



Orphan Profile:

Mary Jane Sands from Banbridge, Co. Down

Snapshot:

- Travelled with 14 girls from Banbridge Workhouse
- Arrived aged 19, on the Earl Grey.
- Employed by a Mr Birkinshaw of Sydney for £10 p/a.
- Moved to Singleton area within 6 months from arrival
- Married aged 19 to Edmund Bull a Bounty Immigrant and widower from Brading, Isle of Wight
- Lived at Waratah a coal mining suburb of Newcastle
- Also had a 60 acre garden at Whitebridge visited by many thousands of people.
- Strong links with the local colliery - sons engaged in mining related employment and daughters marrying miners from the area.
- 3 step-children, 31 step-grand children
- 10 children, 41 grand children
- Outlived husband by 4 years
- Lived to age 73, died at Charlestown in 1903



Mary Jane Sands

Photo: Newcastle Region Library
Image 163 001649

Early life in Ireland

Mary Jane Sands was born in Banbridge, County Down around 1829 to parents James and Eliza.

At some point Mary Jane entered the local workhouse, most likely the one sited at nearby Banbridge. Erected in 1841 on a five acre site to the west of

Banbridge, this workhouse was only recently demolished in 2003.

It is not known if Mary Jane entered the workhouse alone or with other members of her family. We do know from the immigration records that by 1849, both parents were deceased.

Voyage to Australia

The 671 ton barque Earl Grey, commenced its journey from London on the 28 May 1848, stopping further on at Plymouth to collect over 185 female orphans from the counties of Down, Antrim, Armagh and Tyrone.

Sydney, -with 200 Irish female orphans, all well.

After a journey of 125 days the Earl Grey arrived in Sydney Harbour on 6 October 1848.

The Earl Grey was the first ship of the Earl Grey scheme to depart for Australia. The ship finally left Plymouth on 3rd June with its *immigrants and merchandise*, Captain Robertson and the Surgeon-Superintendent Dr. Douglas, his wife and daughter.

The Immigration agent recorded Mary Jane's occupation as farmhouse servant; she could read and her religion was Church of England.

The ship *Royal George* reported speaking to the Earl Grey on July 13th, in lat. 6 46 S., long. 23 47 W (roughly off the eastern most point of Brazil, in the South Atlantic Ocean *bound for*

Post arrival, the ship's Captain, Matron and Surgeon-Superintendent lodged a complaint about the conduct of the girls on the journey, leading to a significant parliamentary enquiry and setting the wheels in motion to an early end to the Earl Grey Scheme.

NAME	AGE	CALLING	NATIVE PLACE	PARENTS
Sands, Mary Jane	19	Farm House Servant	Banbridge	James & Eliza, both dead

Extract of Mary Jane's immigration record from the Earl Grey Shipping List

Hyde Park Barracks & Service

Francis Merewether, the Agent for Immigration, and Chairman of the Orphan Immigration Committee advertised in the Sydney Gazette in October 1848 *'for persons desiring to obtain servants or apprentices from amongst the female orphans who have arrived in the Earl Grey'*.

Agent Merewether was at pains to note that that *'the girls would not be allowed to accept situations in inns or other houses of public entertainment.'*

Marriage at New Freugh

On 15 May 1849, Mary Jane, aged 19 married 33 year old widower, Edmund Bull.

Edmund was born in 1817 in Brading, Isle of White. He first married Frances Lock in a Wesleyan ceremony in Brading in December 1836.

Edmund and Frances emigrated as part of a bounty scheme with their four children on the ship "Herald" which departed Greenock in October 1844.

During the journey, their youngest child Phoebe died on the voyage in the Indian ocean 4 weeks prior to their arrival in Sydney on 9 Feb 1845. Just over 12 months later, Frances Bull herself died in Sydney in March 1846.

At the time, Edmund was working near Glendon on the River Hunter about three kilometers east of Singleton. He had obtained the position with a Mr. J. McDouall shortly after his arrival in Sydney.

McDouall, a pastoralist and chief magistrate for the Singleton area purchased the 1880 acre property in 1844 naming it New Freugh.

We know that Mary Jane was offered employment with a Mr Birkenshaw of Sydney at £10 for 1 year.

