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Daniel Blackwell, born Lighthorne, April 1825, Grandfather's Grandfather

by Lucy Blackwell, Ruth Moon (née Blackwell) and Keith Moon (1995)

This document is dedicated to Walter Edward Blackwell, 24/3/1901 to 5/1/1995 His wealth of memories encouraged us to delve deeper into the story of his grandfather and the ones who followed.

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David Blackwell's convict record describes him thus:

Trade: Boat Man

Height: 5' 9"

Age: 22 Years

Complexion: Swarthy

Head: Large

Hair: Brown Whiskers: Very small dark

Visage: Broad

Forehead: High

Eyebrows: Brown

Eyes: Hazel

Nose: Medium

Mouth: Ditto

Chin: Large

Nat. Place: Warwick

Marks: Scar on left shin. Large scar on right breast

Neither read or write

Single

His photograph reveals a large man, for the times, bald on top, but with thick curled sideburns and untidy dark hair around the ears. With a firm chin and resolute eyes he sits serious and dignified on the photographer's stool. The warm jacket, hard-wearing trousers and practical boots would not look out of place on any farmer from the Tasmanian Midlands today. It's a picture of a successful man, confident and sure of his achievements. And well he should be. From a wretched beginning in Warwick, England, sentenced to fifteen years transportation to Norfolk Island for housebreaking and theft, Daniel Blackwell rose to be a prosperous landowner and farmer, and fathered thirteen children.

Daniel was born in 1822 in Warwickshire, U.K. [1825, Lighthorne – ed.] His mother was Ann Blackwell. According to the records he lived with his mother until his conviction at Old Mill Lane, Leamington (near Warwick) in central England south of Birmingham. Warwick is on the Avon River.

He was tried on 30th March 1844, at Warwick Assizes for having been involved (with at least two other men) in the breaking and entering of a house belonging to two “old people”, Thomas Higgs and his wife, and stealing money, clothing and other articles. Of the three men tried with this offence on that day, Daniel and a man named William Goddard, pleaded guilty and another, John Mullinder, pleaded innocent. According to Daniel's mother's account, William Goddard was a lodger with her and Daniel. Two other men, Joseph Mullinder and Charles Townley, were also mentioned as having been involved in the burglary, but remained at large at the time of the trial.

The full details of the case were reported in the *Warwick Advertiser* of the 6th April 1844. This newspaper printed “the whole of the evidence in consequence of the great interest this case has excited in the neighbourhood”. Daniel was caught wearing a stolen pair of trousers, and a search of his mother's house revealed a bundle of stolen articles behind a stack of bricks. John Mullinder was found wearing two different shoes, the soles of which matched footprints left in Higgs' garden. (The text of the newspaper article is printed as Appendix A to this article.)

All three of the prisoners were sentenced to transportation for 15 years each. The sentence would have been transportation for life in chains, according to the “Learned Sergeant”, had not “one of the prisoners possessed some little degree of feeling, by restraining any of the others from acting with violence to the old people”.

Both Daniel and John Mullinder were transported on the ship *Agincourt* from Woolwich, U.K. on 9th July 1844 bound for Norfolk Island. From available documentation it appears that William Goddard (prisoner number 19866) was transported to Norfolk Island also, but on the ship *Pestonjee Bomanjee*. According to *The Convict Ships 1787 - 1868* by Charles Bateson (Brown, Son and Ferguson, Glasgow, 1959) the *Agincourt* left Woolwich on 9th July 1844 and arrived at Norfolk Island on 9th November 1844. The Indent List for the ship lists Daniel Blackwell (number 19184) and gives details similar to those on his convict record. (Copy held.)

The Indent List was “transmitted with the prisoners, giving the labour and services of the convicts to the ship’s master” In other words it was a sort of certificate of title to the convict. It “referred to a document transferring a property in the prisoner to the governor of the relevant colony, but usually appears to apply to a list of prisoners together with their descriptions”.

Description of the *Agincourt*: 958 tons, built in London, 1841, class A1. Master: Henry Neatby, Surgeon: Charles Henry Fuller. 224 male convicts on board, four of which died on the journey .

The *Agincourt* sailed via the Cape of Good Hope, arriving at Norfolk Island on the 9th November 1844, a journey of 123 days. All convicts were off-loaded, and a complement of soldiers were taken on board for immediate return to Sydney, being replaced by those who arrived with the ship.

This research into Daniel Blackwell's life began with a close perusal of Daniel's Convict Record, a copy of which is held in the Archives in Hobart. This record was begun the day a convict first disembarked from the transport ship. "The muster of convicts at the end of their voyage was 'of a very detailed nature' resulting in the colonial authorities at Sydney or Hobart Town knowing the name, time and place of conviction, sentence, native place, age and trade. The answers volunteered by the convicts were 'compared and corrected if necessary by the description in the Indent and in the lists transmitted from the hulks.'" (Hulk lists are lists of convicts housed temporarily in the hulk ships before transportation. They are preserved in the Admiralty papers in the UK.) "Alphabetical references are compiling from the quarterly returns of fines and punishments, transmitted to the Secretary's office, which, when accomplished, will be an index to the moral history of the Colony. Thus... means will be afforded of pursuing the history, conduct and condition of a convict in his various situations in the Colony from his arrival to his emancipation or death." Compilations of the convict registers were known as the "Black Books" and were completed for many years by trusted convicts. It is the thoroughness of the records made at this time which makes the researcher's task so much easier. Note though that the convict himself supplied the information; this fact was confirmed by the notation "stated this offence" on the record. In Daniel's case the wording is "Burglary, Gaol report, second conviction, single" which is understood to mean that information so far entered is from the official gaol report, then the entry states this offence "Housebreaking, stole money. I don't know how much, Tried with John Mullinder on board. Prosecutor Mr Higgs nr Leamington for a Burglary 1 month." The theory was that a convict would be unlikely to supply incorrect information because they would not be sure how much of it the authorities would in fact know, and would fear being caught out. In fact mistakes, errors and omissions often did appear in the records, and these can prove to be an annoyance to those trying to get an accurate picture today.

