**Slide 1 ~ The Detective**

**Good morning, greetings everyone**. Thank you for your attendance here today …. and for indulging my interest in our First Fleet ancestors, particularly their struggles during the early years of settlement. Thanks also, of course, to our convenor Cathy, for creating this opportunity, and along with my fellow presenter Glen, for providing some of the key source documentation which underpins the conclusions reached through this research.

**But first, a little about me**. My name is Jon and I’m fourth generation Australian born ……. of largely English and Irish stock, with a little Scots and Greek thrown in for seasoning. ……. Mostly middle class, nothing very exciting.

My interest in family history was inspired by my late father-in-law, Jeffery, who spent many square metres of shoe leather …… reams of photocopy paper …… and sheets of stamps ….. during the pre-internet seventies, eighties and nineties ……. to investigate his own ancestry, of which he was deservedly proud.

**Slide 2 ~ Typed Wilder tree**

**About two years before he died**, I naïvely (here read **fatally**) suggested that HE consolidate all of his accumulated information on some sort of computerised genealogy platform. Summarily charged with the job, I was soon caught up in his enthusiasm, and thus the bug was acquired.

**Slide 3 ~ Mary & Thomas in mufti**

**As his end approached**, he asked me to continue his work … which I have ….. in spades ……. My wife will confirm this ☹. However, we’d both give an arm and a leg to spend an hour with him now, revealing some of the more outrageous family furphies since uncovered through access to modern digitised records.

Many of our ancestors would be blushing in the grave if aware of the exposure, in the present day, of their past crimes, illegitimacies, affairs and even bigamies; not to mention the serial deceptions they perpetrated in order to conceal those transgressions.

**Cathy has invited me here** today to present a solution to the **mystery** surrounding the relationships between Thomas and Mary Bishop, and Mary’s daughter Charlotte.

Thomas, a marine, and Mary, a convict also known as Davis or Davies, were participants in the First Fleet. Charlotte was born on Norfolk Island a couple of years later.

**Slide 4 ~ Molly Gillen ~ Mary Davis bio** (will progress automatically to extract)

**So, what was so mysterious about Thomas and Mary** ? It began with the very identity of Mary Bishop, formerly Mary Davis. Molly Gillen, in her seminal work ***The Founders of Australia***, while establishing that *“no convict of the name Mary Bishop was recorded in any First Fleet document”,* posed a raft of unanswered questions about Mary Davis, couched in statements such as *…….“why she used the name Mary Bishop” …… “considerable complications to her story” …. “there has been an assumption” …..… “This assumption is seriously undermined” …. “Why Mary married Samuel Day in Seventeen Eighty Eight and did not stay (with him) …… remain at this time a mystery.”*

**My path to the Bishop family** Jeff’s only daughter Gail Maree is my bride, and it is she that carries the Bishop genes in our family. Routine tracking of births, deaths and marriages led me to her first (i.e. most recent) convict ancestor, one Jacob Chillingworth, a surname very well known in the Tamworth locality, who prior to commencing employment in the Eighteen Fifties at the AA Company’s Goonoo Goonoo station, married a much younger Susannah Pentley, daughter of another convict, John.

Encouraged by these discoveries, I further found that Susannah’s mother, Charlotte (née **Bishop**), led something of a tempestuous life, with many children and multiple partners. With the knowledge that Charlotte was buried in St. Peter’s cemetery in Richmond, in Two Thousand and One Gail and I went to visit.

**Slide 5 ~ CharlotPently headstone**

We were gratified to find a substantial headstone marking her grave, but … WOW !! surprise of surprises !!! was the discovery, on this very well preserved memorial, of a **Fellowship of First Fleeters’** plaque, celebrating the life of one **Mary (Davis) Bishop**.

**Slide 5a ~ FFF plaque ~ Mary (Davis) Bishop** (needs 2nd click to progress)

Investigation soon revealed that Mary was Charlotte’s mother.

**Slide 6 ~ FFF fax confirming Mary Davis was Mary Bishop, and Charlotte’s mother**

Correspondence from the Fellowship of First Fleeters president Peter Christian endorsed Mollie Gillen’s conclusion that Mary Bishop was Charlotte’s mother, although first known as Mary Davies, under which name she was convicted (Salop Assizes) and transported (Lady Penrhyn).

However, all paternity searches led to nothing but controversy and discord about the identity of Charlotte’s father. Theories abounded, on multiple genealogical websites, forums and blogs, suggesting varied candidates and even promoting the occurrence of an adoption. BUT … NOT ONE quoted any supporting sources for these speculations.

**Thus was born the quest** …. Who was Charlotte Bishop’s father ???

Best look at the likely suspects, beginning with mother Mary’s first **recorded** husband. According to Mollie Gillen, based on the

**Slide 7 ~ St Phillip’s Register** (will progress automatically to extract)

St. Phillip’s early church Register, that *first* husband was convict Samuel Day, who she allegedly married in November Seventeen Eighty Eight.

