



THE MASONIC HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF NEW SOUTH WALES

PAPER NUMBER 32 (3 PART PAPER)

- Part 1. Introduction and Samuel Clayton the Freemason by Arthur Astin.
Part 2. Samuel Clayton the Silversmith by Mrs Penny Williams (Guest Speaker).
Part 3. Samuel Clayton and the Foundation of the Darling Mills at Parramatta.
also by Mrs Penny Williams as published in the *AUSTRALIANA*.

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Samuel Clayton - A Colonial Craftsman

For the last eighteen months I have been fortunate to have been collaborating with Mrs. Penny Williams, the Immediate Past President of the Silver Society of Australia - who is also a member of the Australiana Society. We have jointly been carrying out research into artists & craftsmen of early Australia who were Freemasons. Our research has complimented each others efforts in matters both artistic & Masonic. I am very pleased to have present Mrs. Williams, who has travelled from Turrumurra, as she is obviously far better qualified than I am to speak on colonial artistic matters.

Tonight, between the two of us, we will try to highlight one aspect of colonial times by concentrating on Samuel Clayton who, besides being considered probably the most proficient engraver in the colony, was also regarded as a competent silversmith, medal maker, miniaturist, printer, ticket maker and of course - Freemason.

When the ship "Surrey" arrived in Sydney in 1816 amongst the convicts who landed was an Irishman who, in his native land, was a highly regarded Installed Master of Lodge No 6 I.C. This man had been a skilled engraver in Ireland, and who, was not only to carry on his trade prior to obtaining his conditional pardon - but become one of the earliest & most successful men in his profession in the Colony. It is also my opinion that he was the driving force for many years behind the first stationary Masonic lodge in New South Wales N° 260 I.C. Samuel Clayton holds an important - but generally underrated standing, not only in New South Wales Masonic - but Australian Masonic history in general.

Samuel Clayton was the man in question, and, in Masonic terms - he was a regular Hiram Abiff or in modern parlance - multi-skilled - when artistic matters of the Macquarie era are considered. One feature of early colonial times, often overlooked by amateur historical societies such as ours, is the artistic field. Clayton, with his "numerous strings to his bow", plus his involvement with the early days of the Australian Social Lodge N° 260 I.C., is a typical case. That lodge, along with Lodge Leinster Marine N° 266 I.C.. had amongst their members many of the early colony's artists and craftsmen. Quite a number of these men were former convicts - frequently of the political variety from Ireland. Today, the results of their artistic endeavours are often so highly prized that many are kept in the vaults of banks for safe keeping.

