

Mary Clay ID12962 per *William Bryan* 1833

Mary Clay aged 42

York Lent Assizes March 1833

Bigamy (2 indictments)

14 years transportation – 7 years each indictment

Gaoler Report – Character Bad – has led a very desolate disorderly life.

Series – HO 17

Piece Number – 119

Item Number – X R 53

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To The King's Most Excellent Majesty

The humble Petition of the undersigned inhabitants of Halifax and its vicinity in the County of York

Sheweth

That MARY CLAY a woman of about 45 years of age is now under sentence of transportation for the term of 14 years in the Castle of York for having been found GUILTY at the late Assizes there of having intermarried two several times, her former husband JAMES CLAY being then alive:

That the said Mary Clay was at a very early age left an orphan and when but sixteen years old she intermarried with the said James Clay who soon began to treat her with the greatest cruelty and in about two months after the wedding Clay enlisted into the Royal Artillery and went beyond the seas and there continued by the space of twenty two years during which time the convict heard nothing of him, save once, and that twelve years after he had left her.

That having no tidings of her husband and recollecting the ill usage she had experienced from him, the convict intermarried with one William Firth.

Soon after the second wedding her husband Clay came to England on furlow broke up her house, sold off the goods, and basely ill used her, and having taken her along with him about 50 miles from her place of abode (Halifax) he again deserted her.

That Firth finding the convict was a married woman abandoned her and immediately contracted another matrimonial alliance.

That the convict being reduced to a state of pauperism and begging intermarried with one Thomas Oxley.

That your Petitioner believes these are the only offences of which the convict has been GUILTY, and from the good and honest character she had there so far borne they have confidence and hope that without any very severe correction she may be brought deeply to lament the course she had pursued of which they believe her to be sincerely penitent.

Your petitioners therefore humbly pray your Majesty to take her case into your Royal consideration and to extend such mercy to her as to your Majesty under the circumstances may seem fit.

And your Petitioners will ever pray.

Ely Ratcliffe

Sarah Holt

Elizabeth Holt

And a further 52 signatures (of which 40 are female)

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