Imprisoned on Norfolk Island

Two classes of prisoners were sent to Norfolk Island at this time: colonials who had been convicted twice, and prisoners who had been convicted in England to transportation for periods of fifteen years or more. (Daniel's conviction was for fifteen years; it is possible it was his second conviction for burglary.) The number of convicts on Norfolk Island during 1845 was nearly 2000, of whom a quarter were colonial or doubly convicted prisoners. These prisoners had a reputation for brutality to the British convicts, and in fact some literature mentions a "ring" of hardened criminals who not only lorded over other prisoners, but were feared by the guards. Treatment was so severe that on the 1st of July that year there was an outbreak by the prisoners during which four guards were murdered. Thirteen prisoners were later executed as a result of this. Of all the penal

institutions, Norfolk Island had the reputation for the most severe discipline. There was a way out, however. Under Captain Maconochie's new rules, prisoners who exhibited a general improvement of moral or religious standards were entitled to be moved to Van Diemen's Land [now Tasmania – ed.] for entry into the service of the settlers. It is interesting to note that when Daniel died he was a Rechabite (a member of the Independent Order of Rechabites). One of their tenets was total abstinence.

On March 30th 1846 on Norfolk Island he was noted as being absent from his station without leave.

Arrival at Van Diemen's Land

Daniel was moved to Van Diemen's Land on 3rd December 1846 (arriving on the 8th). He was probably landed at Port Arthur. He was transported here on the *Lady Franklin*, as is recorded in the indent list for the vessel. In the document, Daniel's religion is recorded as C. of E., age 22, height 5' 9", single. Trade: Boatman. The *Lady Franklin* is noted as having made two voyages: 26th November 1845 and 12th October 1845, but there is also a page heading on one of the copies of the original documents which states: "Convicts for *Agincourt* to Norfolk Island arrived for *Lady Franklin* 30th December 1846" Daniel Blackwell is listed, with details mentioning his trade as "boatman", offence "housebreaking, tried at Warwick Asz, sentence 15 years, age 59 [possibly a misreading of "19", as that was his approximate age when he was tried – ed.], period of probation one year". John Mullinder is also listed, indicating that he was transported to Norfolk Island and then on to Van Diemen's Land on the same vessels and at the same times as his friend. He is described as a shoemaker, tried at Warwick, sentence of 15 years, age 29. After the list the following signed statement is made: "These men are all English convicts and by the Secretary of Orders Regulation 25th November 1842 (175) they have passed from the year to two in Gang in Norfolk Island before being classed as pass holders - their probation in VDLd was fixed upon lists forwarded from Norfolk Island preparatory to removal at the year end - and the station recommended is Saltwater River." The statement is signed with two illegible signatures and dated 4/?/1847.

There is a document in the Mitchell Library headed "Convicts for Hyderabad from Norfolk Island for *Pestonjee Bomanjee* 2nd February 1847 whose periods of detention at N. I. is effected" (signed by two signatures, one on 28th April 1847, the other on 1st May 1847), which includes the name William Goddard (no. 19866) who was supposed to have lodged with Daniel in Warwick and was tried with him and John Mullinder. His age is given as 24 years at the time he was moved to Van Diemen's Land for twelve month's probation at Impression Bay, now known as Premaydena (Tasman Peninsula).

On January 14th 1847 Daniel was moved to Salt Water River.

Life at Salt Water River

Reference: *Penal Peninsula*, by Ian Brand (Jason Publications, West Moonah, 1978) pp 57 - 59

The Select Committee on Transportation reported to the UK Parliament in late 1838. It condemned the current practice of assigning prisoners to settlers for work and recommended an extension of the penitentiary system as a replacement. Governor Franklin decided to utilise a modified form of the penitentiary system to employ convicts in gangs on projects considered useful to the colony. In 1841 Charles Booth, the Commandant of Port Arthur, began an agricultural project at Salt Water Creek employing Probationary Gangs in its construction. Salt Water Creek Probation Station was the first of the new style probation stations .

