

Links, Lives, Luminaries: Victorian Feminism and the
Founding Headmistresses of Independent Secondary
Schools for Girls in New South Wales 1880-1925.

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Abstract

My research project seeks to answer the question: What can a Study of the Lives of the founding headmistresses of the Independent Secondary Schools for Girls in New South Wales, 1880 – 1925 reveal about the ways in which advanced schooling for girls was connected to Victorian feminism? It is a collective biography that explores new frameworks to interpret the lives of seven of these women, the authority they embodied and the ways in which class and gender intersected to both empower and restrict them. It explores the ways in which they enacted the confluence of Victorian feminism and advanced schooling in New South Wales and distils commonalities that may assist in creating a history of women’s collective experiences. Primary evidence is located chiefly in school archives which is limiting but balanced by access to public archives and assisted by digital technologies. Three defining themes relating to access to power and authority in negotiations around class and gender expectations have emerged as generative concepts in a discourse about women’s advanced education on the cusp of the local and global in feminism: Linkages, Sisterhoods and Legacies. These three themes constitute the organising principles under which my findings are arranged.

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Statement of Originality

This work has not previously been submitted for a degree or a diploma in any university. To the best of my knowledge and belief, the thesis contains no material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made in the thesis itself.

Signed _____

Date: 20/05/2020

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Finally, I'd like to dedicate this work to my late much loved and respected Aunt - known to her family simply as Aunt Vi and to others as Miss Medway of Queenwood School (1909 – 1996). It was through our deep, complex and sometimes perplexing relationship that my interest in the founding headmistresses of independent girls' schools, was born.

Introduction

Between 1880 and 1925, a cohort of predominantly single women entered the educational market in New South Wales by establishing high quality independent non-denominational girls' schools.¹ These 'advanced' schools, of which thirteen remain today, swiftly became elite educational institutions in the state, educating scores of young women who would go on to be influential in their own right.² Like the advanced boys' schools that were predominantly Church owned,³ these girls' schools offered 'advanced' subjects such as algebra, geometry, higher mathematics and classical and modern languages: in short, subjects that would lead to university entrance, a stated aim of first-wave feminism.⁴ They also offered an 'accomplishment' curriculum that included music, dancing, watercolour art and, like the boys' schools, sport.

¹ See Appendix A: Seventeen Independent Girls' Secondary Schools founded by Owner/Headmistresses between 1880 and 1925. NOTE: The educational market in the period 1880-1925 was a crowded field and these seventeen schools do not constitute all the owner/headmistress independent girls' schools established in NSW in that period. For instance, private schools in the period 1885-6 in District No. 7. (St Leonards) alone, numbered forty-five. Source: Legislative Assembly New South Wales - Education - Reports of school attendance officers having reference to private schools 6 May 1886. pp. 251-252. Accessed courtesy of Abbotsleigh Archives 10th April 2019.

The seventeen schools were chosen because of their longevity and in the case of Maybanke College because of Maybanke Anderson's involvement in the field of girls' education in the state and, linked to this, her passionate involvement in the movement to attain social justice for women and children. Jan Roberts, *Maybanke Anderson : sex, suffrage & social reform* [New ed.]. ed. (Avalon Beach: Avalon Beach : Ruskin Rowe Press, 1997).pp. 7&9.

² W. Vere Hole and Anne H. Treweeke, *The History of The Women's College Within The University of Sydney* (Sydney: Halstead Press., 1953). NOTE: My thesis does not include a study of the educational outcomes of the young women who attended these schools. However, an analysis of entries in the biographical register of the Women's College University of Sydney between 1892 and 1925, reveals that twenty Abbotsleigh women were enrolled there during that time. See Rosemary Annable, *Biographical Register The Women's College within the University of Sydney.* , vol. Volume One 1892-1939. (The Council of The Women's College, The University of Sydney., 1995). pp.33 – 83. Constance Harker (1875-1964) educated at Normanhurst graduated with honours in English and History at the University of Sydney B.A. 1895. *ibid* p. 33. Dr Agnes Bennett (1872-1960) educated at Abbotsleigh and Sydney Girls' High was the first woman to graduate with honours in science from the University of Sydney. See Noeline Kyle, *Her natural destiny : the education of women in New South Wales* (Kensington, N.S.W: New South Wales University Press, 1986).p. 104

³ Prior to 1882, the NSW advanced boys' schools included the denominational Kings in Parramatta established 1831 under Anglican auspices and Newington in Strathfield established 1863 by the Wesleyan Methodist Church. The non-denominational Sydney Grammar was established by an Act of Parliament in 1854. Ian Keese and Denise Thomas, *Caring for Education. Celebrating 125 Years of the Teachers' Guild of New South Wales* (Doncaster, Victoria: WriteHeart Press in co-operation with the Teachers' Guild of NSW., 2018).p.3.

⁴ Barbara Caine, *English feminism, 1780-1980* (Oxford, England: Oxford University Press, 1997).pp.115-118. NOTE: The University of Sydney opened its doors to women in 1881. See: Ursula Bygott and K. G. Cable, *Pioneer Women Graduates of the University of Sydney 1881 - 1921.*, ed. C. Turney (The University of Sydney, 1985).p.3.

Today, these schools cater for up to 11,000 girls at any one time.⁵ Yet though they belonged to the new echelon of the middle class intelligentsia⁶ whose ideas would transform Australian life and continue to define the national identity, the lives of the founding headmistresses have been little studied in either the history of women or the history of education in NSW. Moreover, my interest in their lives was piqued by Proctor and Campbell's recent assertion that first-wave feminism and advanced schooling for girls were connected.⁷ This prompted me to ask: What can a study of the lives of these founding headmistresses reveal about the ways in which advanced schooling for girls was connected to Victorian feminism?⁸

To answer this question, I have chosen to use collective biography as a frame for my analysis. My exploration of their lives will refer predominantly to just seven of these women, chosen because of the diversity they offer in terms of age, educational background, religious affiliation and marital status and the contrasting ways in which they illustrate different aspects of their experience. They are: Ellen Clarke who founded Normanhurst in Ashfield in 1882; Marian Clarke, who established Abbotsleigh in North Sydney in 1885, which then moved to Parramatta in 1888 and finally Wahroonga in 1898; Elizabeth Liggins and Clara Arnold who initiated the College for Girls Fitzroy St Milsons Point, 1882 later called Redlands in 1899 when it moved to Neutral Bay, Jeannie Monckton who established Meriden, Strathfield in 1897 and Grace Lawrance and Beatrice Rennie who founded Queenwood, Mandolong Road, Mosman, in 1925.⁹

First-wave feminism was a complex international movement that developed along national lines, in response to different imperatives and to differing chronologies.¹⁰ However I am focusing here on the Victorian Feminists who pioneered academic education for girls as the women who pioneered these advanced schools for girls in NSW, were predominantly English and English educated.¹¹ Their story begins in Victorian England, in the drawing rooms of groups of wealthy middle class women of a reforming disposition, who engaged with a range of linked feminist

⁵ This number was calculated from information about the thirteen schools in Wikipedia, and from individual school websites.

⁶ Marjorie R. Theobald, *Knowing women : origins of women's education in nineteenth-century Australia* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1996).p.66.

⁷ Craig Campbell and Helen Proctor, *A History of Australian Schooling* (Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 2014).p.130

⁸ Throughout the thesis, the term 'first-wave feminism' is used inter-changeably with the term 'Victorian feminism'.

⁹ See Appendix A. Sources: individual school histories referenced in the bibliography.

¹⁰ James Keating, "Piecing together suffrage internationalism: Place, space, and connected histories of Australasian women's activism," *History Compass* 16, no. 8 (2018), <https://doi.org/10.1111/hic3.12481>; June and Katherine Holden Hannam, "Heartland and periphery: local, national and global perspectives on women's history," *Women's History Review* 11, no. 3 (2002).

¹¹This is not to discount the role of the churches at this time in opening secondary schools for girls, nor the role of the state but my focus is on the independent headmistresses as their schools dominated this market in the period I am researching.

activities, including the establishment of advanced schools for girls.¹² Hitherto denied the opportunities to live a full and meaningful life by their social class and gender, Barbara Leigh Smith Bodichon,¹³ Emily Davies,¹⁴ Josephine Butler,¹⁵ and women like them, focused their collective energies on campaigning for secondary educational institutions for girls that would enable them to enter tertiary institutions. They were determined that women would have access to an education that qualified them to take their place in a public arena that included schools, universities, hospitals, the law courts and parliament.¹⁶ In their engagement with other feminist campaigns to free women from legal subjugation, their foci diverged. Caine comments: Emily Davies 'rejected entirely the Victorian ideal of nurturant womanhood and in so doing subverted the existing framework for family life and for social order.' Josephine Butler, after the repeal of the Contagious Diseases Act worked unsuccessfully to end the organization of prostitution and turned to religion, having come to 'the conclusion that the very organisation of heterosexuality involves the oppression of women'.¹⁷ While other feminist ideals were yet to be achieved, the right to an education which would enable women to support themselves, was to form the basis of Victorian feminism. It was in this social milieu that the founding headmistresses of the independent girls' secondary schools

¹² For example, Emily Davies, co-founder and early mistress of Girton College (for women) Cambridge University and Frances Buss, founder and proprietress of the North London Collegiate School for Girls, first met through a contact in the Durham and Northumberland branch of the society for promoting the Employment of Women, which Emily had helped found before moving to London with her mother. Philippa Levine, *Feminist Lives in Victorian England Private Roles and Public Commitment* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell Inc., 1990).p.128.

¹³ Barbara Leigh Smith Bodichon (1827-1891). In 1852 she used some of her father's financial gift of money to establish her own progressive school in London: the Portman Hall School. She also financially supported the establishment of Girton College, Cambridge, the first residential college for women in the U.K., leaving a significant bequest on her death. In this she worked with Emily Davies and with Davies also, was instrumental in the passing of the Matrimonial Causes Act of 1858. In 1866 she formed the first Women's Suffrage Committee. "Barbara Bodichon," in *Wikipedia*. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Barbara_Bodichon.

¹⁴ Emily Davies (1830-1921). Born into a professional upper- middle-class family, Emily felt acutely, her father's refusal to provide her with any of the educational opportunities he afforded her brothers. While they attended elite public schools and Cambridge University, she was refused even the most basic instruction. Her strenuous and persistent efforts to open higher education for women, culminated in the founding of Girton College in 1869. Her commitment to girls' education was derived from her personal experience of discrimination. She spent the entirety of her adult life campaigning against the societal beliefs and strictures that justified inequality for women on the basis of the so-called natural differences of the sexes, arguing that what society regarded as innate qualities of femininity were no more than mere conventional expectations. Sara. Delamont, "Davies, (Sarah) Emily," in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (online ed.: Oxford University Press.). <https://doi-org.simsrad.net.ocs.mq.edu.au/10.1093/ref:odnb/32741>.

¹⁵ Josephine Butler (1828-1921) pressured the authorities at Cambridge University into providing further education courses for women, which eventually led to the foundation of the all-women college at Newnham in 1871. She was appointed president of the North of England Council for the Higher Education of Women in 1867. Judith R. Walkowitz, "Butler (nee Grey), Josephine Elizabeth " in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (online edition Oxford University Press). <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/32214>.

¹⁶ See Appendix B for my timeline of key English and Australian dates of importance for women. Sources: various.

¹⁷ Barbara Caine, *Victorian Feminists* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992).pp. 101, 194.

in New South Wales were raised. It is moreover a manifestation of the link between English feminism and advanced schooling for girls in New South Wales. The Victorian Feminist vision that prevailed offered, in spite of differences, no less than gender autonomy for women, beginning with the largely philanthropic approach to the establishment of academic schools, followed by access to universities and university women's colleges and certification and eventually, the granting of university degrees.¹⁸

The educated single women who migrated predominantly from England to New South Wales in the last quarter of the nineteenth century and established independent girls' secondary schools, I would argue, were beneficiaries of the foresight of Victorian feminists: Emily Davies and Josephine Butler in particular. These pioneers were not however part of the network of Cambridge women referred to by Theobald. None had been at either Girton or Newnham colleges where the heads had exhorted their young women to go to the colonies to teach and although Theobald comments that Sarah Burstall, the second headmistress of the Manchester Girls High School (MGHS) from 1898 had close links with Emily Davies,¹⁹ Marian Clarke who taught at the MGHS 1880-1884, predated Burstall.²⁰ Nevertheless, these pioneers of New South Wales academic girls' schools served as exponents of the beliefs about girls' education of the aforementioned Victorian feminists and purveyors of their message. They may or may not have agreed with other of their feminist leanings as I have not located in the archives any material to suggest the women with whom this thesis is concerned read feminist tracts or were affiliated with particular intellectual figures in Victorian feminist circles. An exception is found with regard to Maybanke Wolstenholme Anderson who corresponded with the English feminist Elizabeth Wolstenholme Elmy, in 1895.²¹ The lack of personal papers left by the founders however precludes such research: in this respect they were unlike the Victorian feminists who left behind a veritable treasure of material that would benefit future researchers.

I am concerned though, with how these women did manifest their commitment to and belief in the empowerment of women through education. Concomitant to this is a discussion of how these newly arrived Anglo-Australian women incorporated in their métier, the Nineteenth century image of the 'good woman' with the later Victorian feminist image of the 'new woman' and the significance of their choice not to marry. Germane to this project also is a discussion of the way in which the English headmistresses transitioned to the colony of New South Wales, how they

¹⁸ Levine, *Feminist Lives in Victorian England Private Roles and Public Commitment*.

¹⁹ Theobald, *Knowing women : origins of women's education in nineteenth-century Australia* p.105.

²⁰ Susan Elizabeth Emilsen, *The Lily & the Lion: A History of Abbotsleigh* (Richard Smart Pub., 2000).

²¹ Roberts, *Maybanke Anderson : sex, suffrage & social reform* p.97.

engaged with Australian middle class expectations of girls' schooling, women's educational leadership opportunities and the optimistic tenets of Victorian Feminism.²² Their exclusion from the histories of education and women is perplexing.

There are a number of reasons for this exclusion, including a gender imbalance in histories of education;²³ a lack of attention to women's leadership in communities and schools;²⁴ an intellectual tradition in Australian histories of education that is embedded in Marxist analysis and focused on the reproduction of class in state schools;²⁵ a paucity of archival material on the founding headmistress themselves; and an historiography that has concentrated on the suffrage movement.²⁶ Consequently, modern comparative studies of the histories of girls' secondary education in England, Europe and the colonies lack any substantial reference to the Australian context.²⁷ The founding headmistresses are, however, glimpsed briefly in individual school histories,²⁸ occasionally in the *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, but almost never in academic journals.²⁹ Acknowledging this lacuna, Alison MacKinnon emphasises that issues of power and authority remain central to the work of restoring women to history.³⁰ Consideration of the nature of women's empowerment is pivotal to my enquiry: how it has historically been conceived and how interpreted by the women in my study.

My thesis is interested in the ways in which these women acted out their beliefs about their status and the tools available to the researcher with which to decipher them. My thesis, informed by

²² Chief among these tenets was the demand to be educated to the same standards as men, for then women would be able to reason as men and be treated as equals before the law. Levine, *Feminist Lives in Victorian England Private Roles and Public Commitment*.

²³ Alison Mackinnon, *Love and freedom : professional women and the reshaping of personal life* (New York: New York : Cambridge University Press, 1997).

²⁴ Amanda Sinclair, "Feminist Perspectives and Leadership," in *Diversity in Leadership Australian Women, past and present*, ed. Joy Damousi, Kim Rubenstein, and Mary Tomsic (ANU: ANU Press, 2014), 21..

²⁵ Marilyn Lake, *Getting equal : the history of Australian feminism / Marilyn Lake* (St Leonards, N.S.W.: St Leonards, N.S.W. : Allen & Unwin, 1999).

²⁶ Clare Alice Wright, *Your daughters of freedom : the Australians who won the vote and inspired the world* (Melbourne, Vic. : Text Publishing, 2018).

²⁷ James C. Albisetti, Joyce Goodman and Rebecca Rogers (eds) *Girls' Secondary Education in the Western World: from the 18th to the 20th century* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010). The question: "to what extent did your country contribute to the emergence of girls' secondary education within the colonies?" yielded only one contribution from Australia: that of Kay Whitehead p. 191

²⁸ See Bibliography. There are written histories for eleven of the twelve surviving independent schools that had begun as Independent Secondary Schools for girls, in this period. Redlands at Cremorne, founded in 1884 and sold to the Anglican Church in 1945, became co-educational in 1978 and does not yet have a written history. The school, however, holds an archive of material.

²⁹ Kyle, *Her natural destiny : the education of women in New South Wales*. Dorothy E Hansen and Ian Victor Hansen, *Feminine Singular: A History of the Association of Heads of Independent Girls' Schools of Australia* (Hyland House, 1989). Campbell and Proctor, *A History of Australian Schooling*.

³⁰ Alison Mackinnon, "Education," in *Companion to Women's Historical Writing*, ed. Mary Sponberg, Barbara Caine, Ann Curthoys (Hampshire and New York Palgrave MacMillan, 2005).

biographical approaches, locates their lives within the twin frameworks of institution building and ordinary female experience. The latter is a frame employed by Caine in *Victorian Feminists*.³¹ Caine seeks to 'explain the nature of particular feminist beliefs and ideas in terms of their place within an individual life lived within a broad social, economic and political framework.' I use a feminist discourse analysis to interpret their lives, articulate the source of the authority they embodied and identify the ways in which class and gender intersected to both empower and restrict them.³² I will ask about the terms in which their lives can be re-constructed and included in the historiography.

I have chosen the biographical form as it has played an important part in the growth of women's history at the most fundamental level. It demonstrates in powerful ways the symbiotic connection between individual lives and historical change by articulating what it was to be a woman in a certain place and at a certain time. Fitzgerald and May for example, in reflecting on their portraits of a small number of early women educators in Australia, show that although lives are re-constructed within hegemonic histories of the past, feminist scholars can work to disrupt that past by re-inscribing women's lives into history.³³ Collective biography – a method that focuses on the group and its impact on certain systems, organisations and institutions - is especially useful when the amount of information in the archive is limited and when the researcher wants to distil commonalities that may assist in creating a history of women's collective experiences, as Caine does in *Victorian Feminists*.³⁴

Kay Whitehead and Lynne Trethewey, for instance, have used a collective biographical form in a series of articles that explore the contribution of Harriet Newcomb and Margaret Hodge, co-founders of the New Shirley School, Edgecliff in 1900, to transnational suffrage movements and early twentieth century education in New South Wales.³⁵ Their research into the historical

³¹ Barbara Caine, "Feminist biography and feminist history," *Women's History Review* 3, no. 2 (1994), <https://doi.org/10.1080/09612029400200049>. Caine, *Victorian Feminists*.p.ix.

³² Norma Grieve and Ailsa Burns eds., *Australian Women. New Feminist Perspectives* (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1986).

³³ Tanya Fitzgerald and Josephine May, *Portraying Lives : Headmistresses and Women Professors 1880s-1940s* (Charlotte: Charlotte, NC: Information Age Publishing, Incorporated, 2016), 6.

³⁴ Caine, *Victorian Feminists*.