However, this employment may have been cut short as just over 6 months later, Mary Jane is recorded as getting married in a Church of England ceremony in the parish of Whittingham (Singleton).

By this act, Mary Jane's indentures would have been automatically cancelled

New Freugh appears to have been a large working estate with the Great Northern Road running through it and the Sydney to Brisbane railway line.

McDouall died in 1891 and the family began subdividing and selling off the estate from 1905 onwards. Since then, the homestead has apparently at some point fallen into the river and no structures remain.

After the death of Frances Bull (nee Lock), her sister Ann and husband George Gray emigrated to Australia in 1848 with their family to support Edmund. Tragically, both Ann and their youngest son James died at sea before arriving in Sydney.

It is believed that George Gray and his children proceeded north to join Edmund at New Freugh.

It was here at New Freugh that Mary and Edmund appear to have met, both parties recording the estate as their address on their wedding day.

George Gray was a witness to the marriage; his address was also given as New Freugh.

New Freugh Estate, Whittington, - where Edmund and Mary Jane met
Photos:TBC



To Waratah, Newcastle

Following their marriage, the Bull and Gray families moved to a place called The Folly (now a suburb of Newcastle called Waratah) where 9 of Mary Jane and Edmund's 10 children were born.

"Waratah and the Original Grants" by T A Braye, names both BULL and GRAY as early settlers who acquired land in 1854 when the original grantees of the land subdivided into 5 acre lots and sold their grants.

One of the Gray children writing in a diary in later life, noted in his journal..... *We arrived at a place then called The Folly now Waratah. The name given to an estate bought by a man named Charles Simpson, it was situated near the old Mill Paddock which was a government*

grant to a man named Platt. He worked the place by government men who were convicts. We and 2 other family being first to settle at Waratah.

Waratah, located 6 kilometers north-west of Newcastle, was established as a coal-mining town in the 1820s. The railway was extended through the town in the 1850s facilitating the growth of heavy industry including a major local employer, the Waratah Coal Company. Several of Mary Jane's sons were engaged in colliery employment and 2 daughters married miners local to the area.

Mary Jane's 6th child Allan George however, was born at Bull's Gardens, near Dudley about 12 kilometers south from Newcastle.

Establishing Bull's Gardens

At some point Edmund and his brother in law George Gray also acquired land further west, closer to the river.

On their 60 acre plot, "Bull's Gardens" was established by Edmund and Mary Jane around 1860.

The area was described as placed low, thickly timbered with scrubby bush. Its protection from the nearby ocean allowed several families to build orchards, including that of Peter Crebert, a German emigrant who was the first to establish a vineyard in the Hunter.

In 1875, a local paper reported with some awe *that pineapples are even now to be seen in a most flourishing condition in Mr. Bull's garden.*

That same year, it appears Edmund put the gardens up for auction, though for some reason the sale did not proceed. The property, known as 'Glen Eureka', was advertised as one of the most romantic and picturesque estates in the district with 60 acres of cultivated land and an eight seam of coal.

At the time it was *cultivated with fruit trees and vines and contained scenic grottos, glens and natural ravines.*

Edmund may have been prompted to sell-up on learning his neighbour Mr

Bevan had put a shaft on his land and struck a seam of good coal.

Aside from tending the garden, the family were involved in local orders such as the Oddfellows and the Band of Hope of which Edmund held the office of president. The latter organisation met fortnightly at the nearby school to promote lifelong abstention from alcohol among young people.

Both Mary Jane and Edmund remained the rest of their lives at Bull's Gardens. In 1901, the gardens were described in a Newcastle directory as being a *popular outing with fruit trees, little waterfalls, ponds, bird aviary and bushland settings.*

Around the turn of the century, the gardens received many thousands of visitors. Three of Mary Jane's sons were gardeners and following her death, son Allan took over property in 1903 and following his death in 1917, his son Norman continued to manage the gardens.

The family no longer hold the property, however the road along the perimeter is officially named Bulls Garden Road. What was originally a rough track for occasional bullocks, drays, and horses, the road is now a main thoroughfare with heavy traffic. Another road, Bulls Street in Mayfield is also named after the family.

GLEN EUREKA.

