

# Matilda Ewer

(*nee Matilda Briggs, uxor Matilda Timms, Matilda Abbott*)

POLICE NUMBER 93 <sup>1</sup>	LITERACY read and write
TRIAL DATE 24 <sup>2</sup> July 1840	AGE ON EMBARKATION 26
TRIAL PLACE Cambridge Assizes	AGE ON ARRIVAL 27
OFFENCE breaking into a dwelling house and stealing a musical box and other articles	HEIGHT 5' 3"
SENTENCE life	COMPLEXION fresh
GAOL REPORT bad, 2 other charges of felony against her, absconding from her husband who is also bad, married 3 children	HEAD oval
PREVIOUS CONVICTIONS "2 other charges against me, one I was not tried"	HAIR dark brown, nearly black
SURGEON'S REPORT mess woman & good	VISAGE oval
ON THE TOWN no	FOREHEAD high
MARITAL STATUS married	EYEBROWS brown
CHILDREN 3	EYES hazel
FAMILY father Samuel Briggs, mother Alice Claydon, husband Jeremy Ewer; sister Alice Briggs	NOSE long
NATIVE PLACE Cambridge, England	MOUTH medium
TRADE ON EMBARKATION	CHIN round
TRADE ON ARRIVAL plain cook, housemaid, wash, iron	MARKS none

24 October 1801 Father Samuel Briggs married mother Alice Claydon at Dullingham, Cambridge, England.<sup>3</sup>

c1812 **Born** at Cambridge, Cambridgeshire, England; father Samuel Briggs; mother Alice Claydon.<sup>4</sup>

20 September 1812 **Baptised** at Dullingham, Cambridgeshire, England; father Samuel Briggs, mother Alice.<sup>5</sup>

2 June 1816 Sister Alice Briggs baptised at Dullingham, Cambridge, England; father Samuel Briggs, mother Alice.<sup>6</sup>

8 August 1828 **Married** Jeremiah Lagden Ewer at Ipswich, Suffolk, England.<sup>7</sup>

c1830 **Son** Thomas Ewer born at Cambridgeshire, England; died.<sup>8</sup>

c1832 **Son** Thomas Ewer born at Cambridgeshire, England; died.<sup>8</sup>

14 June 1833 **Son** Harry Lagdon Ewer baptised at Horseheath, Cambridgeshire, England; father Jeremiah Ewer; mother Matilda Ewer.<sup>9</sup>

1838 **Daughter** Catherine Ewer born at Newmarket, Cambridgeshire, England; father Jeremiah Ewer; mother Matilda Briggs.<sup>10</sup>

c1840 **Daughter** Emma Ewer born at Cambridgeshire, England.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>1</sup> TAHO, CON40/1/4 p.122 No.94 [image 101] (Matilda Ewer); TAHO, CON19/1/1 p.197 [image 102] (Matilda Ewer); ML, CY 1282 p.147 (Matilda Ewer); ML, CY 1197 p.150 (Matilda Ewer); ML, CY 958 p.441 (Matilda Ewer)

<sup>2</sup> Date given as 19 July 1840 on conduct record (TAHO, CON40/1/4 p.122 No.94 [image 101] (Matilda Ewer)), but as 24 July 1840 on Embarkation List (ML, CY 1197 p.150 (Matilda Ewer)) and Assignment List (ML, CY 958 p.441 (Matilda Ewer)).

<sup>3</sup> *Family Search*, IGI Batch No.M13810-1 Source Film No.1040467 (Samuel Briggs & Alice Claydon)

<sup>4</sup> TAHO, CON19/1/1 p.197 [image 102] (Matilda Ewer); VIC Death Certificate 1891/18644 (Matda Abbott); *Family Search*, IGI Batch No.C13559-8 (Mitilda Briggs)

<sup>5</sup> *Family Search*, IGI Batch No.C13559-8 (Mitilda Briggs)

<sup>6</sup> *Family Search*, IGI Batch No.C13559-8 (Alice Briggs)

<sup>7</sup> *The History of Matt*, 'Update on Ewer's in Colonial NSW' (Matilda Ewer)

<sup>8</sup> VIC Death Certificate 1891/18644 (Matda Abbott)

<sup>9</sup> *Family Search*, IGI Batch No. C13821-1, Source Film No.1040532 (Harry Lagdon Ewer)

<sup>10</sup> *Family Search*, IGI Batch No.096043-2, Source Film No.1438885 (Catherine Ewer.); *Family Search*, IGI Batch No.096082-1, Source Film No.1553523 (Catherine Ewer)

This biography supplements our book *Patchwork Prisoners* available from [www.researchtasmania.com.au](http://www.researchtasmania.com.au).