³⁵ Lynne Trethewey and Kay Whitehead, "Beyond centre and periphery: transnationalism in two teacher/suffragettes' work," *History of Education* 32, no. 5 (2003), <https://doi.org/10.1080/0046760032000118336>; L. Trethewey and K. Whithead, "Sowing the seeds of a pre-service model of teacher education in the early twentieth century," *Australian Journal of Teacher Education* 28, no. 1 (2003), <https://doi.org/10.14221/ajte.2003v28n1.4>; Kay Whitehead and Lynne Trethewey, "Vision and pragmatism in the educational and suffrage work of 'two advanced Englishwomen' in New South Wales," *Journal of the Royal Australian Historical Society* 89, no. 2 (2003); Kay Whitehead and Lynne Trethewey, "Aging and activism in the context of the British Dominions Woman Suffrage Union, 1914–1922," *Women's Studies International Forum* 31, no. 1 (2008), <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.wsif.2007.11.009>.

significance of these two women has established a link between the history of feminism and the history of women's education in a way in which other historiography has not. Furthermore, it raises questions about the relationship of the other founders to expressions of transnational feminism, facilitating a discussion in the national and transnational context and specifically in the interaction between local and global discourses on feminism which my project takes up.

Joan Burstyn has argued that women's historians must define for themselves their significant source materials as women seldom appear in the sources defined as historically important.³⁶ Primary evidence for my research is predominantly located in the school archives of the headmistresses about whom I am writing. They comprise mainly photographs, school reports, newspaper cuttings and letters. These are privately held by schools and controlled by them. Access is facilitated by the archivists, some of whom have proven easier to contact than others. The schools I have approached have been helpful but I don't have unimpeded access. This has been a drawback because it allows archivists to limit information. However, because of my common social and cultural background, I have been able to establish a certain degree of trust with them. My reading of the sources reflects moreover my own beliefs and experiences. I am on the whole sympathetic to the establishment of girls' independent secondary schools and feel an affinity with these women, as members of my family came from similar educational and professional backgrounds in England. This is, I acknowledge, a potential pitfall but I am confident that by paying attention to methods of analysis, I have been able to overcome any potential bias.

Biographical research requires access to a number of different resources and the outcomes of my enquiry are limited by the amount of available material. Opportunities to contextualise and address the limitations of the private archive are balanced though, by access to public archives, particularly through digitised information found in online databases such as Trove and the Australian Society of Genealogists. The Land Titles Office and the Sydney Maritime Museum Library are also good sources of information. Given the transnational components of my research, I have been assisted significantly by digital technologies that have transformed access to international facilities that were only open until recently to the privileged few. Given the scattered nature of the archive, though, and the paucity of material left behind, it is often difficult to make a definitive statement about a life, based on the evidence. The advantage of the collective biography is that it does not purport to define a life, but rather, it locates themes around which a discussion of connected lives can take place in order to answer the research question. The themes that have emerged from my

³⁶ Joan N. Burstyn, "Women's Education in England during the Nineteenth Century: A review of the Literature," *history of education* 6, no. issue 1. (1977).

readings are those generative concepts related to work - linkages, those related to marital status - sisterhoods and those related to posterity - legacies.

Working with grounded theory³⁷ I have used a discourse analysis that looks at the text in its historical context but also behind it, to interpret its cultural meaning, especially in relation to the tenets of Victorian feminism and class and gender tropes of institution, family and media. This has meant that I have had to be open to the complexity, ambiguity and contradictory nature of the voices that I have read in the archive. I have looked to see what is not said and whether that is intentional or inconsequential. I have searched for coding, euphemisms and subversive possibilities, examples of which I explore in the chapters that follow. The language of the text creates a life of its own and requires careful deciphering however. Concepts are embedded in historical semantics. Cross checking for evidence is important but often questions lead to more questions and alternative realities need to be constructed to explore issues of power and authority, gender and class, in these educational settings.

For example: Abbotsleigh's historian relates that Marian Clarke swept clean all her school and personal records before passing her school on to Margaret Murray in 1913.³⁸ Rumour has it that there was a veritable conflagration of papers that took place. Marian herself wrote to the school's trustees in 1932: 'Unfortunately I have kept no memoranda and leave no photographs of the school in any of its stages'.³⁹ This rather opaque reference, though, leads to more questions than answers. Marian's twenty-nine years at Abbotsleigh were erased from history.⁴⁰ It is however, a story of archival loss (or erasure). It begs the question: Why? What was there to conceal? What did Marian perhaps want to conceal? The school history reveals Marian as a strict and controlling personality in her professional life.⁴¹ Was this then further evidence of her autocratic style of leadership? My research has revealed however, four failed business partnerships with other women before Marian took total control of Abbotsleigh. Did she or someone else wish to conceal any perceived friction in her record? Letters from New South Wales governors' wives to Marian, reveal the double pressure

³⁷ Barney G. Glaser and Anselm L. Strauss, *The Discovery of Grounded Theory: Strategies for Qualitative Research*. (Chicago: Aldine, 1967).

³⁸ Emilsen, *The Lily & the Lion: A History of Abbotsleigh*.p. 37

³⁹ Marian Clarke Letter to Mr F.S. Boyce, Trustee and Member of Abbotsleigh's foundation council, 4th January 1932. Sourced from the Mitchell Library.

⁴⁰ Susan Emilsen, Abbotsleigh's historian has written an essay entitled 'The Killing of Abbotsleigh's History'. This was deposited in the archives but has not been viewed by me. Emilsen, *The Lily & the Lion: A History of Abbotsleigh*.p.310.

⁴¹ Emilsen, *The Lily & the Lion: A History of Abbotsleigh*.p.5.

to conform to class and gender expectations of gentility, even as her position may have required her to make hard, even ruthless decisions, in order for her school to survive.⁴²

A life is also re-constructed within hegemonic histories of the past and Marian, a German scholar and aficionado of German literature, on leaving Australia in 1913 as Europe was preparing for war, may have wanted to destroy any material that would have made her appear anything but loyal to Britain, Australia and the Empire. Susan Emilsen, Abbotsleigh's historian, notes that Bavarian Bands and German plays enlivened prize-givings and fund-raising events at Abbotsleigh during the period 1903 to 1910. Moreover Marian's great friend Mungo MacCallum, who was Dean of the Faculty of Arts at Sydney University from 1898 to 1919, was married to Dorette Margarethe née Peters, of Hanover and was himself a German scholar. The Dean stayed at Sydney University during World War I and he whole-heartedly supported Australia's involvement.⁴³ As a woman in a position of authority, however, Marian may have felt she was more vulnerable to criticism and needed to protect her life's work. Gathorne-Hardy notes that because, for girls' schools just to exist was revolutionary, they were terrified of shocking anyone.⁴⁴ Susan Emilsen quotes Abbotsleigh old girls recalling that any residual sympathies for Germany's rich cultural life were transfigured into an antipathy for all things 'German.'⁴⁵ For Marian to have been the subject of innuendo could very well have ruined her school.

Her involvement in the war effort in England is a matter of public record and one of which her school is proud. The eradication of all records of Marian Clarke's life's work at Abbotsleigh however appears extreme. If the decision wasn't Marian's, it is troubling. If it was Marian's decision, perhaps she thought, that by establishing the Old Girls' Union in 1908, she had legacy enough, in the persons of the girls she had educated.

The Marian Clarke example reveals a need for the researcher to be aware of the subtle nuances attendant on archival evidence or lack of it, but it is evidence also of the probability that there may be information that will never be seen. As I have pursued questions about these women's values,

⁴² Letters from Lady Poore. Abbotsleigh Archives.

⁴³ K. J. Cable 'MacCallum, Sir Mungo William (1854-1942)', Australian Dictionary of Biography, National Centre of Biography, Australian National University, <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/maccallum-sir-mungo-william-7301/text12663>, published first in hardcopy 1986, accessed online 10 June 2020. MacCallum was president of the Universal Service League in 1915-17, vigorously campaigned for conscription and in 1918 was a founder executive-member of the 'King's Men', formed to promote loyalty. Yet he deplored the prevalent anti-German hysteria and tried to help some of its victims.

⁴⁴ Johnathan Gathorne-Hardy, *The Public School Phenomenon: 1857-1977* (Faber & Faber, 2014).p.p.245-6.

⁴⁵ Emilsen, *The Lily & the Lion: A History of Abbotsleigh*.p.49.

their legacy and the education they offered to young women, I am reminded of the responsibility of the biographer to portray their lives with integrity.

The following chapters are organised around the common over-arching life experiences that allow this cohort of founding headmistresses to be considered as a group. These are: their establishment of advanced schools for girls in Sydney, New South Wales; their choice not to marry (with one exception) and the legacies they left. In each chapter I explore through a feminist lens, the ways in which certain of these women negotiated particular aspects of these core life experiences - always asking what this study of these lives can tell us about the women's movement - by viewing feminism through the linkages that sustained their enterprises, the freedoms offered by their sisterhoods and the nature and limitations of the legacies they left behind.

Chapter One: Linkages: examines the differing social milieu in which Marian and Ellen Clarke and Elizabeth Liggins and Clara Arnold moved. The analysis situates their experiences in the hegemonic themes of the history of education in New South Wales while offering new insights into the linkages between first wave feminism and the establishment of girls' schools.

Chapter Two: Sisterhoods: analyses the ways in which the founders' choice to remain unmarried challenged the gender order in ways that the married state did not. I examine the authoritative power of symbol, myth and metaphor in generating new ways of imagining marital status and the increasingly precarious position of women who dared to rule without strong and visible signs of masculinist hegemonic culture. Biographical material relating to Marian Clarke, Jeannie Monckton, Elizabeth Liggins, Clara Arnold, Grace Lawrance and Beatrice Rennie is cited in this chapter with a view to expanding our understanding of the nature and function of sisterhoods in these women centred communities.

Chapter Three: Legacy: examines the individual ways in which Ellen Clarke, Grace Lawrance and Beatrice Rennie passed on their legacies to future generations; how they transitioned the idea of the Ruskian good woman into the feminist new woman through their messages contained in eulogy, hymn and symbol.

This study is primarily a discursive analysis of the available limited material, viewed from a feminist perspective which it is hoped, will open up a hitherto unacknowledged areas for research in the history of education and the history of women.

Chapter 1 – Linkages ‘The Right to Labour and to Live’¹

In New South Wales, in the decade 1880 to 1890, there were few opportunities for women to work at a professional level. Yet the cohort of English educated women who established individually-owned Independent Girls’ Schools in New South Wales managed not only to find work, but also to provide work for other women and create prestigious and influential positions for themselves and their schools in antipodean society. This, in spite of a current of hostility towards England that was present in the colony from the earliest days and in particular, the rejection of English ways – albeit largely symbolic - that accompanied the developing nationalism of the eighties and nineties.² These sentiments however were not echoed in the governing classes nor in the mainly Protestant well-to-do business and professional groups³ who would both support and patronise these advanced schools for girls and look to England for models: models of schooling that had grown out of the Victorian feminist movement.

Focussing on the sisters Ellen and Marian Clarke and partners⁴ Elizabeth Liggins and Clara Arnold in this chapter, I examine the divergent paths they followed in transitioning from the English landscape to the Australian. I will discuss their use of a range of social vehicles that were available to assist them: denominational, academic and feminist and analyse the terms of their engagement with them.

At the heart of the disparate, complex and often conflicting views espoused by the women of the feminist movement in the latter part of nineteenth century England, was an agreement about the importance of the education of women.⁵ The twin schools of thought were the ‘birthright’ approach to work that would endow women with marketplace skills, an egalitarian approach espoused particularly by Elizabeth Wolstenholme Elmy, and the more aspirational approach of education for women in the same subjects as men. The latter was a cause taken up and won by Emily Davies who was strenuous and persistent in her efforts to open higher education to women, culminating in the founding of Girton College in 1869.⁶

¹ Elizabeth Wolstenholme Elmy, (1833-1918) *Women and the Law* a series of four letters from *The Western Daily Press* (Women’s Emancipation Union, 1895), p. 6. Women’s Emancipation Union Papers, British Library. Shelfmark 8416.h.40.

² Hole and Treweek, *The History of The Women's College Within The University of Sydney*.p.2.

³ John Hirst, *Federation: Destiny and Identity*, (Australian Government, 2001).

⁴ I use this description in the business sense although there is some evidence to suggest they were also life partners.

⁵ Caine, *English feminism, 1780-1980* pp. 115-118.

⁶Caine, *English feminism, 1780-1980* pp. 115-118.

This study of the lives of the founding headmistresses evidences their endorsement of both views.

Marian Clarke had benefited from Davies' enterprise formally through her success in the Cambridge Local Examinations⁷ that had been opened to women in 1867. Ellen Clarke is recorded as holding the Oxford Associate of Arts.⁸ Clara Arnold is referred to as having been awarded the Cambridge Higher Certificate,⁹ although this has been difficult to verify. She is however referred to as having been a teacher at an English Boarding School, from which she subsequently invited a pupil, Miss Sarah Anne Brown, to establish a kindergarten at her school.¹⁰ The educational background of Elizabeth Liggins is not recorded. None of these women held degrees as the University of London did not award degrees to women until 1878; Oxford only offered women degrees in 1920 and Cambridge not until 1948.¹¹

The stories of the individual founders of these independent girls' schools in New South Wales are woven into the transnational and national fabric of their times. They left sparse personal evidence of the reasons for their migration but having experienced - directly as in the case of Marian Clarke¹² - the new English model of teaching girls in the 'affordable' academic schools, such as those provided by The Girls' Public Day School Company, later The Girls' Public Day School Trust, one can only imagine that they saw an opportunity to establish their own versions of academic girls' schools in New South Wales. The Manchester High School for Girls, (M.H.S.G.) where Marian had taught, educated girls in Latin, Greek, Algebra, Mechanics (the Maths teacher was one of the first three woman in England to graduate from an English university) and had entered students for public examinations.¹³ It was an advanced school, meaning it was a feminist school, with what some perceived as 'dangerous notions'.¹⁴ Christine Joy, M.H.S.G. Archivist until 2017, makes the observation that Abbotsleigh and Normanhurst were influenced by the sort of education offered by Manchester High School as all three were noted for their academic rigour.¹⁵ Moreover, the structure of the school day at Abbotsleigh was based on that of Manchester.¹⁶

⁷ Johnston, Rebekah – Archivist *Cambridge Assessment Archives and Heritage* Email 20.12.2019

⁸ Johnston, Rebekah – Archivist *Cambridge Assessment Archives and Heritage* Email 20.12.2019

⁹ Betty Steigrad 'The Spirit of Redlands' 1934, *The Redlander* 1944, p.4.

¹⁰ Betty Steigrad 'The Spirit of Redlands' 1934, p.3.

¹¹ "University," 2010, <https://historicengland.org.uk/research/inclusive-heritage/womens-history/visible-in-stone/university>. English Heritage. (). Researched and written by Dr Cheryl Law.

¹² Marian Clarke who established Abbotsleigh in 1885 had taught for four years as an assistant mistress at the Manchester High School for Girls, 1880-1884. Source: Manchester High School for Girls Archives.

¹³ Email from Dr Christine Joy M.H.S.G. Archivist to Catherine Eldridge 31 January 2011. 21:37.

¹⁴ Levine, *Feminist Lives in Victorian England Private Roles and Public Commitment*.p. 147.

¹⁵ Email from Dr Christine Joy M.H.S.G. Archivist to Catherine Eldridge 25 January 2011. 20.18.

¹⁶ Ibid.

The ambitions the founders had for their schools and their commitment to work may be gauged by the fact that they all placed newspaper advertisements quickly after their arrival in the colony.¹⁷ From this it may be ascertained that they were focussed but anxious also to invest their time and money of which they may have had a limited amount, prudently.¹⁸

Biography often calls for judicious imaginative engagement where personal details of subjects are lacking as indeed they are, in the case of these four headmistresses.¹⁹ In order to achieve a deeper understanding of the women and the way in which they transcribed their English experience into an Australian culture that carried its own hopes, prejudices and competing demands I will rely on some imaginative engagement with fragmented links that have suggested themselves as signposts to a more complete narrative.

Elizabeth Liggins and Clara Arnold who established the College for Girls, later Redlands, in 1884, were Congregationalists.²⁰ As Dissenters, their male forebears would have been debarred from going up to Oxford or Cambridge. The Tests Act had only opened these universities to Dissenters and Roman Catholics in 1872. Consequently, these women had been doubly marginalised but also doubly empowered by their religious and cultural inheritance which was based on a philosophy of independence and self-government – fundamental to the ethos of such individually managed girls' schools. They were radical Protestants and it was from these Dissenters that so much reform and feminist activity in England had emanated.²¹

¹⁷ Marian Clarke initially arrived in Sydney in December 1884 to assist at Normanhurst, the school opened in 1882 by her sister Ellen. Yet by 20th July 1885, she had opened her own school, Abbotsleigh in a small terrace in North Sydney. See: Robyn Claydon, "Clarke, Marian (1853-1933)," in *Australian Dictionary of Biography* (Canberra: MUP, 1981). <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/clarke-marian-5671/text9577>.

¹⁸ Ellen Clarke is recorded as arriving on the Steamer Orient in Adelaide on 14th October 1880 and Melbourne on 18th October 1880, with her brother Herbert.

Moreover Ellen appears to have initially planned on opening a school for young ladies in Melbourne with another unmarried sister and a Mrs John Clarke. Had she planned for Marian to join her? The second Miss Clarke who remains unnamed in the advertisement is said to have held a Cambridge Certificate with high honours, which was Marian's qualification. This advertisement for matriculation classes and boarding facilities for young lady students at university appeared on 21st February 1881 in the Argus. I could not find any records of this venture however and on 21st June 1882, Miss Ellen Clarke's advertisement for 'daily and resident pupils' in Ashfield, appeared in the Sydney Morning Herald. The school Ellen called Normanhurst had opened on 18th July 1882.

¹⁹ Michael Erben, ed., *Biography and Education: A Reader*, Social Research and Educational Studies (London: Falmer Press, 1998). pp. 14-15.

²⁰ Both Elizabeth Liggins and Clara Arnold are buried together at Gore Hill Cemetery St Leonards, NSW in the Congregationalist sector D. Plot 1a and 1b. Author's note: I visited the site on 12th November 2019. See: Appendix C. A Shared Grave: Elizabeth Liggins (1840-1910) and Clara Arnold (1854-1932).

²¹ Clare Midgley, *Feminism and Empire. Women Activists in Imperial Britain, 1790-1865* (London and New York: Routledge, 2007).

The advertisement for the College for Girls they placed in the *Sydney Morning Herald* on Saturday 26th July 1884, just four months after they had left London,²² reads:

College For Girls Jeffrey Street Kirribilli Point North Shore. Miss Liggins and Miss Arnold have commenced at the above address, the course of High class Instruction and Training for Girls in which they have had many years' successful experience in England.