It is ironic to note that Walter Blackwell, the grandson of Daniel Blackwell, and the inspiration for this article, spent all his later years at *Kellie*, a property at Elderslie which was built originally as one of these probation stations. As a result the farm that Walter Blackwell worked until his death has barns made of massive sandstone blocks, with iron bars on the windows. Walter was unaware until his later years that his grandfather had been a convict, as a convict past was not something to be proud of until very recently. The idea of the new system, commencing in 1843, was to imprison on Norfolk Island all men transported for life or the more "aggravated" cases with sentences of greater than 15 years. These prisoners would serve two to four years on Norfolk Island, along with those prisoners who committed serious crimes in the colonies. After this period of hard labour there, they would be moved to Van Diemen's Land to be employed in Probation Gangs for one to two years. The gangs, of from 250-300 men, would be placed in areas where new projects were to be developed, where they would build their own accommodation initially. In other words the prisoners built their own local penitentiaries, and worked in the immediate area of them. If a prisoner was of good behaviour he would be given a probation pass enabling him to obtain private employment for wages in the colony. There were three levels of probation pass: the first category received half wages, the second two-thirds, and the third gave the probationer the right to keep all they earned. The surplus in the first two categories was retained until the probationer received a ticket of leave. Tickets of leave would be given once half the original sentence had been served. The probationer also had to have held his probation pass "for a term equal to the difference between half the sentence and the shortest period at which, under that sentence, the convict might have arrived at the stage of a probation pass-holder". The last stage is the issue of a conditional or absolute pardon. Each probation station had its own superintendent; James Pringle in the case of Salt Water River.

By the time Daniel arrived the first convicts sent there had built a small settlement of slab and bark huts and commenced farming the land. In 1843 further Probation Stations were constructed at Flinders Bay and Slopens Island, and by the end of the year another was being established six miles east of Salt Water River at Impression Bay (Premaydena). William Goddard, Daniel's friend and "partner in crime" was sent to Impression Bay, which housed 445 prisoners, in 1847. On the 29th December 1841 a new barque, the *Lady Franklin*, was launched from the Port Arthur dockyard (272 tons). It became the main means of transporting convicts between Port Arthur, Norfolk Island and Hobart Town. (See picture p. 104 of *Penal Peninsula*.) On 7th January 1842, a David Burn arrived at Port Arthur as a visitor. As a result of this visit he wrote *An Excursion to Port Arthur in 1842*, published in *The Tasmanian Journal of Natural Science* in 1842. He

gives good descriptions of the convict lifestyle of the times. (Refer p. 62 of *Penal Peninsula*) The convicts ate meals of soup, wheaten bread, beef, pork or mutton, breakfast and supper being bread and a pint of skilly. “The clothing of the convicts is of woollen cloth, dyed yellow or partly black, partly yellow. They are furnished with two complete suits, shirts, and boots a year.”

A July 1845 description of Salt Water River: “Completed barracks, and clearing land, general agricultural labour, about 180 acres of wheat expected in the current year besides some vegetables and some hay and oats.” (p. 75 *Penal Peninsula*) Impression Bay: “Building separate apartments, and mechanics’ shops, clearing land for wheat. At this station a considerable number of mechanics are kept and the wants of the convict department, as regards furniture, carts, barrows, messing and barrack utensils, etc, will be supplied; a good deal of sawed timber, especially for the coal mines is prepared at this station.” Salt Water River, 1846: “Salt Water River was one station which required substantial upgrading of the buildings and elaborate plans were drawn for a very large settlement, but, except for a number of isolated buildings, little of the plan was achieved. Modifications of existing buildings were undertaken early in the year.” (p. 85 of *Penal Peninsula*)

LaTrobe wrote a report to England in May 1847 (in the middle of Daniel's term at Salt Water River), giving descriptions of the convict stations . At the time there were 499 prisoners at Salt Water River, 50 of whom were erecting huts for sheep at the new sheep farm which was to be established nearby. “The prisoners at this station were mainly men who had been at Port Arthur. Most of the buildings, except the hospital and store, were of brick” (see map p. 86 of *Penal Peninsula*).

In the Comptroller General's report of May 1848 (GO 33/58), Salt Water River is described: “There are no separate apartments at Salt Water River, and the accommodation generally is of a temporary nature, this having been the first probation station on Tasman's Peninsula. The dormitories have been opened up and provided with bed-places separated by battens.” It appears from the plan that accommodation for convicts was in rows of conjoined huts, each row containing convicts of one of three classes. For third class there were four huts for thirty men, facing roughly north with a courtyard in front. He also wrote “The transfer of the English convicts from Norfolk Island to Tasman's Peninsula rendered it necessary to remove the invalids from Impression Bay, where a large and commodious hospital had been erected, but the recent classification of a large number of the Norfolk Island convicts as pass-holders, and the removal of 200 to Hobart Town [including Daniel] had enabled the invalids to be returned to Impression Bay which was then solely for their use.” Probation convicts, having passed the first stage of probation and becoming available for hire, then passed through another three stages. In the first probationary period, they received half pay, in the second, two thirds pay, and the third, full pay. Their masters (the settlers) were expected to pay the balance in each case to the government. The convict was informed that it would be available to him when he was discharged, if not forfeited due to misconduct. If this process was followed satisfactorily it would have been an excellent way for Daniel to “save” towards the land he eventually purchased.

The following information is from Daniel's records:

13/12/47 Prisoners Barracks

14/12/47 entered the service of J. L. Stewart of O'Brien's Bridge

30/12/47 Prisoners Barracks

31/12/47 entered the service of Thomas Haines of Bushy Park. A list of convicts who worked for Mr. Haines is held in the archives, but unfortunately it starts from 1849. In this year Mr. Haines employed eleven convicts for twelve months and one for three months. The rate of wages was nine pounds.

