

*Transcript of [Letter to Rev. H. T. Stiles],
Sydney, Jan. 8, 1840*

Sydney, 8th January 1840

Dear Sir,

Some few days ago Mr George Cox called to speak to me concerning a subject upon which I promised to communicate with you. There is a native female at Mudgee who has been living in concubinage with a servant on Mr Cox's property, from whom she has now separated herself, or he from her, I do not exactly recollect which. Another man wishes to marry this woman; and the question proposed to me was whether the Marriage Ceremonies appointed by our Church could be legitimately used or not. I have great doubt whether a Christian may, without contradicting his or her profession, be united to an unbeliever; but besides this, I think it quite clear that our marriage service distinctly [assumes?] both parties to be Christians by baptism, or in name at least. This woman I hear, expresses no repugnance to baptism; but I apprehend it is a mere ignorant assent to what she knows little or nothing about; and which we therefore could not encourage. Mr Cox mentioned to me your desire to accompany him to Mudgee in April next; to which I could feel no objection if we can provide for the discharge of your duties. It occurred to me therefore that the desired object might possibly by God's Blessing be brought to pass if this poor ignorant being could be in the meanwhile placed under your instruction; and if found to be qualified might be baptised by you at Mudgee, and at the same time married. The questions therefore which I promised to ask were whether any safe place of lodging could be found for her in or near [Windsor?] where you might attend to her; and secondly whether you would kindly undertake this office, looking to the result which I have named.

As I am going tomorrow evening to the Hunter and shall probably be away a month, there would be no object attained perhaps by writing to me which might not be more directly accomplished by communicating directly with Mr Cox.

I remain Dear Sir
Your very faithful servant
W: G: Australia

[Transcriber's notes:

W. G. Australia is William Grant Broughton (1788-1853), Church of England Bishop of Australia. The Rev. H. T. Stiles is Henry Tarlton Stiles (1803-1867). Copy of original letter was obtained from the State Library of NSW and transcribed July 2005 by Rebecca Stubbs, Rosemary Hotchkiss and Cara Shipp of AIATSIS.]