

Edward Fahey, 8556, *Vimeira*

Researched by Marcia Watson

Edward Fahey was a labourer and Private in the 25th Regiment, 1st Battalion. He was born about 1842, and according to Prison Registers, his father, Martin Fahey, lived in Ballingrow, Co. Mayo, Ireland. However, it may be a misspelling of Ballinrobe, where his aunt Margaret Fahey lived.

Why Edward joined the army is unknown. Perhaps he was given a choice of going to prison or joining the army. He certainly does not seem to enjoy army life. He was court-martialled four times.

1. Private Edward Fahey, 25th foot, convicted by Court Martial at Athlone on 14 February 1861, theft, 56 days hard labour.¹
2. Private Edward Fahey, 25th foot, convicted by Court Martial at Gibraltar on 13 November 1861, theft, absent &c, 56 days hard labour.²
3. Private Edward Fahey, 25th foot, convicted by Court Martial at Malta on 8 November 1862, theft, not guilty.³
4. Edward Fahey, 20, single, cannot read and write, a labourer and late Private in 25th, was convicted on 4 December 1862 by a General Court Martial at Malta for conspiring with others to shoot a Sergeant. He was sentenced to 15 years of penal servitude. Edward returned to England and was received at Millbank Prison on 7 March 1863 from the Malta Barracks. After almost ten months, he was transferred to Portland Prison on 23 December 1863. The register states it is unknown if he had previous convictions.⁴

Edward was transported to Western Australia per *Vimeira*, arriving on 22 December 1865. He was described as 29 years old, 5'9" tall, with light brown hair. Hazel eyes, a long face, a fresh complexion, middling stout and a lion tattooed on his chest. All the English Prison Registers record that he was 20 years old.

His list of offences and punishments in Western Australia gives an insight into his character, which according to English records, was bad. Edward never received a ticket of leave.

1866:

Idleness and refusing to work - 3 months hard labour.

1867:

Absconding from Toodyay - 12 months hard labour with the first 3 months in irons.

Smoking in the wash-house - 1 day bread and water.

1868:

Absconding from Swan district and stealing Government property - 18 months hard labour and 6 months in irons at Fremantle Prison.

Loss of one duck frock - to pay for the article.

Smoking in the bathhouse and refusing to give up his pipe - 3 days bread and water.

Refusing to proceed to work in the party to which he was appointed - 3 days bread and water.

1869:

¹ TNA, WO86/11

² TNA, WO86/12

³ TNA, WO86/12

⁴ TNA, HO24/9

Idleness and disobedience of orders - 3 days bread and water.

Late to Chapel - not proved.

Whistling and dancing in cell - forfeit Sunday dinner.

Laughing and talking in Chapel during Divine Service - 3 days bread and water.

1870:

Idleness on public works - 3 days bread and water.

Carelessly breaking an oar - cautioned, not proved.

1871:

Stealing a quantity of grapes from Mr J Gallop's garden - 1 month, first 14 days in solitary and first 10 days on bread and water.

Insubordinate and absconding from his work party - 10 days solitary, first 7 days bread and water.

1872:

Maliciously wounding a pony, the property of W Alder, by cutting its throat - 12 months hard labour at Fremantle Prison, first 14 days in solitary and first 10 days on bread and water.

Talking during Divine Service - one day bread and water.

Smoking in the closet - one day bread and water.

Bottle of ink in his possession - one day bread and water.

1873:

Stealing a piece of rope - 6 months hard labour.

1874:

On 22 April 1874, Edward was sent to Point Resolution (Dalkeith), a quarry camp on the river.

Three months later, he drowned there on 20 July. The incident is not mentioned in the newspaper, so perhaps he drowned while bathing or was attempting to escape. ⁵

⁵ SROWA, Acc 1156/R12-13