



## Mary Sharpe

Date of Trial:	22 January 1817
Where Tried:	Lancaster Quarter Session
Crime:	Larceny
Sentence:	7 years
Est YOB:	1796
Stated Age on Arrival:	22
Native Place:	
Occupation:	Servant
Alias/AKA:	Mary Sharps, Mary Boyle/Bayle (m)
Marital Status (UK):	
Children on Board:	
Surgeon's Remarks:	A prostitute, shameless and mutinous
Assigned NSW or VDL	VDL

A Mary Sharpe appeared before the Salford New Bayley Sessions on July 1815 and was found guilty of stealing £25 in bank notes from one Charles Lee and sentenced to a year's imprisonment. It was the responsibility of the Governor of the New Bayley Prison keep her 'in safe custody and to hard labor for the space of Twelve Calendar and for doing which this shall be the said Governor's Warrant'.<sup>1</sup> It is very likely that this is the same woman who was tried at the Lancashire Quarter Session on 22 January 1817, and found herself back behind bars at the same prison but this time she was not let off so leniently.

Whereas Mary Sharpe late of Manchester in the said County, Singlewoman, hath at this Session been convicted of Felony. This Court doth therefore order and adjudge that the said Mary Sharpe be sent and transported to some part beyond the Seas for the Term of Seven Years pursuant to the Statute in such case make and provided.<sup>2</sup>

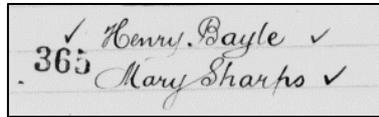
Mary Sharpe was by no means a model prisoner at Lancaster Gaol, where she was sent to await her transportation beyond the seas, as evidenced by one particular event recorded by the Governor on 21 April.

About Noon a Number of the female Convicts under Sentence of Transportation were discovered on the Top of the Dungeon Tower. When the Turnkeys went up they found Ruth Guest, Mary Sharp, M.A. Buckley and S. Robinson on the Roof. They had managed to wrench off three padlocks from the lower and upper Doors and had the Impudence to tell the Turnkeys that they had only forced their way through the Doors to see the fine prospect. Their Intention was to let themselves down from the Turret upon the Wall and then proceed to the Roof of the County Hall, where they might have gone down into the Halls, or have let themselves down by means of the Blankets, on the Terrace. However well inclined I may be to overlook this Transgression, some punishment is absolutely necessary, especially as they seem to boast of the Feat. As I have no means of separating them by solitary confinement, the only resource is Irons, which must be tried until I see some signs of sorrow for the rash Act.<sup>3</sup>

It must have been a great relief to the Governor (and to those women possibly still in irons) when he noted in his journal on 28 May 1817 that he had attended prayers, at which the prisoners were well behaved, and arranged for the removal to the ship *Friendship* at Deptford of the following female transports – Ruth Guest, Ellen Simkin, Ann Atkinson and Mary Sharpe.<sup>4</sup>

By late June all the 101 female convicts rounded up from around the country – from England, Wales and Scotland - had been taken aboard the *Friendship* which set sail on 3 July 1817.<sup>5</sup> Mary Sharpe, already shown to be quite a 'spirited' young woman, continued her wayward conduct on board, being described by Surgeon Cosgreave as 'a prostitute, shameless and mutinous'. After a long and tedious voyage, the *Friendship* reached Port Jackson on 14 January 1818 and from there Mary Sharpe was one of the fifty-three women who were transferred to Van Diemen's Land on the *Duke of Wellington*, which arrived at Hobart Town on 20 February. On arrival she was aged 22 and able to offer her services as a servant. It was also noted that she had been 'on the town'.

Mary was one of the group of *Friendship* women who, having arrived in Van Diemen's Land, were sent to Port Dalrymple, and it was there that she was married in 1819 to Henry Bayle [Boyle].<sup>6</sup> They were one of the many couples married in that year by Reverend Youl, and for whom no details other than their names were entered, at a later date, in the St. John's, Launceston, parish registers. Mary was mustered as the wife of Henry Boyle at Port Dalrymple in 1820 and 1821, and at Launceston in 1823.<sup>7</sup>

