Hughes' choice of words in the first part of this quote encapsulates his viewpoint, and possibly his ignorance (or defiance) of George Rudé's warning over the term "mob", Robert Hughes, *The Fatal Shore*, p. 165. For more historical perspectives on criminal class rhetoric see A.G.L Shaw, *Convicts and the Colonies*, especially Chapters 6 and 7 pp. 127-165, and Lloyd Robson, *The Convict Settlers of Australia*, 2nd Ed. (Melbourne University Press, 1994), especially pp. 123-133.
Reading Atkinson's recollections of labour relations in New South Wales it is clear that he sought to subordinate convicts, ex-convicts, and other small-scale settlers on the basis of general aptitude, industriousness, and morality. Atkinson attacked them on a class and aptitude basis by referring to them as being derived from 'the very lowest orders of people', with very few being suitably skilled for agricultural work due to being drawn from urban centres, and being 'thoughtless and negligent, as might naturally be expected'. The workers industriousness and morality is repeatedly bought into question. They are continuously described as being 'extremely slothful', with any surplus effort to be 'expended in intoxication and debauchery', and of producing offspring without instilling 'education, useful knowledge, and religious principles' within them. Beyond such disparaging rhetoric, Atkinson sought to dislocate these workers from any sense of British identity by arguing that in comparison to free workers in England, this 'improvident, worthless race of people' could hardly be 'derived from the same stock'.

Curr draws similar conclusions. Published two years earlier, Curr described convict workers as 'idle and discontent... contumacious and insolent', and prone to subvert his master with a 'thousand ways of retaliation'. Ex-convicts and ticket of leave holders incur similar accusations of the recidivist behaviour described in the Atkinson account, most notably depicted as 'persons of evil habits', their sentenced served, but demeanors 'rather hardened than amended'. By depicting the colonial

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86 Edward Curr, *An Account of the Colony of Van Diemen's Land*, p. 120.
labour force as inept, untrustworthy, and amoral to their audience — an audience comprised almost solely of the British labour aristocracy and middling sort — Atkinson, Curr, et al neatly consigned the colonial workforce to a diminished moral position. The effect of this was twofold. From an ideological viewpoint, it reinforced gentry hegemony by rendering a hypostatized view of convicts, thus providing the superordinate with a sense of legitimacy in their exploitation of the subordinate. Secondly, this diminished moral position sought to normalise expected and ascribed modes of deference and obsequiousness within convicts in the presence of their masters. 88

Chapter IV: Brickendon’s Convict Workers.

At the time that William Snr wrote his diary, 'Brickendon' was a land grant of 985 acres on the Norfolk Plains, a location described by E.M Curr as being unsurpassed in 'native beauties and excellence of soil'. In the diary, William Snr provided a day to day account of how that "excellent soil" was made to bear fruit. He recorded in detail which convict was assigned to which task, allowing us to see which labourers were placed in positions of trust or jobs which demanded skill, and which labourers are more indicative of the unfortunates that underwent what Nicholas referred to as "job restructuring". This chapter will chart how this activity was organised, the composition and use of the labour force, and the factors that influenced the day-to-day running of the farm. It will also employ data from the diary to test some aspects of the wider literature.

The convict labourers at 'Brickendon' were both young and on the whole skilled. The youngest (and consequently, shortest), John Watt, was 13 years old, the eldest, William Morgan was 59. Upon arrival in Van Diemen's Land their average age was 23 years old. Amongst the sample of men identified (See Fig. 1, below), almost one-third possessed skills directly relating to agriculture, including six men described as ploughmen. Complimenting this core of experienced agricultural labourers were two listed as carter, two listed just as labourer, one well sinker, one sawyer, and a butcher – all skills that could readily be applied to the business of farming on the Norfolk Plains.

89 Edward Curr, *An Account of the Colony of Van Diemen’s Land*, p. 34.
90 988, John Watt, per William Miles, Con. 23, and 305, William Morgan, per Malabar, Con. 23.
Table 1 - Sample of convicts over diary period

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Police No.</th>
<th>Surname</th>
<th>Forename</th>
<th>Ship</th>
<th>Arrival</th>
<th>Calling</th>
<th>Age</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Allcock</td>
<td>John</td>
<td>Roslin Castle</td>
<td>18-Dec-28</td>
<td>Painter</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1000</td>
<td>Bracer</td>
<td>William</td>
<td>Asia (2)</td>
<td>30-Nov-27</td>
<td>Smiths Striker Carter</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>563</td>
<td>Cooper</td>
<td>Benjamin</td>
<td>Albion</td>
<td>21-Oct-23</td>
<td>Wheelwright</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>470</td>
<td>Dodd</td>
<td>Aaron</td>
<td>William Miles</td>
<td>29-Jul-28</td>
<td>Farmers Laborer</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>328</td>
<td>Farley</td>
<td>Joseph</td>
<td>William Miles</td>
<td>29-Jul-28</td>
<td>Farm labourer &amp; ploughman</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1053</td>
<td>Burrows</td>
<td>John</td>
<td>William Miles</td>
<td>29-Jul-28</td>
<td>Coal miner well sinker</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>898</td>
<td>Cotton</td>
<td>Henry</td>
<td>Woodford</td>
<td>25-Aug-28</td>
<td>Brass Founder</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>484</td>
<td>Ditchfield</td>
<td>James</td>
<td>Woodford</td>
<td>25-Aug-28</td>
<td>Farmers Laborer &amp; ploughman</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>648</td>
<td>Mackay</td>
<td>William</td>
<td>William Miles</td>
<td>29-Jul-28</td>
<td>Tailor 3 years</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>353</td>
<td>Forster</td>
<td>Edward</td>
<td>Roslin Castle</td>
<td>18-Dec-28</td>
<td>Hatter</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>432</td>
<td>Leehe</td>
<td>John</td>
<td>Roslin Castle</td>
<td>18-Dec-28</td>
<td>Butcher</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>521</td>
<td>Padgett</td>
<td>John</td>
<td>Roslin Castle</td>
<td>18-Dec-28</td>
<td>Wool combor</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>352</td>
<td>Jones</td>
<td>James</td>
<td>William Miles</td>
<td>29-Jul-28</td>
<td>Shoemaker</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>379</td>
<td>Luck</td>
<td>William</td>
<td>Asia (2)</td>
<td>30-Nov-27</td>
<td>Farmer &amp; ploughman &amp; shepherd</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>261</td>
<td>Knight</td>
<td>Thomas</td>
<td>Bussorah Merchant</td>
<td>19-Jan-30</td>
<td>Ploughman, any thing but sow, milk cows</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>601</td>
<td>Perkins</td>
<td>Charles</td>
<td>Bussorah Merchant</td>
<td>19-Jan-30</td>
<td>Errand boy</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>602</td>
<td>Perkins</td>
<td>William</td>
<td>Bussorah Merchant</td>
<td>19-Jan-30</td>
<td>Laborer</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>661</td>
<td>Moger</td>
<td>John</td>
<td>Bengal Merchant</td>
<td>10-Aug-28</td>
<td>Glazier</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>305</td>
<td>Morgan</td>
<td>William</td>
<td>Malabar</td>
<td>20-Oct-21</td>
<td>Sawyer</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>651</td>
<td>Murray</td>
<td>James</td>
<td>Bengal Merchant</td>
<td>10-Aug-28</td>
<td>Hawker</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>871</td>
<td>Spratley</td>
<td>Abraham</td>
<td>Asia (3)</td>
<td>7-Dec-27</td>
<td>Farm laborer, thresh, spade work</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>803</td>
<td>Watson</td>
<td>Thomas</td>
<td>Asia (3)</td>
<td>7-Dec-27</td>
<td>Navigator &amp; Barge man</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>814</td>
<td>Woodley</td>
<td>Daniel</td>
<td>Asia (3)</td>
<td>7-Dec-27</td>
<td>Farm laborer &amp; ploughman, can milk</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>815</td>
<td>Woolestencroft</td>
<td>William</td>
<td>Asia (3)</td>
<td>7-Dec-27</td>
<td>Cotton carder</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>307</td>
<td>Palmer</td>
<td>James</td>
<td>Albion</td>
<td>21-Oct-23</td>
<td>Farmers Labr. &amp; ploughman</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>979</td>
<td>Warren</td>
<td>John</td>
<td>Surrey (2)</td>
<td>14-Dec-29</td>
<td>Laborer &amp; carter</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>988</td>
<td>Watt</td>
<td>John</td>
<td>Surrey (2)</td>
<td>14-Dec-29</td>
<td>Laborer</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>348</td>
<td>Macintosh</td>
<td>George</td>
<td>Richmond</td>
<td>30-Apr-22</td>
<td>Servant</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Archives office of Tasmania, Con. 23, Con. 31

