

## JANE GRADY

(*Emma Eugenia*, 3, 1844)

by

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Although there is some uncertainty about aspects of Jane Grady's life – both before and after her arrival in Van Diemen's Land (VDL) as a convict in 1844 - it is fair to say that it was an unhappy one.<sup>1</sup> She had been convicted of theft at Liverpool, England, and sentenced to transportation for ten years in December 1842. Put aboard *Emma Eugenia*, which sailed from London in November 1843, she had been fortunate to survive the journey. While handcuffed at the time as a punishment for an assault upon the ship's chief officer, she had flung herself overboard in mid-ocean in an apparent attempt to take her own life and had been saved only by some quick-thinking on the part of the surgeon-superintendent who had managed to grab her by the hair and pull her from the water. Not surprisingly, she was a troubled and troublesome prisoner in the colony. Between her arrival in April 1844 and the completion of her ten-year sentence in December 1852, she was charged with offences - most of which were committed while she was drunk – on no fewer than *thirty-four* occasions. In 1848, she gave birth to an illegitimate child, the father of whom remains unknown. Just prior to her release in 1852, she married former convict, George Evans (*Agincourt*, 1844). Frustratingly, very little more is known about her. Did she manage to curb her drinking? Did she live a happy life with her husband, avoiding further trouble with the law? Did she have more children? Did she leave the colony? Unfortunately, there are no answers to these questions yet.

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This is Jane's story ...

She was born in County Limerick, Ireland, about 1819. Her mother's name was Ellen. She had three brothers - Henry, Patrick and Michael - and a sister, Sophia. There is no mention in her convict documents of her father.<sup>2</sup>

At some time before she reached adulthood, she had left Ireland and gone to live in England. The 1841 Census of England shows her as a twenty-year-old prostitute in Bridewell Prison, London, but that was not her first time in gaol. Since her arrival in England, she had fallen foul of the law many times and had been in prison on no fewer than *nineteen* occasions before her transportation to VDL in 1844.<sup>3</sup>

The offence for which she was transported took place in late 1842. A full account of her crime has not been located but the *Liverpool Mercury* of 16 December 1842 reported that two females

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<sup>1</sup> Conduct record: CON41-1-1, image 60; description list: CON19-1-4, image 17; indent: CON15-1-2, image 276 and 277; Police No: 348; FCRC ID: 4779.

<sup>2</sup> Birth year calculated from age at arrival in VDL per CON41-1-1, image 60

<sup>3</sup> CON41-1-1, image 60; indent: CON15-1-2, image 276 and 277; 1841Census: HO107, Piece 556, Book 29, Folio 5, Page 4 – via FCRC website at [www.femaleconvicts.org](http://www.femaleconvicts.org).

– one of them Jane and the other a woman by the name of Mary Ann Goulding - had been convicted of the theft of £4 ‘from the person’ at the Liverpool Quarter Sessions a few days earlier. Both had been sentenced to transportation for ten years.<sup>4</sup>

After the trial, they were held in a Lancashire prison for almost a year while awaiting a ship to take them to VDL.<sup>5</sup> Jane’s gaol report described her as ‘single’, adding that she was ‘insubordinate’ and ‘artful’, and that she was known to have ‘bad connexions’. The report added that she had been ‘19 times in prison’ previously. Mary Ann’s report described her as ‘impudent’. She had been ‘10 times in prison’.

Later, both women were taken to Millbank Prison, London, and put aboard *Emma Eugenia* which, with George Kenniwell as Master and 170 female prisoners, sailed from Woolwich on 30 November 1843. Responsible for the welfare of the convicts and the health of the crew was Surgeon-Superintendent John Wilson. The vessel reached Hobart on 2 April 1844.<sup>6</sup>

According to the medical journal which Wilson kept, there had been relatively little sickness during the voyage with the exception of ...