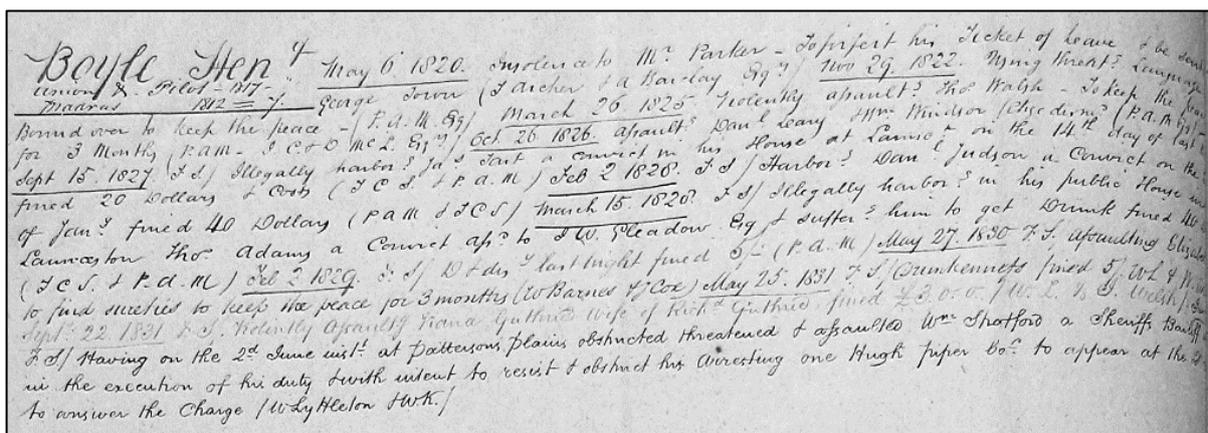


The Female Convicts in Van Diemen's Land database records the birth of a son Henry Bales [sic] in 1819, but no record, nor further information has been found for this child.

Henry Boyle had arrived at Port Jackson on 14 April 1815 on board the *Union* which had sailed from Calcutta. Prior to this he had been a soldier with the 84<sup>th</sup> Regiment based in India and had been tried (court martialled) at Madras on 5 October 1813 (offence not stated) and for which he was to be transported for seven years.<sup>8</sup> A listing of convicts arriving in the Colony other than from the United Kingdom describes him as 5/9¼ tall, with a fair complexion, brown hair and hazel eyes.<sup>9</sup> None of the records located for Henry Boyle give his age.

Initially Henry had been assigned to the bricklayers' gang in Sydney from which he had absented himself by August 1816. He was included in the list of those absconders for whom 'all Constables and others ... [were] ... to use their utmost Exertions in apprehending and lodging them in safe Custody'.<sup>10</sup> Henry was duly found and in 1817, at his request, was included in a roll of male convicts to be transferred on the *Pilot* for service in Van Diemen's Land.<sup>11</sup> Subsequently Henry's name appeared on a list of persons, referred to the Colonial Secretary in February 1824, claiming that their sentences had expired.<sup>12</sup> A Government Public Notice of 6 January 1825 announced that Henry Boyle, *Union*, had obtained his certificate of freedom.<sup>13</sup> Mary Sharpe's name was included in a group of Port Dalrymple people who, as per the Government Public Notice published on 6 August, had obtained their certificate of freedom in the previous week.<sup>14</sup> Meanwhile, in October 1824, Mr. Henry Boyle had been granted a license to 'Retail Spirits, Wine, and Beer' at the "Red Lion" public house, in Brisbane Street, Launceston, and this license was renewed to at least 1827.<sup>15</sup>

Turning to the Conduct Records for Mary and Henry we find that they had both found themselves in trouble.

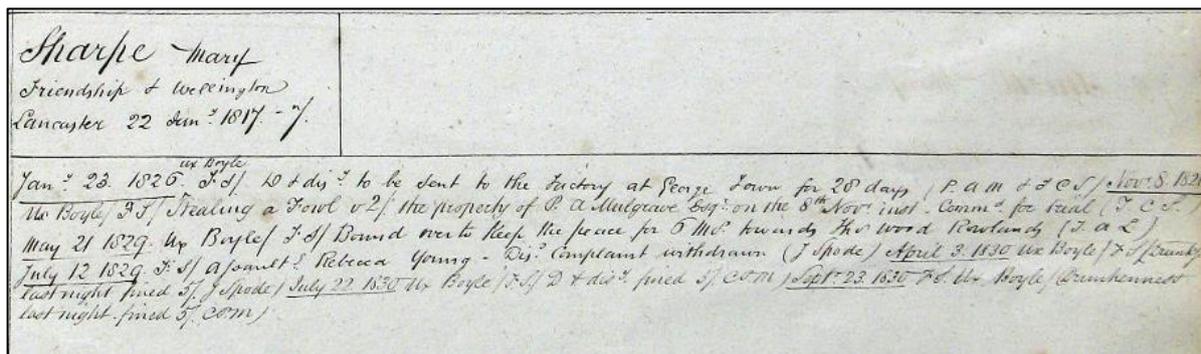


Henry's rap sheet opened with an entry for 6 May 1820 when he was charged with being insolent to Mr. Parker which cost him his ticket of leave and a trip to George Town. On 29 November 1822 Henry Boyle was found guilty of 'Making use of threatening language and bound over to keep the peace'. On 26 March 1825 he was again bound over, this time for violent assault, an offence that was also reported in the press.