- 24 July 1840 Tried at the Assizes, Cambridge, Cambridgeshire, England indicted for breaking into a dwelling house and stealing a musical box and other articles; sentence transportation for life.
- 1841 Husband Jeremy Ewer and son Harry Ewer living in Canter Street, Fordham, Cambridgeshire, England; Jeremy aged 30, agricultural labourer, Harry aged 8.<sup>11</sup>
- 5 April 1841 Departed Woolwich, England on the *Rajah*.<sup>12</sup>
- 19 July 1841 Arrived at Hobart on the *Rajah*.<sup>12</sup>
- c24 July 1841 Upon arrival at Hobart, assigned to Dr Turnbull, Campbell Street, Hobart.<sup>13</sup>
- 2 November 1841 Detained at Cascades Female Factory on probation for 3 months then placed in the interior for having grossly misconducted herself whilst in the service of Dr Turnbull, vide memo of the Principal Superintendent, on direction from the Lieutenant Governor.<sup>14</sup>
- 31 December 1841 Mustered in the service of Mr Turnbull, New Norfolk.<sup>15</sup>
- 21 September 1843 Application for permission to marry Giles Timms<sup>16</sup> (free) sent to the Muster Master.<sup>17</sup>
- 27 September 1843 Application for permission to marry Giles Timms sent to the Secretary; approved.<sup>17</sup>
- 28 September 1843 Notice given of approval for permission to marry Giles Timms; Matilda in assigned service at New Norfolk; Giles free.<sup>18</sup>
- 28 October 1843 **Married** Giles Timms at St Matthew's Church of England, New Norfolk; Matilda aged 30, widow,<sup>19</sup> ship to colony *Rajah*; Giles aged 35, widower, wheelwright; witnesses R Holt and Hannah Holt.<sup>20</sup>
- 21 February 1845 Classified as a 3<sup>rd</sup> class probation pass-holder; gazetted 28 February.<sup>21</sup>
- 12 April 1845 Ticket of Leave application form issued at the Police Office, New Norfolk; fee 2/6; wife of Peter Simms.<sup>22</sup>
- 18 April 1845 Ticket of Leave memorial received at the Police Office, New Norfolk.<sup>23</sup>
- 20 or 21 April 1845 Ticket of Leave application forwarded to the Comptroller General.<sup>24</sup>
- 27 October 1845 Ticket of Leave granted; gazetted 28 October.<sup>25</sup>
- 6 May 1846 Conditional Pardon application form issued at the Police Office, New Norfolk; fee 5 shillings; wife of Giles Simms.<sup>26</sup>
- 11 May 1846 Conditional Pardon application received at New Norfolk Police Office and forwarded to the Comptroller General.<sup>27</sup>
- 29 September 1846 Conditional Pardon application form issued at the Police Office, New Norfolk; fee 5 shillings.<sup>28</sup>
- 3 October 1846 Conditional Pardon application received at the Police Office, New Norfolk.<sup>29</sup>

<sup>11</sup> NA, HO 107/73/6 1841 UK Census pp.8-9 (Jeremy Ewer & Harry Ewer)

<sup>12</sup> AJCP, ADM 101/63 *Rajah*

<sup>13</sup> ML, CY 1274 p.256 (Matilda Ewer)

<sup>14</sup> TAHO, CON40/1/4 p.122 No.94 [image 101] (Matilda Ewer)

<sup>15</sup> AJCP, HO 10/51 p.360 No.93 (Matilda Ewer)

<sup>16</sup> This is Giles Sims who was transported for 7 years on the *Waterloo* in 1835; tried at Southampton (Basingstoke) Quarter Sessions on 11 April 1834 for stealing a bag; married, 3 children, carpenter and joiner, aged 31, native place Basingstoke; Ticket of Leave 4 November 1841; tried at New Norfolk Quarter Sessions on 9 April 1849 charged with receiving; sentenced to 14 years' transportation; at New Norfolk in 1839 and 1849 (TAHO, CON31/1/40 p.116 No.1996 [image 118] (Giles Sims), TAHO, CON18/1/21 No.1996 [image 237] (Giles Sims)).