They had lost no time in establishing their school. The women had moreover opened it initially in the Dissident-friendly Presbyterian Mission Hall in Milsons Point.²³ This may be seen as a circumspect move as they may have wanted to see if there was a market there for them, apart from that of Elizabeth's brother's daughters who were their first pupils.²⁴ It was perhaps also, not a coincidence that the Milson's Point Literary Association also met in the Mission Hall. Literary associations were an integral part of nineteenth century feminist activities.²⁵

Respected for their education of young women to university level,²⁶ altruistic, modest and educationally adventurous, Liggins and Arnold established in their school possibly the first Fröbel Kindergarten in New South Wales.²⁷ Sarah Ann Brown, Clara Arnold's pupil whom Clara had invited from England, wrote the syllabus and trained many of the first Kindergarten teachers in Sydney there. Sarah also taught Maybanke Anderson (then Wolstenholme) and the first meeting of the Free Kindergarten Movement was held in the drawing room of Miss Liggins' house. It was here they formed a provisional committee of the Kindergarten Union of New South Wales. Liggins and Arnold do not appear in lists of early members of other educational organisations such as the Teachers'

²² Marguerite Gillezeau, Redlands Archivist, January, 2019.

²³ <http://www.nthsydgreenpc.pcns.w.gov.au/history/ch4.htm>

²⁴ William Liggins (1838-1921), Elizabeth's elder brother, having worked as an accountant in Sydney and having previously migrated in the early 1880's, brought out his wife Clara and their five daughters to Australia in 1881. In 1884, Elizabeth Liggins and Clara Arnold came out on the S.S. Chimborazo, leaving London 15th March. The first pupils at the school were William and Clara's daughters. From this we can surmise that William relayed to Elizabeth, the opportunity to open a school in Sydney to which his daughters would be the first students. Author's note: This information was supplied per kind courtesy of the Redlands Archivist. Accessed 3rd October, 2019.

²⁵ Rebecca Preston, "The Australian woman movement, 1880-1914: Sexuality, marriage and consent," in *The ANU Undergraduate Research Journal*, ed. Jonathon and Alexandra Hogan Zapasnik (Canberra, Australia: ANU eView, The Australian National University, 2015).p.16.

²⁶ Students Emily Gordon and Nona Dumolo graduated 1898 with honours from the University of Sydney. "About Redlands/Our History/1884-1910.," (website), <https://www.redlands.nsw.edu.au/about/our-history/1884-1911/>. Accessed 24th December 2019.

²⁷ Friedrich Fröbel (1782-1852) was a German educationalist who introduced learning through play to kindergartens. "Friedrich Froebel," early-education.org.uk/about-froebel.

Guild,²⁸ nor Feminist groups like the Women's Club.²⁹ The prestigious Queens Club was not founded until 1912, some two years after the death of Elizabeth Liggins and the retirement of Clara Arnold.³⁰ Their close friendship with Maybanke Wolstenholme Anderson doubtlessly though, provided a link to these educational and women's organisations as well as to the Womanhood Suffrage League (1891) and the Women's Literary Society (1889) in which Maybanke was embedded and that had begun to appear in the lead up to federation. This brief glimpse into the lives of Elizabeth Liggins and Clara Arnold places them firmly as participants in the networks of first-wave feminism in Australia.

In the case of Ellen Clarke's reasons for the establishment of Normanhurst from 1882 to 1892, scant missives are to be found in the *Normanhurst School Magazine*, the first edition of which was published in June 1914, some twelve years after Ellen had transferred ownership to Mrs Maud Stiles. It is clear however from an extract of Ellen's letter to Normanhurst students on their Jubilee in which she 'trusts that their training has prepared them for the wider education of life, and to meet its trials bravely' that her mission was to prepare girls with an advanced education for the difficulties faced by women at this time, even though so many laws had been enacted to protect them.³¹

In the case of Marian Clarke also the archive has yielded limited evidence of her transition. In a letter to Trustee Mr Francis Stewart Boyce in January 1932, Marian records that she had kept no memoranda nor photographs of Abbotsleigh in "any of its stages".³² Abbotsleigh's founder is however recorded as saying to the annual meeting of the Old Girls Union, in 1913, nearly thirty years after her arrival:

²⁸ Denise. Thomas, "Rich in its Women. Women in The Guild. ," in *Caring for Education. Celebrating 125 Years of the Teachers' Guild of NSW.* , ed. Ian Keese and Denise Thomas (Doncaster, Victoria: WriteHeart Press in co-operation with The Teachers' Guild of NSW., 2018). pp. 80-81. The Teacher's Guild was formed in 1892 and of the Guild's seventy-six foundation members, one third were women. Unfortunately there are no records of the names of these members but present at the first Guild Meeting were Mrs Stockfeld who had been invited out to Sydney by Marian Clarke and who was her first assistant at Abbotsleigh from 1886 to 1887. Present also was Mrs Maud Stiles who had worked closely with Ellen Clarke at Normanhurst from its inception in 1882 and who became the second owner/ headmistress in 1892. Maud was the first female president of the Guild 1898-1899. The Suffragette and owner/headmistress of Maybanke College in Dulwich Hill (1883-1899), Maybanke Wolstenholme (later Anderson) attended, and became the first Registrar of the Guild's Teachers' Registry in 1897.

²⁹ Janet Peters: letter/fax to Cheryl Szatow 8th July, 2001. Accessed 6.9.2019. NOTE: Janet Peters wrote a history of The Women's Club but it is only available to members. Janet by letter however advised the first 100 members of the Club included Marian Clarke (Abbotsleigh) and Ellen Clarke (Normanhurst), Maybanke Anderson, Cara Mallett – later Lady Edgeworth David and close friend of Jeannie Monckton (Meriden).

³⁰ E. M. Tildesley, *A History of The Queen's Club. 1912 - 1969.* (Sydney: Halstead Press, 1970).

³¹ *Normanhurst Magazine* December 1932. p. 28.

³² Letter to Mr F.S. Boyce, Trustee and member of Abbotsleigh's foundation council, 4th January 1932. Sourced from the Mitchell Library, 26th July, 2019.

When I came to sunny Australia I asked for work and work only and she granted my request in full measure and added thereto friendship, sympathy and hospitality which have been a source of unfailing joy ever since I came a stranger to her shores.³³

Marian here employs a gracious middle-class metaphor to describe Australia as the perfect hostess and herself as the passive recipient of her new country's largesse. Yet, her working life did not unfold easily and Clarke, who came to Australia in 1884 to assist her sister Ellen's school Normanhurst in Ashfield, established in July 1882, was not known for her acquiescent personality.³⁴

Clearly, Marian wished her Old Girls to remember her in this way: to focus on the positive and not speak about nor record the struggles or compromises she might have made. Her brand of feminism – if we can call her feminist and I believe we can - was not of the radical outspoken activist, epitomised by Elizabeth Wolstenholme Elmy or Emily Davies. Hers was nevertheless the type of Victorian feminism described by Mary Maynard as a 'doing' feminism.³⁵ In the Clarke Sisters' establishment of private, academically-oriented secondary schools for girls in New South Wales, which achieved enviable examination results, they arguably sit within these parameters.³⁶

To further advance an understanding of the particular factors that led to Ellen and Marian Clarke migrating, a brief sojourn into the competitive world of education prior to 1880 in New South Wales is instructive. In the period up to the Public Instruction Act of 1880, denominational schools (Anglican and Roman Catholic) had been subsidised by the government and there had been considerable competition between them for the minds and souls of the colony's children. However, 1880 was a watershed year for education in the colony. Among other provisions, the 1880 Act withdrew state aid to denominational schools from the beginning of 1883 and the state entered the field of secondary education, establishing high schools for girls and boys in Sydney, Bathurst, Goulburn and Maitland from October of that year.³⁷

³³ Extract from Miss Clarke's Last Annual Report, A.O.G.U. Annual Report, 1913, pp.12-13 quoted in Emilsen, *The Lily & the Lion: A History of Abbotsleigh*.p. 41.

³⁴ "Miss Clarke did not suffer fools gladly and upon the half-hearted and lackadaisical she poured the vials of her wrath." Emilsen, *The Lily & the Lion: A History of Abbotsleigh*.p. 9.

³⁵ Levine, *Feminist Lives in Victorian England Private Roles and Public Commitment*. p. 11.

³⁶ Kyle, *Her natural destiny : the education of women in New South Wales* pp 104-5.

Dr Agnes Bennett, a pupil of Abbotsleigh was the first woman to graduate with an honours degree in Science from Sydney University in 1894. Normanhurst achieved a record in performance in examinations that was only exceeded by Sydney Girls' High School and MLC Burwood.

³⁷ Lilith Norman, *The Brown and Yellow: A History of Sydney Girls' Highschool, 1883-1983* (OUP, 1983). p. 14.

The Church of England agreed to give up its elementary schools and preferred establishing fee-paying boys' secondary schools over comparable girls' schools.³⁸ Roman Catholic Schools survived through having members of religious orders as teachers.³⁹ The Catholic fee-paying ladies' schools were attractive to middle-class non-Catholic parents who favoured an academically subdued and morally superior education for their daughters. Moreover, the Protestant influx aided the fund-raising activities of the Sisters – to support their upkeep and the church's education system.⁴⁰

In Ashfield, where the Church of England denominational school had closed in 1880 and the Sisters of Charity had opened the Catholic Bethlehem College in 1881, Dr James Corlette, Rector of St John's Church of England, Ashfield wrote to Ellen Clarke to invite her to come to Australia, to open a school for young ladies.⁴¹ This was Normanhurst College which opened in a cottage, close to Bethlehem College on July 18, 1882.⁴² By 1887, the school had seventy students and although throughout its existence it remained a private, independent and non-denominational school, it was always to have close ties to the Church at St John's. It is not too much of a stretch of the imagination to conclude that this was a competitive move by the Anglicans directed against the Catholics and that it suited both church and Ellen Clarke.⁴³ It was to this school that Ellen's sister Marian arrived in December 1884, to assist.

On 20 July 1885, just seven months after she arrived, Marian opened her own school, Abbotsleigh, in a small terrace house in Mount Street, North Sydney.⁴⁴ This school was next door to Mary MacKillop's cottage and the St Joseph's Novitiate. Marian opened this first version of Abbotsleigh with Matilda Stockfeld, a student whom Marian had taught at the Manchester High School for Girls where she worked from 1880 -1884.⁴⁵ Matilda was described as Assistant Mistress to Marian Clarke

³⁸ Kings, Parramatta founded 1831, St Andrew's Cathedral School, 1885, Sydney Church of England Grammar School (Shore), Barker, 1890. St Catherine's Girls' School – the Clergy Daughters' School had been founded in 1856. These dates sourced from school websites.

³⁹ Geoffrey Sherington and Craig Campbell, "Education," *Sydney Journal* 2 1, no. June (2009), http://epress.lib.uts.edu.au/ojs/index.php/sydney_journal/index.

⁴⁰ Kyle, *Her natural destiny : the education of women in New South Wales* P. 70.

⁴¹ The relationship between the Corlettes and Ellen Clarke remain a mystery. Mrs Corlette however was born Frances Edith Manning, in 1837, a daughter of the first marriage of Sir William Montagu Manning and Emily Anne Wise. Sir William was chancellor of the University of Sydney in 1878. In 1881 he gained the admission of women to the University on an equal footing with men. Source: Martha Rutledge, "Manning, Sir William Montagu," in *Australian Dictionary of Biography* (National Centre for Biography, Australian National University: published first in hardcopy 1974., 1974). <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/manning-sir-william-montagu-4150/text6657>, .Accessed 14.10.2019.

⁴² Nora Peek and Ena Harper, "The Story of Normanhurst School, Ashfield 1882-1941.," *Ashfield and District Historical Society Journal* 2, no. April (1983).

⁴³ Emilsen, *The Lily & the Lion: A History of Abbotsleigh*. P. 21

⁴⁴ Claydon, "Clarke, Marian (1853-1933)."

⁴⁵ Email from Dr Christine Joy, School Archivist Manchester High School for Girls to Catherine Eldridge 25th January 2011.

in 1886 and Second Assistant in 1887.⁴⁶ In the absence of documentation⁴⁷ that would substantiate a claim that this, too, was a competitive move that Marian was party to, I offer the following speculation in spite of Abbotsleigh historian Susan Emilsen's claim that 'Abbotsleigh was not founded with that kind of implied patronage'.⁴⁸

Sydney at that time was a very small place and although Ashfield and North Sydney were some distance apart, the Church of England had an important church and congregation in each suburb, linked, ostensibly but not only, by the involvement of the Blacket family of architects. St John's in Ashfield, designed originally by Edmund Blacket had additions constructed in 1885 and overseen by his sons.⁴⁹ St Thomas's North Sydney was opened in 1884, the nave having been designed by Cyril Blacket.⁵⁰ Given these connections, the known imprecations of Dr James Collette and the decision by Marian to open her school next to the St Joseph Novitiate, it was not unlikely that Marian, formally or informally, had been assisted in her decision making about where to begin her school, by Anglican clergy who were competing against the establishment of Catholic Girls' Secondary schools. Further, Clarke later moved Abbotsleigh to Parramatta, in the same year that The Mercy Sisters opened the Sisters of Mercy School for Girls in Parramatta, 1888.⁵¹

I make these assertions, not to diminish in any way, the Clarke sisters' initiatives, nor their contribution to girls' education in New South Wales. What I wish to show is the way in which the early headmistresses may have responded to existing social infrastructure to achieve their ambitions. Although the Anglican Church was instrumental in their ventures, neither Ellen nor Marian on retirement, sold their schools to the church. Ellen sold Normanhurst in 1893 to Mrs Maud Stiles, wife of an Anglican Minister and in 1914, it was sold to Evelyn Tildesley.⁵² It remained a non-denominational school at its closure in 1941.⁵³ Marian Clarke refused an offer to purchase from Sydney Church of England Girls' Grammar School in 1911 and sold it instead to Margaret Egerton

⁴⁶ SMH 14th January 1886, p. 12 and SMH 2 April, 1887, p. 3.

⁴⁷ Marian Clarke is said to have destroyed all of her school records, prior to selling Abbotsleigh to Margaret Murray in 2013. Emilsen, *The Lily & the Lion: A History of Abbotsleigh*. p. 37.

⁴⁸ Emilsen, *The Lily & the Lion: A History of Abbotsleigh*. p. 21

⁴⁹ "St John's Ashfield," in *Wikipedia*. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/St_John%27s,_Ashfield.

⁵⁰ "St Thomas' Anglican Church, North Sydney.," in *Wikipedia*.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/St_Thomas%27_Anglican_Church,_North_Sydney.

⁵¹ Madeleine Sophie McGrath, *These Women : Women Religious in the history of Australia - the Sisters of Mercy Parramatta 1888-1988* (Sydney: NSW University Press, 1989).

⁵² Evelyn Tildesley M.B.E. M.A. was a Newnham Women's College graduate of Cambridge University and an outstanding scholar in Classics and English.' Peek and Harper, "The Story of Normanhurst School, Ashfield 1882-1941.."

⁵³ Peek and Harper, "The Story of Normanhurst School, Ashfield 1882-1941.."

Murray M.A. who had been educated at the Ladies' Grammar School Hobart, Tasmania and who was previously headmistress of the New England Girls' School (NEGS).⁵⁴

In Emilsen's words: 'She decided, at the last moment, to withdraw from the negotiations, preferring to keep the school's connections as they were; appropriate and beneficial to the school and to the moral welfare of its students yet not so close as to become a source of interference.'⁵⁵ Clarke's understanding of the changes that would be wrought under a Church led Council, were prescient. On the sale of Abbotsleigh to the Church of England in 1924 when seven teachers resigned, resenting the change and the new Council's role, the new headmistress, Miss Poole also was to suffer from 'an interfering and dominating Council.'⁵⁶

Levine observes that feminists rarely rejected religion; it was a primary form of social organization, in spite of the contradictions it implied. 'Belief offered a model of love and friendship, devotion to a cause and the triumph of once untenable beliefs'.⁵⁷ At an organizational level though, women's organizations rarely ceded men any substantial decision-making powers.⁵⁸ Marian and Ellen did not have to answer to a School Council or Board, dominated by a masculine hierarchy as did the Church Schools and the State Public High Schools for Girls. Marian would have been aware of the conflicts between Sarah Christina Hatley-Boyd, headmistress of Bathurst Girls' High School, and the policy makers and departmental implementers of the day which led to the closure of that school in 1898. Hatley-Boyd became the fourth partner of Marian Clarke in 1899. Such conflicts arguably also led to the demise of the Goulburn Girls' High School.⁵⁹

The right to freedom to work and to earn enough to support oneself had been hard won by the English feminists who early saw that education was the key to women's freedom. Vicinus says:

For the first time in history, a small group of middle class women could afford to live, however poorly, on their own earnings outside heterosexual domesticity or church governance ... Many of the most publicly visible single women had fathers who lived by their professional skills, such as clergymen, doctors, lawyers, military officers and middle managers in the burgeoning industries. These daughters could expect little in the way of an

⁵⁴ Kelvin Grose and Jean Newall, *So Great a Heritage. The New England Girls' School* (Sydney: Allen and Unwin, 1990).p. 26.

⁵⁵ Emilsen, *The Lily & the Lion: A History of Abbotsleigh*.p. 22. Sourced from Marcia Cameron S.C.E.G.G.S. A Centenary History of the Sydney Church of England Girls' Grammar School, Allen and Unwin, St Leonards, 1994, p. 55; quotes S.C.E.G.G.S. Council Minute Book, Vol. 3, July 1911, Vol. 4, October 1911.

⁵⁶ Emilsen, *The Lily & the Lion: A History of Abbotsleigh*.p.85.

⁵⁷ Levine, *Feminist Lives in Victorian England Private Roles and Public Commitment*.p. 36.

⁵⁸ Levine, *Feminist Lives in Victorian England Private Roles and Public Commitment*. p. 110.

⁵⁹ Betty Archdale, *Indiscretions of a Headmistress* (Sydney and Auckland: Angus and Robertson, 1972). Fitzgerald and May, *Portraying Lives : Headmistresses and Women Professors 1880s1940s*.p.p.66-73.

income after the death of their fathers and so had most to gain from the new educational and job opportunities.⁶⁰

It was possible that Marian and Ellen fell into that category and were fortunate enough to belong to a family that valued education. Dr Thomas and Mrs Elizabeth Clarke (née Staley) had fourteen children of whom twelve survived to adulthood.⁶¹ That there is a record of an agricultural depression in Banbury between 1871 and 1921⁶² and that six of their children came to Australia⁶³ could indicate that there were funds for education but that the economic downturn had meant they needed to leave and to find work. The heroic picture of Marian Clarke, Cambridge educated, friend of the intellectual and powerful, fierce defender of manners and scruples, exacting, demanding and uncompromising, that emerges from two school histories and an obituary, reveals little of the personal struggles she may have had in order to make her way in the world as a single, educated woman.⁶⁴ Following Tamboukou's genealogical investigations into how late Victorian nineteenth century feminist educators wove together different and often contradictory patterns of existence, in a 'non-stop process of becoming', can serve to illuminate the ways in which the founding headmistress, in divergence from the male canon, created and re-created herself in a new society. Utilising this perspective we can view the woman who could continue to define herself – not as 'the sex' but as woman self-defining.⁶⁵

To illustrate: a rare letter, dated 6th May 1884 constitutes Marian Clarke's resignation from her position of Assistant Mistress of the Manchester High School for Girls where she taught for four years. In it she expresses the desire that the Governors should record that the non-payment of her salary when she was absent from illness in 1882 was not intended as a slight or mark of dissatisfaction.⁶⁶ That Marian felt the need to query the financial terms of her teaching engagement

⁶⁰ Martha Vicinus, *Independent women : work and community for single women, 1850-1920* (Chicago: Chicago : University of Chicago Press, 1985). pp. 6-7.