J. C. BONARIUS has been favored with instructions from Edmund Bull, sen., Esq., to positively sell by auction, at Twelve o'clock, on **MONDAY, November the 8th,** at the Great Northern Hotel, Scott-st., Newcastle.

One of the **PRETTIEST ESTATES IN THIS DISTRICT,** containing **Sixty Acres** of splendid **CULTIVATION LAND,** and an eight **SEAM OF COAL,** equal to any in the district.

GLEN EUREKA is one of the most romantic and picturesque Estates to be seen. It is situated within eight miles of Newcastle, is cultivated with all the choicest fruit trees and vines the country can produce. Its grottos, glens, and ravines, which are natural, are handsome, indeed, and must be seen for its beautiful scenery to be appreciated. The Coal on this estate is, without doubt, equal to any in the district. This has been opened out in one of the creek banks running through this estate, and is to be seen by intending purchasers. It has been pronounced by good judges that have inspected this seam of coal, to be equal to any in this district.

Intending purchasers inspecting this property, will be taken all over it.

Terms easy at sale. *f/h* 7393

1875 Advertisement for the sale of
Glen Eureka



Children:

Step Children

1. Fanny b. 1838 Shanklin, Isle of Wight, d. 1895 North Carrington (12)
2. Anne b. 1839 Shaklin, Isle of Wight, d. 1896 Wallsend (10)
3. Edward Edmund b. 1842 Shaklin, Isle of Wight, d. Mar 1921 Allworth, Wallaroba (9)

[Edmund's 4th child Phoebe b. 1844 died at sea in 1845]

Natural Children

1. William b. 1851 Waratah, d. 1909 Corduroy Bridge, Teralba (Not married) Colliery Engine Driver
2. Henry Ernest b. 1853 Waratah, d. 1902 Dudley (6)
3. Alfred b. 1856 Waratah, d. 1890 (1) Quarreyman died of burns
4. Phoebe Jane b. 1858 Waratah, d. 1938 Broadmeadow (9) married a miner
5. Sydney James b. 1860 Waratah, d. 1952 Parkes, Smelterer (7) age 92
6. Allan George b. 1863 Bull's Gardens, d. 1917 Bull's Gardens, Gardener, (3)
7. Albert b. 1865 Waratah, d. 1914 Rydalmere, Gardener, unmarried
8. Andrew Leonard b. 1867 Waratah, d. 1952 Hamilton, (5) Engine Driver
9. Ada Selina b. 1869 Waratah, d. 1939 Mosman (6)
10. Edmund Edgar, b. 1873 Waratah, d. 1941 Newcastle, (5) Gardener

Family Recollections of Bull's Gardens

In 1981, Alexander Anderson (1891-1982) a great-grandson of Edmund Bull and his first wife Frances Lock, wrote of Bull's Garden in his memoirs.

...Each year the descendants made a pilgrimage to the place. Last time I remember there were 80 of us taken there in two double-decked horse buses called Yankee Buses. The whole crowd of us were entertained to midday dinner in the huge home. I would be 5 years old. We children had our meal in a separate room. I can remember there was a large basin filled with bantam eggs - hard boiled - and we could have as many as we could eat, in itself, a novelty. There was a variety of fruits from the huge orchard - date plums a variety of persimmon, Japanese blood plums and Chinese raisins which were the twigs which we ate. I can remember they had a mattress filled with feathers from the birds shot for the pot.

Grandson Raymond Bull (1892-1980) recalled that in his youth *...there were no neighbours between the property and either Dudley or Charlestown. The bushland was alive with native animals*

and birds, particularly flying foxes which were a menace to gardeners and orchardists, flocking in their thousands at night to attack their orchards . To protect the orchards and make sure they could live off the land, at age nine, Raymond joined several families with his pea rifle on a roster system to exterminate them.