<sup>17</sup> TAHO, CON52/1/2 p.190 (Matilda Ewer & Giles Sims)

<sup>18</sup> *Hobart Town Gazette*, 29 September 1843 p.1077; 6 October 1843 p.1102; 13 October 1843 p.1119 (Giles Sims & Matilda Ewer)

<sup>19</sup> It is not known if husband Jeremiah Ewer had died by this time, and if he had died that Matilda knew of his death.

<sup>20</sup> TAHO, RGD37/1/3 1843/556 Hobart (Matilda Ewer & Giles Timms); TAHO, NS489/1/3 No.74 (Giles Simms & Matilda Ewer)

<sup>21</sup> *Hobart Town Gazette*, 28 February 1845 p.232 (Matilda Ewer)

<sup>22</sup> TAHO, POL517/1/1, 12 April 1845 (Matilda Ewer)

<sup>23</sup> TAHO, POL517/1/1, 18 April 1845 (Matilda Ewer)

<sup>24</sup> TAHO, POL517/1/1, 12 April 1845 (Matilda Ewer); TAHO, POL517/1/1, 18 April 1845 (Matilda Ewer)

<sup>25</sup> *Hobart Town Gazette*, 28 October 1845 p.1349 (Matilda Ewer)

<sup>26</sup> TAHO, POL517/1/1, 6 May 1846 (Matilda Ewer)

<sup>27</sup> TAHO, POL517/1/1, 11 May 1846 (Matilda Ewer)

<sup>28</sup> TAHO, POL517/1/1, 29 September 1846 (Matilda Ewer)

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6 October 1846	Conditional Pardon application forwarded to the Comptroller General. <sup>30</sup>
3 March 1847	Conditional Pardon application form issued at the Police Office, New Norfolk; fee 6 shillings. <sup>31</sup>
13 March 1847	Conditional Pardon application received at the Police Office, New Norfolk. <sup>32</sup>
15 March 1847	Conditional Pardon application forwarded to the Comptroller General. <sup>33</sup>
10 May 1847	Conditional Pardon application received at the Police Office, New Norfolk and forwarded to the Comptroller General. <sup>34</sup>
16 June 1847	Conditional Pardon recommended; gazetted 22 June. <sup>35</sup>
22 August 1848	Conditional Pardon approved; gazetted. <sup>36</sup>
9 April 1849	Husband Giles Timms tried at the Quarter Sessions, New Norfolk indicted for receiving one feather bed, £2 and other articles the property of Reuben Joseph; sentence 14 years' transportation, 2 years probation in the 3 <sup>rd</sup> Class at Port Arthur. Description: Protestant, read and write, married, wheelwright, 5' 4¼", light brown hair, light blue eyes, native place Basingstoke near Hampshire. <sup>37</sup> Husband Giles Timms at New Norfolk Gaol. <sup>37</sup>
17 May 1849	Husband Giles Timms at Port Arthur. <sup>37</sup>
30 December 1850	Husband Giles Timms at the Prisoners' Barracks, Hobart, probation pass-holder, not to reside in the New Norfolk district. <sup>37</sup>
8 September 1851	Husband Giles Timms charged with being out after hours from the service of William Ware, Harrington Street, Hobart; sentence 3 days in solitary confinement. <sup>37</sup>
c1852	Formed a <i>de facto</i> relationship with John Abbott <sup>38, 39</sup>
9 March 1852	Husband Giles Timms' sentence commuted to 7 years transportation. <sup>37</sup>
18 April 1852	Departed Launceston for Melbourne with John Abbott as steerage passengers on the steamer <i>City of Melbourne</i> ; Matilda holding a Conditional Pardon, ship to colony <i>Rajah</i> , John free by servitude, ship to colony <i>Atlas</i> . <sup>39</sup>
16 June 1852	Husband Giles Timms charged with misconduct in being out after hours from the service of W Collins, Liverpool Street, Hobart; sentence 7 days in solitary confinement. <sup>37</sup>
28 June 1853	Husband Giles Timms granted a Ticket of Leave. <sup>37</sup>
15 August 1854	Husband Giles Timms granted a Conditional Pardon. <sup>37</sup>
9 April 1856	Husband Giles Timms issued a Certificate of Freedom. <sup>37</sup>
24 September 1858	<b>Son</b> Harry Ewer Abbott, illegitimate, born at Argyle Street, St Kilda, VIC; father John Abbott, cattle salesman, aged 40, born Cambridgeshire, England; mother Matilda Ewer, aged 37, born Cambridgeshire, England; informant Jane Robertson, illiterate, resident of Argyle Street, St Kilda, VIC. <sup>40</sup>
23 July 1861	Daughter Catherine Ewer married Thomas Cottle at the residence of Mr John Abbott, Yan Yean, VIC; Catherine aged 23, spinster, resident of Yan Yean, VIC, born Newmarket, Cambridgeshire, England; father Jeremiah Ewer, merchant; mother Matilda Briggs; Thomas aged 34, bachelor, farmer, resident of Yan Yean, VIC, born