8/2/48 Wool Pack

9/2/48 entered the service of D. Conlan of Fenton Forest

21/3/48 Hamilton (?) and to William (?) Jarvis of Macquarie Plains 12 months

3/4/48 D. Harris (?) 6th Thomas Bellinger of Hamilton 3 months

8/12/48 Thomas Triffett of Green Hills near Hamilton 12 months to 10/12/49

Daniel's Life as a Settler

Having worked for settlers for some time, Daniel became eligible to apply for a Ticket of Leave. This was a form of pardon which was revocable on misconduct. Daniel would have been allowed to purchase property and would also have gained a deal of freedom, subject to regular checks by the authorities. According to his record, on 17th June 1851 he became eligible to apply in 4 months for a Ticket of Leave. On 3rd November 1851 his Ticket of Leave was granted. On 9th November 1852 he was recommended for a Conditional Pardon. Conditional pardon gave Daniel the freedom enjoyed by free settlers in the colony, but not outside of it. He was not permitted to travel home to England. On 4th October 1853 his Conditional Pardon was approved.

On the 10th August of the same year there had been celebrations held in Hobart and Launceston because the transportation of convicts had ceased. It was also the 50th anniversary of the first settlement of the British in Tasmania. (Hobart was originally begun at Risdon Cove, but moved to its current location a year later when Risdon Cove proved unsuitable.) During the 1840s the burden of looking after so many convicts was proving too much for the young colony as there was a depressed economy, and with time on their hands many convicts returned to crime to survive. The rising number of free settlers eventually persuaded the British to dismantle the convict transportation system. In the meantime, the Aboriginal population of Van Diemen's Land had been reduced from well over 5000 at the time of British settlement to less than 300. The last full-blooded aboriginal died just over 20 years later in 1876.

Less than a year later Daniel was married to the young daughter of an ex-convict. The copy of the marriage licence, dated 20th July 1854, states in clear handwriting for once "Number 1209 Licence for the Marriage of Daniel Blackwell of Rotherwood, Carrier and Elizabeth Pilcher of Macq. Plains, Spinster, in the Church of Saint Mary at Macquarie Plains." The Surrogate is Wright. They were married on 20th July 1854 at the Church of St Mary the Virgin, Macquarie Plains. Daniel is described as being "of full age", Elizabeth Pilcher (his wife) is 19. He is a carrier, she a spinster. She signed with fine copperplate handwriting, he with a cross. The licensee was William Hisketh. The

certificate (a copy of which is held) was witnessed by John Pilcher (who signed with a cross), Jane Pilcher (who signed with a cross) and Charles Harrex (who signed in copperplate). Elizabeth Pilcher was born in 1835 and died in 1911. [Considerable records are held on the Pilcher family by Lucy Blackwell]

Daniel and his wife moved to the property *Rotherwood* where, in 1857, their son William was born. They moved to Victoria Valley, where Daniel became a fencer for farmers in the Ouse and nearby areas. It is likely that he had met many farmers during his probation and was able to use his contacts to obtain work. His family grew to eventually include thirteen children: John Daniel was born in 1862, Charles in 1864, Joseph James in 1866, Phoebe Ellen in 1869, Emily Jane in 1871, Ada Elizabeth in 1873, Louise Dora in 1878, Harriet Sarah in 1879, Alice Florence Rose in 1882. There was also another daughter, Emma Selina, who married Frederick Saunders.

The 1865 records state that Daniel and his family were asked to move from the police station where they were residing in Victoria Valley. Daniel had sufficient capital to acquire a Purchase Grant of forty four acres in the parish of Graham in the County of Cumberland on 5th April 1876 (copy of official purchase document held), described thus "On the south-east by eighteen chains and fifteen links, north-easterly along lot 870 purchased by Henric Nicholas commencing at the Kenmere Rivulet and extending to the road to Lake Echo, on the east by nineteen chains and ninety links, north-westerly in her bearings along that road, on the north by twenty six chains and seventy links, westerly along Crown land to the Kenmere Rivulet aforesaid and then by that Rivulet to the point of commencement." (Signed on 28th March 1876.) A copy of a Certificate of Title is held, dated 8th November 1907, on which is drawn a plan of the lot described above, together with another lot of 111 acres, also bounded on the west side by the Kenmere Rivulet, bounded on the north by a lot held by George Kitchen and bounded on the south side by Crown land and a lot held by J. J. Blackwell (presumably Daniel's son Joseph James). On the Certificate of Title for the first block Daniel obtained, the District Surveyor (George Burgess) has noted "The marsh on this lot is good land and well grassed, the rest of the lot is stony and when the trees are removed will be good pasture. Value one pound per acre." The lot is bounded on one side by the original road to Lake Echo. Daniel's hut was already build at the time of the survey and is marked on the Certificate of Title. This property is at the top end of the Victoria Valley on a rise above a flat plain still known as Blackwell's Marsh. There are still some remnants of the small log cabin he built for his family, the fruit trees planted nearby, and the channels dug around the edge of the marsh to drain it to create fertile pasture. In spring, old bulbs and flowers erupt from the ground in front of the house site in the remains of the flower garden.

In 1990 a group of Blackwell family members, including Walter Blackwell, Daniel's grandson, gathered at the site to conduct a small excavation and to discuss what it was once like to live there. Walter remembered a large fireplace topped by a lintel stone (which is still on the site), three rooms and a verandah facing over the marsh. The floors and walls were slab. Various berry and fruit trees were planted out the back and a row of poplars still grows nearby. Walter remembered coming down the winding dirt track from the highway with a horse and cart to visit.