Mr. Henry Boyle, a publican in Launceston, was charged with an assault on the person of Thomas Walsh; which having been proved, he was bound over to keep the peace for 3 months.<sup>16</sup>

Yet again Henry's apparent temper was evident in a charge on 26 October 1826 of assaulting Daniel Leary and

W. Windsor. However as the prosecutors did not appear when called the charge was dismissed.



It was in 1826 that Mary's first offence was recorded. On 23 January, (ux Boyle and free by servitude), she was charged with being drunk and disorderly and sent to the Factory at George Town for 28 days. She would have been an inmate at the same time as her fellow Lancastrian and shipmate Sarah Ogilvie (née Robinson) died in the Factory. At the end of the same year, on 8 November, Mary was charged with theft from the Police Magistrate and committed for trial. This case, heard at the Supreme Court, Launceston on 31 January 1827, attracted the attention of the *Hobart Town Gazette*.

Mary Boyle, the wife of Henry Boyle who keeps the Lion Public house, Launceston, was charged with stealing, on 8<sup>th</sup> of November, a fowl, of the value of 2s. the property of Peter Archer Mulgrave, Esq. the Police Magistrate. The ludicrous manner in which Antonio Fonsick, a Frenchman (Mr. Mulgrave's cook) gave his evidence, excited some laughter in the Court, which could scarcely be restrained. Mr. Gellibrand defended the prison. Verdict – *Not Guilty*.<sup>17</sup>

In fact the newspaper got the verdict wrong.

A singular error crept into our columns last week, in the case of Mary Boyle, who was stated to have been found *not guilty* instead of *guilty*.<sup>18</sup>

Mary was sentenced to two calendar months imprisonment in the Female Factory.<sup>19</sup> She would have been released at the end of April. Just over two months later the following notice appeared in the papers.<sup>20</sup>

**NOTICE.—The Public are hereby cautioned against giving Credit to my Wife, MARY BOYLE, as I will not be responsible for any Debts contracted by her after this Date. HENRY BOYLE. Launceston, June 25, 1827.**

Evidently all was not well between Henry and Mary, but whether they actually separated, while likely, has not been established. It was as 'ux Boyle' that she continued to be defined for her subsequent misdemeanours. Targeting yet another member of the Launceston elite, on 21 May 1829 she was brought before the bench and bound over to keep the peace for six months towards Thomas Wood Rowlands. What she had actually done to offend him is not stated, but the fact that he was a prominent Barrister, Attorney and Solicitor had not daunted her.<sup>21</sup> Only two months later Mary was charged with having assaulted Rebecca Young, but the complaint was withdrawn. Mary's conduct sheet was rounded off with three 1830 charges of being drunk/drunken and disorderly – 3 April, 22 July, and 23 September – for which she was fined 5/- on each occasion.

As a publican Henry Boyle extended bonhomie not only to his 'regular' customers, but also to the convict fraternity. On 15 September 1827 he was charged with having illegally harboured James Tate, a convict, in his house at Launceston for which he was fined 20 Dollars plus costs. Five months later it was convict Daniel Judson who was found at the "Red Lion" in January 1828 and the landlord was this time fined 40 Dollars plus costs. The same penalty was meted out two months later when, on 15 March, Henry Boyle was charged with illegally harbouring convict Thomas Adams in his public house and 'suffering him to get drunk'. Over the next two years Henry was had up variously for being drunk and disorderly, assaulting one Elizabeth Rowe, breaching the peace, and verbally

assaulting Vienna Guthrie. In a tit-for-tat action, in May 1831 Theophilus Fewtrill and John Crump were charged with assaulting Henry Boyle and fined 20 shillings and bound over; Henry Boyle was charged with drunkenness and fined 5s.<sup>22</sup> His conduct record concludes with a misdemeanour charge laid on 8 June 1832 – ‘having on 2<sup>d</sup> June at Patterson’s Plains assaulted, threatened, and obstructed W[illiam] Stratford, a Sheriff’s Bailiff while in the execution of his duty and with intent to resist and obstruct his arresting one Hugh Piper’. Henry was bound over to appear before the Quarter Sessions – the outcome of the hearing being unknown. The case may not have proceeded given that, at the September Quarter Sessions, William Stratford was himself convicted of stealing a gun and sentenced to 7 years transportation – and relieved of his position as bailiff!<sup>23</sup>