The recording of names of convicts assigned to tasks in the Brickendon diary illustrates that the some workers achieved a degree of labour specialisation, whilst others were limited to unskilled labour tasks. Two examples of assigned workers who achieved a degree of specialisation are Aaron Dodd and Joseph Farley. Throughout the period of the diary the work that Dodd performed varied from ploughing and harrowing, to general cartage, and collecting and transporting timber. From November 1829 till the end of the diary, Farley is listed in similar roles. In the alphabetical registers, their trades are listed as 'farmers labourer' (Dodd) and 'farm labourer & ploughman' (Farley).91 As working ploughmen, both Dodd and Farley constituted valuable skilled labourers due to the general difficulty 'obtaining good

91 470, Aaron Dodd, per William Miles, Con. 23, and 328, Joseph Farley, per William Miles, Con. 23.
farming servants, and especially good ploughmen'. Both were clearly either skilled in the management of livestock, or became so as a result of their experience of working at Brickendon. Here it is important to position masters' comments on the quality of convict labourers within context. When masters' complained about the difficulty of 'obtaining... good ploughmen' it did not mean that such could not be had, but that demand outstripped supply requiring masters to invest in training costs.

John Padgett presents a contrasting case to that of Dodd and Farley. As a wool comber, his industrial skill-set did not readily fit within the framework of agriculture at Brickendon. As such, his occupation changed with the needs of the seasons. His occupational trajectory during the diary period drifted between drain digging, hoeing wheat mowing grass and oats, hay carting, stacking hay, and working on the threshing machine as William Snr's needs dictated. His only respite from the hard physical labour outlined was garden work, and only when 'unwell & Weakly'. Similarly, John Moger's skill as a glazier was not one readily required at Brickendon. Instead, he is recorded as digging drains, spreading manure, cocking and raking hay, mowing, and reaping as needs dictated. Moger's only respite from such physical labour was brief sorting potatoes for planting and 'Keeping the crows off the sown lands' while recovering from sickness.

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94 521, John Padgett, per Roslin Castle, Con. 23.
95 W.A.D, 8 September 1829.
96 661, John Moger, per Bengal Merchant, Con. 23.
97 W.A.D, 22-23 September 1829.
William Woolstencroft, a Mancurian cotton carder, fared better in his process of job restructuring.98 Whilst he did perform stints of manual labour, such as sheep washing and dunghill maintenance, Woolstencroft was placed within positions of relative trust, most notably as a bullock driver.99 As such, he performed tasks such as general cartage, plowing and rolling fields, and grubbing tree stumps in cleared lands. Beyond any demonstrated ability, the cost and effort in retraining Woolstencroft with desirable skills was most likely driven by two factors. First, Woolstencroft's conduct record contains only two entries for minor transgressions, the first being in 1827 and the other in 1834.100 This good behaviour is also reflected in his hulk report, as well as in the lack of both disparaging comments about work performance and onsite disciplinary actions recorded in the diary.101 Such evidence indicates that he readily bent his back, doffed his cap, and kept a still tongue in his head. Second, Woolstencroft was both young (21 years at arrival) and sentenced to life. As such, William Snr could be readily assured that Woolstencroft would remain within the convict system long enough to recoup the investment made in training him. According to the 1835 general muster, Woolstencroft was still employed at Brickendon six years after the diary ended.102*
Other members of William Snr's workforce performed highly specialised duties, a good example being mechanic Benjamin Cooper. Cooper's listed trade was 'wheelwright', and it was a task that he was kept at in William Snr's employ. Cooper not only repaired wheels, but also constructed and maintained a wide range of agricultural equipment, including ploughs, harrows, drays, and wagons, and was integral to Brickendon's working. As a mechanic whose skills were in intense demand, Cooper represented the highest echelon of convict labourer, and as such would be greatly valued. In practice, Cooper was a resource that was utilised by other branches of the Archer family. On 9 September 1829, William Snr noted that Cooper was put to 'Repairing Thomas’s [Archer's] Cart which had been a long time used by us on the Plain' and that on 29 December 1829, Cooper was sent to 'Panshanger' to overlook the carriages of Joseph Archer.

The 'loan' of Benjamin Cooper to other branches of the Archer family was not an isolated incident of labour sharing at Brickendon and the surrounding farms. On 8 December 1829, William Snr recorded that he had sent 'Burrows & Wolstencroft[sic] to Panshanger to wash Sheep' – a task they performed for almost three weeks. Whilst there were other workers who were moved to different locations from time-to-time, the harvest period represents the period in which Brickendon received its greatest influx of labour from other Archer sites. On 12 February 1830, William Snr noted the arrival of 'Lent men from Woolmers: Perkins Irwin Reapers… and Leeds

103 563, Benjamin Cooper, per Albion, Con. 23.
104 W.A.D, 9 September 1829 and 29 December 1829.
105 W.A.D, 8-27 December 1829.
who knows nothing but not disinclined to Learn. Price Pearce Smith, Taylor Allen Howe." 106

As a labour management strategy, the presence of a mobile labour pool explains how the Archers, as a group, solved one of the greatest problems that the masters of unfree labour faced – the changing seasonal demands on the labour pool. The problem arises from the natural tendency for the level of demand placed upon the labour force to be a series of "peaks" and "troughs" at different points of the agrarian cycle, with planting and harvest times representing peaks.107 In free labour economies, it is possible for masters to get around this problem by hiring additional seasonal labour. In unfree labour societies, where labour is fixed and cannot be hired and fired on a seasonal basis, this can present serious problems. During periods of peak demand, the workers hardest hit are likely to be unskilled or marginally skilled labourers who performed the majority of monotonous, heavy labour. They were often required to work harder at particular times of the year to bridge the gap between the available supply of labour and the seasonal demand. This was particularly true of monoculture plantation systems of farming, such as the cotton belt in antebellum southern United States, sugar plantations in the West Indies, and of the Brazillian coffee trade.108 One notable exception was South Africa, in which larger slaveholders

106 W.A.D, 12 February 1830.
exploited the 'dovetailed' cyclical demands of grain crops and wine to maximise their use of slaves throughout the year.¹⁰⁹

Other miscellaneous workers at 'Brickendon' included a shoemaker, a painter, and a glazier. These men also had opportunity to ply their trades. John Allcock, a painter by calling, is noted by William Snr to have been 'At the House painting.'¹¹⁰ James Jones, a shoemaker by calling, is recorded as repairing and making the shoes for William Snr and the other convicts at Brickendon.¹¹¹ Jones' trade experience was also utilised in the construction and running of the tanning pits at Brickendon. Beyond being used for shoes and boots, the onsite tanning of hides provided materials for many farm implements, such as whips and harnessing for bullocks and horses. Whilst this may seem to affirm Nicholas' argument that the assignment system matched the "right" workers to the "right" jobs, this is only partly correct.¹¹² The workers outlined did work in their specialty trades, but only on a sporadic basis. Typically they were more likely to be employed in low-skilled or manual labour tasks for the majority of the agrarian cycle. However, this analysis of the Brickendon workforce masks a more pragmatic element to assignment and colonial labour at a grass roots level that transcends the Convict Workers econometric analysis. In the colonial workplace, previous skills were discovered by masters or displayed by convicts in a dynamic exchange of labour and patronage.

