Cornelius Savage, 2985, *Ramillies*

Convict Orphans

As Lucy Frost says in the introduction to Convict Orphans,[1] – "Few of the 6000 children who entered the orphanage [in Hobart] between 1828 and 1879 were orphans in the usual sense of the word. They were the children of living convicts. It was not death that orphaned them but the convict system."

James Savage (extract from the book)

'Supposed to have gone to Hobart where his friends reside', a master of the east Coast told the local constabulary when James Savage took off. James, red-haired and freckle-faced, had sailed with his mother from Ireland on the convict ship *Earl Grey*, and entered the Orphan Schools before he was three years old. His mother retrieved him once she had her ticket of leave, and for several years lived off and on with her and the man she soon married (although her first husband, James' father, was alive and serving time in Western Australia).

James did not get along in the new family, and kept running away. When found, he would spin tales of having 'neither father nor mother', or of being treated very cruelly by his mother, who 'refuses him food' and 'has turned him out of doors', so that he is obliged to sleep out in the open air at night, except when he is fortunate enough to find some person kind enough to give him shelter'. People would take him in, only to discover they had been duped. He would then be 'reconciled to his parents', with promises that they would 'treat him kindly for the future' – and the cycle would start all over again.

It was broken when James returned to the orphanage as a twelve year old and became the responsibility of the state. His record as an apprentice was as unstable as his history in the family, and he was on the fourth of his five masters when he took off from the East Coast. For almost four months he remained free, concealed perhaps in a network of friends he trusted more than his family.

James was the son of Bridget and Cornelius Savage, who were convicted of sheep stealing on 27 June 1849 in Kerry, Ireland, and both sentenced to 15 years' transportation.

Bridget Savage was sent to Tasmania, arriving per *Earl Grey* in May 1850. Ireland Prison records list her as having a child on board, James, aged 2 years and 9 months. James was admitted to the Orphanage in July 1853.

Bridget married ex-convict Butcher Dann on 30 October 1854. He was the son of John Butcher and Sarah Dan and was baptised Isaac Butcher Dan.

Bridget died on 10 April 1868 of phthisis pulmonalis - after a long and painful illness, in the 42nd year of her age, the beloved wife of Isaac Dann, corn factor, 36 Collins Street, Hobart. (She was closer to 50 years old)

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[1] Convict Orphans by Lucy Frost, Allen and Unwin, 2023. FHWA: 364.3946 FRO.

Cornelius was sent to Western Australia, arriving in 1854 per *Ramillies*, after spending two years at Gibraltar. He asked the authorities to enquire after his wife, and on 1 May 1858 he received a reply: his wife was married to another man.[2]

More information may be found in *Ramillies* by Glennis Sewell, including the possible death of Cornelius Savage. See: Family History of WA library, 364.3941 SEW

[2] Stamp Books, 1857 - 1864 (S1 - S3)