

This is A Few Forgotten Women Story



This story was written, in March 2023, as one of a series resulting from the 'A Few Forgotten Women Friday' collaborative research project, investigating the lives of women who appear in the 1901 census for St. Joseph's Inebriate Reformatory, Ashford, Middlesex and Farmfield Reformatory for Inebriate Women, Horley, Surrey.

Margaret Bates's Story

Margaret Bates appears in the 1901 census as being an inmate at the St. Joseph's Reformatory, Ashford, Middlesex. The information registered for Margaret Bates is that she was a widow aged 37 years old, occupation, laundress, born in Brentford Middlesex. A picture of Margaret is shown in the UK Registers of Habitual Criminals and Police Gazettes. In 1908 It described her as being Margaret Bates, alias Mary Ann Casey, no fixed abode, not employed, age 45, height 4ft, 10 half inches., complexion fair, hair is fair and turning grey, blue eyes, a straight nose and oval shaped face, she has scars over left eye and on bridge of nose, occupation-ironer. Date of conviction 8th March 1912, she

was committed to a certified inebriate reformatory for three years, court convicted at County of Middlesex, Brentford, Isleworth.

In October 1891 Margaret Bates aged 28 years of 9, Queens terrace, Isleworth was charged having been disorderly at high street Brentford, she said she was drunk- P.C T said that she was not drunk but only disorderly. Several previous convictions were proved against her, and she was fined 5 s.

Margaret Bates aged 30 years of no fixed abode, married, was charged on remand with having been in the possession of a silver Geneva watch supposed to have been stolen. This was the case in which prisoner sought the assistance of the police to make a pawnbroker give up her watch, she was subsequently unable to account for how she got the watch and was taken into custody, when she stated that she had it from man named Callaghan, enquiries were made, this man could not be traced at the address she gave. Margaret was given a bad character by the police, but she was discharged with a caution.

On Saturday 14 October 1899 in the Middlesex and Surrey Express Newspaper, shows an article referring to a Mary Ann Mahoney, of no fixed abode, and a widow, was charged at Brentford on Tuesday with having been drunk and disorderly at High Street Southall, on the previous day P.C Ford deposed to seeing the prisoner singing whilst lying on the ground. He requested her to go away twice, but she returned each time and repeated the performance. Witness added that the name given by the prisoner was false, and that she was well known to the police. Mr Marshall said the prisoner's name was Margaret Bates and she was a confirmed inebriate. A fine of 5s was imposed.

Another injustice for Ireland – Margaret Bates, who gave the name of Mary Ann Mahoney, a widow, of no fixed abode, was charged at the Brentford court with being drunk and disorderly at High-street, Southall. – P.C Fond said that he saw the prisoner lying on the ground drunk and singing. He requested her to go away, and did so, but returned and repeated her conduct. The accused had given a wrong name- Mr. Marshall the court missionary, said that her proper name was Margaret Bates and that she was a confirmed inebriate. – Fined 5s.

On 25 October 1899, Margaret is again in the newspaper. this time the Middlesex independent, headline Enemy – Margaret Bates, alias Maloney, Enemy brought up on remand charged with drunkenness. Three police officers were called to prove as many convictions as possible for drunkenness within the present year, third being on the 10 October. When she again got drunk, and this made fourth convictions within twelve months and qualified her for a sojourn in an inebriate home. The chairman told her that she had a great enemy, drink. They wanted to turn her into a respectable woman, and to that end she would have to go to a home for two years.

Margaret makes another appearance, she is charged again, this time in the Middlesex Independent, on the 25 November 1903, it states Margaret Bates, 41, a laundress of no home, was charged with having been found drunk at London Road, Isleworth. P.c. 793T said he found prisoner in a ditch in London-road on Thursday night. He had to take her to the station in the ambulance. Fined 5s

From Prison to Police court – Mary Ann Maloney, alias Margaret Bates, 36 years laundress of no fixed abode, was charged with having been drunk and disorderly at Kew Bridge- Road, Brentford. – P.c 443(Drewery) said the Prisoner was creating disturbance outside the star and Garter and a crowd had assembled. Prisoner was helplessly drunk, and the ambulance had to be used to take her to the station. Prisoner had only just come out of prison admitted this, she would be remanded a week.