¹⁰⁹ Nigel Worden, Slavery in Dutch South Africa, pp. 21-23.
¹¹⁰ 303, John Allcock, per Roslin Castle, Con. 23, W.A.D, 4 January 1830.
¹¹¹ 352, James Jones, per William Miles, Con 23. See also W.A.D, 21 September 1829, 28 December 1829; 16 January 1830, 6 February 1830.
¹¹² Stephen Nicholas and Peter R. Shergold, 'Unshackling the Past', in Convict Workers, pp. 3-13, p. 10.
Brickendon was also a site of technological change and improvement. As was demonstrated by the venture into Colthrop Paper Mills (Chapter I), William Snr was active in adapting technology to suit differing environments.\footnote{Neil Chick, \textit{The Archers of Van Diemen's Land}, p. 21.} This spirit of adaptation was only possible because of William Snr's ability to draw on the skills of his convict labour force. The most obvious feature of this was the reworking and modification of the threshing machine shared between the branches of the Archer family. As a process, it is one that William Snr was actively involved with. On 25 September 1829, he recorded a maintenance session where he had 'Filed the Bevil Wheel and Pinion and reversed the brass which had been put in wrong and threw the Cogs of that motion across'.\footnote{W.A.D, 25 September 1829.} During harvest, frequent downtime caused William Snr to conclude that the machine needed both repairs and modification. He stated the machine was to have 'a set of new Circles and Beaters. To have Six [beaters] instead of five'.\footnote{W.A.D, 27 January 1830.} This process of modification also engaged the skills of the assigned labour force. On 30 January 1830, William Snr recorded he sent assignee George Macintosh to rivet 'the plate on the planks & Beaters [and] Gave Mackintosh Six pieces of Seasoned quartering for the new machine beaters'.\footnote{W.A.D, 30 January 1830.}

This process of adaptation was not limited to the threshing machine. E.M Curr noted that timber in Van Diemen's Land 'does not answer very well for wheelwrights', advising potential immigrants to bring with them 'iron axles for polecarts'.\footnote{W.A.D, 25 September 1829.} Given the importance of carts, drays, and wagons in colonial Van Diemen's Land this caused William Snr to seek a solution within the surrounding environment. As such, he recorded James Cooper as 'Making the Blackwood axletree for the waggon & a
Yoke.\textsuperscript{118} As an innovator, William Snr shared his knowledge through informal networks. On 13 February 1830, he recorded that he met Mr Sinclair ‘on the Plain and offered to lend him a fly wheel or a winnowing machine which Medcalf is making’.\textsuperscript{119} This sharing of knowledge undoubtedly occurred through other, more formalised channels. One such event William Snr recorded in detail. He wrote that on 16 September 1829 he attended:

'\begin{quote}
\end{quote}

William Snr’s use and adaptation of technology reflects the Enlightenment values that permeated the development of European Australia.\textsuperscript{121} This view is reinforced by his role in “improving” convict workers such as William Woolstencroft.

\textsuperscript{117} Edward Curr, \textit{An Account of the Colony of Van Diemen's Land}, p. 97.
\textsuperscript{118} W.A.D, 28 August 1829.
\textsuperscript{119} W.A.D, 13February 1830.
\textsuperscript{120} W.A.D, 16 September 1829.
E.P. Thompson described paternalism as 'a profoundly important component not only of ideology but of the actual institutional mediation of social relations'. In this discussion of gentry hegemony in Van Diemen's Land, the actions of William Snr will be compared to models of paternalism evident in eighteenth century England as well as those in Antebellum Southern planter culture. In the model of paternalism defined by Thompson, he argued that paternalism represents a set of social relations which, as seen from above, often 'confuses the actual for the ideal'. Far from being rooted in natural familial warmth and reciprocity that develops between parties, paternalism was a deeply internalised, studied technique of social control. In practice, paternalism often maintains a semblance of being based upon family relations as the name suggests, but the motivation behind such transactions is solely to benefit the master. Thompson argued that paternalism became a preferred method of social control and influence on workers as it frequently combined economic transactions and social relations simultaneously, and thus developed a deep association between the two.

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125 E.P. Thompson, 'The Patricians and the Plebs', p. 38. Genovese argues a similar line
Eugene Genovese, whilst agreeing with the majority of Thompson's argument, advocated a generally softer line. In particular, he stressed the manner in which these relationships began to outwardly resemble familial relationships in the Antebellum Southern plantation ideology, but argued that reciprocal duties and a deeply internalised sense of intimacy developed, and further underpinned this relationship for both parties.\textsuperscript{126} Whilst no doubt informed by the close proximity of the planters' houses to the slave quarters, this intimacy between the disparate groups rendered acts of insubordination and self-assertion on behalf of the slaves into acts of betrayal, 'treason and disloyalty' in the eyes of the planters.\textsuperscript{127} Further to this, Genovese also stressed that central to planter paternalism was a dependency relationship that the slaves turned to their own ideological advantage. Within this dialectic, planters expected "gratitude" to be the product of this relationship. The slaves however, by stressing the reciprocity inherent to their interpretation of planter paternalism, saw no reason to show gratitude. By their reckoning, the protection and material goods provided were a form of quasi-payment for the labour services they provided.\textsuperscript{128}

As an integral component to cultural hegemony, paternalism relied less upon constant attention to responsibilities, but more so through dramatic intervention in calculated acts of largess and perceived liberality, such as harvest dinners, charitable donations, and through the extension of mercy.\textsuperscript{129} Further to this, the calculated nature of these acts of benevolence was enhanced by the 'high visibility of certain of their
functions, and the low visibility of others'.

Acts of "high visibility" made great use of ritual and symbolic "theatre", and according to Thompson were 'calculated to receive a return in deference quite disproportionate to the outlay'. The ability of the gentry to orchestrate periods of "low visibility" was entrenched in the architecture of their houses, their private modes of transport, and in social structures that engendered separation from others. Herein lies one of the central tenets of the power of gentry hegemony — the ability to pick and chose moments, and in particular the "stage" setting for interaction with social subordinates. Combined with the rhetoric that reinforced the gentry's moral authority, the cultural hegemony that ensued took on a natural, almost "ordained" countenance, and as such proved incredibly powerful. As such, certain events and gestures, such as increased rations for convicts at periods of peak labour demand, whilst having the potential to be perceived as "favours" by the convicts were more representative of a functional necessity for the gentry.

Although this description of gentry hegemony appears monolithic it does not necessarily relegate the subordinate to victimhood, and thus deny them any agency. Examples from all societies that utilised unfree labour clearly demonstrates that the marginalised could indeed directly affect the parameters of their captivity.

Genovese argues that whilst planters conceived of paternalism as a means of legitimating the extraction of involuntary labour, this sense of reciprocal duties, whilst

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130 E.P Thompson, 'The Patricians and the Plebs', p. 46.
131 E.P Thompson, 'The Patricians and the Plebs', pp. 46-47.
132 E.P Thompson, 'The Patricians and the Plebs', pp. 43-44.
accepted by the slaves, was reinterpreted to include notions of 'reciprocal rights'.¹³⁴ Likewise, the labouring poor within the Thompsonian paradigm did not readily accept gentry hegemony on solely the gentry's term, but in a dynamic exchange that was in part 'necessary self-preservation, one part calculated extraction of whatever could be extracted'.¹³⁵ Just as the gentry engaged in theatre to reinforce paternalism, this was met with plebian countertheatre calculated to moderate the limits of gentry hegemony.¹³⁶ In both the Thompsonian and Genovesian paradigms, beyond purely fiscal or material connotations, there is a sense in which both parties observed one-another's gestures of power and resistance, and ultimately needed each other.¹³⁷

Whilst the patterns of deference that such paternalistic relationships extracted from subordinates could be seen as legitimating the power of gentry hegemony, deference as a concept does not inherently equate to acquiescence. Howard Newby argued that because deference can be expressed, both as a form of behaviour as well as a set of attitudes, problems arise from the 'implicit assumption that there is a one-to-one correspondence between attitudes and behaviour'.¹³⁸ In this dialectic, behaviour defined as deferential – the doffing of ones caps, averting the gaze, and bending ones knee – can be viewed as not truly deferential, but as 'ritualized and habitual'.¹³⁹ Thus, such ritualised behaviour can be only 'understood solely in terms of the constraints surrounding the actor that sanction any other forms of behaviour'.¹⁴⁰ Beyond such ritualised behaviour, Newby stated that other seemingly deferential behavioral

¹³⁵ E.P Thompson, 'The Patricians and the Plebs', p. 85.
¹³⁶ E.P Thompson, 'The Patricians and the Plebs', p. 57.
¹³⁹ Howard Newby, 'The Deferential Dialectic', p. 142.
patterns cannot be classified as such because of their calculated nature.\textsuperscript{141} In these contexts, behaviour that might be interpreted as obsequious or acquiescent by the superordinate is little more than a 'superficial observation of their "on stage" behaviour'.\textsuperscript{142} In cases of groups that exhibit true deferential behaviour, Newby argued that whilst the relationship to the superordinate is viewed by the subordinate from a position that it is 'necessarily inferior, [it] is perceived more as one of partnership than servility'.\textsuperscript{143}

\textsuperscript{140} Howard Newby, 'The Deferential Dialectic', p. 142.
\textsuperscript{141} Howard Newby, 'The Deferential Dialectic', p. 143.
\textsuperscript{142} Howard Newby, 'The Deferential Dialectic', p. 142.
\textsuperscript{143} Howard Newby, 'The Deferential Dialectic', p. 145.
Chapter VI: Masters and Servants.