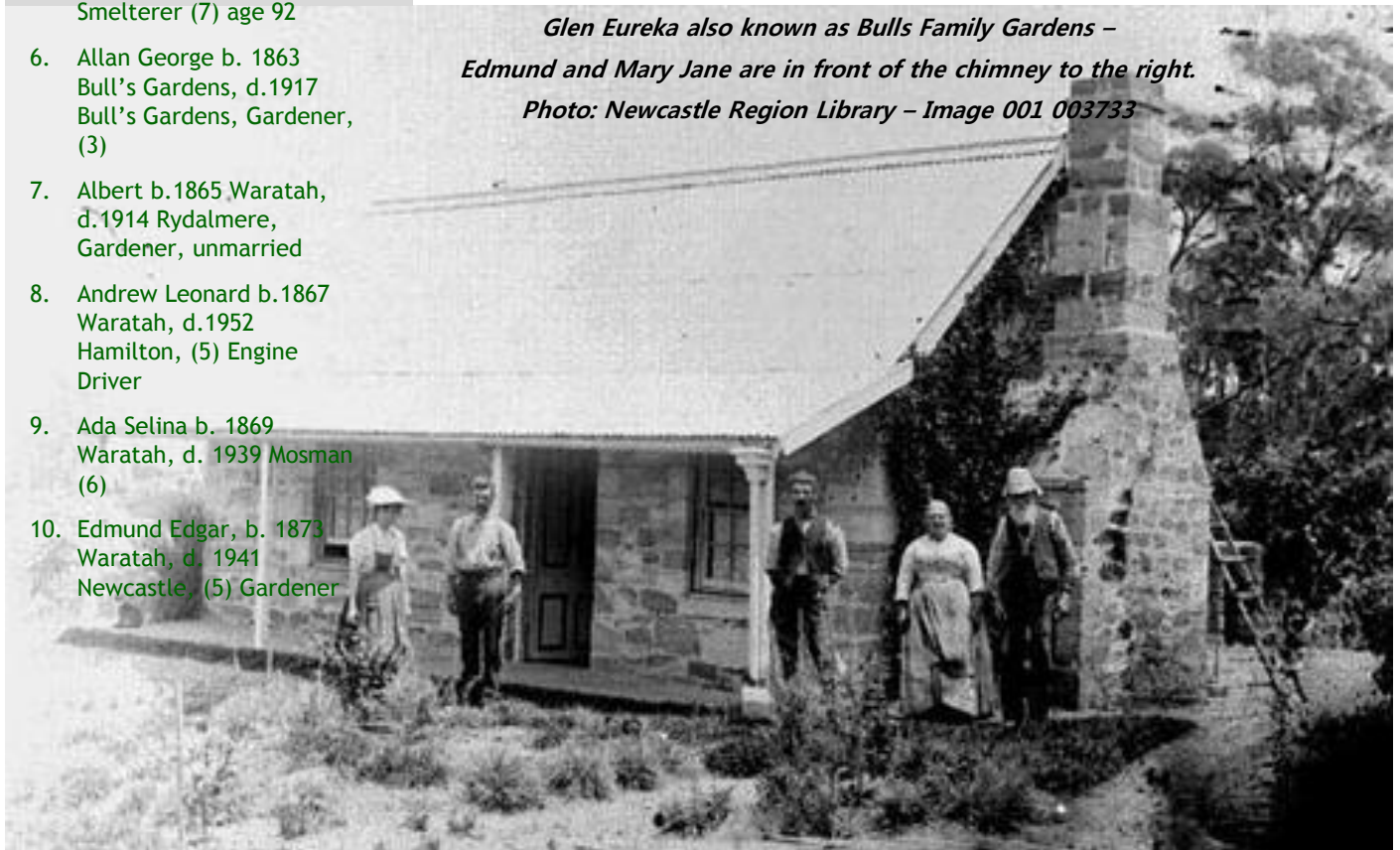
Raymond also recalled his grandfather imported cuttings from the world famous nursery of Childs in the United States, the plants arriving at the property in small split wood boxes.

The fruit grown included citrus varieties, apples, pears, apricots, peaches and mangoes. For years the produce was sold to Woods Brewery in Hunter Street.

It was part of a family tradition to open the gardens to the public - it was said by many visitors that the colour and arrangement of flowers was a sight to behold.