Acton Gazette October 1903- An Old Offender – Margaret Bates 40 years old a farm hand from 5, North- Street Isleworth, was charged with being drunk and disorderly at High Road Chiswick: further, with damaging a drinking mug to the value of 1s. P.C 753 T arrested the prisoner and conveyed her to the station. P.S.76T said he oversees the Chiswick police station, Margaret Bates who had behaved in a disorderly manner throughout the evening. Asked for a mug of water. He filled the mug and handed it to her, she immediately emptied the water out, and smashed the mug on the ground, doing damage amounting to 1s. Assistant-Gaoler Goris observed that the prisoner had not been to the court since May, he said that it is rather a long time for her to be away from here, added and started laughing, in which Margaret Bates a rough-looking woman, joined. Mr Lane ordered her to pay for the damage, or in default seven days.

Another remand for Margaret Bates 40, a laundress of no fixed abode was charged on remand with being drunk and disorderly at Brentford, as stated in the Middlesex Independent on the 9 January 1904, this was the prisoner's fourth appearance on the same charge, she is having been remanded with a view to sending her to an inebriate's home. A list of previous convictions was formally proved, and prisoner was again remanded.

Middlesex Chronicle 9 June 1907- reported.

Margaret Bates 43 years, a laundress of no fixed abode, she was charged with having been drunk and disorderly at Rose and Crown-passage Isleworth, she admitted the charge. The P.C said he heard a noise in the passage and found Margaret Bates creating a disturbance. When he went over to her, she behaved like a mad woman. Prisoner said it was the first drink for six months. she had worked at Feltham and would leave the neighbourhood if they gave her another chance. There were 29 previous convictions, and Inspector Eyre's said the prisoner had been in a home for three years, she was sent to prison for a month with hard labour.

Margaret Bates alias Mary Ann Casey's early life, born 1863/64, Brentford, there are no birth records that I can find relating to a Margaret Bates born 1863/64 born in Brentford, Middlesex, only a Margaret Casey born 1863 Brentford, also shows a baptism record in Tipperary Ireland, her parents Patrick Casey born Tipperary Ireland, Mother Catharine Casey, Sibling Joseph Casey. In the 1881 census Margaret Casey is living with her parents and brother Joseph aged 14 years old at 1 Barnes Cottage, Brentford, she is 18 and working as a domestic. Census 1901. Margaret married to Thomas Davitt in Brentford Middlesex in 1901 she is living with Thomas and two children Patrick and Katie at 6 Pottery Road Brentford, she is working as a laundress. Thomas Davitt dies in 1904, although I am not convinced this is the same woman.

Records show that a Margaret Keating born 1863 married a Robert Bates born 1862, Brentford, Marriage 1886 Brentford Middlesex. Robert Bates died in 1897 Brentford, Middlesex, could this be Margaret Bates alias Mary Ann Casey,

who is reported in all these newspaper articles as the prisoner, or is this the Margaret Bates In the 1891 census that states Margaret Bates born Brentford, Middlesex married, wash laundress, aged 28 who is a prisoner at Holloway Prison, however this cannot be confirmed as there is not enough evidence to prove this is the Margaret Bates alias Mary Ann Casey.

© Donna Mills March 2023

Sources

St. Joseph's Inebriate Reformatory, Ashford, Middlesex RG13 1171 folios 12-13

UK, Registers of Habitual Criminals and Police Gazettes, 1834-1934

British Newspapers – Middlesex and Surrey 14 October 1899, Middlesex Independent 25 October 1899, 25 November 1903, Acton Gazette 2 October 1903, Middlesex Independent 9 January 1904, Middlesex Chronicle 9 June 1907