<sup>29</sup> TAHO, POL517/1/1, 3 October 1846 (Matilda Ewer)

<sup>30</sup> TAHO, POL517/1/1, 29 September 1846 (Matilda Ewer); TAHO, POL517/1/1, 3 October 1846 (Matilda Ewer)

<sup>31</sup> TAHO, POL517/1/1, 3 March 1847 (Matilda Ewer)

<sup>32</sup> TAHO, POL517/1/1, 13 March 1847 (Matilda Ewer)

<sup>33</sup> TAHO, POL517/1/1, 13 March 1847 (Matilda Ewer); TAHO, POL 517/1/1, 3 March 1847 (Matilda Ewer)

<sup>34</sup> TAHO, POL517/1/1, 10 May 1847 (Matilda Ewer)

<sup>35</sup> *Hobart Town Gazette*, 22 June 1847 p.565 (Matilda Ewer)

<sup>36</sup> *Examiner*, 26 August 1848 p.8 (Matilda Ewer)

<sup>37</sup> TAHO, CON37/1/5 No.1477 (Giles Simms)

<sup>38</sup> John Abbott was transported for 14 years on the *Atlas* in 1833; tried at Somerset Assizes on 29 March 1832 for stealing a watch from the person; single, groom, aged 22, native place Camarthen, Wales; Conditional Pardon 28 February 1842, Certificate of Freedom 15 July 1846 (TAHO, CON 31/1/2 p.92 No.578 [image 95] (John Abbott), TAHO, CON18/1/3 p.107 [image 59] (John Abbott)).

<sup>39</sup> TAHO, POL220/1/1 p.654 (Matilda Ewer & John Abbott)

<sup>40</sup> VIC Birth Certificate 1858/16293R (Harry Ewer Abbott)

- Moorwinstow, Cornwall, England; father John Cottle, miller; mother Elizabeth Pearce; witnesses sister Emma Ewer and Joseph Drarr<sup>41, 42</sup>
- 1862 Grandson John Cottle born at Morang, VIC; father Thomas Cottle, mother Catherine Ewer.<sup>43</sup>
- 1863 Daughter Emma Ewer married William Morgan Davies in Victoria.<sup>44</sup>
- 1864 Grandson William Harry Morgan Davies born at Tarnagulla, VIC; father William Morgan Davies, mother Emma Ewer Abbott.<sup>45</sup>
- 1864 Grandson Harry Ewer Cottle born at Yan Yean, VIC; father Thomas Cottle, mother Catherine Ewer.<sup>46</sup>
- 1865 Granddaughter Margaret Ewer Davies born at Tarnagulla, VIC; father William Morgan, mother Emma Ewer.<sup>47</sup>
- 1865 Granddaughter Margaret Ewer Davies died at Tarnagulla, VIC; aged 1 day.<sup>47</sup>
- 1866 Grandson Benjamin John Davies born at Tarnagulla, VIC; father William Morgan Davies, mother Emma Ewer Abbott.<sup>48</sup>
- 1866 Grandson William Harry Morgan Davies died at Tarnagulla, VIC; aged 2, father William Morgan Davies, mother Emma Ewer.<sup>49</sup>
- 1866 Grandson James William Cottle born at Morang, VIC; father Thomas Cottle, mother Catherine Ewer.<sup>50</sup>
- 1867 Granddaughter Emma Matilda Davies born at Newbridge, VIC; father William Morgan Davies, mother Emma Ewer Abbott.<sup>51</sup>
- 1869 Granddaughter Margaret Davies born at Newbridge, VIC; father William Morgan Davies, mother Emma Ewer Abbott.<sup>52</sup>
- 1871 Grandson William Harry Davies born at Tarnagulla, VIC; father William Morgan Davies, mother Emma Ewer.<sup>53</sup>
- 2 January 1874 **Married** John Abbott in the dwelling house of Reverend J Gardner, Lower Charles Street, Launceston; Matilda adult, housekeeper, widow; John adult, butcher, widower; witnesses Catherine Gardner and Catherine G Gardner.<sup>54</sup>
- 1882 Grandson Harry Cottle died at Melbourne Hospital, VIC; aged 17, father Thomas Cottle, mother Catherine Ewer.<sup>55</sup>
- 2 May 1886 Husband John Abbott died of gout of the heart at Yan Yean and Morang, VIC; aged 74, retired innkeeper, born St Peters, Caermarthen, Wales, 22 years in Tasmania, 34 years in Victoria; father Samuel Abbott, licensed victualler; mother Elizabeth; informant friend Henry Pierce, resident of Morang.<sup>56</sup>
- Death notice:  
*ABBOTT. – On the 2<sup>nd</sup> inst., at his residence, Separation, Morang, Mr. John Abbott, aged 74 years.*<sup>57</sup>
- 4 May 1886 Husband John Abbott buried at Yan Yean Cemetery, VIC.<sup>56</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> This name is difficult to decipher so may not be Drarr.

