

Susan PYE (1829-?)

Susan was aged 28, born about 1829, possibly in Suffolk. She was single, literate and a cook. She was discharged at the Quarantine Station, Impression Bay, on 9 April 1858 to Government House.

Another passenger on the 'Trade Wind' was John Pye. It is probable John and Susan were brother and sister. 'Trade Wind' records show they were both single, literate, and came from Suffolk. In the 1841 and 1851 England Censuses there are siblings John and Susan Pye living at Bridge Street, Pebmarsh in Essex. Pebmarsh is a small village having as its neighbour, Lamarsh, where other 'Trade Wind' immigrants originated from. This part of Essex borders Suffolk. John was an agricultural labourer and Susan was a silk throwster. A silk throwster twists silk filaments into raw silk, or who twists together two or more single threads of yarn of silk to make silk thread or yarn.

Susan was sponsored by Francis Smith of Hobart Town. At the time Susan arrived in Tasmania Francis was the Premier of Tasmania and Attorney General. In 1862 Francis was knighted and in 1870 he became the first Australian to hold office as a chief justice after having been a premier. Many of Francis' achievements included: he was an anti-transportationist, barrister, chief justice, crown solicitor, judge, Member of the Tasmanian Lower and Upper Houses, Premier, and solicitor general.



Susan was the cook for His Excellency the Governor Sir Henry Fox Young. In January 1858, Sir Henry was the first Tasmanian Governor to occupy Government House, Hobart, the beautiful neo-gothic Vice-Regal residence on the banks of the River Derwent where it stands today. Sir Henry was the Governor in Tasmania between 1855 and 1861 when on 10 December 1861 he departed for Melbourne and then on to England where he lived in retirement in London until his death there on 18 September 1870.

According to 'The Courier' on Tuesday 30 November 1858 (p3), on 10 September 1858 Frederick Ward alias Day, broke into the ground floor room of Susan Pye at Government House, through an open window and stole a watch, two brooches, a mantle and a skirt. Ward was employed on the Government House building on that day. When apprehended Ward had the brooches in his possession. Another man, Samuel Dobson, was also charged as Ward had passed other goods to him; he pawned the mantle and skirt. Both prisoners were found guilty and Ward was sentenced to four years' penal servitude and Dobson to six years. Obviously Dobson's crime of pawning the goods was viewed more serious than the stealing of them by Ward.

It is not known what happened to Susan after working at Government House. It is possible she left when Sir Henry retired as Governor and possibly returned to England although no records could be found for her.