The second lot (lot 11660) is described as having been acquired by Daniel Blackwell on 8th September 1891. The Certificate of Title has the following addendum "I, the abovenamed Elizabeth Blackwell in consideration of five shillings paid to me by John Daniel Blackwell of Hamilton in Tasmania, shepherd, do hereby request and appoint that the said John Daniel Blackwell shall be registered proprietor of the above described land for all intestate and interest therein." In other words she gave both lots to her son before she died. Daniel Blackwell died in 1907. Elizabeth Blackwell died on the 4th November 1911 at Hamilton. She is described on her death certificate (copy held) as "resident in Tasmania about 60 years, age 76 years, widow of Daniel Blackwell, farmer", with at the time of death 3 male and 4 female children still living, and 2 male and 4 female children deceased. The cause of death is stated as "cardiac dilatation". The informant was John Daniel Blackwell of Hamilton, and the medical attendant Ed. H Morgan. Elizabeth became quite deaf in her old age, and is remembered as a "nice, quiet lady who had a hard-working but happy life. She was known to have caught Tasmanian Tigers in her traps and made a rug from brush possum tails".

Walter Blackwell Remembers

I can just remember my grandfather, Daniel Blackwell, but I was only three years old when he died on January 6th 1904, but I remember Elizabeth, my grandmother well. I was 8 and she lived with us at Montford after grandfather died, but she was very deaf. I have slept in the log cabin grandfather built. It was a big place - three rooms with a verandah along the front facing towards the road. [The road comes down to the marsh before coming along to the house site.] It had a slab floor and all the cracks on the walls were filled in and papered over with newspapers. It was cool in the summer and warm in the winter. It had a big old fireplace - so big you could almost walk into it, with big bars of iron that swung round to hang the old iron pots on. [Pieces of large iron cooking pots can still be found at the site.] The log cabin was built at the top end of Victoria Valley about 1865. The marsh is known as Blackwell's Marsh to the current owners, the Weedings.

Our parents, John Daniel and Alice Louise Blackwell (née Burriss) first went to White Hills, about two and a half miles from the Lyell Highway towards Bothwell, in about 1892. They were married at Osterley in 1891 and George, Grace and John were all born at White Hills. George walked about five miles to and from Hamilton School when he was only a little fellow. I don't think Grace and John walked that distance. The family moved to Montford before I was born. We lived there until 1921 when our father bought *Kellie* and got me to leave my job with the Hydro [Hydro Electric Commission] to come on the farm with him. I had my twenty-first birthday at *Kellie*. Maude was 19 when we came here. [*Kellie*, at Elderslie.]

Our home at Hamilton was on the Montford property owned by Madden Bros. We lived in the whole house excepting for the few weeks at shearing time. The men used to have their meals in the long back room which was a skillion built on the original four roomed cottage. Mother did all the cooking for the shearers and shed hands, twelve of them all told - that was breakfast, dinner and tea, then morning and afternoon teas too. Also a cup

of tea and a scone or something before they started at 6 am. She worked very hard but it was no trouble to her, and the money she earned helped keep us in food and clothing for many months. My father was a shepherd and he worked long hours, often on horseback all day. He was earning about twelve pounds a quarter in the early days - later he was paid two pounds a week or about 100 pounds for the year plus the house and rations.

I got my first pocket money by following the poison cart. I picked up the rabbits and sold the skins for fourteen pence a pound. Once I had fourteen pounds worth I sold these to Roberts. We used the skillion for our kitchen most of the year and he had our own table and chairs, but during the shearing time a long trestle was brought in and the men sat round that. They slept in shearers' quarters on palliasses of chaff bags filled with straw. They used to sew two new bags together, joining them at the open ends leaving about a foot or more to stuff the bags with straw. The mattresses would be six feet or more long. Some of them doubled the end over for a pillow, but I remember some with their own pillow without pillowslips and they didn't use sheets - only a couple of grey blankets. At night they used to sit around a table and play cards, or mostly draughts by candle-light or hurricane lamps. When the job was finished they used to empty the straw out of the palliasses and roll up the pillow and blankets in the bags and move off with their humpies on their backs.

There was a big fuel stove in the back kitchen - it was a good cooker. Mother used to make up nice baked rabbit in an open baking dish. She used to cut up the rabbits into large pieces then mix in some onions cut up and some bread crumbs and crusts and a bit of water and salt and pepper and a couple of pieces of dripping then bake it very slowly. It was brown and beautiful to eat. We had very little money so we ate a lot of rabbits in those days - we had to. She would make us apricot pies but she didn't take the stones out. She used to pile the apricots up as high as they would stay in the baking dish then roll out the pastry, dripping and sugar and flour and water, and press it all over the top of the apricots and as it cooked they would make the pastry bulge in knobs all over the pie. We ate this with globs of clotted cream - it was really good and filling. She also made roly-pollies - some fruit like currants and some jam and brown sugar and dumplings and Golden Syrup. Also she made an exhibition pudding. It was white and we ate it with white sauce. It was baked. Every Sunday was a special dinner. Father would sit at the end of the table and sharpen his carving knife on a steel and then carve up the roast, and Mother had all these covered dishes like the casseroles we use now only they were crockery - they were full of mashed potatoes, swede, carrots, parsnip, pumpkin, peas - depending on what vegetables we had in the garden. We would help ourselves to mint sauce or gravy. You could feed a dozen or more without any trouble. The floor of the kitchen was scrubbed boards and the hearth stone was white, scrubbed white with a piece of sandstone. All the other rooms' floors had linoleum on them and the rooms also had open fire-places. We had a bath once a week, and changed all our clothes. The bath was a big tin tub in front of the fire and in each bedroom was a washstand with a big basin and a bedroom jug of water standing in it. Under the table was a shelf where the chamber pot was kept. Some washstands had a door, and others only had a curtain to hide the pot.