How can these complementary, yet somewhat competing paradigms of paternalism as a means of social control be applicable within a Vandemonian context? The ultimate difference between Thompson's model of "Patricians and the Plebs" and Genovese's relationship between planters and slaves is the fundamental aim of the superordinate. In Thompson's case, deference and social control are the primary objectives, with economic factors, whilst undoubtedly important and necessary to the relationship, are secondary. In Genovese's model, the primary objective is economic in the extraction of involuntary labour, with deference, dependency, and gratitude being secondary, but nonetheless important to planter ideology.

The Brickendon diary provides abundant evidence that William Archer Snr employed elements drawn from both models of paternalism. The overarching need to extract labour from his workforce and the rage shown by William when he felt betrayed resemble the Genovese model, whilst the manner in which he sought to inculcate deferential attitudes through displays of calculated largess highlights his Thompsonian use of theatre. This combination of traits could be explained by the duality of his newly found role on the Norfolk Plains. As a member of the ascendant middle class in England, William Snr may have seen the success of sons Thomas and Joseph in the colonies as his means to break into the ranks of the landed gentry. Given both his advancing age, and his demonstrated voracity as a reader, his experience of life in Britain during the turbulent late eighteenth century may have fostered a desire for social control and deference. Concomitantly, the mode of production of colonial
settler agronomy bore a marked resemblance to Antebellum U.S planter ideology. To illustrate these points, a range of social transactions will be examined to demonstrate just how this septuagenarian male and his sons enforced their will upon and extracted labour from his convict labour force.

The most comprehensive displays of paternalism in the 'Brickendon' diary occurred at harvest time. This represented the period of peak labour demand and as such was the season in which William Snr was most susceptible to labour withdrawal and other convict bargaining strategies. As Alan Atkinson argued, withdrawal of labour in many circumstances represented the only form of bargaining power available to many convicts, and as such it can be construed as a means of convict protest.144 In terms of bargaining power, the success of the attempt to renegotiate terms is limited to the value of the convict's labour to the master. So whilst convict artisans could readily engage in this tactic year round, the effectiveness of this strategy for unskilled and semi-skilled was dictated by the relative need of the master.145 Understandably, in this period of the diary the efforts of William Snr to maintain social control and extract much needed labour from his convict charges took on new dimensions, as does the manner in which the convicts attempted to moderate his power. These entries yield the most vivid displays of the agency of both parties, including William Snr's most elaborate use of theatre and the resultant convict countertheatre. As such they clearly illustrate a dichotomy in that, on one hand they demonstrate the power of the power of Vandemonian gentry hegemony, and on the other their vulnerability to convict counteraction.

144 Alan Atkinson, 'Four Patterns of Convict Protest', Labour History, no. 37 (1979), pp. 28-51, p. 30
During the harvest there was a significant augmentation of rations provided to the convicts at Brickendon. The major component of this was an increase in the per capita supply of meat. For the month of October to December, twenty-five sheep were slaughtered per month. Based upon average carcass weights recorded for other periods, this equates to approximately 3394 lbs. of mutton, and assuming equal distribution between convicts on-site, this equates to 1.45 lbs. of mutton per convict per day. In comparison, for January William Snr recorded 1721 lbs of mutton slaughtered, as well as the purchase of 155lb side of beef. In terms of share per convict, an even distribution would see 2.75lbs of meat per convict per day for those on-site.

It should be noted that the calculation of meat rations includes bone material, and that William Snr recorded the side of beef purchased from James Hortle was 'very bad'. The state of the beef should not be confused however with any sense of economy or false bonhomie on William Snr's behalf, but as symptomatic of the scarcity of beef in the colony, a point that William Snr had already confided in this diary the previous August. Given that this scarcity could be expected to increase over the summer period, the attempt to procure beef by William Snr should be seen as powerful evidence of his desire to provide for his convict charges. This desire is also evidenced in the average carcass weights of the sheep slaughtered. E.M Curr noted that in Van Diemen's Land the 'average weight of sheep is between 45 and 50lbs., and that they are rarely more than from twelve to fifteen months when slaughtered'. For the month, the thirty-eight sheep that were slaughtered at Brickendon had an average

\[142\text{ Alan Atkinson, 'Four Patterns of Convict Protest', pp. 36-37.} \]
\[143\text{ W.A.D, 28 January 1830.} \]
\[144\text{ E.M Curr, } \text{An Account of the Colony of Van Diemen's Land}, \text{ p. 68.} \]
carcass weight of 45.25lbs. — well within the average weight range as recorded by Curr.\textsuperscript{149} This is significant as harvest season was the time of year when grazing fodder was at its shortest supply. This indicates that at Brickendon, the Archers' slaughtered better than average animals, or at the very least, did not resort to the weakest and the poorest stock.\textsuperscript{150}

The increase in the January meat ration can be viewed in two distinct ways. First, the augmented supply of protein served an obvious functional role in a period of peak labour demand. Beyond William Snr's need for labour, this increase in work was concomitant with the decrease in daylight. Stephen Nicholas argues that the available light regulated the hours of work in New South Wales during summer.\textsuperscript{151} This is corroborated by Henry Widowson's observation that in Van Diemen's Land the 'regular hours of work are from sun-rise to sun-set.'\textsuperscript{152}

\textsuperscript{149} W.A.D, 1 January 1830 to 31 January 1830, \textit{passim}.

\textsuperscript{150} Notably, Nicholas' calculation of the caloric content of convict rations is based upon the use of poorer quality mutton, see Stephen Nicholas, 'The Care and Feeding of Convicts' in \textit{Convict Workers}, pp. 180-198, p. 184

\textsuperscript{151} Stephen Nicholas, 'The Care and Feeding of Convicts', p. 187.

\textsuperscript{152}Henry Widowson, \textit{Present State of Van Diemen's Land; Comprising an Account of its Agricultural Capabilities with Observations on the Present State of Farming, etc., etc., Pursued in that Colony: and other Important Matters Connected with Emigration} (J. Robinson, St. Pauls, 1829), p. 55.
Fig. 1 - Daylight - December 1829 to February 1830
(Sunrise, Sunset, Twilight Set)

Fig. 2 - Hours of Daylight December 1829 - February 1830 (Hours per day)
The data in Fig. 1 and Fig. 2 (above) highlight that whilst the amount of available daylight peaks and then diminishes, there is only a small variance of sunset times. The amount of daylight peaks at 15:12 mins at the summer solstice and gradually decreases to 13:07 mins by the end of February, effectively shortening the potential workday by two hours. However, the sunset time for the period begins at 7:29pm, plateaus at approximately 7:49pm and then recedes to 6:58pm — a variance around half-an-hour at either side of the starting point. Notably, the sunset time is later than 7:29pm for over two-thirds of this period. If Nicholas's argument that 'daylight hours' determined the work day, Longford's geographical position dictates that in ideal weather conditions there would also be an average half-hour of twilight available for the whole period, which theoretically could be used for extra work. The data in Fig. 3 (below) illustrates that during this period of decreasing daylight, there was a steady increase in the number of workers employed in harvest-related activities, such as mowing, reaping, carting, threshing, stacking, and maintenance to work items and areas.