⁶¹ Clarke Family Tree prepared by Margaret A. Kirby, 3129 Somerset Street, Victoria, B.C. Canada. Sourced from Abbotsleigh Archives and accessed 3rd April 2019.

⁶² Christina Colvin et al., *British History Online. A History of the County of Oxford*, vol. 10, ed. Alan Crossley (London 1972). <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/oxon/vol10>.pp. 18-28.

⁶³ Clarke Family Tree. Accessed 3rd April, 2019. There is evidence of two sons: John and Herbert coming with their wives to Australia and another brother, Arthur who is described as having died in Queensland from snake-bite. A third sister, Emily taught at both her sisters' schools and is referred to in a 1904 prospectus as having made a special study under Mrs Emil Behnke, of voice production, articulation, elocution and reading. A fourth sister, Ethel was a teacher in Oswestry, Wales and a brother-in-law an assistant teacher at Dover College.

⁶⁴ Sir Mungo MacCallum 'A Woman of Note – Miss Clarke of Abbotsleigh.' *Sydney Morning Herald*. 15.7.1933.

⁶⁵ Maria Tamboukou, "Writing Feminist Genealogies," *Journal of Gender Studies* 12, 1 (2003).

⁶⁶ Letter from Marian Clarke to the Governors of the Manchester High School for Girls 6th May 1884. Courtesy of The Manchester High School for Girls Archives. Accessed 8th October 2019.

and its linkages to performance, from two years previous, reveals both a certain anxiety about pecuniary matters and a glimpse into her plans for a future career, where her professional record would be scrutinised. As Prentice and Theobald have noted, although teaching was the only respectable profession for a woman of that time, it was often used by women (and men) as a stepping stone to a more powerful professional position, as is evidenced by illuminating the lives of these founding headmistresses.⁶⁷

These four founders transitioned from England to Australia with the assistance of informal and formal networks, chief amongst which were church related introductions. Once in Australia however, they lost little time in forging their own connections in both the educational and woman oriented spheres. Marian Clarke became a foundation member of the newly established Teachers' Guild (originally The Teachers' Association) in 1891.⁶⁸ Among the foundation members were a number of strong individuals already associated with the suffrage movement and women's rights in general. They were Louisa MacDonald, first Principal of Women's College, Sydney University from 1892, (Maybanke) Wolstenholme (Maybanke College), and Professor Mungo MacCallum (Sydney University).⁶⁹ Mrs Maud Stiles, the second headmistress of Normanhurst, became the first female president (1898-1899). Marian Clarke chose to move in circles where education and political empowerment were seen to be intrinsic to female independence.

In 1901 the strongly feminist Dr Mary Booth⁷⁰ established The Women's Club and several teachers were listed among the first one hundred members, including Marian and Ellen Clarke.⁷¹ Later Marian Clarke was recorded as a Shareholder and Member of the Queens Club in 1912 along with Lady MacCallum, wife of Sir Mungo MacCallum and others who were the financial founders of the Club.⁷² Curiously, Ellen Clarke by 1901 had returned to England and in 1912, Marian Clarke also had left Abbotsleigh. It would seem that these sisters kept their transnational feminist connections alive beyond the educational institutions they established.

⁶⁷ Alison Prentice and Marjorie Theobald, "The Historiography of Woman Teachers," in *Women who Taught*, ed. Alison Prentice and Marjorie Theobald (Toronto: Toronto University Press, 1991).

⁶⁸ Thomas, "Rich in its Women. Women in The Guild. ." pp. 80-97. Keese and Thomas, *Caring for Education. Celebrating 125 Years of the Teachers' Guild of New South Wales*

⁶⁹ Thomas, "Rich in its Women. Women in The Guild. ."pp.80-97.

⁷⁰ Jill Roe, "Booth, Mary (1869-1956)," in *Australian Dictionary of Biography* (National Centre of Biography: Australian National University, 1979). <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/booth-mary-5291/text892>.

⁷¹ Letter from Janet Peters, writing a history of the Women's Club to Cheryl Szatow 8th July 2001. Other early members included Mrs Hodge (Shirley), Mlle Soubeiran (Kambala), Maybanke Anderson. Later, Isabel Fidler (Ravenswood), Gertrude Roseby (Redlands), Marie Wallis (Ascham), Cara Mallett (later Lady Edgeworth David), Miss Badham (SCEGGS Darlinghurst), Fanny Cohen (Fort Street), and Mrs Bowmaker (Sydney High).

⁷² Tildesley, *A History of The Queen's Club. 1912 - 1969*.pp.99 &100.

In this chapter I have examined the independent and divergent paths the sisters Ellen and Marian Clarke (Normanhurst est. 1882, Abbotsleigh est. 1885) and partners Elizabeth Liggins and Clara Arnold (College for Girls est. 1894, later Redlands) trod as they transitioned from the English landscape to the Australian. I show how these paths located them within – and as products of – Victorian feminism – a feminism that prized female empowerment through education. Acknowledging the lack of personal correspondence in the archives that would have articulated more fully, this narrative, I have looked at the linkages in their lives in their new country that were at once transnational, religious, academic and feminist. My focus in particular was on how linkages with the Church - in the case of the Clarke sisters, the Church of England - and in the case of the Liggins Arnold partnership – the Dissenters - shaped their enterprises. I deal briefly with the Clarke sisters' linkages to the academic and feminist leaders of the day through their membership of certain clubs and associations and in the case of the Liggins - Arnold partnership, their affiliation with the feminist and reformer, Maybanke Wolstenholme Anderson. I show that these relationships positioned them central to the debates about the coming reforms, which aimed to improve the lives of women and children.⁷³

In the following chapter I examine the way in which the choice to remain unmarried assisted the headmistresses to re-imagine their lives and the subsequent backlash that nearly spelt the end of such women's individual enterprises.

⁷³ Appendix B pp. 51-53

Chapter 2 – Sisterhoods. The Right to Remain Unmarried.

*'They were a brood, a breed apart, the headmistresses of the girls' schools of Sydney. They were the ones who devoted themselves to female education. None of them was married. The idea that you could be married and be a headmistress [was never entertained].'*¹

Novelist Madeleine St John, schooled in the 1950s at Queenwood, an independent girls' secondary school in Sydney, articulates a tradition initiated by the first headmistresses who established independent academic girls' schools in the 1880s that withstood the test of time. Varied in their educational and family backgrounds, this group of women with just one exception, decided to remain single and devote themselves to women's education.² In doing so, they established a modus operandi for the education of middle-class girls in New South Wales that challenged dominant constructions of gender and gender relations at a time when a deeply gendered masculinist ideal of Australian national identity was emerging.³

By choosing to remain unmarried, the early headmistresses were exemplars of a kind of feminism that challenged the economic and sexual transactions that masculinism demanded of women. Lake describes this Australian ideal of masculinity, propounded by the *Bulletin* between 1880 and 1902 and celebrated in the literature of Henry Lawson, as one that valorised men's independence from women but concurrently, demanded women's total economic and sexual dependence on men. Based on a mateship culture of drinking, smoking, and gambling, it was vehemently anti-clerical and scornful of women, especially spinsters who were depicted as both unprepossessing and 'scheming to trap men into wedlock.'⁴ Independent and educated middle-class single women, freed from the constraints of marriage, channelled their energies into a variety of social services and some founded women-controlled residential communities: 'families' of academic girls' schools for boarders and day students.

Yet the historiography of first wave feminism has overlooked these Australian 'reluctant revolutionaries'.⁵ This is not to diminish the importance of the scholarship that has focussed on the

¹ Helen Trinca, *Madeleine: a Life of Madeleine St John* (Australia: Text Publishing, 2013).p. 52.

² Mrs Jeannie Monckton founder of Meriden was the one exception. See Appendix A.

³ Judith Allen, "'Mundane' Men: historians, masculinity and masculinism " *Historical Studies* 22, no. 18. (1987). Marilyn Lake, "Historical reconsiderations IV: The politics of respectability: Identifying the masculinist context.," *Australian Historical Studies* 22:86 (1986).

⁴Lake, "Historical reconsiderations IV: The politics of respectability: Identifying the masculinist context.."p. 119.

⁵ Nonita Glenday and Mary Price, *Reluctant Revolutionaries. A Century of Headmistresses 1874-1974* (London: Pitman Publishing, 1974).

women who pursued suffrage and their challenge to the gender order,⁶ but to suggest that, through education, the gender order was also being challenged. Perhaps historians have paid too much attention to the race for the vote, and have ignored the transformation that was happening in these schools where women held the reins of power. Feminist historian Sheila Jeffreys observes:

Numbers of spinsters, at least until after the First World War, made a positive choice not to marry ... either because they regarded marriage as a form of humiliating slavery and dependence on men, or because they wanted to pursue a career and fulfil their potential in a way which would not have been allowed by their husbands.⁷

There is general agreement among scholars that after 1870, employed or financially independent English middle-class women no longer regarded marriage as necessary for financial support or self-respect and that the 'new spinster' was active in the effort to improve women's secondary and college education.⁸ In Sydney, this activity was exemplified by Emily Baxter and Mary Ann Flower, single women who opened private schools offering academic subjects to girls, prior to Sydney University opening its doors to women in 1881 and prior to the immigration of the newly independent English-educated women with whom this study is concerned.⁹

In exploring the lives of the new women founders and the communities they created, I will address the question of how these single women managed to 'slip under the radar' and establish enduring schools, well before women achieved voting rights in either England or New South Wales.¹⁰ Applying marital status as a category of analysis,¹¹ I am arguing that the conscious choice to remain single and childless – a strongly gendered identity – was, somewhat peculiarly, given the history of

⁶ Susan Magarey, *Passions of the first wave feminists* (Sydney: Sydney : UNSW Press, 2001); Wright, *Your daughters of freedom : the Australians who won the vote and inspired the world*. Patricia Grimshaw, "Settler Anxieties, Indigenous Peoples, and Women's suffrage in the colonies of Australia, New Zealand and Hawaii 1880-1902.," *Pacific Historical Review* 69:4 (2000). Roberts, *Maybanke Anderson : sex, suffrage & social reform*

⁷ Sheila Jeffreys, *The spinster and her enemies : feminism and sexuality, 1880-1930*, [New ed.]. ed. (North Melbourne: North Melbourne : Spinifex Press, 1997).p. 88.

⁸ Ruth Freeman and Patricia Klaus, "Blessed or not? The New Spinster in England and the United States in the Late Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Century.," *Journal of Family History*, Winter. (1984).

⁹ Kyle, *Her natural destiny : the education of women in New South Wales* pp. 101-103. NOTE: Baxter's school closed in 1912 and Flower's in 1893.

¹⁰ Female Suffrage for white women in Australia conferred: 1902; in NSW: 1902; Right to stand for Parliament: Legislative Assembly: Australia and NSW: 1918. Legislative Council NSW, 1926. Source: "Parliament of NSW. Women in Parliament.," parliament.nsw.gov.au/about/Pages/Women-in-Parliament.aspx. Local government NSW: restricted right to vote 1906; Right to stand for Local Government: 1918. Source: "Suffrage in Australia.," in *Wikipedia*. en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Suffrage-in-Australia. Limited Female Suffrage in England conferred: 1918. Source: "Living Heritage. Women and the vote. ," <https://www.parliament.uk/about/living-heritage/transformingsociety/electionsvoting/womenvote/keydates/>.

¹¹ Katherine Holden, Amy Froide, and June Hannam, "Introduction to a history of Spinsterhood," *Women's History Review* 17:3. (2008).

the largely negative stereotype of spinsterhood played out in the popular press in England and the antipodes¹² - a significant enabling factor in their success and a strong endorsement of the first wave feminist discourse on marriage.

The over-riding question is: how was being single, seen by the establishment as such a problem, an advantage in this milieu? What did it mean to be a single woman at this time? A view that prevailed throughout the nineteenth century and articulated by the influential journalist W. R. Greg in 1862, was that the single woman was 'superfluous' (to a man's needs), 'incomplete' and her situation - 'abnormal'. His solution to the estimated 750,000 single women over thirty in England, was to send them to Canada, Australia and the United States where men outnumbered women by some 440,000 and where there was a more favourable marriage market.¹³ For many of these women, marriage may have seemed a favourable outcome. Not everyone was committed to a single life, though the calibre of such bachelors as may have been awaiting the arrival of educated middle class women of 'honour, virtue and refinement' in the 'crude, male dominated pioneering colonies', may have been a strong deterrent.¹⁴

Jeannie Monckton who founded Meriden at Strathfield, is the only married woman in my cohort and the exception to the spinster headmistress rule.¹⁵ An examination of the extant remnants of her married life and how it impacted her professional path is instructive. It will throw into sharp relief what it meant, paradoxically, to be unmarried. Described by her family as a pacifist and suffragette,¹⁶ the account of Jeannie's life in the school's history bears witness to neither, although she may have been both. The description does not rely on evidence.¹⁷ What could a re-examination of this truncated account of her life reveal? Born Jane Webster, orphaned, raised by her grandmother and trained at Whitelands¹⁸ in London, she travelled first class on the *Orient* to Sydney in 1885, her passage having been paid for by the New South Wales Government as she was a trained teacher. She came at the invitation of Cara Mallett, also an orphan and now Cara David, on her

¹² Especially *Punch* in England and *The Bulletin* in NSW.

¹³ Quoted in Vicinus, *Independent women : work and community for single women, 1850-1920* p. 4.

¹⁴ James A. Hammerton, *Emigrant Gentlewomen. Genteel Poverty and Female Emigration 1830-1914*. (Canberra: Australian National University Press, 1979).p. 45.

¹⁵ Maybanke Wolstenholme (later Anderson) who opened Maybanke School in Marrickville in 1883 was married at the time but her husband deserted in 1885 and she later divorced him. Her school closed in 1899. Roberts, *Maybanke Anderson : sex, suffrage & social reform* pp. 53-56.

¹⁶ Anne Cooke, *Visions of Parnassus: Meriden's First 100 Years* (Strathfield: Meriden School, 1997).p.p. 15 & 161.

¹⁷ School histories generally do not refer to headmistress's political views. In a society where women's education was emphasised as being useful for women who would remain in the home, rather than going out to work, anything that would challenge this illusion is noticeably still suppressed in school histories. This is a subject for further research.

¹⁸ Whitelands Teacher Training College, Chelsea founded in 1841 by the Church of England's National Society. <https://www.roehampton.ac.uk/colleges/whitelands-college/history/> Accessed 25th July, 2019.

marriage in March 1885 to Edgeworth David, professor of geology at the University of Sydney. Jane had trained in London with Cara and at the time of the invitation, Cara was the first principal of Hurlstone, the Teacher training facility in Ashfield, Sydney.¹⁹ In 1888, after completing her contract there, Jane married Walter Hillary Monckton, an architect of independent means to whom she was introduced through her friendship with Cara.²⁰ She established Meriden at Strathfield in 1897, initially to educate her two sons, Hilary James born 1889 and Basil Bruce born 1894.²¹

Although the 1895 NSW Public Service Act prevented married women from working in the public service, it did not prevent married women from opening their own businesses. As Catherine Bishop writes: many women, married, widowed or spinster opened businesses in colonial Sydney. Ladies' academies were however, more likely to be run by spinster sisters, female partners or mothers and daughters, than husband and wife.²² Given that a major platform of first-wave feminists was the fight against the acceptance of the sexual double standard that privileged male sexuality at the expense of women's health and given that the age of consent for girls in New South Wales was, until 1910, twelve, there must have been an unspoken concern that male teachers would be in a position to seduce girls.²³ Alternatively, it may have also reflected male teachers' reluctance to educate girls, given they were destined to be wives.

Jane, with Walter's support in opening her school, was a woman before her time. It was, after all, a sign of a middle-class man's prosperity to have a wife who did not work. Moreover, it is evident that Jeannie and Walter practised family planning, to limit their progeny to two. Australian historian Susan Magarey's observation that contraception was favoured by a wide range of feminists at this time, supports the claim made by Jeannie's family that she was a supporter of women's rights (although they, perhaps mistakenly, referred to her as a suffragette).²⁴ In 1908 though, at the age of forty-nine, Jane, now known as Mrs Jeannie Monckton, retired and sold her school to a single woman: Bertha Brailsford Turner.²⁵ Walter, it seems, provided the support Jane

¹⁹ Cooke, *Visions of Parnassus: Meriden's First 100 Years*.

²⁰ N J Kyle, "Cara David: A Leading Woman in Australian Education," *Journal of Educational Administration* 31, no. 4 (1993).

²¹ Cooke, *Visions of Parnassus: Meriden's First 100 Years*.p. 15.

²² Catherine E. Bishop, "Commerce Was a Woman: Women and Business in Colonial Sydney and Wellington" (Ph. D. A.N.U., 2012).

²³ The Crimes Act of 1900 Schedule 1A, especially Sections 67, 68 and 74 are relevant here. Section 74 specifically states that schoolmasters must not abuse girls and there were heavy sentences for such crimes. Source: "New South Wales Consolidated Acts. Crimes Act 1900-Schedule 1A. Former sexual offences.," http://www5.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/nsw/consol_act/ca190082/sch1a.html.

NOTE: The Crimes (Girls' Protection) Amendment Act (NSW) raised the age of consent from twelve to sixteen in 1910.

²⁴ Magarey, *Passions of the first wave feminists*.p. 102

²⁵ All owners and headmistresses of Meriden thereafter were single women until the advent of Mrs Denise Thomas in 1985. Meriden remains today a girls-only school with over 850 students.

needed as long as it didn't interfere with his plans or their boys' education. Jane sold her school suddenly in 1908, either because Walter was in ill-health and wanted to retire or because their sons were at an age to require a higher education. Their elder son Hilary had however already started at Sydney Grammar in 1904 and the younger son Basil, in 1907. The timing of their retirement was moreover unpropitious for any realisation of Jane's ambitions.²⁶ She had always wanted to teach older girls as well as infants and primary children and in 1909, Marie Angreave Neale, taught by Mrs Monckton, entered Women's College at The University of Sydney, graduating B.A. in 1914. Her success would have been a powerful endorsement of Jane and her school. Walter, if ill, must have made a remarkable recovery as in retirement, he bought land, built cottages and developed a tropical garden.²⁷ Jane's ambitions for her school were curtailed by the demands of Walter but she had ensured her school would have a future.

It was not as easy or as possible for a married woman to run a business or have a career, in spite of the law of coverture being dismantled by the N.S.W. Married Women's Property Act of 1893. It wasn't then until 1928, in a late flourishing as a widow, that Jane published her one novel *The Shuttle of Life*.²⁸ It was four years after Walter had died and Jane was sixty-nine. She had contracts for another two novels but these were never published.²⁹ The sources are silent on the reasons for this and I cannot help but wonder what she could have achieved if she had been free to write at a younger age. Unlike her friend (Dame) Mary Gilmore, who separated from her husband after fifteen years of marriage and thenceforth established herself as a poet and writer of deep political convictions, Jane remained married - assisting the governess employed to teach her grandchildren and having the occasional poem published in a newspaper.³⁰ Her family responsibilities took pre-eminence. This is not in any way to pass judgement on her choice but it is evident that her marital obligations prevented her from developing fully the teaching, musical, dramatic and literary skills she had employed at Meriden, the latter of which were evident in her novel.