What happened to Henry Boyle after June 1832? From earlier references it would seem that he had been quite well off. In March 1826 he offered a reward of \$200 for anyone providing information leading to conviction of a person or persons who had shot a mare and colt, both belonging to him, on the highway near Mr. Philips’ farm.<sup>24</sup> He was the victim of a theft of twenty half-crown pieces and ten Spanish dollars in his dwelling house in January 1827.<sup>25</sup> At some stage he had acquired a block of land described in 1844 as ‘2r 14p, Launceston, originally Henry Boyle’.<sup>26</sup> In 1831 Mr. Sherwell advertised the opening of a Timber Yard in ‘those very eligible premises in Brisbane Street, formerly occupied by Mr. Boyle’, and three years later Mr. Henry Boyle informed the public that his ‘House and Premises in Brisbane Street, with excellent Garden, &c’ was to be sold by private contract.<sup>27</sup>

Noting that by 1842 there was another person with the same name in Tasmania, ‘our’ man was possibly the Henry Boyle fined 5s for being drunk in May 1839, and perhaps the man of that name found drunk and resisting arrest in March 1849.<sup>28</sup> He is not listed in the TAHO census listing for the 1840s and 1851.

Assuming a profitable return on the sale of his Brisbane Street premises, did he leave take his leave of Launceston, e.g. as the passenger Henry Boyle on the brig Mic-Mac which sailed on 23 May 1835 for Sydney?<sup>29</sup>

Finally – could he have been the subject of an inquest held on 29 April 1850 at the “Queens Head”, Perth, in the county of Cornwall, the verdict of which was as follows?

Henry Boyle ... for a long time, at the parish of Perth, in the County aforesaid, did labour and languish under a grievous disease of body – to wit, an ulcerated leg, and on the said 27<sup>th</sup> day of April ... Henry Boyle, by the visitation of God in a natural way, and not by any violent means whatsoever to the knowledge of the said Jurors, did die.<sup>30</sup>

It is perhaps significant that no age is given in either the inquest record or the entry in the Longford death register.<sup>31</sup>

219	Apalby	Henry Boyle	Male	Labourer	at the Mountain of the City	Charles Ashken	April 30	Richard ...
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It has been suggested that Mary Boyle (née Sharpe) died at Hobart on 9 March 1847. However, on checking the register, this death refers to a Mary Ann Boyle, aged six days.<sup>32</sup> Nothing had been found to suggest what happened to Mary following her last recorded offences in 1830, by which time she would have been about 34 years old. Did she marry again?

There were at least three other people named Mary Boyle living in Van Diemen’s Land between 1836 and 1842. However, by 1849, these three women were respectively Mrs. William Yeoman (1839), Mrs John Booth (1849), and Mrs. John Jones (1844).<sup>33</sup> As far as ‘our’ Mary Boyle is concerned, there is one marriage record that, speculatively, may be of interest. On 26 December 1846, a 49 year old Mary Boyle, house keeper and widow, married bachelor Joseph Eggleton, stated to be six years younger than the bride. The ceremony was conducted in the home of the groom, River Forth in the district of Port Sorell, by the Congregational Minister the Reverend William Waterfield.<sup>34</sup>

Number.	When married, and where.	Name and Surname.	Age.	Rank.	Signature and Description of Parties.	Name of Clergyman, Officiating Minister, or Deputy Registrar.	When registered.	Signature of Deputy Registrar or Officiating Minister.
10.	28 December 1846. At the house of Mr Joseph Eggleton, Green Hill in the Parish of St. Michael.	Joseph Eggleton Mary Boyle	19 17	Plumber House Keeper	Joseph Eggleton Bachelor Mary Boyle Widow	William Walker Congregational Minister	28 December 1846	William Walker Minister
<p>Married in the Home of Mr Joseph Eggleton according to the Rites and Ceremonies of the Congregational denomination by the Rev. William Walker Minister.</p> <p>This Marriage was solemnized between us                  { In the Presence of us }                  Joseph Eggleton                  Mary Boyle                  Joseph Henry                  Sarah Henry</p>								

