

Mary Hanbury per *Digby* with her two sisters, Bridget and Catherine

Mary Ann Lankenon (nee Hanbury) came to Julie Poulter's attention from searching the Darlinghurst gaol records of the girls who arrived on the *Digby* in 1849.

Mary Ann was difficult to trace due to her unusual surname which was spelt various ways in the records. I was forced to eventually order one of her children's birth certificates in order to verify that she was a famine workhouse orphan girl.

Mary Ann Lankenon first entered the criminal world in 1866, probably as a result of her *de facto* husband, Johannes Lankenon's illness. On 7 November 1866, Mary admitted two of her children to the Benevolent Asylum: Maria Charlotte (birth registered as Charlotte Marie), aged 4 and William Henry, aged 2. William Henry was discharged on 22 April 1867, aged 2 years and 6 months, and Charlotte was discharged two months later on 22 June.¹ Charlotte Maria's birth certificate of 1862 confirms that her mother was Mary Ann Hanbury, aged 28 (b.c.1834), born in County Roscommon, Ireland.²

There indeed was a Mary Hanbury from Roscommon on the *Digby*, aged 16 in 1849 (b.c.1833). Mary Ann's sisters Catherine and Bridget were also on the *Digby*. Mary Ann's *de facto* husband also had numerous criminal convictions from 1866 until 1871 when he was charged with being a rogue and vagabond and eventually sent to Parramatta asylum. Mary Ann accumulated no less than 12 criminal convictions herself. There were six convictions for being drunk and disorderly, one charge of assault and robbery and four charges for prostitution.³ For the assault and robbery charge of 1867, Mary Ann spent 12 months in Parramatta gaol doing hard labour. Three of her children died in 1863, 1867 and 1868. In September 1871, the *Empire* reported that Mary Ann Lankelow (sic) had been charged with 'being a common prostitute and behaving in a riotous manner'. She went to gaol for three months on that occasion.⁴ Three months later she was fined for similar behaviour in Hay Street, Sydney. In January 1872 for being a common prostitute and behaving in a riotous manner in Belmore Gardens she was sent to gaol for three months again.⁵

After this, Mary Ann disappears from the records, and it is unknown what happened to her (yet!).

Grateful thanks to Julie Poulter, descendant of Jane Kelly also on the *Digby*.

¹ Mary Ann Lankenon, Minutes of the House Committee, Benevolent Asylum, 6 November 1866; Index to Benevolent Asylum records: <http://www.sydneybenevolentasylum.com/>.

² Birth certificate of Charlotte Maria Hanbury Lankenau, no. 1562, born 21 July 1862, illegitimate. Father Johannes is a painter from Germany.

³ Mary Ann Lankenon (and aliases), Darlinghurst gaol records, www.ancestry.com

⁴ Mary Ann Lankelow, *Empire*, 5 September 1871.

⁵ Mary Ann Lankenow, *Sydney Morning Herald*, 23 January 1872.