Being single represented freedom and mobility in ways that marriage did not. Single women were freer to control their own destiny. The Australian feminist journal, the *Dawn*, re-imagined 'unmarried women' as 'entirely free, and therefore able to follow their natural bent.'³¹ Marian

²⁶ Jane's friend Cara David provided a reference on the school prospectus, supporting Jane's ability to teach girls fifteen years and over. Cooke, *Visions of Parnassus: Meriden's First 100 Years*.p. 14.

²⁷ Cooke, *Visions of Parnassus: Meriden's First 100 Years*.

²⁸ Jean Bruce Monckton, *The Shuttle of Life* (London: Hutchinson & Co., 1928). The story allowed her to discuss the political issues of the time; the white Australia Policy, illegal immigration, drug trafficking, trade unions and the possibility of war with Asia.

²⁹ Cooke, *Visions of Parnassus: Meriden's First 100 Years*.p. 17.

³⁰ Cooke, *Visions of Parnassus: Meriden's First 100 Years*.p. 17.

³¹ Katie Holmes, "'Spinsters Indispensible': feminists, single women and the critique of marriage, 1890-1920.," *Australian historical Studies* 29:110 (1998).p. 86.

Clarke, founder of Abbotsleigh on her retirement in 1913 at age sixty, after twenty-eight years as sole owner and headmistress of Abbotsleigh, was able to seize the opportunity after the war, to travel extensively. She stayed with and travelled with friends and Abbotsleigh Old Girls in England – many of whom remained unmarried. Clarke further developed her artistic skills, producing upwards of eighty paintings, two of which were shown in the Paris Exhibition of 1929.³² Like Jane, Marian was a talented artiste; unlike Jane, she was a free agent, able to fulfil her potential across multiple skill sets. What set these women apart was their choice of marital status. It must have taken extraordinary confidence and a deeply held self-belief for women like Marian Clarke and her sister Ellen, the Misses Liggins and Arnold, Grace Lawrance and Beatrice Rennie, to establish schools in a new and largely unknown society. What models of the single state were available to these women and to the societies they inhabited? Did they find historical precedents in ancient narratives?

The generative power of myth on our everyday lives has been voiced in a cross section of disciplines, from Freud to Jung and most recently in the work of Joseph Campbell.³³ I do not ascribe to these versions of a theory of the collective unconscious, in referring to the power of myth but rather to the way in which we selectively choose and appropriate versions of available stories and apply them to our lives. The two great mythological traditions of the Western world: the Greek and the Judeo-Christian, that have influenced the Western view of gender roles, offer sets of values to live by and suites of social rules and practices that are unashamedly patriarchal. There are however stories about the power and kind of freedom that the single state offers certain women. In ancient Athens this freedom was offered only to the goddesses Athena and Artemis, the two great virgin goddesses of Ancient Greece, daughters of Zeus.

Daughters in wealthy and intellectually inclined families had, for some centuries in England, shared their brothers' books: absorbing language skills, literature, philosophy, history, linguistics, philology, art and archaeology. To intelligent women, this entrée into a world where authority was only conferred on particular powerfully connected unmarried (virgin) women must have been both confronting and illuminating. As masculinist governments continued to deny the double standard that privileged male preference and pleasure over female health, safety and liberty, the right to choose a single life over marriage became an increasingly important strand of feminism for educated women.³⁴ How did middle-class women break free from the crippling image of the

³² Marian Clarke letter to Geoffrey Clarke 5th June 1929. Clarke Collection per courtesy of Judy O'Neill .

³³ Joseph Campbell, Bill Moyers, and Betty Sue Flowers, *The Power of Myth* (United States: Doubleday, 1988).

³⁴ Levine, *Feminist Lives in Victorian England Private Roles and Public Commitment*.p. 87.

spinster and re-claim her as a model of independence? Is there evidence that these founding headmistresses looked to Greek Mythology for inspiration?

Marian Clarke, Abbotsleigh's founder, had in 1880 passed the Cambridge Higher Local Examinations with a distinction in political economy and passes in Arithmetic, Mathematics and Logic.³⁵ In the absence of diaries or letters in which her views about her spinster status is articulated, I rely for an understanding of Marian's thinking, on a symbol – the school motto that she employed for Abbotsleigh: 'Tempus fugit radio celerit' translated as 'Time goes faster than a weaver's shuttle.' Emilsen notes that the motto was also that of the Clarke family and that the Clarke family crest figured a weaver's shuttle.³⁶ This is however an unreferenced allusion. The goddess Athena though, is depicted with a spindle, also associated with weaving and related to the practice of unmarried women spinning for a living: the origin of the word 'spinster'. Marian may have been alluding in a playfully ironic way, to her spinsterhood; reclaiming the word and imbuing it with the strength that came from her elevated status of credentialed academic and owner of a successful school.

What bound Jeannie and Marian together, was their common selection of a metaphor for life associated with the goddess Athena – a particularly woman centred image - an image that referenced the work of women spinning and weaving but also a metaphor for the way in which these women moved back and forth between England, Europe and Australia: their transnational existence.³⁷ This was the metaphor of the shuttle: a busy component of the spinning and weaving process of cloth making, undertaken initially by hand by women and later mechanised. The spinster may have become a derogatory word for an unmarried woman who had to spin and weave for a living but here are two women, both of whom had powerful positions in the community, using the metaphor in playful and respectful ways: a title of a novel and a school motto; a link with women in the past who had worked; a code for working women, whether married or not; an intellectual link between women; a feminist link.

In order for the daughters of the rising middle class to have been afforded an education by women who were, in many ways, complete strangers, there needed to have been a contract of trust between them and their families. The advertisement for Normanhurst 21 June, 1882 reads:

³⁵ Email to C. Szatow from Rebekah Johnson, Archivist Cambridge Assessment Archives and Heritage 20.12.2019.

³⁶ Emilsen, *The Lily & the Lion: A History of Abbotsleigh*.p. 18.

³⁷ Frances Hodgson Burnett used this latter image in her 1907 novel of the same name, the shuttle referring to the ships crossing the Atlantic, carrying American heiresses to meet impoverished English Lords - creating alliances between England and America. Frances Hogson Burnett, *The Shuttle* (New York: Frederick A. Stokes, 1907).

ASHFIELD. Miss Clarke, who holds Oxford Associate in Arts, and Cambridge higher Examination certificates, with high honours, will be prepared, after the mid-winter vacation, to receive daily and resident PUPILS, in Ashfield.³⁸

An advertisement for Abbotsleigh in 1899 on Marian Clarke's new venture in Wahroonga reads:

Educational. Abbotsleigh, Wahroonga (Milson's Point Line) A BEAUTIFUL COUNTRY HOME FOR GIRLS. 620 feet above the sea; within half-an-hour by rail of Sydney. Especially built for school purposes. CAREFUL and THOROUGH TEACHING. CYCLING. TENNIS. SEA-BATHING. Prospectus on application to the principals. MISS CLARKE. MRS HATLEY-BOYD.³⁹

Based on these and similar advertisements, it appears that this trust was based on a perception that the heads were English educated, cultured and 'up to date'.⁴⁰ The taking-on of Mrs Hatley-Boyd was unusual and it appears she did not stay on very long. If the thought had been that a married woman would prove an attraction, it was clear that this was not deemed necessary by the numerous parents of students who continued to enrol their girls in Miss Clarke's Abbotsleigh long after Mrs Hatley-Boyd had returned to England.⁴¹

Moreover, the status of an English educated spinster headmistress was, arguably, a matter of pride - not only expected but synonymous with the position. Within the broad meaning of the category of middle class, a gendered concept in itself, my focus is on how the state of being unmarried enabled certain women of the middle class to subvert the masculinist context of late nineteenth century in Australia. Historian Philippa Levine writes: 'One of the most remarkable features of Victorian Feminism was its concerted attempt to remould rather than reject marital practice whilst at the same time not annul the worth of the single woman.'⁴² The unmarried headmistress had chosen a socially acceptable, (though not universally thought to be satisfactory) alternative to marriage and procreation but she had not, in creating an alternative school family, denied her maternal. Henderson notes of Miss Lawrance's first headship of The Glennie (1908 to 1925) that, under her 'The general tone of school life is free and home-like',⁴³ a retrospect of Redlands

³⁸ Sydney Morning Herald (NSW: 1842-1954) Wednesday 21 June 1882, page 12. <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article28380580>.

³⁹ *The Sydney Stock and Station Journal*, Tuesday 18 July 1899.

⁴⁰ Sydney Morning Herald (NSW: 1842-1954) Wednesday 21 June 1882, page 12. <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article28380580>. Referenced in Chapter One. Sydney Morning Herald (NSW: 1842-1954) Saturday 26 July 1884, p. 20. <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article13571713>.

⁴¹ Emilsen, *The Lily & the Lion: A History of Abbotsleigh*.p. 28. Note: Sarah Hatley-Boyd's name ceased to be associated with Abbotsleigh in Emilsen's history from the time her name appeared in the SMH Advertisement (above) of 1899. Josephine May notes that Hatley Boyd 'later became an inspector in French in London where she died in 1928.' Fitzgerald and May, *Portraying Lives : Headmistresses and Women Professors 1880s1940s*.p. 71. This is however an unreferenced allusion and I could locate no further information about Hatley Boyd's whereabouts from 1899. This would be a subject further research.

⁴² Levine, *Feminist Lives in Victorian England Private Roles and Public Commitment*.p. 43.

⁴³ Christine (Cox) Henderson and John Keeble Winn, *100 Years of Friendship. A Centenary History of The Glennie School 1908-2008* (Caringbah, NSW: Playright Publishing, 2008).

describes Miss Liggins: 'She loved mothering them (the children) too, and at dinner time kept a watchful eye on the children whose appetites were not good enough to satisfy her.'⁴⁴ Like her sisters in the Catholic convents, she symbolised in her unmarried state, both virginal respectability and mother, a powerful combination and one embedded in the ancient cult of the virgin Mary, also referred to as 'the queen of heaven'.⁴⁵

This analysis is not meant to ignore individual headmistress's personal qualities nor the collective vision that established the powerful headmistresses' associations in England and Australia.⁴⁶ The voices of most of these women are however, muted. We hear them nearly always through the cipher of the school history and its magazines and reports. The empowering status of their single womanhood is never discussed and the women's own reasons for choosing a single life are not countenanced. For these reasons I will, in the words of Dever, "use research and documentation to create an archive where one does not already exist."⁴⁷ In particular I examine the employment of metaphor and image, ambiguity and contradiction in the voices I am reading, to explore the ways in which these women and the historians who have written about them, have interpreted their marital status and the tropes of power and authority with which their positions were invested.

Masculinist myths such as the Christian myth and cult of the Virgin Mary empowered virginal woman who had leadership conferred on them by high birth. England's Virgin Queen Elizabeth 1 comes to mind though it was through bitter experience, a keen intelligence and an iron will that she is said to have resisted marriage.⁴⁸ Although they would have been cognisant of the example set by the queen, none of the women in this study specifically claimed to be following her example by not marrying. Indeed, English suffragettes appealed to Queen Victoria for support, even though she was not known to support the newly educated woman. For aspirational and loyal subjects the attribute of 'queenliness' was though, seen to be a desirable trait for young women. It was moreover, part of the limited lexicon applicable to authoritative unmarried women.⁴⁹ This is best illustrated in this context by reference to the life of Grace Carola Lawrance whose grandmother

⁴⁴ Anon, "Redlands before Miss Roseby," in *Redlands in Retrospect 1884-1945*. (Cremorne, NSW.: The Council of SCEGGS Redlands, 1983).p. 7.

⁴⁵ I am using 'virgin' and 'celibate' interchangeably with 'being unmarried' and 'being single'.

⁴⁶ The Association of Headmistresses of New South Wales was however not established until 8th November 1916, some thirty-four years after these enduring schools had begun to be established. Hansen and Hansen, *Feminine Singular: A History of the Association of Heads of Independent Girls' Schools of Australia*.p.7.

⁴⁷ Maryanne Dever, "Archives and New Modes of Feminist Research," *Australian Feminist Studies* 32, 91-92 (2017). p. 3.

⁴⁸ Elizabeth Abbott, *A History of Celibacy* (New York: Scribner, 2000). pp. 239-245.

⁴⁹ Mary Spongberg, "The ghost of Marie Antoinette: a prehistory of Victorian royal biography," in *Cilio's Daughters: British women making history, 1790-1899*, ed. L. Felber (Newark, USA: University of Delaware Press, 2007).

Emma and mother Annie were proprietors of an elite boarding school for girls in Eastbourne, England between 1863 and 1899. Although Annie's husband George Woodford Lawrance named the school 'Queenwood' for reasons unknown, the fact remains that thereafter, Grace and Beatrice Rennie also named their school, established in 1925 in Mosman, Australia, 'Queenwood'.⁵⁰

Grace and Beatrice chose this name to honour Grace's mother's school in England and honour Beatrice's regard for John Ruskin's 'Queen's Gardens' in which he described 'queenliness' as dignity, courtesy and service as being the key aims of a girl's education. Beatrice goes on to say, when explaining the origins of the naming of their school: 'Can we not all strive to attain that queenliness ... to make service the motive of our lives, so that we may be like Sir Gareth who wrought all kind of service with a noble ease that graced the lowliest act in doing it.'⁵¹ Queenliness, as Beatrice depicts it, entails an assertive and active sense of service – devotion to a noble cause rather than unpaid service in a domestic household. The nature of queenliness, to Beatrice, was not gender specific and, additionally, carried heroic overtones.

For Beatrice, who had had 'several very angry discussions with her father before going to university – he did not approve – women's (sic) place was in the home!' ⁵² celibacy clearly transcended gender. When she was welcomed to The Glennie in April 1918, she must have been delighted to have discovered in Grace Carola, a kindred spirit. In the words of Kelvin Grose 'Miss Rennie became a firm friend of Grace Lawrance and exercised a decisive influence on her future.'⁵³ On 29th October 1925 they officially opened their own school – this time in New South Wales, in Mosman, on the Balmoral slopes. The school was their home and place of work.

The establishment of Queenwood is illustrative of one of the ways in which unmarried women had, since 1882 in New South Wales, been reinterpreting the Victorian myth of spinsterdom with its focus on the spinster eking out a living as a poorly paid governess and having to co-habit with other poor women in similar circumstances. They had been transforming it, through their education, family connections, intellectual network and close friendships, from a passive state into an active, passionate and empowering power base:⁵⁴ a shuttle in fact, rather than a spindle. Grace and Beatrice, close friends for the previous seven years, opened Queenwood together – Grace as Principal, Beatrice as her chief-of-staff and in 1931, as sole Principal, owing to Grace's deteriorating

⁵⁰ Dorothea Petrie Carew, *Many Years, Many Girls. the history of a school, 1862 - 1942*. (Dublin: Browne and Nolan, 1967). p.p. 63-64.

⁵¹ V. M. Medway, *Queenwood-The First Sixty Years 1925-1985. A History according to V.M. Medway* (Sydney: Macarthur Press, 1986). p.6.

⁵² Margaret Parker, Beatrice Rennie, no year, Mosman Queenwood, Archive, Queenwood, Mosman.

⁵³ Kelvin Grose, *The Lawrances in Australia 1900 to 1942* (Sydney: K. Grose, 2001).p. 12.

⁵⁴ Vicinus, *Independent women : work and community for single women, 1850-1920* p. 5.

health. By the end of 1926 they were a registered secondary school with forty-five pupils, four resident mistresses and a number of specialist teachers. By 1928, their school was registered for the Leaving Certificate and was a member of the Headmistresses' Association of New South Wales.⁵⁵

The link between the choice of a significant proportion of the female population in England and Australia to remain unmarried, from around 1880 and the outcry over the sexual double standard that endangered the lives of women and girls has been well established.⁵⁶ There is also a body of historical work on the subject of nineteenth century women's friendships beginning with Carroll Smith-Rosenberg's seminal study of the emotional ties that women formed with one another in Nineteenth Century America.⁵⁷ These studies and others like them, reveal that women, married or not, traditionally formed close bonds - romantic and sensual - that were accepted by men and women alike. Yet, with the advent of first wave feminism, came a time in which the enemies of women, particularly independent women, were gathering. On the one hand, women were demanding even greater degrees of autonomy and of freedom from marital and familial ties – at the same time, more interest was being taken in women's sexuality and in the physical aspects of their maternal role.⁵⁸

Although single women had been living together and managing girls' schools since the 1880's in Sydney, a backlash against the spinster, in the guise of sexology, was being promulgated by men like England's Havelock Ellis (1859-1939), who had spent time in Australia, the Swiss psychiatrist Dr August Forel (1848-1931), and the biologist Walter Heape (1855-1929), to name a few.⁵⁹ The sexologists re-constructed the spinster as deviant and from the 1890s, as women campaigned for restrictions on men's privileges, the attacks on feminists as spinsterish killjoys intensified and women's same sex-friendships came to be seen as a threat. Whereas earlier attacks on the single woman had been motivated by a fear of male emasculation and decreasing population, the inter-war period in Australia and other western countries saw the effects of Freudian theories about sexual repression and concern about regulating women's sexual behaviour.⁶⁰ Nonetheless, single

⁵⁵ Medway, *Queenwood-The First Sixty Years 1925-1985. A History according to V.M. Medway.* p.p. 11, 14.

⁵⁶ Magarey, *Passions of the first wave feminists*; Jeffreys, *The spinster and her enemies : feminism and sexuality, 1880-1930.* Jeanette Beaumont and W. Vere Hole, *Letters from Louisa* (St Leonards, Sydney: Allen and Unwin, 1996).

⁵⁷ Amy Froide, "Spinster, Old Maid, Self-Partnered," 2019, December, theconversation.com; Carroll Smith-Rosenberg, "The Female World of Love and Ritual: Relations between Women in Nineteenth Century America.," *Signs* Vol. 1, No. 1., no. Autumn (1975).

⁵⁸ Caine, *Victorian Feminists.*p. 249.

⁵⁹ Jeffreys, *The spinster and her enemies : feminism and sexuality, 1880-1930.*p.128, pp.143-144.

⁶⁰ Holmes, "'Spinsters Indispensable': feminists, single women and the critique of marriage, 1890-1920.."

women continued to command headships of girls' independent schools, in tandem,⁶¹ with the assistance of families,⁶² or alone.⁶³

Between 1894 and 1925 of eight independent girls' schools I was able to identify that were established in New South Wales at that time,⁶⁴ three were created by women in partnership: the New Shirley School, Frensham and Queenwood. No charges of deviance were laid against these women. In 1884, during the 'Indian Summer of Public Tolerance'⁶⁵ before the enemies of the spinster began to assemble, forty-one years before Grace Lawrance and Beatrice Rennie established Queenwood, Elizabeth Liggins and Clara Arnold had established The College for Girls (later Redlands, Cremorne) in Milson's Point. Elizabeth and Clara left nothing of themselves behind that could be treasured in the school archives: no speeches, no photos, no reports. They left memories of others that would define them. They left the school that they passed on to the next headmistress, Miss Roseby and they left a shared grave in the Congregational section of the Gore Hill Cemetery, St Leonards, Sydney. There was no mention of a wish to be interred together in either of their Wills and so it appears that it was left to others to memorialise their close friendship.⁶⁶

⁶¹ Queenwood: Grace Lawrance and Beatrice Rennie, Frensham: Winifred West and Phyllis Clubbe, The New Shirley School: Harriet Newcombe and Margaret Hodge, Kambala: Louis Gurney and Augustine Soubeiran source: Alanna Nobbs, *Kambala, the First Hundred Years, 1887-1987* (Kambala Centenary History Committee, 1987)., and Redlands: Elizabeth Liggins and Clara Arnold. For other references see footnote 64.