Joseph, aged 19 and a brickmaker by trade, had been tried in Newington on 17 August 1821, removed from the Horsemonger Lane prison to the hulk *Leviathan*, and transported for seven years on the convict transport *Phoenix* arriving at Van Diemen's Land on 21 May 1822.<sup>35</sup> He was free by certitude in 1828. In 1838 (and again in 1839 and 1840) he was licensed as a carrier in the Richmond district.<sup>36</sup> Mary Eggleton, the wife of a labourer, died on 28 December 1872, the cause of death being dropsy and the death registered at Launceston.<sup>37</sup>

1925	28 Dec	Mary Eggleton	Mary Boyle	Robert's wife	Dropsey	William Walker Undertaker	28 Dec	At Home
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But, one Eggleton researcher has identified the Mary who married Joseph Eggleton in 1846 as Mary Boyle who arrived on board the convict ship *Roslin Castle* (4) on 25 February 1836.<sup>38</sup> This Mary Boyle had been tried at Antrim in October 1834, found guilty of stealing a watch, and sentenced to 7 years transportation. She was a widow, a housemaid/laundress by calling, and had on board with her a 5 year old infant.<sup>39</sup>

So it would seem that the fate of Mary Boyle (née) Sharp remains a mystery.

NOTES

- <sup>1</sup> *Manchester Mercury*, 1 Aug 1815, p.3. Ancestry, England & Wales, Criminal Registers, 1791-1892, England, Lancashire, 1815. Ancestry, Lancashire, England, Quarter Session Records and Petitions, 1648-1908, Lancashire, Order Books, 1815.
- <sup>2</sup> Ancestry, Lancashire, England, Quarter Session Records and Petitions, 1648-1908, Lancashire, Order Books, 1817.
- <sup>3</sup> FindmyPast (FMP), England & Wales, Crime, Prisons & Punishment, 1770-1935, Lancaster Gaol, Governor's Journal.
- <sup>4</sup> FMP, England & Wales, Crime, Prisons & Punishment, 1770-1934, Lancaster Gaol, Lancashire, Governor's Journals.
- <sup>5</sup> Free Settler or Felon? Convict Ship Friendship 1818, [https://jenwilletts.com/convict\\_ship\\_friendship\\_1818.htm](https://jenwilletts.com/convict_ship_friendship_1818.htm).
- <sup>6</sup> Tasmanian Archives and Heritage Office (TAHO), Launceston marriages 1819, RGD36/1/1 no 365.
- <sup>7</sup> Female Convicts Research Centre (FCRC), Female Convicts in Van Diemen's Land database, Convict ID: 3618.
- <sup>8</sup> The 84<sup>th</sup> Regiment of Foot was raised in 1793 in response to the French Revolution. In 1795 the 84<sup>th</sup> was posted to the Cape of Good Hope and from there was sent to Madras in 1798. Local operations moved to Bombay in 1807. Following the capture of Mauritius in 1810, the 84<sup>th</sup> was stationed for four years in Bangalore – 84<sup>th</sup> Regiment of Foot, Families in British India Society (FIBIS), [https://wiki.fibis.org/w/84th\\_Regiment\\_of\\_Foot](https://wiki.fibis.org/w/84th_Regiment_of_Foot).
- <sup>9</sup> Ancestry, New South Wales, Australia, Convict Indents 1788-1842, Convicts Arriving in the Colony (but not from the UK), 1807-1824. TAHO, Assignments, CON13/1/1 image 28.
- <sup>10</sup> *The Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser*, 3 Aug 1816, p.1 and 24 Aug 1816, p.1.
- <sup>11</sup> Ancestry, New South Wales, Australia, Colonial Secretary's Papers, 1788-1856. Altogether there were 280 convicts embarked on the *Pilot* – 175 who had just arrived per the *Almorah*, and 105 made up from various ships.
- <sup>12</sup> Ancestry, New South Wales, Australia, Colonial Secretary's Papers, 1788-1856. TAHO, CON13/1/3 image 28.
- <sup>13</sup> *Hobart Town Gazette*, 7 Jan 1826, p.2.
- <sup>14</sup> *The Hobart Town Gazette and Van Diemen's Land Advertiser*, 6 Aug 1824, p.1.
- <sup>15</sup> *The Hobart Town Gazette and Van Diemen's Land Advertiser*, 15 Oct 1824, p.3. *Colonial Times and Tasmanian Advertiser*, 29 Sep 1826, p.3. *The Hobart Town Courier*, 27 Oct 1827, p.1.
- <sup>16</sup> *Tasmanian and Port Dalrymple Advertiser*, 30 Mar 1825, p.3.
- <sup>17</sup> *Hobart Town Gazette*, 3 Feb 1827, p.2. See also TAHO, Court, SC32/1/1 images 225 and 227.
- <sup>18</sup> *Hobart Town Gazette*, 10 Feb 1827, p.2.
- <sup>19</sup> FCRC, Female Convicts in Van Diemen's Land database.
- <sup>20</sup> *Colonial Times and Tasmanian Advertiser*, 13 Jul 1827, p.4.