We had iron bedsteads - no springs, only metal slabs to put the mattresses on. First there was a palliasse of straw or horse-hair, then on top a big thick mattress of feathers. Each day we would pat it and fluff it up to make it smooth. They were very warm and comfortable. Mother used to save all the soft feathers from the neck and breasts off all the fowls and ducks we killed for the table, then she would wash them and save them for mattresses and pillows. We also had chests of drawers in the bedrooms and a corner to hang our good clothes. Mother used to make all our Christmas beer. She made sassafras, hore-hound, ginger beer, and hot chilli beer. Also honey mead. Once when the honey mead was almost finished she tipped the dregs into the pigs trough and made them drunk. When dad came home they were sitting up and would squeal and fall over.

I used to get a new suit every Christmas. Brownells used to send up a box of things and I would have about three to choose from and to try on. I was eighteen when I got my first fitted suit. Mother also made our own coffee from a German recipe she got from a relative, May Pilcher, who used to visit her mother (Mrs John Pilcher) at Collinsvale [then known as Bismark]. It was brown sugar and treacle mixed together.

Appendix A

Warwick Advertiser, 6 April 1844

BURGLARY AT MYTON

Daniel Blackwell, Wm. Goddard and John Mullinder were indicted for having, at the parish of St. Nicholas, in the borough of Warwick, burglariously broken and entered the dwelling house of Thomas Higgs, and stolen therein one £5 note, three and a half sovereigns, one shawl, and a variety of other articles, his property. Mr Wilmot appeared to conduct the prosecution, and Mr Miller defended the prisoner Mullinder, Goddard and Blackwell having pleaded guilty. The following witnesses were then produced. We give the whole of the evidence in consequence of the great interest this case has excited in the neighbourhood.

Ann Higgs said: Upon the 26th day of February last, I and my husband went to bed at 9 o'clock. I heard some persons in the house about 12, and someone said to the man who works for me and sleeps in the adjoining room "Be still, we won't hurt you." They then came to my door and desired me to open it, when my husband got out of bed and asked what they wanted, and they replied "money or life." I then gave my husband a pocket-book, and he handed it to the men through the window; there was not any money in it, and some of them asked outside whether there was any money in it, but I made no answer. They said "Money we want, and money we'll have." I gave my husband my pocket, containing three and a half sovereigns. I had another book with money in, but I took it out of my pocket before I gave it to my husband. I put it between the beds, as it contained a five pound Bank of England note. The burglars still kept saying money they wanted and money they would have, or life. The window was then broken and one of the

men jumped into the room and directly opened the door and let four others in. My husband told me to get out of bed and we both knelt down and begged for mercy and one of them said "get into bed," which we did and they covered us over with the clothes and some wool and they asked us if we could see and I told them we could not. They then wanted more money and I told them they had got all the money we had and they said they had not got the pocket at all. The men got a light, and again asked if we could see them and they then got some bread, meat, and a beer from the cupboard and began to eat and drink. Three of them sat upon the bed, while the other two were rifling the drawers. One of the men then put his hands between the beds and when he had got up opposite me I could see his face and dress. He had on a rough chocolate-coloured waistcoat and a cap that fitted close to his head. He found the pocket-book and put it in his pocket. The men then went away, taking with them my husband's clothes, a quantity of other wearing apparel, a hare, a pair of soles, and a mackerel. Mr Bellerby came, and I gave him a description how the man was dressed. I can swear the prisoner Blackwell was the man.

Thomas Higgs said: I live near to the Leamington Road, in the borough of Warwick. I went to bed on Saturday evening, the 24th of February, about nine o'clock, having fastened the door. There is but one room in the house, but there is a lean-to attached, in which a man, named Robert Barlow sleeps. [This witness then repeated the statement made by his wife.] When they had covered us up, one of them said, if we spoke a word they would blow our brains out and they got a light and one of them held over me a bayonet, which was in the room. During this time some of them were eating, one of the men, who sat by me on the bed, was smoking, and said if I would give them another ten shillings they would go. They were in the house till about ten minutes after two, when they left.