Fig. 3 - Harvest Workers Versus Daylight Hours

![Harvest Workers Versus Daylight Hours Graph]
The manner in which this increase in daylight hours and workload affected the 'Brickendon' labour force is evidenced by diary entries for the harvest period in which work is recorded 'after dinner', and in one recorded incident, till sunset.

In addition to the increase in the meat ration, William Snr also augmented the rations of the convicts at harvest time in other ways, including the provision of fruit. William Snr's interest in fruit is evidenced in literature that traveled with him to the colonies, and in a practical sense in the orchard still extant at Brickendon. The first mention of fruit in the diary occurred on 28 December 1829 when plums were provided alongside other special rations to serve to the convicts as a Christmas Dinner. On Sunday 31 January, William Snr recorded that convicts Woodley and Smith were dispatched to 'Cox’s for Fruit'. What is important about the provision of fruit and other items at this time is that it indicates that the items that warranted diary mention were beyond the normal ration and many cases had been purchased to provide incentive. Therefore it is reasonable to expect that items grown on-site, such as potatoes and turnips, would have been increased before going to the additional expense or bother for securing other specialty items.

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153 Amongst the books in the Brickendon library is a copy of William Salisbury, *Hints Addressed to Proprietors of Orchards and to Growers of Fruit in General Comprising Observations on the Present State of the Apple Trees, in the Cider Countries, made in a Tour During the Last Summer also the Natural History of the Aphis Lanata or American Blight and Other Insects Destructive to Fruit Trees* (A. Strahan, 1816). This is dated by William Snr as 1827, and as an interesting side-note, has a pencil drawing of what was to become the stock and bale brand at Brickendon.

154 W.A.D, 28 December 1829. As Bruce Hindmarsh has pointed out, the provision of extra and special rations was an 'important part of the paternalist relationship'. Bruce Hindmarsh, *Beer and Fighting*, p. 155.

155 W.A.D, 31 January 1830.

156 The diary includes many mentions of potatoes and different varieties of turnips being grown. As the 'Swedish' variety is mentioned, it is safe to assume that these were not all bound for stock consumption. See in W.A.D, 12 November 1829 for entry explaining that the convicts 'Began to lay up the Ridges and to dung them intended for Swedish Turnips'. Swedish turnips are described in a contemporary source as being a dual-purpose turnip, and beyond use as a stock feed was 'more nourishing than the common turnip, as they possess more saccharine. In this respect, they are next to carrots, but are cultivated cheaper'. *The Tasmanian Almanack For the Year of our Lord 1830; Being the Second After the Leap Year* (Andrew Bent, 1830), p.21.
The most extraordinary harvest "indulgence" recorded in the diary was the provision of bottled Cape wine. The provision of alcohol as an incentive was common in Van Diemen's Land, and as a practice it has antecedents in both other unfree labour and peasant societies.\(^{157}\) Discussing the use of alcohol as a means of convict labour extraction, Henry Widowson argued that 'perhaps the greatest stimulus to extra labour, is the promise of a little rum, in the hope of obtaining which, work is performed with almost incredible dispatch'.\(^{158}\) Beyond the didactic element, Widowson's argument seeks to portray convicts as wretched, debased, and motivated by simplistic and bestial passions, and as thus fits squarely within the rhetoric of convictism. Yet, the use of alcohol as an indulgence at Brickendon transcends both Widowson's limited understanding of labour relations and the functional, fortifying role ascribed to wine in contemporary literature. Instead of wine being used to appeal to convicts as an incentive based upon a perceived moral deficiency, wine appears to take on the role of reward based on a collective sense of family, aimed at fostering social cohesion.\(^{159}\)

Generally William Snr took a dim view of alcohol abuse. On Sunday 13 December 1829, William Snr recorded that:

'Tomlinson's [brought] Rum on the farm, were drunk themselves and sold a bottle to Gillen, so he was drunk too. He gave up about half a bottle to McKay. They all confessed to the above.'\(^{160}\)


\(^{160}\) W.A.D, 13 December 1829.
William Snr's response to the incident was to call the constable and search all the huts. His aversion to his workers intoxication appears not to driven by the loss of production caused by the after effects of drinking binges. This is evident in the entry for 13 January 1830 in which he wrote that '2 Bottles to Ditchfield Paget Welch. Woodley Foster Burrows Luck & Leach a bottle, Each half Water and a Little Sugar'. The argument made is that, given the ready availability of cheaper spirits in Van Diemen's Land at the time, the provision of wine can be interpreted as surpassing a material incentive transaction between master and servant. The choice of providing bottled Cape wine and not some inferior 'grog' is important to these transactions. Such wine was both an expensive and highly prized commodity in the colonies. It was the kind of thing that William Snr would have poured into his glass when he sat down to eat as his own table. As the wine is representative of something that William Snr himself would drink, its provision to convicts evokes a highly paternalistic transaction.

As demonstrated in Fig. 3 (above), this time of year saw decreasing amounts of daylight, and as evidenced by the increasing number of harvest workers, a marked increase in need for labour to be extracted. As such, the increased need for labour and diminishing available light created a great deal of tension for the parties involved. On 18 January 1830, William Snr recorded that John Allcock was 'Cook for all: the first Harvest dinner served in the field today' – a position he would remain in for the rest of the harvest.

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161 W.A.D, 13 January 1830.
162 It is prudent to note that in the first quarter of the nineteenth-century, temperance movements experienced a dramatic upsurge in popularity, and became a ubiquitous feature of newly industrial towns. In the period following the diary temperance societies were founded in Hobart and Launceston (1832). For more on colonial temperance, see Michael Roe, *The Quest for Authority in Eastern Australia 1835-1851* (Melbourne University Press, 1965), pp. 165-171.
of the period.163 This recurring event is the culmination of the provision of extra 
ration s and gifting of wine that "negotiate" the required increased labour extraction. 
*This notion was reinforced on the previous day – a Sunday – William Snr distributed 
'half a pint of Wine Each at dinner about 7 bottles. 3 to a bottle' to the workforce after 
working on what was clearly their recreational time.164 As Howard Newby argues 
that at times of increased friction in deferential relationships, such 'appropriate 
symbolic celebration[s] can serve as a social control, holding together the inherent 
tension' in the situation.165 This social adhesion aspect of the harvest dinner is 
augmented by a purely functional role. Henry Widowson noted that the practice of 
dining the workforce together had the advantage of 'enabling the master to send them 
away to the field in a body, and when there, their conduct is under the immediate 
supervision of the overseer'.166 In this context, the ability to keep the workers at the 
site of production (instead of dispersing to their cabins) benefited William Snr by 
minimising downtime at dinner. In a ritualistic sense, the harvest dinner represents the 
nexus between William Snr's gifting of wine and food, and his need to extract of 
labour. Not only has he provided wine that he himself would drink, he has provided 
the table – effectively a "stage"– at which he appeared literally in front of his convict 
family as an embodiment of paternalism.

163 W.A.D, 18 January 1830. 
164 W.A.D, 17 January 1830. 
165 Howard Newby, 'The Deferential Dialectic', p. 152. 
166 Henry Widowson, Present State of Van Diemen's Land, p. 55.
Chapter VII: The Countertheatre of the Harvest

Harvest represented a time of increased rations — of fat lambs, plums, fruit, expensive wine and harvest dinners, but this was offset by increased surveillance and labour intensity as the harvest was gathered in against a back drop of receding day light hours. This tense environment, as has been argued, represented the peak of William Snr's need for labour, and as thus was also the time in which unskilled labourers realised their greatest value in human capital form. Robert Miles argues that unfree workers are 'dependant on others to directly determine the disposal of his...labour and to determine much about his...daily existence'. 167 Whilst Miles has encapsulated an important psychological aspect of convictism, the practicalities of what happened at the workplace illustrate that convicts clearly negotiated some aspects of the way in which they worked. Evidence from the diary strongly suggests that both William Snr and his convict labour force engaged in behaviour calculated to limit the boundaries of each other's power in a constantly negotiated relationship.