⁶² Roseville College: Isobel Davies was assisted by her sister Lillian: Denise Thomas, *Memories and Dreams: Roseville College 1908-2008* (Roseville: Roseville College, 2008).p.18. Wenona: Edith Hooke was supported by her sister Bessie who taught at her school: Denise Thomas, *Ut Prosim: Wenonians Celebrate 125 Years* (North Sydney: Wenona School, 2011).p.14. Abbotsleigh: Marian Clarke was supported by her sister Emily who taught at the school. Source: Emilsen, *The Lily & the Lion: A History of Abbotsleigh*.p.33. and Normanhurst: Ellen Clarke was initially supported by her sister Marian and later by her sister Emily. Source: Peek and Harper, "The Story of Normanhurst School, Ashfield 1882-1941.."

⁶³ Meriden, NEGS, Brighton College: source: email from Robert Pauling, Archivist, Manly, Warringah and Pittwater Historical Society 26th November 2005 to C. Sztatow. Accessed November, 2005. Tara, Ascham: source: Caroline Fairfax Simpson, Annette Fielding-Jones Dupree, and Betty Winn Ferguson, *Ascham Remembered 1886-1986* (Fine Arts Press, 1986). Ravenswood, Maybanke School: source: Roberts, *Maybanke Anderson : sex, suffrage & social reform* .

⁶⁴Tara: source: Bronwyn Hubbard, *Tara: A Telling of the Tapestry* (North Parramatta: Tara School, 1997). NEGS: source: Grose and Newall, *So Great a Heritage. The New England Girls' School*. Meriden: source: Cooke, *Visions of Parnassus: Meriden's First 100 Years*. The New Shirley School: source: May. Munro, *Shirley. The Story of a School in Sydney* (Killara: Compiled for the Shirley Old Girls' Union., 1967). Ravenswood: source: Marjorie Binns, *Ravenswood: Educating Girls 1901-2001* (Wahroonga: The Helicon Press, 2001). Roseville College: source: Thomas, *Memories and Dreams: Roseville College 1908-2008*. Frensham: source: Susan E. Emilsen, *Frensham An Historical Perspective* (Mittagong: Winifred West Schools, 1988). Queenwood: source: Medway, *Queenwood-The First Sixty Years 1925-1985. A History according to V.M. Medway*.

⁶⁵ Theobald, *Knowing women : origins of women's education in nineteenth-century Australia* p. 88.

⁶⁶ The Last Will and Testament of Elizabeth Ann Liggins. Death Date: 22 November 1910. Will No. 51402 New South Wales Will Books 1800-1952. The Last Will and Testament of Clara Jane Arnold. Death Date: 12 January, 1932. Will No. 178981. New South Wales Will Books 1800-1952.

With the advent though of the public change in attitude to single women and women in partnerships, two events occurred that indicate the concern felt by heads of girls' independent schools that they should be represented by an official body. In 1916 this led to the establishment of the Headmistresses Association of New South Wales. The second event was the establishment of a Board of Education in the Anglican Diocese of Sydney, in 1919, to acquire and establish schools. On the one hand great strides were being made for women in education and in civic membership but on the other hand, there were moves to control the independence of these girls' schools and the headmistresses who led them. The Anglican Church which had worked so closely with women to secure their protection, earlier in the century, acquired no fewer than seven of these schools between 1907 and 1967. The Methodist Church purchased Ravenswood in 1925.⁶⁷ This inexorable masculinist march diminished the authority and independence of working women. In this instance, a number of the spinster headmistresses and the schools they founded were depleted of self-reliance as surely as the Harvester Judgement of 1907 had confirmed women into dependency.⁶⁸ The masculinist society of the Twentieth Century in Australia may have spoken in different terms to that of the 1890s but the intent was the same.

In this chapter I have analysed the ways in which the founders' choice to remain unmarried challenged the gender order in ways that the married state did not and I have argued that the exemplars the single headmistresses offered in their schools were in their own way, as radical in outcomes as the pursuit of the vote, a preoccupation of historians of the first wave of feminism. Moreover, I show how these women, in creating alternative all female 'families' to educate girls, successfully challenged the negative image of the spinster, turning that status into one that was respected – indeed – expected and I have illustrated the constraints on married women by contrasting the lives of the only married headmistress in my cohort – Jeannie Monckton - with that of Marian Clarke of Abbotsleigh.

⁶⁷ Ravenswood purchased by Methodist Church 1925: Binns, *Ravenswood: Educating Girls 1901-2001*.p.p. 24-32. The Anglican Church purchased the New England Girls' School in 1907: Grose and Newall, *So Great a Heritage. The New England Girls' School*.p.23; Cooke, *Visions of Parnassus: Meriden's First 100 Years*.The Anglican Church purchased Abbotsleigh in 1924: Emilsen, *The Lily & the Lion: A History of Abbotsleigh*.p.p. 73-102; Kambala in 1926: Nobbs, *Kambala, the First Hundred Years, 1887-1987*.p.p. 60-75; Redlands in 1945: "Redlands, Cremorne," in *Wikipedia*. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Redlands,_Cremorne. Tara in 1956:"Tara Anglican Girls' School Ordinance 1956," accessed 19th October 2019, https://www.sds.asn.au/sites/default/files/O72-0056.pdf?doc_id=NTEyNTk=. Claremont in 1959:"All About Claremont," <https://media.digistormhosting.com.au/cc-au-nsw-233-website/documents/Publications/All-About-Claremont-2019.pdf?mtime=20190208160308>. Roseville College in 1967:Thomas, *Memories and Dreams: Roseville College 1908-2008*.p.74.

⁶⁸ Lake, "Historical reconsiderations IV: The politics of respectability: Identifying the masculinist context.."p. 130.

To illustrate what it meant to be part of an all-women community, to subvert the masculinist context of nineteenth century Australia and to re-claim the spinster as a model of independence, I went in search of historical precedent, myth and metaphor that lay embedded in the scant literature on their schools. I found three unifying themes: the cult of the virgin in religious teachings; the use of the metaphor of the spindle/shuttle associated with women spinning and weaving, and the notion of queenliness – a metaphor on which I further expand in the following chapter.

I conclude by alluding to the threat posed by the backlash against the spinster by the sexologists who constructed the unmarried state as deviant and significance of the headmistress's move to come together in an association: The Headmistress's Association of New South Wales in 1916. I refer to how this move was countered by the establishment of the Board of Education in the Anglican Diocese of Sydney in 1919 with its mission to purchase their schools: a move that would curtail their unfettered autonomy but not their sisterhood.

In the following chapter, using Kimberley Wade - Bizoni's understanding of 'legacy' to explore primarily the headmistress's cultural legacies, I examine the ways in which Ellen Clarke, Grace Lawrance and Beatrice Rennie handed down the legacies they saw as their sacred mission, to future generations of young women. I explore the terms in which they framed their quest for meaning as they transitioned from the *fin de siècle* problematic of religion versus science translated by Victorian feminism as the 'good woman' versus the 'new woman'.

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Chapter 3 – Legacies. Passing on the Baton.

A distinguishing feature of the early founding headmistresses of independent girls' schools was their sense of vocation - a higher calling that impelled them to educate and inspire the girls in their trust. Notwithstanding the fact that these schools were profitable enterprises, the chance for women to be educated was a precious, almost holy gift.¹ As instruments of what historian Mary Spongberg has called one of the most important campaigns of first wave feminism - the struggle for access to attain higher education² - the headmistresses were charged with an almost sacred mission. Having inherited the right to be educated and having taken up that challenge, their mission in establishing their schools was to pass on that birthright to future generations.

Evidence of this higher calling is discernible in the language employed by the New South Wales founders. For some it was predominantly couched in a discourse of empire, patriotism and religious fervour. For others, a Romantic attachment to that most influential thinker of the nineteenth century, John Ruskin. For all, the lofty ideals of the women's movement of late nineteenth century England, transplanted to Australia, impelled them to build institutions that would be true to these values, and would withstand the tests of time. Business women and educationalists, they were each acutely aware of the struggle in which they were engaged, to facilitate access to higher education for the young women in their charge. The legacy the headmistresses left behind was based on a mix of deeply held personal values conceived in a potpourri of paradoxes emerging in mid to late nineteenth century religious, scientific, political, feminist, literary and artistic thought.

The legacies the founding headmistresses bequeathed future generations relied on how they reconciled these often opposing views and how they were interpreted by those to whom the baton was passed. What constitutes a legacy? Kimberly Wade-Benzoni, writing for the Harvard Business Review states that legacy encompasses the resources, opportunities and culture you leave behind.³ It comes from grounding your purpose in a greater purpose and living for others. It means ensuring your loved ones will be taken care of, when you are gone. There is an element of self-sacrifice in legacy. At its extremes, a legacy can be a burden for future generations or it may provide the key to unimaginable freedoms. Legacy is about reach of influence. It is about intent and the ability to

¹ Gathorne-Hardy, *The Public School Phenomenon: 1857-1977*.p. 242.

² Mary Spongberg, *Writing Women's History since the Renaissance* (Hampshire, UK: Palgrave MacMillan, 2002).p. 151.

³ Kimberly Wade-Benzoni, "How to Think about Leaving your Legacy," *Harvard Business Review* (2016), hbr.org/2016/12/how-to-think-about-building-your-legacy. Accessed 18.1.2020.

inspire, beyond one's physical existence, albeit within the limits of acceptance of the gatekeepers of one's own culture.

The founders' legacies I am exploring are predominantly of a cultural nature. They refer to the special qualities with which the founding headmistresses imbued their fledgling schools, that they believed would motivate and inspire future generations of girls. Each of the headmistresses began with certain ideals, but it was often not until her death that the legacy she had left was fully articulated. Her living legacy though, was often enshrined in school mottos, school shields and school hymns and these were rarely altered by later administrations. It is with these media that I am primarily concerned.

Referencing Wade-Benzoni's definition of legacy, this focus on the cultural aspects of legacy is not intended to ignore the importance of the legacy of resources. The acquisition of property and the thoughtful management of financial resources both contribute to the viability of an institution's future. Nor am I disregarding the memorialisation of the names of the founding headmistresses on school buildings, plaques, gates, portraits, schools' houses and scholarships.⁴ The opportunity for study moreover ensured an education that was of a high enough standard to provide for university entrance and founding headmistresses often kept up-to-date on the academic progress of their schools. Marian Clarke wrote in a letter to the school's trustees in 1932: 'It is delightful to find it (viz. Abbotsleigh) in so happy and prosperous a condition and to hear from Miss Williams, of The Women's College that we have twenty undergraduates at the university.'⁵ Academic success is well documented in school histories and the annals of Sydney University and its Women's College.⁶

Founders are moreover recalled at commemorative events, solidifying traditions and reminding the school community of the spirit in which their school was established. An important vehicle of legacy was the Old Girls' Union, often inaugurated by the founding headmistress. Marian Clarke

⁴ Some examples include the main administration building at Abbotsleigh named after Marian Clarke, the Library at Queenwood named after Beatrice Rennie, the Lawrance Gates at the Glennie and the Lawrance Campus at Queenwood, Liggins House and The Arnold Library at S.C.E.G.S. Redlands, The Jeannie Monckton Creative Writing prize and Board room at Meriden. NOTE: I have visited all buildings except for those in The Glennie and the Jeannie Monckton memorialisation was advised courtesy of the school archivist Elizabeth Stevens.

⁵ Letter to Mr F.S. Boyce, Trustee and Member of Abbotsleigh's foundation council, 4th January 1932. Sourced from the Mitchell Library and accessed 26th July 2019.

⁶ Two of the first seven graduates from Women's College in 1892 were Constance Harker from Ellen Clarke's Normanhurst and Dorothy Harris from Marian Clarke's Abbotsleigh. Later, in 1899 two of the College's eight graduates were from Miss Wallis's Ascham and one was from Miss Gurney's Kambala. Emily Gordon and Nona Dumolo from The Misses Liggins and Arnold College for Girls graduated with honours from The University of Sydney in 1898. Hole and Treweeke, *The History of The Women's College Within The University of Sydney*. See Reference 2, p. 4.

addressed the need for an Old Girls' Union (OGU) in 1908;⁷ it was the second headmistress of Normanhurst, Mrs Stiles, who inaugurated that OGU in 1900;⁸ likewise it was under the second headmistress, Bertha B. Turner, in 1917 that Meriden began an OGU.⁹ Queenwood OGU was established in 1930 under the two founders¹⁰ and Redlands OGU was founded in 1908 under the founders' partnership of Liggins and Arnold.¹¹ The creators of these organisations believed that the members would ensure that the seeds planted by their founders in the hearts and minds of the earliest students would also be planted in the minds of future generations. These powerful bodies are represented on School Boards and are highly influential in the directions their Old Schools take, including but not limited to their interest and control about what should be included in a school history. At Queenwood, for instance, the O.G.U. assisted the retired Principal in collating material for the school history.¹² In Abbotsleigh's most recent history, Susan Emilsen records her appreciation of and responsibility to, the O.G.U.¹³

This chapter will focus however on the personal legacy of the founding headmistresses of New South Wales with particular attention to Ellen Clarke (1853 – 1933) who founded Normanhurst, Ashfield in 1882 and Grace Lawrance (1873 to 1932) and Beatrice Rennie, (1893 to 1971) who founded Queenwood in 1925. I discuss what they bequeathed – and were seen to bequeath - on the institutions they founded; how they solidified the hopes and dreams they had inherited and how they - or others - ensured their work would be carried forth into the future. As they left few official school records and even fewer personal communications, I elicit their intents through a close examination of the discourse in which they and others framed their legacies. Moreover I recognise that these legacies along with the biographical details of their lives have been selected and re-selected as posterity deemed fit. I discuss the terms in which the founders articulated their intent, where they did, and I evaluate their influence on women's education and women's history.

The late nineteenth and early twentieth century was a time of great social change – a time of turbulence and reform. The Women's Movement challenged the old gender order. Charles Darwin's theory of evolution was used to discredit biblical teachings relating to women. The supremacy of the Church as The Gatekeeper of Truth was shattered. The Creation Myth of Genesis, based as it

⁷ Emilsen, *The Lily & the Lion: A History of Abbotsleigh*.p.40.

⁸ "Normanhurst School Magazine," June 1916, 1916.

⁹ Cooke, *Visions of Parnassus: Meriden's First 100 Years*.p.25.

¹⁰ Medway, *Queenwood-The First Sixty Years 1925-1985. A History according to V.M. Medway*.p. 230.

¹¹ Gillezeau, Marguerite About Redlands. Our History. <https://www.redlands.nsw.edu.au/about/our-history/1884-1911/>

¹² V.M. Medway, *Queenwood-The Next Ten Years 1985-1995.A History according to V.M. Medway* (Sydney: McPherson's Printing Group, 1995).p. 5.

¹³ Emilsen, *The Lily & the Lion: A History of Abbotsleigh*.pp.v,x.

was on a masculinist interpretation of the bible, was exploded. Centre stage was the great paradox of nineteenth century thought: science versus religion. If Charles Darwin initiated this contretemps through the 1859 publication of his *Origin of Species*, then it was left to other luminaries to attempt a reconciliation. A notable, though hardly feminist, intellectual was the polymath and aesthete John Ruskin (1819 to 1900) who, in his writings on women and education, Christianity and Greek mythology,¹⁴ demonstrated but failed to resolve, the paradox posed by late Victorian feminism - a paradox that would later pit the image of 'the good woman' against that of 'the new woman'.¹⁵ I refer to Ruskin here because, as far as the archive reveals, he is the only Nineteenth Century Intellectual who is referred to by any of the headmistresses in this study.¹⁶ How could the good woman, charged with the moral responsibility for addressing the deficiencies and social fallout of male Victorian industry by her philanthropic works, step out of her garden and as a 'new woman' move into that public world where she would inevitably challenge the ways in which men managed that world? Each of the founding headmistresses navigated their way through these divergent ideals of femininity in slightly different ways.

Ellen Clarke, one of the few women at that time in Australia equipped with a precursor to a university degree and founder of Normanhurst School Ashfield, to which she devoted the years 1882 to 1892, was unequivocal in setting out the ideals of her school.¹⁷ In the forward to the first Normanhurst School Magazine in June 1914, she wrote from England to explain the vision she had for girls' education at Normanhurst. She exhorts her students to be leaders in setting the standard for the national character: one based on loyalty, sacrifice and work. Her vision is both bold and grand in its sweep: it answers to no-one except God:

By self-sacrifice and earnest work, each member upholds the honour of her school and does her part to build up the national character which will form the strength of a great, new, free nation, firm in its true and loyal patriotism, striving towards its God.¹⁸

Viewed in its context which was the onset of the First World War, Ellen's vision reads as being more attributable to ideals of Empire than the education of young women. It was twenty two years since

¹⁴ "Sesame and Lilies by John Ruskin," 1865, [www.fulltextarchive.com>page>Sesame-and-Lilies](http://www.fulltextarchive.com/page/Sesame-and-Lilies). Ruskin. John, *The Queen of the Air* (Project Gutenberg E-text, orig. 1869), <https://www.gutenberg.org/files/12641/12641-h/12641-h.htm>, 2019.

¹⁵ Caine, *English feminism, 1780-1980* p.p. 33 -34 for a succinct introduction to the 'new woman' debate among late Victorian feminists.

¹⁶ See references to Grace Lawrance and Beatrice Rennie.

¹⁷ Ellen in fact held an Oxford Associate of Arts, a precursor to a Degree at a time when women were not offered degrees. She had in all probability attended the Miss Beale's Cheltenham Ladies' College as her sister Emily is recorded as visiting there as an Old Girl in 1902. Student records were not kept prior to 1885. Emilsen, *The Lily & the Lion: A History of Abbotsleigh*.p. 36.

¹⁸ *Normanhurst School Magazine* No. 1. June 1914. Forward by E. Clarke.

she had handed over Normanhurst to Mrs Maud Stiles, her successor. The school hymn Ellen chose in 1882, *Through the night of doubt, and sorrow* and to which she refers in 1914 as embodying ‘the ideal of mutual helpfulness,’¹⁹ seems similarly unattached to educational ideals though ironically prescient, as Australia was a footstep away from World War One. The metaphor the school hymn employs for mutual helpfulness depicts a band of pilgrims marching through the darkness into the light and love of the risen Christ, holding aloft the Cross. The hymn embraces masculinist ideology: masculine fraternity; ‘brother clasps the hand of brother,’ the military; ‘marching to the Promised Land’ and masculine language; ‘fight its battle’.²⁰

Read in this way, it appears that Ellen Clarke managed the paradoxes of the great debates of the nineteenth century largely by ignoring them and retreating into religious and patriotic ideology. If however, one compares the theme of this school hymn with those of other schools of this kind, the hymn can be read as a metaphor for the camaraderie needed to fight for women’s education collectively and individually. Phrases such as ‘Onward with the Cross our aid; bear its shame and fight its battle ‘til we rest beneath its shade’ finds an echo in the words of the later Queenwood School hymn: ‘Star of courage, so inspire us that we fearlessly may fight, spite of danger, scorn and laughter, in the cause of truth and right.’ Ellen’s pilgrims are led by the God’s guiding light: ‘Clear before us through the dark noon gleams and burns the guiding light’... One the light of God’s own presence o’er his ransomed people shed’. In the Queenwood hymn, girls are to strive towards the light of ‘stars [that] glow in the darkling sky’. Both hymns employ imagery associated with enlightenment - the one via the path of evangelistic fervour; the other with more Russonian Romantic and theosophical images. The one set firmly in the Old Order, the other, part of the New Order.