Thomas Bellerby, police officer, said: In consequence of information I received, I proceeded to the house of the prosecutor, upon the morning of the robbery and examined the house. The window was broken very much and all the things in the house were scattered about. Mrs Higgs having given the man's description who she had seen, I apprehended Blackwell and Goddard, at Blackwell's house, in the Old Mill Lane. The prisoners' shoes were very wet and dirty, and their clothes were also wet. The prisoner Blackwell was committed to gaol, but Goddard was discharged. In consequence of what I heard, I and Mr. Ruby went to Warwick gaol to see the prisoner Blackwell. He then had on the trowsers which I now produce. I asked the prisoner where the cord trowsers were that he had on when he was committed, and he said he had them on underneath. I asked him where he got the white trowsers from, and he said that he had bought them in Birmingham some time ago. I then took the trowsers from him, which I now produce. I went the next day to see the prisoner, in consequence of a message I received. I saw him in the presence of the turnkey and asked him if he wanted to see me and he said he did. He said his mother had nothing to do with the robbery, nor knew anything about it. He also stated there was himself, Goddard, Jack Mullinder, Joe Mullinder, and Townley. He said when they brought the things home his mother would not suffer them to remain in the house. Goddard took them away, but where to, he did not know. He said he asked Goddard before he was sent to gaol to send him a pair of trowsers, and his mother brought him the white ones I took from him. On Tuesday morning, the 27th of February I

went to the prisoner John Mullinder's house a little before six o'clock and found him upstairs. When I told him I apprehended him on a charge of being concerned with Blackwell and others in the robbery of Higgs's house, he denied having been there. I then asked him if he was at Leamington on Saturday night? He said he was, and was there the most of the day, but came home very early, and was in bed soon after 9 o'clock. He first said that no one came home with him. He afterwards stated that he has joined by his brother, Goddard, Blackwell, and Townley and that it was very late. He also said that, as they were coming home, they went into Higgs's garden and that the others went into Higgs's house, but he did not go in. I afterwards took the shoes from the prisoner John Mullinder's feet. They did not appear to be a pair, as one was soled differently to the other. I compared the shoes with some foot-marks in Mr. Higgs' garden, and they exactly corresponded; the foot-marks were the same I had noticed on the Sunday morning.

William Shirley Ruby said: I apprehended the prisoner, William Goddard, in Warwick, on Tuesday, the 27th of February last, on a charge of being one of the parties who broke into Higgs's house, on the Warwick road. The prisoner said he knew nothing about it. I then searched his lodgings. I found a bundle secreted. I asked the prisoner if the bundle belonged to him and he said he knew nothing of it. I then asked him if he knew anything of a pair of trowsers that had [been] taken out of that bundle to Warwick gaol and given to Daniel Blackwell. He said he did. He then admitted taking the trowsers out of the bundle, and giving to Ann Blackwell, the mother of the prisoner Daniel Blackwell; she was then upstairs; and that she took them to her son in Warwick gaol. I went with Mr Bellerby, the police officer, to Warwick gaol and there saw the prisoner. Blackwell gave Mr. Bellerby a pair of white trowsers, which he said he had bought at Birmingham. I afterwards asked the mother of Daniel Blackwell if she had any goods in her house that did not belong to her. She said [she] had not seen any. I then searched the house, and found the bundle behind a stack of bricks. Ann Blackwell said she supposed that was the bundle William Goddard got the trowsers out of, which she took to the gaol to her son; that her son Daniel and the prisoner Goddard came into the house between 3 and 4 o'clock on Sunday morning. When I took the prisoner Goddard into custody, he said "now you have us two poor devils, I hope you will not be long before you have the rest." He also stated that John Mullinder was one with them in the robbery, and two others, who are at large, and whose names he gave as Joseph Mullinder and Charles Townley. The bundle I found in Ann Blackwell's house contained a piece of blue printed merino and various other articles.

Ann Blackwell said: The prisoner is my son. The prisoner, Goddard, lodged at my house. On Tuesday morning between ten and eleven o'clock, I was upstairs and he (Goddard) brought me a pair of white trowsers. I asked him where he had them from, when he replied out of the bundle. I asked him where the bundle was and he said it was all right. He then told me to take the trowsers to my son, who was a prisoner in Warwick gaol. I took them to him. Mr. Ruby came into my house about an hour afterwards. He said he wanted to search the house, and he did so and found the bundle he has produced. I knew nothing of the bundle being there. There was no one else living in the house besides my son and the prisoner Goddard. When the prisoner Goddard gave me the trowsers and said he had them out of the bundle, I did not know what bundle he meant, never having

heard the bundle mentioned before. My son and Goddard went together on Saturday night, the 24th, between five and six o'clock. They came home between four and five o'clock on Sunday morning. There was no one else with them. I was in bed, and could not tell if they brought anything home with them.

The prosecutor identified the property produced as being his property. Mr Miller addressed the jury for the prisoner Mullinder and, the evidence having been summed up, the jury returned a verdict, after some consideration, of guilty. The Learned Sergeant said had not one of the prisoners possessed some little degree of feeling, by restraining any of the others from acting with violence to the old people, he should certainly have sent them to one of the penal settlements, where they would have dragged out the remainder of their lives in chains and slavery. As however he did not wish the one who did possess that good feeling to be so severely dealt with, the whole of the prisoners should receive the benefit - the sentence, therefore, was that they be transported for the term of 15 years. The court adjourned soon after six o'clock.

Appendix B.

The Last Will and Testament of Daniel Blackwell

This is the paper writing referred to in the annexed Executors Path (?) of John Daniel Blackwell and Richard Vale Rodda signed before me this Third day of April One Thousand nine hundred and seven Frank Ath Pitt Commissioner of the Supreme Court of Tasmania.

