



# Diaspora Stories

Ancestor's Name: JANE LEARY

Place of birth (if known): SKIBBEREEN

Your Name: (DR) JUDITH CONSTABLE

Contact (optional): j.constable@ozemail.com.au

From the Shipping Lists Public Records Office Melbourne, Victoria:

JANE LEARY arrived Port Phillip aboard the "Eliza Caroline" 31<sup>st</sup> March 1850, having departed Plymouth Harbour on 31<sup>st</sup> Dec. 1849.

Her family thought she was only 14; however the shipping list states that all the girls were 18. She was R.C. & illiterate.

Jane never knew her parents names, nor did she know how old she was.

She said she thought she was going to America with her brothers, but had been separated from them in the confusion on the wharf & found herself alone on a ship to Australia. Her priest in Australia tried for many years to trace her brothers, without success. Jane was an orphan in the Skibbereen Workhouse, when she was sent to Australia under the Earl Grey scheme.

She was contracted for 6 months as a servant to a Mrs Rice in Geelong. On 9<sup>th</sup> May 1852, she married Thomas Constable, an English "exile" transported for 7 yrs in 1846 (the year he arrived in Oz).

Their eldest child, Mary Jane, died by drowning when they were living in a tent on the Ballarat goldfields. She was 2½ yrs old. They had 8 more children, Eliza, Rebecca, Thomas William (my great grandfather), Mary Jane the 2<sup>nd</sup>, Ruth, Mercy, Jennifer & Arthur Samuel.

According to Thomas' Family Bible, written in 1899, Jane was born Skibbereen either 1836 or 1839. Names of her parents recorded as "unknown" on her death certificate in 1914. Jane & Thomas eventually became respected pioneers, living most of their married life in the town of Cobden in Western Victoria & on a small farm nearby. They eventually retired to Geelong. They have hundreds of descendants, including teachers, musicians, writers, artists, lawyers & doctors.

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I agree to submit this story for publication by Skibbereen Heritage Centre.

Signed: Constable

Date: 18<sup>th</sup> July 2018

I think Jane was a very intelligent woman.

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Jane Leary (O'Leary) &  
husband Thomas Constable.

Photo taken in Cobden or Geelong, Victoria  
about 1870's.

They had 9 children, including my  
great grand father, Thomas William Constable.

Jane is buried with her husband  
in the Pioneer (Old Eastern) cemetery in  
Geelong, Victoria, Australia.