BUT …. she was recorded in the register as Mary BISHOP. Remember, there was no Mary Bishop recorded in the First Fleet as Mary was convicted and transported as DAVIS (or DAVIES). Which leads back to Mollie Gillen’s question … *why she used the name Mary Bishop, remain(s) at this time a mystery.”* No answer yet !

However, what **is** established is that within ten months of the arrival of the First Fleet, Mary Davis was already known as Mary Bishop. But why ? (said I).

I concluded that the obvious answer was ….. she had formed a liaison with a male named Bishop. There were only three. Two of them subsequently married others. As did, incidentally, Samuel Day. He settled on Norfolk Island with convict Mary **Bolton** (within ten months of his alleged marriage to Mary Bishop) and they were later recorded in Norfolk Island documentation as married.

So another question arises, if he truly married Mary Bishop in Seventeen Eighty Eight …. *“how did he get away with bigamy, and Mary continue on with the name of Bishop ?”*

**Slide 8 ~ Convict idents ~ Mary Davies & Mary Bolton** (will progress automatically to extract)

The answer increasingly appears to be **a case of mistaken identity**. Research reveals that Mary Bolton and Mary Davis were transported on the **same** ship (Lady Penrhyn) after being convicted **together**, on the **same** day, of the **same** crime, in the **same** court (Salop Assizes). Given that Mary Davis had recently acquired the name of Bishop (therefore **both** were ***Mary B\_\_\_***), perhaps the scribe was confused ?

It is virtually certain that Samuel Day married Mary **Bolton**, not Mary **Bishop,** and was not the father of Charlotte. Which left our Mary continuing her relationship with **Unknown** BISHOP.

**So…back to the quest**. A father named Bishop ? It is recorded that both Elias and Joseph Bishop married others within a few years of arrival. There is no extant record of marriage for **Thomas** Bishop.

**Slide 9 ~ Thomas Bishop assignment** (will progress automatically to extract)

Thomas was a 21st Plymouth Company marine private who was assigned upon arrival in NSW to Captain James Campbell’s Company as part of the garrison of Port Jackson. Upon discharge in late Seventeen Ninety One, Thomas expressed the wish to settle on Norfolk Island and received a grant of land.

**Slide 10 ~ HRA Marine Settlers to NI**

Mary Bishop had travelled to Norfolk Island in early Seventeen Ninety on the ill fated HMS Sirius and lived there without a recorded partner until March Seventeen Ninety Three.

**Slide 11 ~ Commissary List of maize purchases** (will progress automatically to extract)

Thomas took up his land, but after more than twelve months of documented productivity, relinquished his grant and returned to Sydney per the Kitty, in March Seventeen Ninety Three. It is recorded that Mary and Charlotte accompanied him.

What is not recorded is the intervening months, from their inevitable reunion, Thomas meeting his daughter for the first time, and their working together to produce the significant crop of maize sold into the Commissary on Norflolk Island after only one growing season. Nor is the reason recorded for the surrender of their farm.

**Slide 12 ~ 110ac grant @ Concord** (will progress automatically to extract)

Upon their return to Port Jackson, Thomas was granted 110 acres on the southern shore of the harbour. Sadly, he died in early December, within six months of the grant, of unknown causes and was interred in the Old Burial Ground in George St Sydney thus disappearing from the record.

The notion that Thomas may have been Mary’s husband, de facto or otherwise, and possibly the father of Charlotte, was for me gaining momentum. It was not an original thought, and had been expressed by other researchers well before it occurred to me.

However, whilst the partnership was accepted, the paternity was adamantly debunked …….. on the grounds that Thomas was still in Sydney for the entire seventeen months leading up to Charlotte’s birth on Norfolk Island.

It appeared that the quest had hit one of those well known **brick walls**. Then along came a succession of lucky breaks …… In genealogical research, as in life, often times ….. *the harder you work, the luckier you get.*

**Most of us are familiar** with the term “*the devil’s in the detail*”. Sometimes, so too are the jewels. And often, key details are only revealed in the **context** of a document, such as an introduction, a foot note or margin note, a heading or an endnote.

Some such details ….. as …. (with luck) …. they have unfolded ….

**Slide 13 ~ 110ac highlight** (will progress automatically to source)

* **Thomas’s land grant** ….. Detail …… ***the 110 acres*** granted to Thomas in June Seventeen Ninety Three, known as Bishop’s Farm, is of exactly the correct entitlement due to a discharged marine private, married, with one child. From the Historical Records of New South Wales Vol II …. *“(Governor) Phillip, accordingly, was directed to issue grants to all soldiers, who were willing to remain, as follows:— To* ***married*** *men.—…….* ***privates, 100 acres; and, in each case, 10 additional acres for every child”.*** Thomas was adjudged to be both husband and father.