This is the last Will and Testament of me Daniel Blackwell of Victoria Valley Parish of Graham in the County of Cumberland made this twenty fourth day of October in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and Ninety Eight. I hereby revoke all Wills made by me at any time heretofore. I appoint my son John Daniel Blackwell and R. V. Rodda of the Ouse, Store Keeper in Tasmania, to be my executors and direct all my Debts and Funeral expenses shall be paid as soon as conveniently may be after my decease. I give and bequeath unto my son John Daniel Blackwell Two hundred acres of Land in Parish of Graham County of Cumberland, Joining G Pilchers & G. C. Nicholas Esq Together with all Stock and Effects, that I may own at my death. Also, to my son Joseph James Blackwell I will to him 25 acres of Land in the Parish of Graham County of Cumberland. And all the remainder of my property unto my wife Elizabeth Blackwell and all moneys that I may be in possession of in Banks or otherwise and also to my wife Elizabeth I will my House and Garden for the term of her life.

Signed by the said Testator his Daniel Blackwell in the Daniel X Blackwell presence of us at the same mark time who at his request Witness to mark in his presence and in the of R. V. Rodda each other have subscribed our names as witnesses " " " Thomas Dunlop New Norfolk Alfred Taylor Dee (NO further grants of free land after 17th September 1831)

References

Other references noted but not consulted were:

Archives reference no. C214 p 142 Barber, William, convict Norfolk Island petitions the home government concerning his innocence.

Roger, W. F., Norfolk Island in the Forties "The Government and W.H. Barber", published 1866

Archives reference no. CY880 "History of Norfolk Island" by Aaron Price 1774-1852

Archives reference no. CY368 Convicts 1830 - 1844 (Norfolk Island) Q354.91/4 Journal of Surgeon Supt of Convict Ships to Norfolk Island, eg the *Agincourt* 17 June to 23 November 1844, listed in the Convict Guide to the Archives p 294.

Archives reference no. CY367 Official Records concerning Convicts on Norfolk Island 1843 -1855 FM4/8494-5 Papers 1844 - 1850 (under Norfolk Island section of the catalogue)

Archives reference no. CY1288 Lists of Convicts sent from Norfolk Island to Tasmania 1845 -1847

Archives reference no. CY1381 Tasmanian Convict Dept Returns of Convicts from Norfolk Island 1847 – 1848.

Archives reference no. CY1194 Ticket of Leave Register 1845 – 1857.

Archives reference no. CY151 Convict Dept Records of Prisoners 1840 - 1850 Z329

Archives reference no. CY1831 Convict Records Z293

A useful though disorganised list to be found at the front counter of the Mitchell Library is entitled: "Guide to Mitchell Library Tasmanian Papers on Micro File". This may be a misnomer, as microfilm references are not apparent for many of the documents referred to in the index. I was unable to consult most of them because a reader's ticket is required. However I was able to peruse one compilation of documents concerning the police in Tasmania from 1820. [Daniel and his family lived in the old police station at Victoria Valley at one stage]

Other references from the State Library Archives

Archives reference no. CON 17/1 p 246 *Lady Franklin* from Norfolk Island 3rd December 1846 (The indent for the voyage of 30 August 1846 is on p 210 of the same document on film) Try CON 21/1 for a description of the voyage of the *Lady Franklin*. Adm 101/1 reel 3187 for details on the *Agincourt*.

Rita Minnie Gertrude Triffett married George William Pilcher on 21/8/1911 (RGD 1/23 no. 1224) [May be relative of Daniel's wife.]

Thomas Triffit (Sen) mentioned LSD 1/77 pp 217-8, 238, 243, 264

D. Conlan of Fenton Forest HTG 15 Jan 1856, 15/12/57, 25/1/1859, 7/2/1860

"Launceston Advertiser" 2nd December 1844 or 27th December 1844 describes conditions at Woolwich before leaving (by William Henry Barber) "Hobart Town Courier" 20/3/1845

David Burn "Voyage to Norfolk Island in 1844" (on the *Lady Franklin*) said to be in the Mitchell Library. [David Burn owned *Rotherwood*, where Daniel lived for a while also.]

"Household Words" a magazine published by Charles Dickens published William Henry Barber's impressions of the voyage (as a convict) on the *Agincourt* to Australia.

"Hobart Town Courier" 22nd May 1847 William Barber states his case and details life on Norfolk Island.

Archives reference CY1288 Probation Books - described as "Papers re Convicts and Convict Ships, mainly 1845 - 1850"

Robson, L. L., "The Convict Settlers of Australia" (Melbourne University Press, 1965), p 172 *ibid*, p 172 Refer Adm 101/1 reel 3187 for more details of *Agincourt* (copy not held yet) *ibid* p 173 *ibid* (quoting British Government Statutes) p 174

West, John, "The History of Tasmania" (1971) pp 488-489

Archives reference CON 17/1, p 246 (a photocopy of which is held)

Notes from the Mitchell Library taken 9 June 1990

Refer CON 21/1 for a description of *Lady Franklin*.

Archives reference no. CON 17/1 p 246 *Lady Franklin* from Norfolk Island 3rd December 1846 (The indent for the voyage of 30 August 1846 is on p 210 of the same document on film)

Brand, Ian, "Penal Peninsula" (Jason Publications, West Moonah, 1978). pp 57 - 59 (GO 33/60 Administrator - Secretary of State 31/5/1847)