*... seven or eight who had been recently ill of Diarrhoea ... A reference to the Sick Book will show that the health of nearly all continued good from the day of embarkation in England to debarkation in Van Diemen’s Land, a space of upwards of five months, or one hundred & fifty-three days. Three only of the nineteen cases were accompanied by danger.<sup>7</sup>*

In his journal, Wilson made particular reference to an incident involving Jane. Describing her as ‘twenty-four, single, a prostitute’, he recorded that she had been admitted to the ship’s hospital on 9 March 1844 and remained there for ten days. He was uncertain about her illness but thought that whatever it was could probably be attributed to her attempt to take her own life by throwing herself from the ship in mid ocean some days earlier. He wrote:

*Jane Grady: This case is marked Dyspepsia in the absence of a more appropriate designation. The patient had had a very irregular life for several years and was nineteen times in jail before Conviction. Her present illness appeared to be the consequence of her jumping overboard half way between the Cape & Hobart Town. She had handcuffs on at the time as a punishment for striking & wounding the Chief Officer. About fifteen minutes afterwards I caught her by the hair about half an arm’s length under water.<sup>8</sup>*

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<sup>4</sup> *Liverpool Mercury*, 16 December 1842, per FCRC researcher Eileen Ball at [www.femaleconvicts.org.au](http://www.femaleconvicts.org.au); see ‘Mary Ann Goulding’ in FCRC d/base: ID 4778.

<sup>5</sup> Lancaster Prison: See ‘New South Wales and Tasmania, Australia Convict Musters 1806-1849’ at [https://www.ancestry.com.au/imageviewer/collections/1185/images/IMAUS1787\\_114238-00229?treeid=&personid=&hintid=&queryId=fad46265d7b976aca9436cb245b10f33&usePUB=true&\\_phsrc=Khe328&\\_phstart=successSource&usePUBJs=true&pld=419683](https://www.ancestry.com.au/imageviewer/collections/1185/images/IMAUS1787_114238-00229?treeid=&personid=&hintid=&queryId=fad46265d7b976aca9436cb245b10f33&usePUB=true&_phsrc=Khe328&_phstart=successSource&usePUBJs=true&pld=419683).

<sup>6</sup> Millbank Prison: <http://sites.rootsweb.com/~austas/emmasurg.htm> via [www.femaleconvicts.org.au](http://www.femaleconvicts.org.au); *Emma Eugenia*: <http://members.iinet.net.au/~perthdps/convicts/shipsTAS.html>.

<sup>7</sup> Medical Journal of John Wilson: <http://sites.rootsweb.com/~austas/emmasurg.htm> via [www.femaleconvicts.org.au](http://www.femaleconvicts.org.au)

<sup>8</sup> As for Note 8, above.

It is interesting that Wilson refers to the reason for Jane's hospitalisation as 'dyspepsia' but adds the words 'in the absence of a more appropriate designation'. It is clear that he suspected that her 'illness' was something more serious than 'dyspepsia' (or indigestion, as it is more commonly known today.)<sup>9</sup>

Although Wilson does not reveal why Jane had attacked the ship's Chief Officer, his references to her 'irregular life' and her 'nineteen times in jail' indicate that he had found her troublesome.<sup>10</sup> It is not surprising, therefore, that she 'had handcuffs on' when she threw herself overboard.

Although the medical journals of surgeon-superintendents such as Wilson varied in style and length, they usually included information such as sick lists, case histories of patients, date and cause of deaths (if any), lists of diseases or conditions treated and general remarks on a voyage. Often, they listed also any punishments meted out to offenders for unruly behaviour or ill-discipline during the long months of the voyages. The handcuffing of prisoners who had committed breaches, as in Jane's case, was common but other punishments included head shaving, solitary confinement (often in a small, damp storage hold below decks or in a hot, uncomfortable 'box' built for the purpose on the main deck), the use of straight-jackets, the imposition of a bread-and-water diet and the allocation of unpleasant tasks.<sup>11</sup>

Was Jane remorseful about her suicide attempt? Was she grateful to the surgeon-superintendent for rescuing her? There are no answers to these questions but, tellingly, there is no evidence that she ever tried to take her own life again. Wilson did not mention her again in his journal.

Before disembarkation at Hobart, Jane would have been required, as were all convicts, to strip to the waist for an examination so that a comprehensive description of her could be compiled. The 'description lists' commonly included details of the individual's age, height, complexion, hair, eyes, eyebrows, nose, mouth, forehead, chin, tattoos, scars or deformities. Normally, the individual's place of birth and trade or occupation were also added.<sup>12</sup>

Jane's description list shows her as twenty-four years old, five feet five and a half inches (about 167cms) tall, with a dark complexion, round head, square visage (or face), black hair, black eyebrows, hazel eyes, medium forehead, medium mouth, small nose and small chin. She was a native of Limerick, Ireland. Her convict trade was shown as 'housemaid'. It was noted that she had 'a downcast look' and a cut on her forehead.<sup>13</sup> (Was the cut on her head the result of her jumping overboard?)