One instance in which a group of convicts clearly redefine their workplace, and sought to limit William Snr's authority over what they perceived as their duties, occured on Saturday, 2 January 1830. William recorded that at 'Sunsetting the men all struck leaving the Stack the Wagons and the floor round about the stack in a very littered and unsafe state, nearly 3 loads still to unload'. 168 As the weather conditions were 'fine', the refusal to work after sunset denied William Snr an extra 34 mins of twilight labour to tidy the unsafe workplace. The issue here for both parties is not workplace safety or tidiness, but the hours of work. Stephen Nicholas notes that the

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168 W.A.D, 2 January 1830.
working week for convicts in assignment was $5^{1/2}$ days.\textsuperscript{169} That this walk-off occurred on a Saturday illustrates that not only were the convicts refusing to work later than sunset, they were already half-a-day overtime.

By refusing to work after sunset, the convicts demonstrated that they had an implicit understanding of what constituted their own time and what was their master's. This understanding is a component of the ideological process that converted the ration into a wage, and the reworking of convict "duties" into convict "rights".\textsuperscript{170} Kirsty Reid has argued that such 'well developed notions' of what constituted their own time were motivated by their view of what constituted customary rights, and were frequently articulated in both convict protest and used as a means of defense in disciplinary proceedings.\textsuperscript{171} Bruce Hindmarsh has noted that William Archer Jnr faced a similar response from an assigned servant. Upon asking William Rogers to 'put some Hay in the carts for the bullocks', he was met with the words 'I'll be damned if I do—it is sundown'.\textsuperscript{172} Hindmarsh has further argued that this demarcation of work and free time was driven by the desire to develop and maintain a distinct recreational counter-culture to contrast 'the control of penal authorities and their assigned masters'.\textsuperscript{173} Through this assertion of rights, the recreational activities of convicts thus formed a powerful sense of identity based in their shared experience of incarceration.\textsuperscript{174} William Snr's reaction to this protest was swift: He withheld the indulgences that

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{169} Stephen Nicholas, 'The Care and Feeding of Convicts', p. 187.
\item \textsuperscript{171} Kirsty Reid, 'Convict Women and Workplace Resistance', p. 111. See also E.P Thompson, 'The Moral Economy of the English Crowd in the Eighteenth Century', in \textit{Customs in Common}, pp.185-258, p. 188, Alan Atkinson, 'Four Patterns of Convict Resistance', p. 28.
\item \textsuperscript{173} Bruce Hindmarsh, "No man can keep me from a Woman unless he puts me in Gaol": Love, Sex and Male Convicts in Van Diemen's Land', paper presented at 'Colonial and Post-Colonial Studies Conference', University of Stirling, (March 1999), p. 5.
\end{itemize}
would have ordinarily been distributed to all men that night.\footnote{175} By doing so, William Snr explicitly linked the indulgence to the extraction of extra labour, and thus partially ratified the convict's ideological reworking of the ration as a wage. In this context, the (literally) \textit{ex gratia} payment of the paternalistic indulgence becomes a purely economic transaction calculated to shift the diminishing time equation to benefit the master. For the convicts, the indulgence was thus transformed into an "overtime" payment.

William Snr's remonstrance over the refusal to work gained in intensity, and spilt into the following day, noting that he had 'Assembled them all and lectured them on their duty and their conduct'.\footnote{176} By marshalling the men, William Snr demonstrated to the labour force that he had power over their lives. He achieved this by assembling them on a Sunday, unequivocally convict recreational time, \textit{not} farm time. This sense of power is reinforced by William Snr's ability to assemble the "staff" in an arena of his choosing for instruction over their conduct and their \textit{duties}.\footnote{177} As a social transaction, William Snr's engagement with his convict charges was done upon 'markedly advantageous terms', and served to formalise his social power as social authority.\footnote{178} That this "dressing down" occurred on a Sunday further reinforced the message that in not bending to the will of their master, the convicts had morally

\footnote{175}Bruce Hindmarsh, 'Beer and Fighting', p. 156.\footnote{176}This is not recorded in the 2 January entry, but in the 3 January entry.\footnote{177}W.A.D, 3 January 1830.\footnote{178}The constraints of space and scope forbid applying a Foucauldian analysis, an Isaacian action-statements reading, or using Geertzian 'thick description' to further understand this episode, but I must acknowledge my debt to these scholars. See Michel Foucault, \textit{Knowledge/Power: Selected Interviews and other Writings}, Edited by Colin Gordon (Pantheon Books, 1980), Rhys Isaac, \textit{The Transformation of Virginia} (Paperback edition: University of North Carolina Press, 1999), Clifford Geertz, \textit{The Interpretation of Cultures: Selected Essays} (Basic Books, 1973). In a colonial context, W.M. Robbins has done a similar analysis of Hyde Park Barracks, see W.M Robbins, 'Confined to Barracks: The Hyde Park Convict Barracks and the Freedom of Male Convict Workers', paper delivered at Escape! Conference of International Centre of Convict Studies (June, 2003).\footnote{178}Rhys Isaac, \textit{The Transformation of Virginia}, p. 339.
failed. In his “pulpit”, “Father William” clearly tried to link economic duty to issues
of social conduct. When the function of this pulpit time was completed and the
convicts were properly chastised, William Snr reverted to his paternalistic persona
with the doxology ‘And in the end gave them their allowances which had not been
given to them last night’.\textsuperscript{179} As a single episode, this exchange encapsulates much of
the Thompsonian paradigm of gentry hegemony. First, William Snr successfully
combined a moment of high visibility with his ability to pick and choose venues for
social condescension.\textsuperscript{180} He also mixed the occasion of social instruction with an
economic function in the form of bestowing allowances, completed by the gesture of
"giving in" – all performed with a sense of theatrical clemency.\textsuperscript{181}

The convict reaction to the event was also swift, and equally theatrical. Though not recorded in a conventional narrative form, the convicts spoke
voluminously through their actions. To paraphrase Rhys Isaac, the aftermath of
William Snr's exchange with the convicts over the downing tools after an arduous
day's work contains vivid glimpses of convicts not doing things.\textsuperscript{182} For the following
week, the recorded sick list ballooned to nineteen entries. As such, this episode
represents the single highest level of sicknesses reported for the diary period, and
represents one-fifth of all entries in the sicklist (see Fig. 1 below), and almost one-
third for the harvest period. The motive behind this was a clear and articulated protest.
William Snr recorded that:

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item \textsuperscript{179} W.A.D, 3 January 1830.
\item \textsuperscript{180} E.P Thompson, 'The Patricians and the Plebs', p. 46 and p. 45.
\item \textsuperscript{181} E.P Thompson, 'The Patricians and the Plebs', p. 38, and pp. 45-48.
\item \textsuperscript{182} This is a reworking of Isaac's statement that in 'documents surviving from the past, the social
historian can everywhere find traces--occasional vivid glimpses--of people doing things'. Rhys Isaac,
\textit{The Transformation of Virginia}, p. 324.
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
Malingering, or feigning illness, was one method of convict protest that was practised by all categories of convicts. In practice it removed the convict from the master's employ for a period of time, and cost the employer money in the form of medicine and doctors fees, as a means of protest it therefore combined both a 'withdrawal of labour' and 'compensatory retribution'.

To discourage malingering some masters assumed 'responsibility for all medical treatment on their estates'. As a component of this effort to curb malingering, Nichol has argued that masters also employed 'the harshest forms of medication', including the application of purgatives, emetics, and bleedings. Whilst the motives for employing such methods of treatment is not recorded, the data in the diary does make a case for Nichol's thesis. As the only occurrences of William Snr administering such medical practices occurred during the harvest period, it could be argued that the application of such practices may have been a tactic employed at Brickendon to counter malingering. The first recorded application of such medicinal treatment occurred on 19 December 1829, with '2 Tablespoonfuls of Salts mixed thro' Quinine' administered to James Ditchfield. Two days later, William Snr reported that 'Ditchfield reputes Himself worse, ordered an emetic & suspended the

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183 W.A.D, 6 January 1830. I should also note that convict James Ditchfield is recorded on the same day as coming 'from plow at midday in conscience of Rain pleading illness and I gave him a pass to the Doctor's but he lay down and went to Sleep – and late in the afternoon went to the Doctors who was not at home'.