**Slide 14a ~ NI VB p76a** will progress to **14b ~ close up of Charlotte entry** (will need 2nd click to progress to DoW)

* **Charlotte’s birth date** ……… generally believed to be 9th July, Seventeen Ninety One, ……… has been arbitrarily derived from an initial entry found in the Norfolk Island Victualling Book. However, closer inspection of this entry….. and the dates of adjacent entries …… reveals that they were entered on a Saturday.

**Slide 14c ~ DoW ~ Saturday 9th July 1791**

In fact, further review reveals that ALL of the entries in the Victualling Book (with the exception of some ship arrivals) appear to have been made on a Saturday. Very considerate of the children to arrive at weekly intervals, especially on the weekend !! Back to work Monday for the mums.

All jokes aside though, it would appear that Saturday was the day of the week that the Victualling Book was updated. Clearly, this is not a birth date, but simply the date of the first entry for each child, i.e. when they began to draw a ration; …… which implies they have experienced a period of weaning ……. historically, at the time of settlement ……. for a period of six to nine months.

**Slide 15a ~ Victual book headings** (will need 2nd click to progress)

* **Context. Weight** is added to this conclusion by review of the column headings in the original document. The notation “Born”, against each child, is in the column headed *“from whence”,* following after the column headed *“Time of entry”.* Mary’s *“Time of Entry”* is *13 March Seventeen Ninety,* which is in fact the arrival date of the Sirius and, it follows, Mary’s entitlement to rations. Her *“from whence”* is *HMS Sirius,* which is the means by which she arrived on the island.

**Slide 15b ~ Victual book composite entries for Mary & Charlotte**

Charlotte’s *“Time of Entry” was 9 July Seventeen Ninety One* and her *“from whence”* implies *(she was) BORN (here, i.e. on Norfolk Island).* This convention is reflected in many later accountings of the colony’s population, the universal identifiers being “*date and ship of arrival*”, OR “*born in the colony*”.

**Slide 16 ~ Victual book, Port Jackson, 1788** (will automatically progress to preamble)

* **Validation:** Consider now the preamble to the list prepared in Sydney (Port Jackson), at or about the same time, for the Government Store (i.e. Victualling List ~ Seventeen Eighty Eight) which states ……... *“The original list did not include nursing babies, which were added later when weaned”*.

**The inescapable conclusions** drawn from the above details are:

* Thomas Bishop WAS a father.
* Charlotte Bishop was NOT born in July Seventeen Ninety One, but rather sometime during Seventeen Ninety.
* Given that Mary Bishop didn’t embark from Port Jackson until March Seventeen Ninety, it is now virtually certain that she was with child upon departure.
* **Thomas Bishop re-enters the picture !!**

**Slide 17 ~ luv is**

As to their marital status, it is now generally accepted that Thomas and Mary were married. The date and place are the only remaining points of conjecture.

**Slide 18 ~ Marriages November 1791 Norfolk Is**)

Cathy has included them within the list of marriages conducted on Norfolk Island by the Reverend Johnson in November Seventeen Ninety One. There is some evidence to support this. However, I suspect (and prefer to believe), given her public use of the name Bishop **prior** to November Seventeen Eighty Eight, that the union occurred **prior** to November Seventeen Eighty Eight.

During her life in the Colony, in ALL of her interactions with the Civil authorities (as opposed to penal records),

**Slide 19 ~ Mary Bishop in Civil records** (will automatically progress through 7 examples)

from her employment, to her several further land dealings, to her 1810 memorial to Gov. Lachlan Macquarie, to the 1828 Census, to her death in 1839, Mary was recorded as Mary **Bishop**.

**Slide 20 ~ Bishop’s Farm indenture** (will automatically progress to closeup, full text and WIDOW reference)

All differences of opinion aside, the growing **presumption** that the Bishops were a married couple is **NOW CONFIRMED** by the serendipitous discovery of an original handwritten land dealing ….. dated just eight months after Thomas's death, which records the release of 110 acres of land known as Bishop’s Farm, on the South side of the Harbour of Sydney, for £45, on 11th August Seventeen Ninety Four, to James Squire the colonial brewer, by **Mary Bishop, widow of Thomas Bishop**.

**Slide 21 ~ Bishop’s Farm indenture** (oblique)

This extremely early Australian land document, recording a transaction that took place within seven years of the arrival of the First Fleet at Port Jackson, was offered at auction in Melbourne in Two Thousand and Twelve, and turned up in one of my periodic internet searches for ***search term: Mary Bishop***. All credit to Google ……. and to revisiting old ground.

Thomas and Mary Bishop, tragic couple, who had no more than a handful of years together, punctuated by servitude and duty, gifted the infant colony but one child, Charlotte. She, on the other hand, made amends …… by bearing ten children (to six different fathers) ….. Their descendants are legion.

This closure is for them.

**Slide 22 ~ Thomas & Mary in descendant crowd** (requires 2nd click to close)

Thank you. Questions ? Comments … Discussion.