A 'convict record' was also compiled for each prisoner. It consisted of a summary of the person's description and details about his or her history before arrival - such as the nature of

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<sup>9</sup> See Note 8, above.

<sup>10</sup> <http://sites.rootsweb.com/~austas/emmasurg.htm> via [www.femaleconvicts.org.au](http://www.femaleconvicts.org.au)

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.femaleconvicts.org.au/convict-ships/convict-ship-punishments>; see also <https://www.libraries.tas.gov.au/get-help/knowledge-base/Pages/kb-convicts.aspx>

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.findmypast.com.au/articles/world-records/full-list-of-australia-and-new-zealand-records/institutions-and-organisations/tasmania-convict-records-1800-1893>

<sup>13</sup> CON19-1-4, image 17.

the crime, trial details, sentence, marital status and statement or confession. During the term of the convict's sentence, the conduct record was updated regularly to include details about the his or her work in the colony, places of employment, names of masters and mistress, offences and punishments received, comments on good conduct, grants of emancipation and other relevant data.<sup>14</sup>

As well as a summary of her description, Jane's conduct record showed the name of the ship on which she arrived, its date of departure and arrival, the date of her trial at Liverpool and the length of her sentence. It showed her as a Catholic and that she was unable to read and write.<sup>15</sup>

However, the document is confusing. In one place, it states that she is 'single' but in another that she is a 'widow'.

The cause of this confusion appears to have been the 'convict indent' of *Emma Eugenia*. The 'convict indent' – or 'ship's muster', as it was more correctly known - was a list of the convicts on board, alphabetically by surname. It was a legal document drawn up by the Secretary of State or his representative after a decision had been made regarding which convicts were to be transported on a given vessel. The document commonly showed the full name of each convict, their age, the offence for which they had been convicted, the court in which they had been tried and the length of their sentence. Evolving over time, some later indents also included a physical description of each prisoner for identification purposes as well as relevant personal information about their lives before transportation.<sup>16</sup>

Jane's entry in the convict indent of *Emma Eugenia* reads:

*Police Number: 348; Name: Grady, Jane; Height: 5'5½"; Age: 24; Where Tried: Liverpool Boro QS, Lancaster; Sentence: 10 years; Native Place: Limerick; Married or Single: Wid; Children: 1; Read or Write: No; Relations: M. Ellen. B. Henry, Patr'k and Mich'l; 1 S Sophia – pr name Mary A. Grace; Offence: Stg £4 from the person; pr in Liverpool; 20 times in prison – 7 times 3 days one month, 14 days.*<sup>17</sup>

Although the abbreviations make the entry a little difficult to read, there can be no doubt about its content. Jane was allocated Police Number 348; she was five feet five and a half inches tall; she was twenty-four years old; she was tried at the Liverpool Boro(ugh) Q(arter) S(essions) at Lancaster, the county town of Lancashire; she was sentenced to ten years' transportation; she was born in Limerick (Ireland); she was a wid(ow); she had one child; she could neither read nor write; her M(other's) name was Ellen; her B(rothers) were Henry, Patrick and Michael; she had one S(ister), Sophia; her pr(oper) name was Mary A(nn) Grace; her offence was Stg (stealing) four pounds from the person; the pr(osecutor) or person from whom she stole

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<sup>14</sup> <https://www.findmypast.com.au/articles/world-records/full-list-of-australia-and-new-zealand-records/institutions-and-organisations/tasmania-convict-records-1800-1893>.

<sup>15</sup> CON41-1-1, image 60.

<sup>16</sup> [https://www.digitalpanopticon.org/Convict\\_Indents\\_\(Ship\\_and\\_Arrival\\_Registers\)\\_1788-1868](https://www.digitalpanopticon.org/Convict_Indents_(Ship_and_Arrival_Registers)_1788-1868)

<sup>17</sup> CON15-1-2, images 276 and 277.

was in Liverpool; she had been in prison twenty times for various lengths of time – three days on seven occasions, a month on another, fourteen days on another, and so on.)

