

No baptism has been found for William Grice; however, he appears to be the son of Thomas and Mary Grice. <sup>1</sup> This couple had two other children baptised at St Martin Church, Birmingham: George born on 14 February 1823, Sheep Street, father Thomas, an Iron founder. Mary Ann born on 10 May 1825, Duke Street; her father was an Iron founder. She died aged 21 months, at Lawrence Street, 25 February 1827.

William fronted the Birmingham Borough Sessions In April 1841: William Vine, William Grice, and Thomas Plastow were charged with stealing metal from Messrs. Bolton and Clowes' warehouse. Grice pleaded guilty. The evidence, which will be found in our police report against the other prisoners, was laid before the court, and the jury, after a few moments of consultation, returned a verdict guilty against the other two prisoners. Sentences—Vine ten years transportation; Grice and Plastow twelve months hard labour. <sup>2</sup> The Criminal Register noted his age as 18 [b. 1823].

On the 1841 census, taken in June, shows:  
House of Correction, Warwick:

William Grice, 20, is a farm labourer not born in the county. [b.1821]

And at 46 Cliveland Street, Birmingham:

Thomas Grice, 48, Iron founder, not born in the county.

Mary, 50, not born in the county.

George, 18, Iron founder, born in the county. <sup>3, 4</sup>

In April 1846, the newspapers reported:

A young man named William Grice, moulder of 22 Cliveland Street, was charged with rescuing a prisoner from the custody of Police Constable 256. It appeared that about two o'clock that morning, the officer in question was taking a disorderly female from Lady Well Walk to the station when the prisoner came up to him, knocked him down, and enabled the girl to make her escape, for which he was himself taken into custody. The prisoner said that hearing the girl scream, he went to her and finding that she was being dragged along the ground by the policeman, he merely raised her to her feet. He was fined 10/- and costs, or in default, committed to the House of Correction for twenty-one days. <sup>5</sup>

In September 1848, William was again in trouble, this time more serious.

An athletic fellow named William Grice, residing in Cliveland Street, was brought up on the charge of being concerned in a robbery of which we last week we gave the particulars, viz., that in which an Irishman named Patrick Jennings was knocked down in Carr's Lane, by a prostitute and two men, and robbed of 17/ 6 in silver money. The female was committed last Monday to take her trial. The prisoner was recognised by the prosecutor (Jennings) as one of those who robbed him, and he was apprehended by Police constable 143, in Park Street, about one o'clock on Sunday morning. He at first protested his innocence, but on being taken to the station, he said he recollected knocking the prosecutor down about something over a girl. Mr Harding, who appeared for the prisoner brought forward two men who swore positively that they were in the prisoner's company at the time the

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<sup>1</sup> There is a marriage, by Banns, for Thomas Grice and Mary Freeman on 29 September 1820 at St Peter and St Paul Church, Aston near Birmingham, Warwickshire. Both made their marks.

<sup>2</sup> Birmingham Journal, 10 April 1841, p5

<sup>3</sup> The National Archives, UK, HO107/1155/4; HO107/1141/10

<sup>4</sup> When George Grice married on 1 November 1847 at the same church where he was baptised, his parents, Thomas and Mary Grice, were the witnesses. Both made their marks.

<sup>5</sup> Birmingham Journal, 25 April 1846, p5

robbery was alleged to have been committed and for some time afterwards, but the Bench appeared to attach some doubt to their testimony, and committed the prisoner to take his trial at the assizes.<sup>6</sup>

Warwickshire Lent Assizes in March 1849:

13 William Grice 25, Committed 4 September, by C. Geach, Esq. - Having, at the borough of Birmingham, on 26 August last, feloniously robbed Patrick Jennings, and with having at the time, and immediately before and after such robbery, beaten, struck, and used personal violence towards the said Patrick Jennings. 10 years Transportation. (See No. 10 )

10 Jane Rickards, 19, (Imp). Committed 28 August, by H. V. Wart , Esq . - Having, at the borough of Birmingham, on 26 August last, feloniously robbed Patrick Jennings of one half sovereign and other moneys, and with having at the time, and immediately before and after such robbery, beaten, struck, and used personal violence towards the said Patrick Jennings. 10 years Transportation. (See No. 13 )<sup>7</sup> Jane was sent to Tasmania per *St Vincent*, arriving on 4 April 1850.

The 1851 census, 46 Cliveland Street, Birmingham:<sup>8</sup>

Thomas Grice, 58, Iron founder, born in Birmingham

Mary, 61, born in Birmingham.

Mary died in 1860, aged 72. Thomas went to live with his son George and family. He died in 1864 aged 71.

The Prison Registers show William Grice, 25, married with one child, read and write imperfectly, iron castor, convicted 27 March 1849 at the Warwick Lent Sessions of robbery with violence. He had a previous conviction and was sentenced to 10 years transportation. He was received at Northampton Prison on 4 May 1849, where his previous convictions were listed as April 1841 at Birmingham Sessions, felony, 12 calendar months; and assault 14 days.

On 5 April 1850, he was one of 43 convicts transferred from Northampton Prison to Portland Prison.<sup>9</sup> At Portland Prison, he was recorded as being married with no children. No marriage has been found.

Journal of the Governor of Portland Prison.

11 March 1851: Received orders to be in readiness to embark on the *Echo* Steamer tomorrow the Convicts to be sent by the Convict Ship *Pyrenees* to Western Australia.

12 March 1851: The prisoners were not taken out to labour in the morning on account of wet, thick fog.

With reference to yesterday journal, it appearing that a Steamer had anchored in the roads during the night, the Prisoners for embarkation were got in readiness, but the Officer in Charge of the *Echo* having reported that it was too thick weather to move from the anchorage, the Prisoners were not put on board.

13 March 1851: With reference to yesterday's journal, the following 77 Convicts for Ticket of Leave men embarked at 7 o'clock am in the *Echo* Steamer to be taken to the Convict Ship *Pyrenees* at Spithead for W. Australia.<sup>10</sup> The *Pyrenees* departed England on 30 March 1851.

On arrival at Fremantle, Western Australia, William was assigned number 642. 642. William Grice, 28, 5'11", with light brown hair, blue eyes, a long face, fresh complexion, proportionate stature, no marks, an iron moulder, single with no children.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Birmingham Journal, 09 September 1848, p7

<sup>7</sup> "Warwickshire, England, United Kingdom records," images, FamilySearch, Film Number/Image Group Number: 004414584; Aris's Birmingham Gazette, 09 April 1849, p4

<sup>8</sup> The National Archives, UK, HO107/2058

<sup>9</sup> The National Archives, UK, HO23/8, PCOM2/354, p286-7

<sup>10</sup> The National Archives, UK, PCOM2/355, pp107-8

<sup>11</sup> SROWA, Acc 128/32

He obtained his Ticket of Leave on arrival on 28 June 1851 and a Conditional Pardon on 26 May 1859.

No further information has been found.