- <sup>21</sup> Thomas Wood Rowlands Esq was sworn in as a Barrister, Attorney, Solicitor and Proctor in April 1827 – *Hobart Town Gazette*, 28 Apr 1827, p.4.
- <sup>22</sup> *The Independent*, 1 Jun 1831, p.3.
- <sup>23</sup> *Launceston Advertiser*, 11 Sep 1832, p.293.
- <sup>24</sup> *Colonial Times and Tasmanian Advertiser*, 3 Mar 1826, p.4.
- <sup>25</sup> *The Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser*, p.3
- <sup>26</sup> *Launceston Examiner*, 30 Nov 1849, p.7.
- <sup>27</sup> *The Independent*, 12 Nov 1831, p.2. *The Independent*, 1 Oct 1834, p.3.
- <sup>28</sup> *The Cornwall Chronicle*, 25 May 1839, p.3. *Colonial Times*, 27 Mar 1849, p.2. It should be noted, however, that by December 1842 there was another convict in Van Diemen's Land by the name of Henry Boyle who had arrived per *Moffatt* (3) – TAHO, Muster Roll, CON28/1/1.
- <sup>29</sup> *Launceston Advertiser*, 21 May 1835, p.2.
- <sup>30</sup> TAHO, Inquests, SC195/1/27, Inquest no 2301.
- <sup>31</sup> TAHO, Longford deaths 1850, RGD35/1/19 no 219,
- <sup>32</sup> TAHO, Hobart deaths 1847, RGD35/1/2 no 1395. FCRC, Female Convicts in Van Diemen's Land database.
- <sup>33</sup> FCRC, Female Convicts in Van Diemen's Land database.
- <sup>34</sup> TAHO, Port Sorell marriages 1846, RGD37/1/5 no 553. The Reverend Mr. Waterfield had initially served at Port Phillip before being transferred to Van Diemen's Land in 1843 – *The Teetotal Advocate*, 31 Jul 1843, p.3.
- <sup>35</sup> Ancestry, UK Prison Hulk Registers and Letter Books, 1802-1849, Leviathan, Register 1801-1836.
- <sup>36</sup> *Hobart Town Courier*, 2 Nov 1838, p.3. *The Hobart Town Courier and Van Diemen's Land Gazette*, 6 Dec 1839, p.2. *The Courier*, 8 Dec 1840, p.2.
- <sup>37</sup> Ancestry, Australia, Death Index, 1787-1985. TAHO, Launceston deaths 1872, RGD/35/1/41 no 1925.
- <sup>38</sup> Ancestry, Clayton online family tree, <https://www.ancestry.co.uk/family-tree/person/tree/9094879/person/250114842423/facts>.
- <sup>39</sup> Ancestry, New South Wales, Australia, Convict Indents, 1788-1847, Annotated Printed Indentures, 1836.



## SOURCES

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Lancashire, England, Quarter Session Records and Petitions, 1648-1908  
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UK, Prison Hulk Registers and Letter Books, 1802-1849

#### FindmyPast

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### Other Websites

Families in British India Society (FIBIS), <https://wiki.fibis.org/>  
Female Convicts Research Centre, <https://www.femaleconvicts.org.au/>  
Free Settler or Felon? <https://www.jenwillets.com/>  
LINC Tasmania, <https://www.linc.tas.gov.au/>  
Tasmanian Archives and Heritage Office, <https://www.libraries.tas.gov.au/archive-heritage/>

### Online Newspapers

#### British Newspapers (FindmyPast)

Manchester Mercury

#### TROVE

Colonial Times  
Colonial Times and Tasmanian Advertiser  
Hobart Town Gazette  
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Launceston Examiner  
Tasmanian and Port Dalrymple Advertiser  
The Cornwall Chronicle  
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