But, was Jane *really* a widow? Could the indent entry be incorrect? Yes, it could be. Mistakes were sometimes made by the clerks who compiled the hand-written convict records.

However, it is possible that she was a widow. It is noteworthy that Mary Ann Goulding, the woman with whom Jane had been convicted in 1842, was also described in one section of her conduct record as ‘married’ and in another as ‘single’.<sup>18</sup> Goulding explained this anomaly by telling the authorities in Hobart that she had lived in a *de facto* relationship with a man by the name of Patrick Goulding in England before her conviction but had never married him. Hence, the confusion about her marital status. It is possible, therefore, that Jane had also been in a *de facto* relationship in the years before her conviction and that her *de facto* husband had died.<sup>19</sup>

Did Jane *really* have a child? That, too, is possible – but, if so, she must have been left it behind in England. There is no indication that the child was on board *Emma Eugenia* with her. Nor is there any evidence of this child in records in VDL.

Was Jane’s *real* name ‘Mary Ann Grace’? That seems unlikely. As it happens, Jane’s name is listed on the ‘convict indent’ of *Emma Eugenia* directly below that of Mary Ann Goulding and the notes about each have been over-written and are intermingled. They are difficult to read. Thus, the phrase ‘pr(oper) name M. A. Grace’ could apply to either of the women. It seems reasonable to suggest, therefore, that it was Mary Ann Goulding, rather than Jane, whose proper name was ‘Mary Ann Grace’. That seems more probable.<sup>20</sup>

In the colony, Jane was troublesome. In the years between her arrival in April 1844 and the expiration of her sentence in December 1852, she was charged with offences repeatedly – five times in 1845, twice in 1846, five times in 1847, twice in 1848, five times in 1849, seven times in 1850, five times in 1851 and three times in 1852.<sup>21</sup>

It is obvious that she had a serious problem with alcohol. Most of the charges brought against her related to her behaviour while drunk. Her drunkenness was usually accompanied by ‘disorderly conduct’ or some kind: ‘creating a disturbance’, ‘riotous behaviour’, ‘indecent’ or ‘abusive’ language or ‘insolence’. On several occasions, she was charged with being ‘out after hours.’ For most of these offences, she was punished by being sent to the Female Factory to serve terms which varied in length from a few days to six months, usually in solitary confinement or with hard labour. In total, she spent almost three years of her ten-year sentence in prison.<sup>22</sup>

Nevertheless, none of Jane’s offences were particularly serious. None were accompanied by assaults, violence or threats. Perhaps the most outrageous charge brought against her was ‘gross insolence and abusive language to her mistress’ on 27 January 1846. For that she was sentenced

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<sup>18</sup> Mary Ann Goulding’s conduct record: CON41-1-1, image 59.

<sup>19</sup> See ‘Mary Ann Goulding’ (ID: 4778) in FCRC d/base at [www.femaleconvicts.org.au](http://www.femaleconvicts.org.au).

<sup>20</sup> CON15-1-2, images 276 and 277.

<sup>21</sup> CON41-1-1, image 60.

<sup>22</sup> CON41-1-1, image 60.

to six months' imprisonment at the Cascades Female Factory, Hobart. She also served a three-month term of imprisonment at the Female Factory, Launceston, after being charged, on 24 December 1849, with 'having a man secreted in her bedroom'.<sup>23</sup>

On 16 July 1848, she gave birth to an illegitimate daughter whom she named Ann. The father's name was not recorded.<sup>24</sup> Sadly, nothing is known about the child. Did it survive infancy? As it might have been impossible at that time for Jane to raise the child herself, was she forced to offer it up for adoption?

On 29 July 1851, Jane was granted a ticket of leave and was able to find her own employment - providing that she remained in the area specified on the ticket. She would also have been obliged to report regularly to the local authorities and to attend church every Sunday, if possible.<sup>25</sup> Unfortunately, the ticket was revoked six months later following a charge of 'disturbing the peace' for which she was sentenced to two months' gaol with hard labour.<sup>26</sup> It was not restored.

However, Jane soon had two reasons to celebrate!