Of the soil, Mr. Bull commented: *It was first class when the family first came here; it has never changed.*

*Glen Eureka also known as Bulls Family Gardens –
Edmund and Mary Jane are in front of the chimney to the right.
Photo: Newcastle Region Library – Image 001 003733*





Headstone of Mary Jane Sands and Edmond Bull at Whitebridge Cemetery, Charlestown.
Photo courtesy of Lyn Goll

Notes:

Mary Jane's place of birth

The original shipping record states 'native place' as Banbridge, Co.Down. MJ's son Allan was the informant on her death certificate stating she was from Limerick. This is most likely a mistake. Other descendants on Ancestry refer to her coming from Cavan. Evidence is required via the birth certificates of Mary Jane's later children to corroborate Banbridge as her place of birth.

Mary Jane's age

The original shipping record states 'MJ was 19 years old on arrival meaning her DOB was 1830. She was recorded as being 78 on her death certificate equating to a birth year of 1825.

There were some orphans on the Earl Grey who had provided incorrect information about their age, name, and background, however Mary Jane is not believed to be part of this group. The local clergy were meant to have certified and vouched for the girls elected for emigration therefore it is more likely she was born in 1830.

Descendants Researching Mary Jane Sands [@2013]:

Lyn Goll
Lyngoll[at]gmail.com
Descended from Edmund Bull and first wife Francis Lock

Final Years

In 1890, Mary Jane's 3rd son Alfred died aged 31 of injuries sustained whilst working in a quarry at Lambton. When lighting a fuse, a spark made contact with the explosive powder causing fatal burns. Alfred was reported as being well-known in the area; his funeral being an exceptionally large procession.

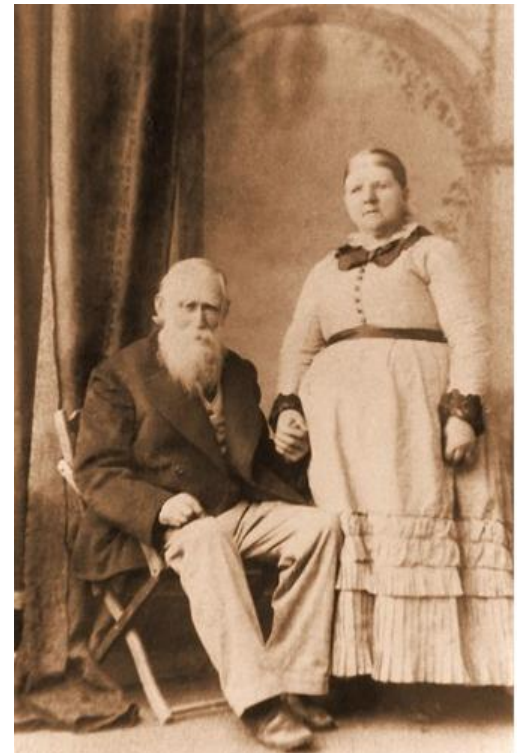
Husband Edmund Bull passed away at age 82 on 8 April 1899 from *senile decay and pneumonia*.

In May 1899, Mary Jane and her son Alan applied for probate on Edmund's will which set out an inventory and estate worth £550. Amongst the property was 10 acres of cultivated land under fruit and flowers, 52 acres of unimproved land, a 2 roomed house with detached kitchen, 20 head of cattle, 2 horses, 2 vehicles, farming implements and machinery. There were also some shares and £20 in the bank. The furniture was valued at £10.

Mary Jane signed with a cross, with the Commissioner for Affidavits noting that *the contents having been previously read over and explained to deponent - Mary Jane Bull had the appearance to me to fully understand the nature and effects thereof.*

In December 1902 Mary Jane's second son, Henry Ernest was found with a broken neck on Dudley Beach. His death certificate reported the cause as diabetic coma.

Mary Jane died 4 ½ years after husband Edmund on 6 November 1903 at Bulls Gardens and was buried with Edmund at Whitebridge Cemetery in Charlestown.



The cutest picture...Mary Jane and husband Edmund holding hands – pre 1899.
Photo: Newcastle Region Library – Image 163 001649



Visitors to Bull's Gardens dated approximately 1929.
The garden was still operating as a family venture via Mary Jane's sons and grandsons.
Photo: Lake Macquarie Council Library – Image 602

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Bull's Gardens, Whitebridge

Photo: Lake Macquarie Council Library, Image 4816