<sup>42</sup> VIC Marriage Certificate 1861/2643 (Thomas Cottle & Catherine Ewer)

<sup>43</sup> VIC Birth Record 1862/18408 (John Cottle)

<sup>44</sup> VIC Marriage Record 1863/1202 (William Morgan Davies & Emma Ewer Abbott)

<sup>45</sup> VIC Birth Record 1864/4319 (William Harry Morgan Davies)

<sup>46</sup> VIC Birth Record 1864/6108 (Harry Ewer Cottle)

<sup>47</sup> VIC Death Record 1865/5467 (Margaret Ewer Davies)

<sup>48</sup> VIC Birth Record 1866/4034 (Benjamin John Davies)

<sup>49</sup> VIC Death Record 1866/6149 William Harry Morgan Davies)

<sup>50</sup> VIC Birth Record 1866/12242 (James William Cottle)

<sup>51</sup> VIC Birth Record 1867/24535 (Emma Matilda Davies)

<sup>52</sup> VIC Birth Record 1869/18564 (Margaret Davies)

<sup>53</sup> VIC Birth Record 1871/12130 (William Harry Davies)

<sup>54</sup> TAHO, RGD37/1/33 1874/414 Launceston (Matilda Ewer & John Abbott)

<sup>55</sup> VIC Death Record 1882/12617 (Harry Cottle)

<sup>56</sup> VIC Death Certificate 1886/7886 (John Abbott)

<sup>57</sup> *Argus*, 3 May 1886 p.1 (John Abbott)

*Matilda Ewer*

- 26 October 1891 **Died** of influenza at Yan Yean and Morang, VIC; aged 79, retired lady, born Borough Green, Cambridgeshire, England, 38 years in Victoria, not known how long in Tasmania; married in Tasmania to John Abbott; children Thomas (deceased), Thomas (deceased), Henry Laydon Ewer (56), Catherine (54) and Emma (52); father Thomas Briggs, farmer, mother Alice; informant friend Hugh McKenna, resident of Morang.<sup>58</sup>
- 28 October 1891 Buried at Whittlesea General Cemetery, VIC.<sup>58</sup>  
Funeral notice:  
*ABBOTT. – The Friends of the late Mrs. MATILDA ABBOTT, relict of the late John Abbott, are most respectfully invited to follow her remains to the place of interment in the Whittlesea Cemetery.*  
*The funeral is appointed to leave her late residence, Morang, THIS DAY (Wednesday, October 28), at 2 o'clock.*<sup>59</sup>
- 1913 Daughter Catherine Ewer died at Northcote, VIC; aged 76, father Jeremiah Ewer, mother Matilda Briggs.<sup>60</sup>
- 1915 Daughter Emma Ewer died at Tarnagulla, VIC; aged 75, father William Ewer, mother Matilda Briggs.<sup>61</sup>

### **Notes**

- Matilda's second husband is likely to be the Giles Sims who died on 28 December 1858 of ulcus chrom caries at the General Hospital, Hobart; aged 56, born Hampshire, carpenter; informant C Seager, Steward and Wardmaster, General Hospital.<sup>62</sup>

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<sup>58</sup> VIC Death Certificate 1891/18644 (Matda Abbott)

<sup>59</sup> *Argus*, 28 October 1891 p.1 (Matilda Abbott)

<sup>60</sup> VIC Death Record 1913/14622 (Catherine Cottle)

<sup>61</sup> VIC Death Record 1915/7055 (Emma Davies)

<sup>62</sup> TAHO, RGD35/1/5 1859/1287 Hobart (Giles Sims)