

## *This is a Story from 'A Few Forgotten Women'*



*This story was written, in January 2023, as one of a series resulting from the 'A Few Forgotten Women Friday' collaborative research project, investigating the lives of girls from Leeds, Girls' Industrial School, Yorkshire.*

### **Mary Jane Haddock**

Mary Jane Haddock can be found in the 1861 census aged one years old, giving her an approximate birth year of 1860; this is the only census record with a possible match to a birth of approximately 1858 in Leeds. It is quite possible that Mary Jane's age was mistaken by a 12 – 18 months on admission. (4)

According to the 1861 census Mary Jane's father, Joseph Haddock, was a bricklayer's labourer and was born in Manchester approximately 1825. Her mother, Hannah, was born in Leeds approximately 1825 and all the stated children were also born in Leeds. Mary Jane's three older sisters; Sarah Ann, Mary Ann and Caroline, were all flax spinners and her brother John was a scholar aged eight years.

Mary Jane's age on the 1861 census is 1 years old which gives a discrepancy of her being 9 years old on her admission to the Industrial School in 1867; perhaps she was only 8 years old when she went to the schools.

The address on the 1861 census is Dalby Court, the following is the Enumerator route of the 1891 census and helps to locate the part of Leeds Mary Jane was living in, near Lemon Street and Charles Street. All that part of the North East Ward commencing at the centre of Lemon Street which crossed High Street to the centre of Charles Street ..... along the centre of High Street including: Lemon Street (east side) from High Street to Charles Street, **Dalbys Court**, from Charles Street to Lemon Street ..... The whole in the parliamentary Division of East Leeds. (5)

Dalby's Yard is not listed on GENUKI LEEDS: The streets of Leeds in 1853; however, by using the addresses of the Haddock's neighbours on the 1861 census and the enumerator route of the 1891 census the location of Dalby's Yard is off Lemon Street which was off York Street near Kirkgate in the centre of Leeds. (6)



The above photograph from Leodis [www.leodis.net](http://www.leodis.net) shows Lemon Street on 15th March 1908. This was part of the 'unhealthy' area of Leeds, poor sanitation was a major contributor to disease. (7) Even though this is 47 years after the census indicating when the Haddock family were living here it is likely that the area had been one of deprivation.

The yards of Leeds date back centuries and were often owned by cloth merchants and other traders to work in and provide housing, though the housing was overcrowded. (8)

In the mid-1800s, when Mary Jane was born, Leeds was overcrowded and the streets were very dirty; there were cholera epidemics in 1832 and 1849. It was not until 1899 when it was made compulsory for dwellings in Leeds to be connected to sewers; until then many dwellings using cesspits or buckets with the excrement emptied at night by the 'night soil' men. (9) This poor state of sanitation contributed to poor health and life expectancy was very low, for labourers this was only 19 years old and tradesmen and farmers could hope to live to 27 years old in 1840. (10)

Mary Jane appears to have been born into an underprivileged family in a poor area of Leeds. Her parents, Joseph a labourer and Hannah, married in 1843 and both were classed as minor of age, neither of them were literate, signing their marriage with a X mark. (11) The two witnesses also signed with a X and do not appear to have been directly related to either Joseph or Hannah. Hannah's residence is stated as 'Off Street', this was an actual street in central Leeds. (12) Hannah had given birth to Sarah Ann, Mary Jane's sister, the following year and then Mary Ann and Caroline within the next three years. One brother is mentioned on the 1861 census, John born about 1853 with Mary Jane born about seven years later. It is possible that other siblings had been born and died during these intervening years or were living elsewhere, such as in an institution; however, no records have been located.

It would appear that childhood was difficult for Mary Jane as ten years later she is included on the census return in 1871 at the Leeds Girls Ragged School, Windsor Street, aged 12 years. At the time of the census there were 46 girls living at the Ragged School aged from 7 – 14 years. This indicates that Mary Jane attended the Ragged School after the Industrial School, when the girls were transferred to the Ragged School from the Industrial School. It is unknown whether she returned to her family in the intervening years. (13)

The 1881 census does not reveal a Mary Jane Haddock who was unmarried and living in Leeds or born in Leeds. There are ten possibilities of a married Mary Jane within the date possible date range and born in Leeds. Of these ten, nine have been eliminated as the maiden names are not a match to Haddock.

