

**AUSTRALIAN JOINT COPYING PROJECT**

**GARDINER FAMILY**

**Papers, 1814-65, 1959**

**Reels M395-96**

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**National Library of Australia  
State Library of New South Wales**

**Filmed: 1960**

## BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

John Gardiner (1798-1878) was born in Dublin, the son of John and Martha Gardiner. In September 1822 he married Mary Eagle and in the following month they embarked on the *Andromeda* on a voyage from Leith to Van Diemen's Land. They arrived in Hobart in May 1823 and Gardiner was granted 800 acres near Ross. In 1826-28 he was employed by the Bank of Van Diemen's Land. He then became a storekeeper in the Macquarie River district and later rented a farm at Lovely Banks.

In 1836 Gardiner went to the new settlement at Port Phillip and then on to Sydney. He bought 300 cattle and, together with Joseph Hawdon and John Hepburn, drove them overland to Gardiner's Creek near Melbourne. This was the first overland journey with stock and the three men are known as 'the Overlanders'. In 1837 Gardiner, his wife and daughter settled in Port Phillip. He bought a house at Gardiner's Creek and established a cattle station at Mooroolbark, east of Melbourne, where he was joined by his brother David and his cousin William Fletcher. In the following years he pursued business interests, becoming manager of the Port Phillip Bank. He left the bank in 1842 and lived at Mooroolbark. He and his brother returned to England in 1853. His wife, who had remained in Melbourne with his daughter, died in 1863 and Gardiner married his cousin Sarah Fletcher. He spent his last years in Leamington Spa.

John Gardiner had five siblings: Mary Eliza, who married Henry Brinton of Kidderminster, Agnes, who married J. Woll of Dublin, David Fletcher (b. 1796), Mary, who married Freeman Hardy of Belfast, and Sarah, who married John Cameron. Their mother, Martha Gardiner, was the daughter of William Fletcher, a shipowner in Cumberland, England. One of her sisters, Eliza Fletcher, married Paul Minnet, and they emigrated to Van Diemen's Land in 1824. Their daughter married Francis Hines, who in 1828 was found to have defrauded the Bank of Van Diemen's Land. Because of the family connection, John Gardiner resigned from the staff of the bank, although he was cleared of any wrongdoing. A granddaughter of William Fletcher, Sarah Fletcher, married John Gardiner in 1863.

Gardiner's first wife, Mary Eagle, was the daughter of George and Anne Eagle. Together with their three young sons, they also sailed to Van Diemen's Land on the *Andromeda* in 1822-23. George Eagle acquired land in the Macquarie River district. The Eagle Family maintained close relations with John and Mary Gardiner. Mary Gardiner and her daughter Anna Maria stayed with the Eagles when John Gardiner went to New South Wales in 1835-36. He returned quickly when news reached him that Edward Eagle (b. 1814) had disappeared, probably killed by bushrangers, and attempts had been made to poison the family.

Leslie J. Wilmoth (1881-1963), who grew up in Melbourne, was a geologist with a strong interest in Australian history. He wrote an unpublished account of the life of John Gardiner in 1937, while the manuscript filmed on reel M396 is dated 1959. At that time, Wilmoth was living in retirement in England. Another manuscript, on maritime exploration of Australia, was filmed by the Australian Joint Copying Project on reel M399.

## GARDINER FAMILY

### Reel M395

#### Letters

Sarah Gardiner [Dublin] to her sister Mary Gardiner (Workington), 6 July 1822: refers to John Gardiner not having given up idea of quitting his native country, perhaps for ever; his correspondence with Lord Bathurst about land in New South Wales; if he leaves he will be accompanied by Mr and Mrs Eagle and their family. (crossed)

Miriam Scott (Melbourne) to her mother Mary Hardy (Belfast), [25 May 1865]: property matters; mutual friends and relatives, including John Gardiner.

John Gardiner (Dublin) to his wife Martha Gardiner (Cockermouth, Cumberland), 13 June 1814: their temporary separation; his love for his wife; Martha's visit to relatives in Cumberland; 'your house affairs are conducted with the same preciseness as ever'; John Fletcher; her mother's illness.

Freeman Hardy (Ballinasloe, Co. Galway) to Mary Gardiner (Dublin), 30 Oct. 1822: refers to prevalence of fever in Tuam and Galway; David has disposed of his house. (crossed)

Martha Gardiner (Dublin) to her daughter Mary, 29 Dec. 1824: family and local news.

Sarah Cameron (Dublin) to her sister Mary Hardy (Belfast), 1824-53. (6 letters, all crossed)

#### New Testament

Title page of a copy of the New Testament, Dublin, 1782.

On the verso of the title page are the names of members of the Hardy Family, 1852-57, including Thomas Hardy who left Belfast on 9 November 1852 on a voyage to Melbourne.

### Reel M396

L.J. Wilmoth. The Gardiners of Gardiner's Creek, 1959. (manuscript, 161pp + appendices)

The manuscript contains maps and plans of properties at Port Phillip and photographs of miniatures of John Gardiner, John Gardiner (senior), Martha Gardiner, David Fletcher Gardiner, Mary Hardy née Gardiner and Mary Gardiner née Eagle. There are also photographs of John Gardiner in old age, John Gardiner and Sarah Gardiner née Fletcher, the site of Gardiner's homestead at Hawthorn, and a copy of a drawing of his home by his daughter Anna Maria Gardiner, 1838.