

MEET SARAH MASON

Sarah's most prominent features were her determination and defiant personality.

Sarah was 21 when the *Aurora* (2) docked in Van Diemen's Land on 10 August 1851. It had been her third conviction – the theft of a shawl and pair of boots from Mr Hancock of Manchester – that saw her transported to the other side of the world.

By 26 January 1852 Sarah had seen the inside of the Cascades Female Factory cells twice. Unfortunately for Sarah, the second visit occurred just as new regulations were being enforced – all prisoners sentenced to hard labour were to receive separate treatment for the first half of their sentence.

Sarah was caught talking and then singing, she took the duty of a watchwoman without permission and was punished three times for improper or disorderly conduct. Giving a piece of tobacco and leaving the yard without permission rounded out Sarah's offences during her twelve month stay.

Just three days after completing hard labour at the Female Factory, Sarah absconded from her place of assignment, resulting in twelve more months of hard labour. Sarah behaved well, until 'refusing to have her hair cut' got her three days in solitary and a month in the separate apartments.

Her next spell outside the Factory lasted less than a month before she absconded. This got her eighteen months in the Factory. Which was followed by another three months, and then 10 days solitary confinement for being absent from her accommodations.



By September 1856, Sarah was granted her Ticket-of-Leave and on 24 November 1856 she married James Sydenham. Apart from one incident when the couple were assaulted in 1857, what happened to Sarah remains uncertain – though a woman of the same name and birth year passed away in Hobart on 21 January 1873, aged 43.

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