The one possibility is of a Mary Jane Corkerill, born in Leeds about 1859 and living in Kirkgate with her husband, a butcher; however, it has not been possible to locate a marriage for a Haddock / Corkerill marriage. (14) However, a marriage record shows a Mary Jane Haddock marrying a Thomas Holden in Q2 of 1872; it would be expected that Mary Jane was about 14 or 15 years old at the time. This is entirely possible as the minimum age of marriage was not raised to sixteen years of age until 1929. It is possible that Mary Jane married Thomas Holden. (15)

The next research for Mary Jane is sadly a death record of Q4 in 1872 when she was 14 years old, a birth year is given as 1858 which is consistent. The death record gives the name as Mary Jane Haddock – had she married Thomas Holden or had her maiden name been given? The death was four to eight months after the possible marriage – had Mary Jane died in childbirth? (16)

It has not been possible to locate a record in the 1881 census of a child born in 1872 living without the parents – did the baby also die in childbirth? Nor has it been possible to locate Mary Jane Haddock / Holden in the 1881 census.

Mary Jane's sister, Mary Ann, died young aged about seventeen years; she was living at Lemon Street and was buried at Beckett Street Cemetery in April 1862 which is close to where she lived. (17)

Mary Jane's sister Caroline appears to have a better life than her sisters; in 1871 (18) she appears to have been a boarder with the Gill family and working as a spinner; ten years later she was living with her husband William Tiffany in Hunslet Leeds, they had no children living with them. (19)

It is possible that Mary Jane's brother, John, was a habitual criminal. Records show a John Haddock imprisoned in 1892, he had previously spent terms of between six and eighteen months between 1876 – 1879, and in 1881 seven years penal servitude. If this was Mary Jane's brother, he would have been aged 23 – 28 years throughout his criminal years until imprisonment. (20) (21)

It would appear that Mary Jane Haddock led a short and difficult life. It is not known why she was admitted to the Ragged School and Industrial School or what criminal activity she was involved in but there appear to have been contributing factors. She was probably the youngest of her siblings and her brother John was only seven years older; if he had led a life involving crime Mary Jane may have followed his example.

The family appear to have had limited income which would have been difficult with at least four children and the neighbours, who Mary Jane will have mixed with, were probably in the same situation. They lived in an area of Leeds that was crowded and most likely there was poor sanitation and public health which would add to the stresses of daily life.

It will never be known if Mary Jane had been born into different circumstances whether she would have had an easier life and not resorted to crime or whether she would have taken this path in any case.

***Judith Rhodes January 2023***

Image [Lemon Street - Leodis www.leodis.net](http://www.leodis.net)

References:

- 1 [West Yorkshire, England, Reformatory School Records, 1856-1914 - Ancestry.co.uk](#)
- 2 vol. 9b, pg. 348 [England & Wales, Civil Registration Birth Index, 1837-1915 - Ancestry.co.uk](#)
- 3 [Mary Jane Hadd\\*ck - Ancestry.com](#) [Search Results for Britain records | findmypast.co.uk](#)
- 4 [1861 England Census - Ancestry.co.uk](#)
- 5 [1891 Census Return - RG/12 3691 - 501 Leeds \(West Riding\) 2D North Leeds \(leedsindexers.co.uk\)](#)
- 6 [GENUKI: The streets of Leeds in 1853, Yorkshire \(West Riding\)](#)
- 7 [Lemon Street - Leodis www.leodis.net](#)
- 8 [A to Z of Leeds: How the city's yards took on a new lease of life | Yorkshire Evening Post](#)
- 9 [A History of Leeds - Local Histories](#)
- 10 [Life in Leeds during the 1840s - Thackray Museum of Medicine](#)
- 11 [West Yorkshire, England, Church of England Marriages and Banns, 1813-1935 - Ancestry.co.uk](#)
- 12 [GENUKI: The streets of Leeds in 1853, Yorkshire \(West Riding\)](#)
- 13 [1871 England Census - Ancestry.co.uk](#)
- 14 [1881 England Census - Ancestry.co.uk](#)
- 15 [Record Transcription: England & Wales Marriages 1837-2005 | findmypast.co.uk](#)
- 16 Vol. 9B, pg. 394 [Record Transcription: England & Wales Deaths 1837-2007 | findmypast.co.uk](#)
- 17 [Mary Ann Haddock \(1844-1862\) - Find a Grave Memorial](#)
- 18 [1871 England Census - Ancestry.co.uk](#)
- 19 [Record Transcription: 1881 England, Wales & Scotland Census | findmypast.co.uk](#)
- 20 [Ancestry.co.uk - England & Wales, Criminal Registers, 1791-1892](#)
- 21 [England & Wales, Crime, Prisons & Punishment, 1770-1935 Image | findmypast.co.uk](#)