



## John Campbell & Charlotte Dawson: Trials of Life and Law

*David William Otterman*

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# **John Campbell & Charlotte Dawson: Trials of Life and Law**

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This book tells the story of two people who came to Australia in the 1820s. John Campbell, a victim of the Highland clearances in Sutherland, Scotland, emigrated to Van Diemen's Land in search of a better life. Charlotte Dawson, a petty thief from Lincolnshire, England, was tried, convicted and sentenced to seven years transportation to New South Wales. The story follows John and Charlotte from cradle to grave, giving us a view of the conditions under which they lived, and consequently the trials and tribulations they endured. Their lives are influenced both beneficially and adversely by people they meet. Their marriage is fraught with unfortunate incidents and separation. John and Charlotte represent the thousands of immigrants and convicts who settled in Australia in the first half of the 19th century. Ordinary people, subject to the law, they often stumbled into circumstances which led to tragic consequences. This book therefore is not only a biographical account but also an historical sketch of early Australia as experienced through the lives of a free settler and a convict. Some aspects of the story are raw and confronting, but the facts are a part of that early Australian history and their lives. David Otterman is a graduate of McMaster University, Hamilton, Canada and a geologist by profession. This is his first work of historical biography.



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