On 30 October 1852, the *Hobarton Guardian, or, True Friend of Tasmania* (Hobart), carried the news that she had been granted permission to marry former convict, George Evans (*Agincourt*, 1844):

*In accordance with the Act of Council of Victoria, No. 38, I hereby give notice, for the first time, that His Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor has been pleased to approve of the solemnisation of Matrimony between the under-mentioned parties: George Evans, 'Agincourt', 1844 and Jane Grady, 'Emma Eugenia', 1844, both residing at Evandale.*<sup>27</sup>

On 21 March 1844, George Evans, twenty-six years old, a widower and an engineer (or 'fitter-up') by trade, had been convicted of burglary at the Hereford Assizes, Herefordshire, England, and sentenced to transportation for fifteen years. It was his first conviction. Put aboard *Agincourt*, he was taken to Norfolk Island where he was disembarked on 9 November 1844. Two years later, he was transferred to VDL via *Lady Franklin*, arriving there on 30 December 1846. In the colony, his behaviour had been good and by 7 September 1852 had been recommended for a conditional pardon.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> CON41-1-1, image 60.

<sup>24</sup> RGD33/2119/1848, Launceston.

<sup>25</sup> ToL granted: *Hobart Town Gazette*, 29 July 1851. See also <https://www.nla.gov.au/research-guides/convicts/tickets-of-leave>

<sup>26</sup> ToL revoked: *Hobart Town Gazette*, 20 January 1852 – via FCRC website: [www.femaleconvicts.org.au](http://www.femaleconvicts.org.au).

<sup>27</sup> *Hobarton Guardian, or, True Friend of Tasmania* (Hobart), 30 October 1852.

<sup>28</sup> George Evans (*Agincourt*, 1844. (CON31-1-83, image 80; police number: 19242). See also [https://www.jenwillets.com/convict\\_ship\\_agincourt\\_1844.htm](https://www.jenwillets.com/convict_ship_agincourt_1844.htm) and [https://linctas.ent.sirsidynix.net.au/client/en\\_AU/names/search/results?qu=NI\\_NAME%3DGeorge&qu=NI\\_NAME%3DEvans&qf=PUBDATE%09Year%091839-1859%091839-1859&qf=NI\\_INDEX%09Record+type%09Convicts%09Convicts](https://linctas.ent.sirsidynix.net.au/client/en_AU/names/search/results?qu=NI_NAME%3DGeorge&qu=NI_NAME%3DEvans&qf=PUBDATE%09Year%091839-1859%091839-1859&qf=NI_INDEX%09Record+type%09Convicts%09Convicts)

The marriage ceremony was performed at St. Michael's Church of England, Evandale, on 1 November 1852. The church register described George as a thirty-five-year-old free man. Jane's age was shown as twenty-five but she was probably older six or seven years older than that. Her 'rank' was shown as 'p. holder' (or 'pass-holder') which signified that she was on probation and would soon become eligible for a ticket-of-leave if she maintained a stable work record.<sup>29</sup>

Within a month she was free by servitude. On 12 December 1852 – ten years to the day since her conviction in Liverpool - she was a free woman again.<sup>30</sup>

Ironically, however, Jane was probably in prison when that joyful date arrived because, on 4 November – just three days after her wedding – she was charged with drunkenness again and sentenced to three months hard labour at the Launceston Female Factory. Had she celebrated these happy occasions *too* enthusiastically!!

Gladly, that was to be her last recorded offence. On 3 February 1853 – probably before her release from prison - she was issued with a certificate of freedom, officially bringing to an end her years as a convict.

Jane was still only about thirty-three years old. Frustratingly, however, nothing more is known about her with certainty.<sup>31</sup> Was her marriage to George a success? There is no record of children of the marriage. Did she overcome her problem with alcohol? Did she leave the colony, as many others had done, to escape her convict past? Did she manage to live out the rest of her life in peace and happiness, avoiding further trouble with the law?

As yet, there are no answers to these questions.

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<sup>29</sup> Marriage: CON41; RGD37/1/11, No. 1221, Evandale): See 'pass-holder' at

<https://www.parliament.tas.gov.au/php/becomingtasmania/convictfreedom08.pdf>

<sup>30</sup> *Hobart Town Gazette*, 8 February 1853 via FCRC website: [www.femaleconvicts.org.au](http://www.femaleconvicts.org.au).

<sup>31</sup> CON41, *Hobart Town Gazette*, 8 February 1853 via FCRC website: [www.femaleconvicts.org.au](http://www.femaleconvicts.org.au).