185 W. Nichol, "Malingering" and Convict Protest', p. 25.

186 W. Nichol, "Malingering" and Convict Protest', p. 25.

187 W.A.D, 19 December 1829.

Hay & Oat Harvest commences. Harvest season continues until diary ends.
Quinine'. In some circumstances, treatments were administered in tandem. In one instance, convict William Luck was reported to have been given an emetic and that two 'hours after its operation had ceased [was given] A dose of Calomel' – a strongly laxative concoction of mercurous chloride that was common to nineteenth century medical practitioners. Other remedies used by William Snr appear barbaric by modern standards. On 21 December 1829, William Snr recorded 'Recipe for Spitting blood. Alcock. Sulphuric Acid 1/8 to Water – 20 drops twice a day'. Such cases alone do not conclusively prove that William Snr was deliberately treating convicts harshly. When he entrusted his convict charges to outside medical care, similar methods and outcomes occurred. When Emanuel Lowen took ill on 15 February 1830, William Snr issued a pass to Doctor Paton, who 'bled him and sent a dose of Jalap [a purgative] which I gave him this evening'. Whatever William Snr's intention in sending Lowen to Doctor Paton was, he recorded with evident satisfaction that 'he thinks he shall try to work tomorrow'.

Whilst Nichols is undoubtedly right to claim that masters used medical intervention to curb malingering, this masks that the paternalistic role that the provision of medicine played in the nineteenth century household. Roy and Dorothy Porter have argued that in familial situations 'medicine involved all the ploys of

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188 W.A.D, 21 December 1829.
190 W.A.D, 21 December 1829.
191 W.A.D, 15 February 1830.
192 W.A.D, 15 February 1830.
power and prestige, and the sick easily became pawns in domestic politics.\textsuperscript{193} As a distorted version of the extended family, the Brickendon convicts would at times \textit{genuinely} have been in need of medical care. Thus William Snr's ability to combine an economic function (curtailing malingering) with a paternal function (administering medical care) was not inconsistent with other forms of social control employed by masters of unfree labour.\textsuperscript{194} As the medical practices outlined in the diary are highly representative of nineteenth century medicine, it is difficult to be definitive about these matters.\textsuperscript{195} That William Snr's application of medical care for his convicts increased with his need for greater labour extraction, however, suggests that there is a case for viewing medical intervention as another form of indulgence. After all, like cape wine, medicine was an expensive commodity, and was provided at the masters' expense. This view is evidenced in the increased use of disciplinary proceedings for offences indicative of malingering, such as revoking indulgences for 'Morgan for Idleness and pretending Illness, Foster for neglect of his work \& insolence, Bracer for general insolence'.\textsuperscript{196}

The increase in the number of convicts who appeared on the sicklist was not isolated to this incident, and was a general feature of the harvest. As the data in Fig. 1 (above) illustrates, the harvest period saw a sustained level of workers who were reported sick. The 62 recorded instances of workers who reported sick during the harvest period represents 65\% of total reported instances for the entire diary period.

\textsuperscript{194} E.P Thompson, 'The Patricians and the Plebs', p. 38.
\textsuperscript{195} Roy Porter, \textit{The Greatest Benefit to Mankind}, particularly pp. 674-676.
\textsuperscript{196} W.A.D, 19 January 1830.
although harvest accounted for only 44% of the diary period.\footnote{197} At the other end of the pendulum, the period was also characterised by an increase in disciplinary proceedings. During the harvest period there were a recorded 22 disciplinary procedures instigated. Of these, three-quarters were dealt with on-site, including 14 suspension of indulgences.\footnote{198} In terms of corporal punishment a total 275 were meted out to six individuals. This accounts for 79% of all lashes received and 75% of all floggings covered in the diary.\footnote{199} In a comparative sense, the punishment served out in the harvest period represent 63% of offences over the entire diary period.\footnote{200} Again, just under three-quarters of the offences were dealt with on-site.\footnote{201} Interestingly, there are only two recorded instances of William Snr suspending indulgences during the period leading up to harvest. The number of incentive withdrawals recorded in the diary clearly demonstrates that the experience of convicts from a disciplinarian view differed greatly from that recorded in the bench books and conduct records. The data indicates that the provision of indulgences was more economically driven than the wider literature suggests, and that it was particularly important during harvest and was calculated as a means of lengthening the working day.

During the harvest, William Snr attempted to extract greater levels of labour participation by appealing to convict bellies and by threatening their backs.\footnote{202} Exactly how convict workers viewed both forms of punishment is an open question. Stephen Nicholas has played down the importance of corporal punishment, arguing that although the threat of the lash was 'a daily feature of [their] working lives', it was not

\footnote{197} There are a total of 96 instances of labourers reported as sick in the diary period. \footnote{198} 14 of the 22 offences. \footnote{199} 275 out of 350 lashes total, 6 out of 8 individual offences resulting in lashes. \footnote{200} 22 of 35 the offences. \footnote{201} 4 of the 14 offences. \footnote{202} James Atkinson, \textit{Op. Cit.}, p. 116.
used 'indiscriminately'. One component of this 'benign treatment' thesis was that as a practice, whipping was common component of not only other 'coerced' labour regimes, but also of free labour in contemporary Britain. Raymond Evans and Bill Thorpe have challenged the 'benign treatment' thesis, arguing that convict labour was not regulated to solely maximise output, but were punished through the work process and that therefore pain was regarded as an output in itself. According to them, the convict worker represented an 'individual constituted by the state to be simultaneously punished and worked'. Further, Evans and Thorpe have argued that floggings represented an expression of gentry masculinity calculated to 'produce an overarching structure of superordinate masculine relations of power'. As such, corporal punishment reduced the victim to a 'condition of helplessness and impotence...[in which] a sense of humiliation and emasculation was violently imposed' through a process that 'siphoned power...to the inflictor'.

Whilst Evans and Thorpe's reappraisal of punishment regimes is not without merit, the focus on penal labour dictates that it represents the experience of a 'minority of convicts'. The focus on corporal punishment, whilst largely applicable to convicts in the assignment system, ignores the wider economic implications of the convict masters' need to extract labour. Further, the experience of being flogged for a convict in the assignment system occurred off-site, and often outside the gaze of their peers and master. In this context, the 'dramatic spectacle of disempowerment and

204 Stephen Nicholas, 'The Care and Feeding of Convicts', p. 183.
208 Hamish Maxwell-Stewart, 'Life at Macquarie Harbour', p. 143.
emasculating ritual beatings' was largely avoided by the victim. In such cases, the victim could mentally reconfigure the experience from one of degradation to one of empowerment and something to brag about amongst the peers. This is not the case for the suspension of indulgences. Evidence in the diary suggests that the distribution and suspension of indulgences were moments of high visibility, consistent with the Thompsonian paradigm of gentry hegemony. As such, the expected "dressing down" that would accompany the denial of indulgences would be very public. That this punishment was delivered by a man in his mid-seventies would have increased its capacity to emasculate a convict workforce who were made to feel as though they were errant children.

How the removal of indulgences affected convicts is also relatively unknown. As a punishment, it acted on multiple levels. Although adequate, and at times plentiful, the indulgence helped break the monotony of the ration. Just as the indulgence had been converted into payment, the items in the indulgence served as "currency" on the convict black market. Not having this currency thus denied convicts access to an important part of their material culture. One transaction recorded in the diary that illustrates how the indulgence was viewed by the workforce at Brickendon occurs on 26 September 1829. In this extract William Snr wrote:

Ordered Morgan's allowances be stopped. Much dissatisfied with Burrows who was more than double time at his meals and making away to his Hut during the day. Palmer very saucy about the Lime - was determined not to fetch it and on being told his allowance should be stopped he sneered at it, and

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209 Raymond Evans and Bill Thorpe, 'Commanding Men', p. 25.
210 Nowhere is this more illustrated than the confrontation between William Snr and the workforce that occurred on 3 January 1829.
That James Palmer confronted William Snr directly over the threatened removal of his allowance demonstrated the level of perceived importance of the indulgence. In this instance, Palmer made a clear and calculated counter-threat that acknowledged his value as a skilled 'farm labourer' to William Snr that he and Cotton were worth £4 a week, and that the indulgence was no indulgence at all. By threatening to 'go to Hobart town' after William Snr's threat, Palmer explicitly linked his labour to the allowance. In this instance, Palmer risked a trip to the magistrate, and subsequent flogging, over the withdrawal of his labour. William Snr's propensity to have men flogged over such incidents is evidenced by Archer's treatment James Gillen, the only convict recorded as having absconded during the diary period, who 'received fifty'. Henry Cotton's act of solidarity in joining in and thus risking his own allowances and a flogging, reinforced how importantly convicts viewed the suspension of indulgences as well as how they functioned as part of the convict "wage". That both convicts confronted William Snr in such an exchange illustrates how effective the indulgence was as a management tool.

