

The Cottage Home

1879 – c. 1889

Other Names: • Cottage Home for Destitute Children

Details

The Cottage Home was established in July 1879 as a private boarding-out home in Newtown, Sydney. The Cottage Home had capacity for approximately 10 children and was managed by an older couple acting as house “father and mother”. It was established as a trial of the boarding-out “family system” as opposed to the institutional system of out-of-home care for children that was prominent at the time. The Cottage Home was the first boarding-out Home established in New South Wales.

The Cottage Home was initially a privately run Home established by Mrs. Marian Jefferis, a founding member of the Boarding-out Society and one of the first Board members of the State Children's Relief Board. At first the Home was funded primarily through private donations, however it had the support of the State Children's Relief Board. In 1884 the home was officially brought under the supervision of the Board following the placement there of two State wards.

The Home was intended to, as closely as possible, replicate a family atmosphere. In 1884 The Cottage Home is described as housing nine children (two of whom were state wards) from ages three to eleven. The cottage itself was stated as being small, consisting of three bedrooms, dining room, kitchen, and outdoor playroom and bathroom. The children in the Home were expected to assist with household duties before and after school, with boys responsible for cleaning boots and girls responsible for sweeping, folding laundry, making beds, mending clothes, assisting the house ‘mother’ with preparing meals and caring for the younger children, and assisting the boys with the boot cleaning.

The Cottage Home closed around 1889 due to the failing health of its founder Marian Jefferis. At this time there were 12 children living in the Home, which had re-located to Burwood some time after 1884.

More info

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- [State Children's Relief Board \(1881 - 1923\)](#)

Date: 1884 - 1889

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