The alternate meaning I have proposed for Ellen’s hymn can be referenced by a comment published on her death in 1933 by a former student: ‘Deeply religious, her teaching was not only of a spiritual nature, but practical and made applicable to daily life.’ Further: ‘Miss Clarke with her confident, decided manner ...invariably converted hesitating parents to the new outlook in the training of girls.’²¹

This pioneering headmistress whose school was referenced by Noelene Kyle as outdistancing all other private competition in examinations closed in 1941.²² Ellen Clarke’s legacy was a brief but inspirational candle that lived on in the memories of the girls and teachers who attended there and

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ A copy of the school hymn I located pasted into a page of a *Normanhurst Old Girls’ Magazine* possibly dated 1982 as deaths of Old Girls are recoded for 1981. Courtesy of Ashfield and District Historical Society.

²¹ Normanhurst School, *Normanhurst School Magazine* (Reflection Old Girls’ Union.), December 1933.p.27

²² Kyle, *Her natural destiny : the education of women in New South Wales* p.105.

who met regularly until 1986, over forty years after Normanhurst's closure. She was loved and respected and the high expectations of her legacy continued under the headmistresses who followed. Her successor, Mrs Maud Stiles was responsible for the rather more down-to-earth motto: 'Strive and Thrive' and for continuing to turn Ellen's ideals into practical reality. My understanding of a legacy is that it is a gift that influences and continues to influence. Did Ellen's legacy die with her school? I think not, for in establishing her school and setting the standard of academic excellence, she influenced her sister Marian who came to Australia in 1884 to assist her. By her example, she showed that women could and did manage large schools (in just the first few years Normanhurst grew to over one hundred pupils).²³ By 1892 when Ellen returned to England, there were ten Independent Girls' Schools, owned and operated by individual women in New South Wales, eight of which survive today. Marian then went on to establish her own school Abbotsleigh which carries on that tradition to this day and whose academic results lead it to be considered the leading girls' independent school in New South Wales.

*The path of a good woman is indeed strewn with flowers but they spring up behind her, not before.*²⁴

This view of the legacy of a good woman, taken from John Ruskin's 1865 lecture *Sesame and Lilies* was, according to Beatrice Rennie, the favourite quotation of Grace Lawrance, the woman with whom she established Queenwood in 1925.²⁵ For Rennie to quote Ruskin as an influence on her friend Grace, may seem perplexing, heretical even, to twenty-first century feminists, given Ruskin's acknowledged attachment to the doctrine of separate spheres in *Lilies*, a doctrine that confined women to home. A century on, the influential second-wave feminist Kate Millett was to demonstrate the paradox of the good woman charged with remedying a world rendered cruel and increasingly uninhabitable, whilst confined to home in a vicarious and indirect existence - the chattel of her husband. Millett stated: 'The salvation of the world which, he (viz. Ruskin) is assured, should come from its subject women is a concoction of nostalgic mirage, regressive sexuality, religious ambition and simplistic social panacea... It is the fabric of dreams.'²⁶ Having damned Ruskin to all eternity, Millett also acknowledges that 'the dreams of an age are part of its life although, perhaps just as often, a species of death.'²⁷ What was dying was the Old Order and the founding headmistresses were undoubtedly participants if not leaders in the establishment of a New Order that looked increasingly for guidance to the university and decreasingly towards the

²³ Normanhurst School, *Normanhurst School Magazine* December 1932.p.29.

²⁴ Ruskin, "Sesame and Lilies by John Ruskin."

²⁵ Niree Verger and Dorothy Farmer, *Three Headmistresses*, Box 307., per Queenwood Archives.

²⁶ Kate Millett, "The Debate over Women: Ruskin VS Mill," *Victorian Studies* 14, No. 1 (Sept 1970.).p. 80.

²⁷ Millett, "The Debate over Women: Ruskin VS Mill."p. 80.

established church. Their legacy would include new metaphors to inspire a new generation of women but juxtaposed alongside these new imaginings they retained the vestiges of the old.

Grace Lawrance and Beatrice Rennie who had established Queenwood, were women who had inherited the hopes and dreams of the Victorian feminism of the 'Long Nineteenth Century' as well as that century's more conservative social mores explicated by Ruskin. These headmistresses may have paid tribute to the Victorian ideal of the good woman as espoused by Ruskin, but were however in practice, also 'new women'. These 'new women', better educated than their mothers, rejected the idea of home as the woman's sphere and in the words of Sarah Grand, who coined the 'new' epithet, sought a wider world of thought and activity.²⁸ Moreover they owed more to Ruskin's view of women expounded later in *The Queen of the Air* (1869) than in the earlier *Lilies*. Nineteenth century scholar Sharon Aronofsky Weltman shows how Ruskin's later queen, elaborated from the mythic Athena, embodies both male and female, subverting the strictly differentiated gender dichotomy inherent in his earlier lecture.²⁹ It is a somewhat perturbing metaphor, though, because in so doing, Ruskin removes woman from her garden and relegates her to the spirit world, where presumably she will direct earthly affairs from the safety of an ethereal existence. Her sphere of influence has increased exponentially, but she herself is invisible - a not entirely satisfactory basis for participation in the corporeal world, but a very useful way of imagining legacy.

What is the nature of the legacy these women left for Queenwood? In her tribute to Grace, penned after her death in November 1932, Beatrice eulogises her in terms that may be interpreted as evidence of the subversion of a strictly differentiated gender dichotomy referred to by Weltman. She describes Grace's mind in terms that encompass traditionally masculine characteristics: 'Her mind was clear, logical and efficient; her method of thinking, fearless and original.' Her soul she describes in terms of feminine expectations: 'her soul was a rare and beautiful one, her whole life was a record of her service to others.'³⁰ The dichotomy is there, but contained in the one person. At one level, Beatrice is moving towards a genderless ideation of womanhood. In the same passage however, the final message Beatrice selects for Grace to send her students is a message of love.³¹ It is not the message of the 'new woman' who exhorts girls to work hard and to achieve academically. It is rather, both an uplifting spiritual and ambiguously romantic amalgam. The words are these: 'If you will love and give, you will be happy and love will come to you and stay with you,

²⁸ Caine, *English feminism, 1780-1980* p. 135.

²⁹ Sharon Aronofsky Weltman, "Mythic Language and Gender Subversion: The Case of Ruskin's Athena," *Nineteenth Century Literature* 52, 3, no. December (1997).p. 371.

³⁰ Medway, *Queenwood-The First Sixty Years 1925-1985. A History according to V.M. Medway*.p. 18. "Our Late Beloved Principal An Appreciation and a Message" B.L.R.

³¹ *The Glennie Gazette*. Volume 12. No. 33. May 1925, p. 4.

and I shall feel that my work has not been in vain.³² Examined in a religious frame, and both women were recognised for their spiritual affiliation,³³ the message is reminiscent of the words attributed to Jesus when he farewelled his disciples: 'A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another.'³⁴ There are also elements of Ecclesiastes 11:1 'Cast your bread upon the waters: for thou shalt find it after many days.' If Grace's legacy was to bestow love of the agape kind, in a Christ-like way, how has this influenced school tradition?

This is the story of the gifting of flowers which has a very nice synergy with the picture Ruskin paints of the good woman. When Grace was very ill and unable to teach or command the authority of a Principal, Beatrice, who cared for her during those difficult years, ensured that every day a girl would visit Grace with flowers.³⁵ Likewise when it was Beatrice's birthday, the girls would also bring her floral bouquets. Then, as Queenwood was established on Beatrice's birthday, eventually, and after Grace's death, Beatrice's birthday became the school's birthday and all the girls brought flowers to school to celebrate. Instead of them adorning the school, however, parents, teachers and girls took the flowers to hospitals and nursing homes in the area. Thus is Grace's legacy of love – and Beatrice's – manifest every year.³⁶

In a different frame, as Grace and Beatrice were leaving the Glennie together, to establish their own school, and as Beatrice was to nurse Grace for four years until her death, at Queenwood, the meaning of love assumes a more companionate emotion. Does Grace, on leaving The Glennie, mean that she has found love with Beatrice and is she also wishing that the girls she has had in her charge will also find love? In which case, the legacy of the flowers still applies, but in a more nuanced way. The flowers become symbols of the threads that bind women together through caring for and honouring each other. They become a symbol of female solidarity.

The school hymn, the imagery of which I have compared with the 1882 Normanhurst hymn, can also be read as a memorial to Grace: Beatrice's legacy of love. In the hymn are constant references to the way in which she describes Grace in her message to the school. Grace's gifts of clarity of thought become: 'thoughts and words and actions guiding, purifying heart and mind.' Her

³² Medway, *Queenwood-The First Sixty Years 1925-1985. A History according to V.M. Medway*.p. 19.

³³ Reminiscences of Lola Hardwick (Cormack) Queenwood 1930-37) 'Miss Rennie had a deep religious faith which governed her whole life. She often quoted the bible.' Sourced from Queenwood Archives. Henderson and Winn, *100 Years of Friendship. A Centenary History of The Glennie School 1908-2008*.p.57. 'Miss Lawrance took a Sunday evening service on a regular basis once the chapel was completed.'

³⁴ The Holy Bible KJV John 13:34.

³⁵ Medway, *Queenwood-The First Sixty Years 1925-1985. A History according to V.M. Medway*.p. 18.

³⁶ This story in part is recounted on <https://www.queenwood.nsw.edu.au/Queenwood-News/Events/Schools-Birthday>

'fearlessness' is written into the hymn in 'that we may fight, spite of danger scorn and laughter in the cause of truth and right.' Beatrice writes of Grace: 'her whole life was a record of service to others' and in the hymn: 'star of service make us dwell on not our own but others' needs'.³⁷ Ensuring she would be ever present in the hearts, minds and souls of Queenwood girls in perpetuity and through music – Grace's first love - was Beatrice's legacy as much as it was Grace's.

Ellen Clarke's vision, grounded in the traditions of the old country, lives on too, in Beatrice Rennie's ideals of self-sacrifice and reach, loyalty and honour. The national character that Ellen sought to mould was being formed in later independent schools like Queenwood. The Christian ideals were re-iterated but also new images and new metaphors were being introduced.

Aronofsky-Weltman notes: 'In his (viz. Ruskin's) mythic oscillations lies the potential for escape from fixed categories of gender, a thought that Ruskin never articulates but keeps always in suspension.'³⁸ So too, the legacy of Queenwood's founders oscillates between an adherence to Christian doctrine and a reach for largely unattainable possibilities under southern skies. Beatrice articulates this when speaking of the meaning of the school motto: *Per Aspera Ad Astra* 'through struggles to the stars.'

"Ad Astra!" What a vision this calls up of the distant, unearthly loveliness of the stars – too distant ever to be attainable and with a loveliness far beyond our grasp, but beacons to guide us in our search for strength and courage to strive always for the highest and best we are capable of.³⁹

As Queen of the Air, Rennie re-imagines her stars into beacons as she continues with the star metaphor in her school hymn written after Lawrance's death in 1932. A triangulation of stars: of truth, of courage and of service, 'sanctified by God's own spirit' are personified as they beckon students to think sincerely, fight fearlessly and sacrifice self for others.⁴⁰ Later each student would be given a House badge (three houses: Queen, Wood and School) each in the shape of a pentacle star, the sign of the supremacy of spirit over matter. The five pointed star was also the symbol of the Theosophists who in 1924 had constructed their Star Amphitheatre at nearby Edwards Beach, Mosman, just a kilometre away from the Queenwood site in Mandolong Road, purchased by Grace and Beatrice in 1925.⁴¹

Theosophy may or may not have been of more than a passing interest to Beatrice. She may also, as a Mosman resident and of an enquiring mind, have been acquainted with that offshoot of the

³⁷ Medway, *Queenwood-The First Sixty Years 1925-1985. A History according to V.M. Medway*.pp. 20-21.

³⁸ Aronofsky Weltman, "Mythic Language and Gender Subversion: The Case of Ruskin's Athena."p.371.

³⁹ Medway, *Queenwood-The First Sixty Years 1925-1985. A History according to V.M. Medway*.p. 7.

⁴⁰ Medway, *Queenwood-The First Sixty Years 1925-1985. A History according to V.M. Medway*.p. 21.

⁴¹ Jill Roe, *Beyond Belief. Theosophy in Australia 1879-1939* (Kensington, Australia: New South Wales University Press, 1986).

International Theosophical Society: The Order of the Star in the East, formed in 1913 by Mrs Annie Besant and Charles Webster Leadbeater, the same year that Beatrice had begun university studies.⁴² The order was responsible for the construction of the afore-mentioned Star Amphitheatre. Perhaps Beatrice, eulogised as a gifted teacher - one 'whose special territory was English and who had a profound love for history's great novelists, poets and playwrights and for the work they spawned'⁴³ projected her own love of Ruskin onto her friend Grace, whose special subject was music rather than literature. Ruskin's images of 'queenliness' adopted by Beatrice and Grace and applied to Queenwood are testimony to his pervasive effect.

In this chapter, following Wade-Benzoni's understanding of 'legacy' as predominantly cultural, I have explored the meaning of the individual predominantly cultural legacies left to posterity by Ellen Clarke (1853-1933) of Normanhurst, and Grace Lawrance (1873-1932) and Beatrice Rennie (1893-1971) of Queenwood. Applying discourse analysis to the school mottos, hymns, songs, eulogies and other symbolic material they bequeathed to their schools, I have argued that these women envisaged their enterprise of educating and equipping young women for a changing world as 'sacred'. Their mission moreover I explained as being framed in terms of the *fin de siècle* problematic of religion versus science – yet in the 'new woman', that emerged from Victorian feminism they also envisaged the 'good woman' who retained her caring disposition and love for humanity.

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⁴² Roe, *Beyond Belief. Theosophy in Australia 1879-1939*.

⁴³ Medway, *Queenwood-The First Sixty Years 1925-1985. A History according to V.M. Medway*.p. 24. "From the Old Girls" Fay Taylor (Grogan).

Conclusion

In this thesis, my aim has been to search beyond the school buildings, the examination results and timetables for evidence of the way in which advanced education for girls was connected to first-wave feminism between 1880 and 1925. I have asked questions about the way in which the founding headmistresses thought about their lives as new women and how they enacted their beliefs.

In chapter one I have explored the approach taken by the Liggins and Arnold partnership; an approach that emanated from their egalitarian concerns as much as from their educational aspirations for their school, especially through their involvement with the Free Kindergarten movement. I contrasted this approach with that of Ellen Clarke who viewed her mission to educate young women through the Anglican Evangelistic lens while keeping the established church at arms' length. Different again was Marian Clarke's fierce independence and ambitious outlook that transcended the confines of her school and resulted in a consistent flow of young women to university and a strongly cohesive woman-centred culture, evident in Abbotsleigh today.

This study of Victorian women in Australia who established advanced schools for girls, shows them to have been both independent and yet constrained by the limited opportunities for work offered to them. However they were not as constrained as many other women of the era. Stepping out from the confinements of home, choosing not to marry and dispensing with chaperones, they threw themselves wholeheartedly and in remarkably modern ways into building institutions that remain for the most part with us to-day. They were prescient in their anticipation of a new age for women, where an education would be valued and where white, middle class women could establish their own realms.

I have argued however that they could not have established these schools if they had been married. They also could not have begun to build their institutions without some degree of personal wealth. For women of this class to change from dispensing philanthropy to the poor, which presumably they would have done if they had married, to educating young women of their own class, was a quantum leap. It involved them directly in generating the changes anticipated by first-wave feminism. In chapter two I search for metaphors to describe the authority they embodied, outside the separate sphere of the home. I discover a sense of them being acutely aware of being women moving in a woman's world and their sense of belonging.

In their strenuous efforts to open the opportunity of higher education to women, they were extraordinary but also ordinary. Negotiating their way in an outpost of Empire, with the flimsiest of

contacts, with only their wits and education to recommend them, they were the vanguard of the woman of the future. Their authority came from their superior education, not from their marriageability. Their partnerships, families and networks sustained them. The early schools however, with few exceptions, succumbed to the overtures of the Church of England. Did they perhaps unite in an association a little late? The Association of Headmistresses of NSW was not formed until 1916, over thirty years after Normanhurst was founded. The English Association of Headmistresses was formed from the inception of advanced schools for girls by Frances Mary Buss in 1874. Alternatively as I have suggested, did the new 'sexology' intimidate enough to undermine that precarious confidence the women of the first-wave had enjoyed in their independent all women's communities? Of the seven schools that formed The Association of Headmistresses of NSW, four were Church owned, making them the majority in any decision-making process.¹

The founding headmistresses educated a new middle-class of Australian women who would leave school equipped to do anything they might choose. They had the model of an independent woman in their headmistress to follow. The headmistresses themselves, with their credentials and entrepreneurial spirit could have been lawyers or doctors, writers or artists but they were constrained by the limits of their education. This did not stop them from nurturing the girls in their care and encouraging them to continue their education. That their reach did not extend to indigenous women is a criticism levelled against the first-wave feminists, especially in regard to their exclusion from suffrage at federation. The schools the founders established did not admit or educate indigenous girls until well after the founders had departed.

The photographs we have of these women belie their youth.² They were young, yet each was prone to over-work and exhaustion. They were leaders: respected, feared, loved. They put their individual talents and personalities onto the organisations they led.

I have ventured into this no-man's land they created to ask about the terms in which their lives can be re-constructed and included in the historiography. They are re-constructed within hegemonic histories of the past, but as in the case of their relationship with the established Church of England, they have been shown to be resistant. They engaged in networks formal and informal before the Headmistress's Association was formed in New South Wales. They were part of the mission of Empire but they were also part of the mission of feminism. They were great negotiators before the

¹ "Association of Heads of Independent Girls' Schools (AHIGS)," (9 January 2019).
<https://www.ahigs.nsw.edu.au/>.

² See Appendix D.

fear of women's power led the church to persuade a number of them back onto the path of masculinist culture.³

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³ See Appendix A.

Appendix A

Seventeen Independent Girls Secondary Schools founded by Owner/Headmistresses between 1880 and 1925.