The convict experience of sawyer William Morgan illustrates the dangers of limiting an analysis of master, servant relations to bench records. Morgan's only experience of corporal punishment for the diary period occurred on the 9 February 1830, but it represented the culmination of a protracted campaign of resistance to William Snr's authority. From William Snr's perspective, Morgan was not the ideal labourer, and their relationship was based on constant conflict. For the diary period,
Morgan reported sick on no less than nineteen occasions, and of these fourteen occurred within the harvest period. In direct response, William Snr had Morgan's indulgence suspended on four occasions prior to his trip to the bench.\textsuperscript{216} Between the cuts in his indulgence, Morgan's defied William Snr in many ways. He was recorded as being 'very Lazy', 'not at work after dinner', and as having 'lost more than two hours at dinner'.\textsuperscript{217} When William Snr instigated the 'first Harvest dinner', Morgan 'refused to partake of it'.\textsuperscript{218} Beyond such everyday acts of defiance, Morgan openly confronted William Snr's authority.\textsuperscript{219} On 5 January 1830, Morgan was engaged in 'cutting off tops of Wild Oats'. When directed to go to Panshanger, Morgan 'Refused to go to saw for Joseph [Archer]'\textsuperscript{220} Further, William Snr recorded that Morgan:

> 'wanted a pass to go to Capt. Smith. Went to the [chief] Constable who sent him home. After a parly[sic] he still obstinately refusing to go to Josephs. He sets himself to work again at the Oats.'\textsuperscript{221}

One month (and three suspension of indulgences) later the battle between William Snr and Morgan reached its zenith. William Snr recorded that:

> 'Morgan: Attended at the Police Office to charge us with refusing his Rations and allowances. Stated that he He [sic] was ordered to leave his Hut at the Sawpit and to go to one at the House which he refused to do and as he had also been feigning sick a Long time I refused everything to him till he did come there. Ordered fifty returned to his old Hut.'\textsuperscript{222}

Reading the entries in the diary which relate to Morgan's behaviour, it is clear his protests constituted a wholesale rejection of the power and authority of Vandemonian gentry hegemony.\textsuperscript{223}

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{214} W.A.D, 11 January 1830.
\item \textsuperscript{215} 305, William Morgan, per Malabar, Con. 31.
\item \textsuperscript{216} See W.A.D, 26 September 1829, 9 January 1830, 19 January 1830, and 31 January 1830.
\item \textsuperscript{217} W.A.D, 6 November 1829, 23 November 1829, and 9 January 1830.
\item \textsuperscript{218} W.A.D, 18 January 1830.
\item \textsuperscript{219} James C. Scott, \textit{Weapons of the Weak}, pp. 28-37.
\item \textsuperscript{220} W.A.D, 5 January 1830.
\item \textsuperscript{221} W.A.D, 5 January 1830.
\item \textsuperscript{222} W.A.D, 9 February 1830.
\item \textsuperscript{223} Alan Atkinson, 'Four Patterns of Convict Protest', p. 30.
\end{itemize}
Chapter VIII: Conclusion.

The data in the Brickendon diary demonstrates that the lived experience of the convicts differed greatly from that which was recorded in the official records. It also illustrates that the diary itself is a complex record that can be viewed and utilised in a number of different ways. The diary was used onsite by William Snr as a management tool to assist in recollecting the performance of the workforce, and the distribution of goods. It also functioned much like a farm version of the magistrates' bench book in recording the transgressions of the convict labour force. Whilst the work of Hamish Maxwell-Stewart and Kirsty Reid has provided a valuable and much-needed contribution to our understanding of convictism, the reliance that both place in official documentation limits the depth of understanding they can achieve. Whilst both hypothesise that the bench books represent the tip of the iceberg, and that much that occurred in the way of negotiation between convict and master went unrecorded in official registers, their methodology prevents them from investigating this. This is particularly important to their arguments on convict agency. As bench records only represent the instances where the masters made the decision to prosecute, Reid's and Maxwell-Stewart's analysis is limited to attempts where convicts failed to influence farm practices. From an industrial bargaining perspective, the bench books can be construed as being littered with cases where convict workers misjudged their bargaining position, and overplayed their hand.

In a comparative sense, the bench book entries, and the offense register summaries that were derived from them, were a tool to regulate and record convict
work over the period of their sentence, whilst the diary functioned on a day-to-day basis as a management tool. As such, while the bench books may record similar patterns, they lack the resolution and texture of the diary. In broad terms they are reliant upon the economic decision of the master to prosecute, and thus paint a much dimmer picture of convict labour. Further, beyond observing econometric trends, the bench books cannot place convict offences contained therein within the context of the seasons, husbandry, and the occupational demands of the tasks to which they were set in the manner the diary does. As the case of William Morgan illustrates, the bench does not record the nuances of the relationship between master and servant. Whilst the offence registers ultimately record William Snr's dissatisfaction with his convict charge, they do so without acknowledgment to the protracted contest of authority between the two that lasted for the majority of the diary period. In Morgan's case, the data from the bench records represent only one-fifth of the punishment he received. As the data from chapter VII demonstrates, this lack of disciplinary nuance is not restricted to this one relationship, with one in four disciplinary matters being resolved on-site through suspension of indulgences and verbal reprimands.

On the issue of allowances issued to convicts, the data in the diary demonstrates that they were an economically driven transaction, and used by William Snr during harvest as a means to shift the daylight/effort equation in his favour. That 87.5% of suspension of indulgences occurred during the harvest period clearly demonstrate this point. As such, this transformed the indulgence, the increased rations, and the gifting of wine, into an overtime payment. The data that illustrates that indulgences were frequently withheld during the harvest period dictates that it was not just convicts who ideologically converted the ration into a wage, but that this
was a process that was also fostered by the masters in their efforts to extract more labour at particular times of the year.

In terms of the social landscape at Brickendon, the diary records the social transactions in which William Snr engaged with his convict labour pool and as such it reinforces our understanding of the working of Vandemonian gentry hegemony. The paternalistic relationship set up in James Atkinson's account, but writ large in the work of E.P Thompson and Eugene Genovese, could well serve as a model for the manner in which William Archer Snr organised, encouraged, and punished the labour force at Brickendon. The labour force, however in action statements that give credence to E.M Curr's account, exhibited their own particular responses to William Snr's attempts to contain and curtail their labour. The diary also provides a wealth of data that demonstrates the peculiar strains that the harvest placed on both the Archers and their assigned servants. An increase in work demand and declining hours combined to place normal farm relationships under increased stress. The techniques that William Archer Snr and his assignees adopted to try and protect their differing interests over this obviously difficult time of the year illustrate the complexity of the colonial working environment. That Sharon Morgan, Robert Hughes, A.G.L Shaw, Lloyd Robson et al reduce these transactions to a simplistic equations of rewarding a few good convict servants and being forced to put up with or punish the wicked majority, ignores the complexity and fragility of the relationship expressed in the diary. The manner in which both sides of the Brickendon workplace had to negotiate and renegotiate terms of engagement against a backdrop of the changing seasons highlights this point.
William Archer Snr commanded a young and mostly skilled workforce in a tense environment. As a paternalist, he managed to negotiate terms that ultimately saw him extract extra labour on Saturdays, as well as some limited work on Sundays. As the case of William Woolstencroft illustrates, his paternalistic persona was not above awarding his convict charges with increased responsibility. His convict charges, however, made him pay a price by forcing him to hand over *ex gratia* payments that significantly ameliorated conditions as unfree workers who technically could not be in receipt of a wage.
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