Owner	Bio dates	School	Time at school	Education	Status in 2020.
Ellen Clarke	1854-1933	Normanhurst Ashfield	1882-1892	Oxford Associate in Arts	Closed 1941
Janet Hyland	1841-195031	Claremont Randwick	1882-1896	Unknown	Purchased C of E 1959 Co-ed primary School
Maybanke Wolstenholme (Anderson)	1845-1927	Maybanke College Marrickville	1883-1899	Educated as a teacher in Sydney	Closed 1899
Elizabeth Liggins & Clara Arnold	1840-1910 1854-1932	The College for Girls (Redlands) Milsons Point	1884-1910	Unknown Cambridge Teaching Certificate	Purchased C of E 1945 Now co-ed.
Marian Clarke	1853-1933	Abbotsleigh N. Sydney Parramatta Wahroonga	1885-1913	Cambridge Local Exams honours in political economy, history and logic.	Purchased by C of E 1924.
Marie Wallis	1850-1904	Ascham	1886-1902	German educated	Independent
Edith Hooke	1866-1942	Woodstock (Wenona)	1886-1920	Australian educated	Independent
Louisa Gurney & Augustine Soubeiran	1852-1937 1868-1933	Kambala Rose Bay	1887-1914 1891-1914	English educated Swiss educated Lausanne	Purchased C of E 1926.
Margaret Nelson Mills OR Mary Elizabeth Waugh (Joan)	1843-1920 1872--1946	Tara Parramatta	1887-1897 1897-1946	Educated France and Germany Perth House Ladies College Parramatta	Purchased C of E 1956 NB Some debate about who the founder was.
Miss E. Milne	Unknown	Brighton College Manly	1889-	Unknown	Closed 1960

Florence Emily Green	1862-1926	New England Girls' School Armidale	1895-1907	Private school Melbourne. Th.A. hon. Australian College Theology	Purchased by the C of E 1907
Mrs Jeannie Monckton	1859-1939	Meriden Strathfield	1897-1908	Teacher trained Whitelands, London	Independent.
Harriet Newcombe & Margaret Hodge	1854-1942 1858-1938	The New Shirley School Edgecliff	1900-1912	Cambridge Teachers' Certificate Cambridge Teachers' Certificate	Closed in 1936 and absorbed by Kambala
Mabel Fidler	1871-1960	Ravenswood Gordon	1901-1925	The Argyle School, Sydney	Purchased by Methodist Church 1925
Isobel Davies	1878-1953	Roseville College Roseville	1908 -1947	B.A. Sydney University	Church of England from 1967
Winifred West Phyllis Clubbe	1881-1971 ????-1973	Frensham Mittagong	1913-1938 1913-1938	Newnham College Cambridge Unknown	Independent
Grace Lawrance & Beatrice Rennie	1873-1932 1893-1971	Queenwood Mosman	1925-1932 1925-1971	Guild College of Music London B.A. (hons) Sydney University	Independent

Appendix B

First Wave Feminism - Parliamentary Acts and Education Milestones concerning women, work and family in England and Australia to 1925.

1. First Wave Feminists Regarding the rights of husbands over their wives' bodies, Sir Matthew Hale, chief justice of the King's Bench (**1671-1676**) first published in **1736** that a husband cannot be guilty of rape he commits on his wife. (Mary Wollstonecraft 'Vindication of the Rights of Woman' **1792**). This was based on Hale's understanding of the law of matrimonial status at the time he wrote. Since then, the law affecting matrimony and the status of women has changed – trust law – recognises separate property for a wife after marriage, married women's property legislation, and the passage of divorce legislation **1857** in the UK and then in all states of Australia. The Criminal Law Consolidation Act of **1935** s. 48 (South Australia). (NB Windeyer) Marital exemption not part of the common law of Australia. It is noted that other courts have assumed Hale's proposition to be correct at common law and that immunity (from rape accusation in marriage) was relied upon. NB **1980** Legislation criminalised rape in marriage (Lake, 'Getting Equal' p. 93).
2. **1750** Mrs Elizabeth Montagu – she who effected blue stockings formed a society of men and women interested in learning. Blue stocking Circles grew – Hannah More, Catherine Graham, Mary Wollstonecraft, and Fanny Burney – Feminist Forerunners.
3. **1792** Mary Wollstonecraft's Vindication of the Rights of Women.
4. **1820's** Through the writings of Harriet Martineau et al, the colleges of the University of London allowed women to attend lectures in the late 1820's. Wikipedia says 1830 - through Birbeck College (Bloomsbury area) originally the Mechanics Institute – FOUNDER: Sir George Birbeck – physician and graduate of University of Edinburgh. But really welcomed from 1848.
5. **1832** First Reform Act (suffrage).
6. **1836** University of London established, though founded 1826.
7. **1841** The Church of England national Society founded Whitelands College Chelsea, London as a teacher training College for women.
8. **1843** Governess's Benevolent Institution founded by Rev. David Laing.
9. **1847** The Governesses Benevolent institution began a series of lectures primarily for governesses but open to other women.

10. **1848** One of Queen Victoria's Ladies in Waiting, a Miss Matilda Murray (wrote "Remarks on Education" 1847), raised money for a house in Harley Street that became the Queen's College for Women. It was more like secondary education. Among the first graduates were Frances Mary Buss (21) and Dorothea Beale (17). See UCL – "Survey of London" vol. 52, ch. 12. Run by a committee of patrons. Frederick Denison Maurice.
11. **1849** Bedford College UK first higher education college for women in the UK. Founded by Elizabeth Jesser Reid (née Sturch) social reformer and anti-slavery activist in London.
12. **1851** Frances Buss funded the North London Collegiate School for Ladies (a model for the later girls' Secondary schools.
13. **1852** Experimental: Portman Hall School off the Edgware Road. Barbara Leigh Smith and Elizabeth Whitehead (?) in control.
14. **1853** Elizabeth Clarke Wolstoneholme Ely purchased her own boarding school in Manchester, first in Boothtown then Congelton, Cheshire in 1867.
15. **1857** Divorce Legislation UK.
16. **1858** Beale developed the pioneer Girls' Public School Cheltenham Ladies College..
17. **1864** Contagious Diseases Act allow police to arrest women suspected of being prostitutes and incarcerate them (not the men) in an attempt to eradicate syphilis.
18. **1865** women admitted to exams for university – provisionally.
19. **1866** London Schoolmistress's Association formed in Emily Davies' house.
20. **1866** More power to police. Second Contagious Diseases Act. Prostitutes could be locked up for a year but not the men who frequented them.
21. **1867** Women admitted formally to exams for Cambridge University.
22. **1867** Second Reform Act franchised part of the Urban Working Class male in England and Wales.
23. **1867 – 1916** New South Wales- Junior and Senior Public Exams for entry through Sydney University
24. **1865 – 1868** The Taunton Commission.
25. **1868** The Taunton Report
26. **1869** Elizabeth Wolstenholme and Josephine Butler form the Ladies' National Association to repeal the Contagious Diseases Acts et al.

27. **1869** Watt Institution and School of Arts, a predecessor of the Heriot-Watt University admits women (Edinburgh) Also the Edinburgh Seven studied medicine at the University of Edinburgh – although were not granted degrees, their case ensured women able to study at that university in 1877.
28. **1869** University of London the first to introduce examinations for women.
29. **1869** Cambridge local Higher Exam served as a certificate of proficiency for teaching before regular degrees were opened to women.
30. **1869** Women granted the Municipal Franchise in England.
31. **1869** Girton College Cambridge opened as the first residential college for women in the UK. NB Emily Davies plus Barbara Leigh Bodichon.
32. **1870** Women could vote municipally and be elected to School Boards.
33. **1870** England – first Women’s Property Act. Women could keep her inherited and her own earnings but her personal property was still her husband’s. Not retroactive and limited to receiving property up to £200.
34. **1871** Newnham College opened at Cambridge for women. Women could sit exams from 1881 but results recorded separately. NB the first principal had not attended a secondary school though she had run a school in the Lake District. She was Anne Jemima Clough (1871 – 1892). NB2. Many young women had not access to attend secondary school so courses set to their individual levels – unlike Girton.
35. Last Quarter 19th century Girls’ Secondary Schools founded in the UK.
36. **1871** New Zealand – universities open to women.
37. **1872** The Tests Act opened Oxford and Cambridge to Dissenters and R.C.s
38. **1874** Association of Headmistresses founded by Miss Buss – president until 1894.
39. **1874** The London School of Medicine for Women founded.
40. **1874** The Manchester High School for Girls founded.
41. **1876** University College Bristol opened – open to men and women – links with the University of London.
42. **1877** The first Oxford woman completed her course – Annie Mary Anne Henley Rogers, though she had in 1873 topped the Oxford local junior and senior examinations.
43. **1878/9** The University of London awards degrees to women – the first in the UK to do so.

44. **1878** Lady Margaret Hall established at Oxford.
45. **1879** Somerville Hall established at Oxford.
46. **1879** NSW passed the first Married Woman's Property Act.
47. **1880** The first women to gain degrees in the UK – from the University of London (B.A.s)
48. **1880 NSW** Public Instruction Act. May 1880.
 - a. Withdrew state aid to denominational schools from the beginning of 1883.
 - b. Replaced the Council of education with the Department of Public Instruction
 - c. Introduced compulsory education for 6 to 14 year olds
 - d. The state entered the field of secondary education
 - e. Introduced three new types of school: superior public, high (fees and academic) and evening public schools (rudiments of education). NB1. Separate aboriginal schools because of parent protests and house to house schools for remote areas. NB2. 1848 first National schools.
49. **1881** Women allowed to take the Cambridge Mathematical Tripos (UK)
50. **1882** W.C.T.U Sydney formed.
51. **1882** Women admitted to Sydney University (the university was only Arts initially); granted in 1881. First graduates 1885 (First graduate from an Australian University was Julia Margaret Guerin from University of Melbourne 1883).
52. **1882** *Normanhurst, Ashfield established by Ellen Clarke.*
53. **1882** Married Women's Property Act (U.K.) gave married women the right to own property and protected women from husband gaining control of her property and from his creditors.
54. **1882** *Claremont, Randwick established by Janet Hyland.*
55. **1883** Queen Margaret College University of Glasgow. First and only college in Scotland to provide university education for women.
56. **1883** *Maybanke College Marrickville established by Maybanke Wolstenholme (later Anderson)*
57. **1884** Oxford opened its exams to women.
58. **1884** *The College for Girls opened (later Redlands) North Sydney by Elizabeth Liggins and Clara Arnold.*
59. **1885** England Criminal Law Amendment Act – Age of Consent raised from thirteen to sixteen for girls.

60. 1885 Abbotsleigh, North Sydney (later Parramatta then Wahroonga) founded by Marian Clarke.
61. 1886 England Repeal of the Contagious Diseases Act
62. 1886 Ascham Edgecliff established by Marie Wallis.
63. 1886 Woodstock (later Wenona) North Sydney established by Edith Hooke
64. 1887 Public sanction to the plan for a Women's College at Sydney University. Committee formed to raise money.
65. 1887 Kambala Rose Bay founded by Louisa Gurney and Augustine Soubeiran
66. 1887 Tara Parramatta established as St Ronans by Margaret Nelson.
67. 1889 Brighton College Manly established by Miss E. Milne
68. 1891 Womanhood Suffrage league of New South Wales formed.
69. 1892 Louisa MacDonald – first Principal, Women's College University of Sydney.
70. 1892 – The Teachers' Guild formed: NSW.
71. 1892 Divorce Amendment and Extension Act (NSW) meant a woman could divorce her husband on the grounds of desertion if 3 years gone.
72. 1893 NSW Married Women's Property Act brought into line with that of England.
73. 1895 South Australia gave the vote to women.
74. 1895 New England Girls' School Armidale established by Florence Emily Green.
75. 1895 NSW Public Service Act prevented married women from working in the public service.
76. 1896 The National Council of Women formed in Australia. NB Isobel Fidler. It had an Education section and standing committees.
77. 1897 Queen Victoria's Silver Jubilee.
78. 1897 Meriden Strathfield established by Jeannie Monckton.
79. 1899 The Early Closing Act. (Limited employment. Trading hours).NSW.
80. 1899 Women in W.A. could vote.

81. 1900 The New Shirley School Edgecliff established by Harriet Newcombe and Margaret Hodge.
82. 1901 The Women's Club of Sydney formed. First meeting in Women's College University of Sydney.
83. 1901 The death of Queen Victoria.
84. 1901 Federation of Australia.
85. 1901 Ravenswood Gordon established by Mabel Fidler
86. 1902 Commonwealth Franchise Act. Women granted Suffrage by the Australian parliament and NSW parliament and able to stand for parliament in Australia (not NSW which was later in 1918). Women over 21, though not indigenous (until 1962).
87. 1903 The Juvenile Smoking Suppression Act (NSW)
88. 1903 The State Children's Amendment Act (NSW)
89. 1904 The Infant's Protection Act (NSW)
90. 1905 Neglected Children and Juvenile offenders Act (NSW)
91. 1908 The Police Offences Amendment Act and the Prisoners Detention Act (NSW)
92. 1908 The Registration Act NSW Schools.
93. 1908 Roseville College Roseville established by Isobel Davies.
94. 1910 The Crimes (Girls' Protection) Amendment Act (NSW) – raised the age of consent from 12 to 16. Then Goldstein closed the Women's Political Education League. Work done??
95. 1911 SCEGGS Darlinghurst wanted to purchase Abbotsleigh and Marian Clarke demurred.
96. 1912 The Queens Club Sydney founded.
97. 1913 NSW Bursary Endowment Act introduced the intermediate Certificate and Leaving Certificate. Competitive exam oriented approach.
98. 1913 Frensham Mittagong established by Winifred West and Phyllis Clubbe
99. 1914 28 July to 1918: 11 November – First World War.
100. 1914 The feminist Club Sydney formed.

101. **1914** The Lyceum Club founded.
102. **1916** Public Instruction (Amendment) Act required all schools to be updated and inspected for efficiency. (NSW only?) NB Private schools under duress – economic costs and government regulation.
103. NB Other states followed change to age of consent and Goldstein wrote in The Christian Science Monitor in 1918 that “practically every reform has been initiated through the **political action of non-party women.**” P. 147 Lake.
104. **1916 8th November NSW** Association of Headmistresses of Independent Girls’ Schools formed at The Women’s Club. Seven founding schools: Abbotsleigh, Frensham, Kambala, PLC Croydon, PLC Pymble, St Catherine’s, SCEGGS Darlinghurst. Edith Badham Foundation President.
105. **1918** English women franchised – that is, women over 30 with property. Also German and Polish women.
106. **1918:** Women could stand for parliament in NSW.
107. **1919** A Board of Education established in the Anglican Diocese of Sydney to acquire and establish schools.
108. **1919** 28 June Treaty of Versailles. Woodrow Wilson.
109. **1920** 10th January League of Nations formed.
110. **1920** Women who had earned degrees at Oxford were able to graduate.
111. **1922** The Country Women’s Association formed. NSW.
112. **1925** [Queenwood Mosman established by Grace Lawrance and Beatrice Rennie](#)

Appendix C.

Shared Grave of Elizabeth Liggins and Clara Arnold (College for Girls later Redlands)1.



Shared Grave of Elizabeth Liggins and Clara Arnold (College for Girls later Redlands)2.

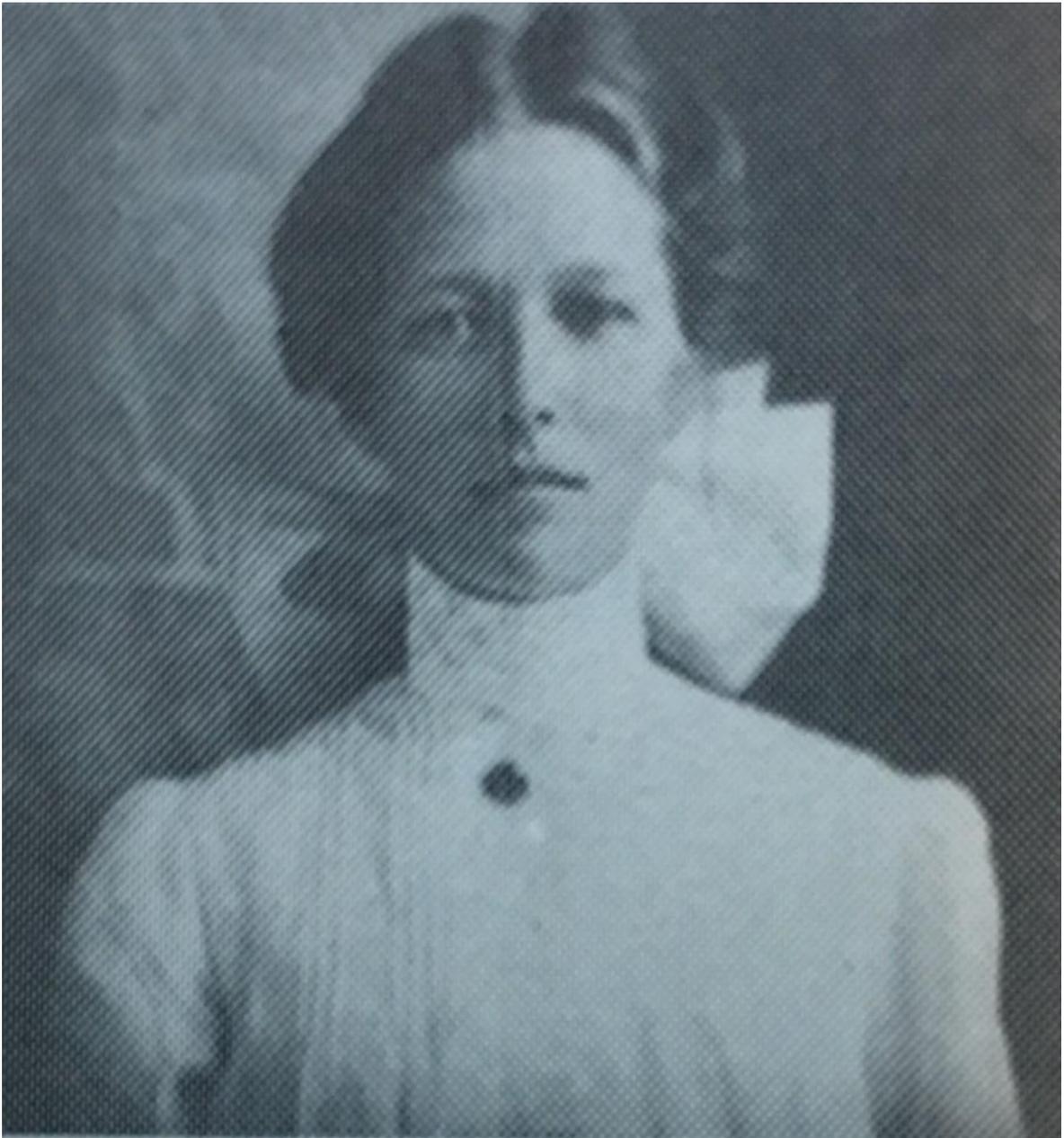


Appendix D

Grace Lawrance (1873-1932). Founder of Queenwood School, 1925. (Queenwood Archives)



Beatrice Rennie (1893-1971) Co-founder of Queenwood School 1925. (author's personal collection)



Ellen Clarke (1854-1933). Founder of Normanhurst 1882. (Abbotsleigh Archives)



Marian Clarke (1853-1933) Founder of Abbotsleigh 1885.

(Portrait by Tom Roberts) (Abbotsleigh Archives)



Jeannie Monckton (1859-1939) Founder of Meriden 1897. (pictured with her son Hilary).
Meriden's History: Visions of Parnassus Anne Cooke. P. 10)



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