

Jean Batten**The Glamorous and Pioneering Pilot of the Thirties****by Angelika Burns****Based on a presentation at the International Graphological Colloquium in Cambridge in April 2016****Introduction and procedure**

This will be an exploration into the psycho-dynamics between the apparently modern Jean Batten and her compelling mother Ellen. Was it a unique and mutually catalytic symbiosis? Or was the daughter rather the victim of maternal ambition and domination?



Fig. 1 and 2 from left to right: Jean Batten (age 27), mother Ellen Batten, autographed card of Jean Batten

We will look at their distinctive motivations through the eyes of graphology and attempt an answer to these questions.

When we graphologists – be it in articles, be it in conferences – present the portrait of famous people, based on handwritings but also based on the knowledge from their biographies, we are often faced with the reproach that our conclusions stem from what we already know about the people. Hence, before we consider any further biographical data let us begin with the handwritings of Jean and Ellen Batten and just look at them. Let us begin with a brief look at two samples from Jean. The first one (Fig. 4) is written ten years after her great successes, the second one (Fig. 5), an extract from her flight log, is written under abnormally stressful conditions.

When you attempt to do a portrait of a person and you want to compare that portrait with the one of a second person you need a structure to build them into. Most likely we as graphologist would use some form of typology or the functions of Jung. I have chosen The Six Radical Concepts known from German graphology in order to get Jean's writing into perspective.

These Six Radical Concepts go back to Aristotle. They had been reanimated later by Klages and were finally adapted by Müller/Enskat und Pfanne for graphological use. This classification

model, which is not too far away from the Jungian Model, allows us to bundle dominant features in the handwritings and to find some interpretation. But it is also an instrument for comparison.

Here you see the Six Radical Concepts (fig. 3) in form of a house. Later, not on this picture, each storey is divided into an active part on the right hand and a passive and more receptive one on the left hand. Each storey represents an important transitional phase in the development of human beings parting from the older brain and moving up to the more recent one. Each storey has a psychological meaning and a possibility to be translated into graphological language. We begin with the Somatopsyche which represents the bottom storey in our house and apply it to Jean's writing.

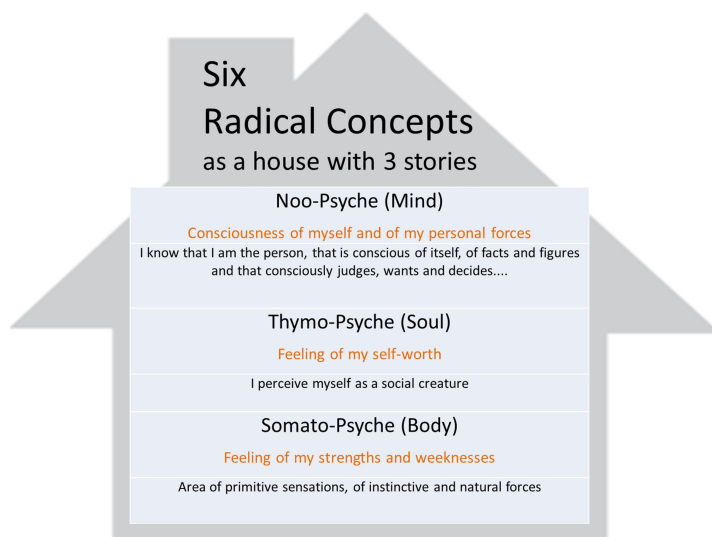


Fig. 3: Six Radical Concepts

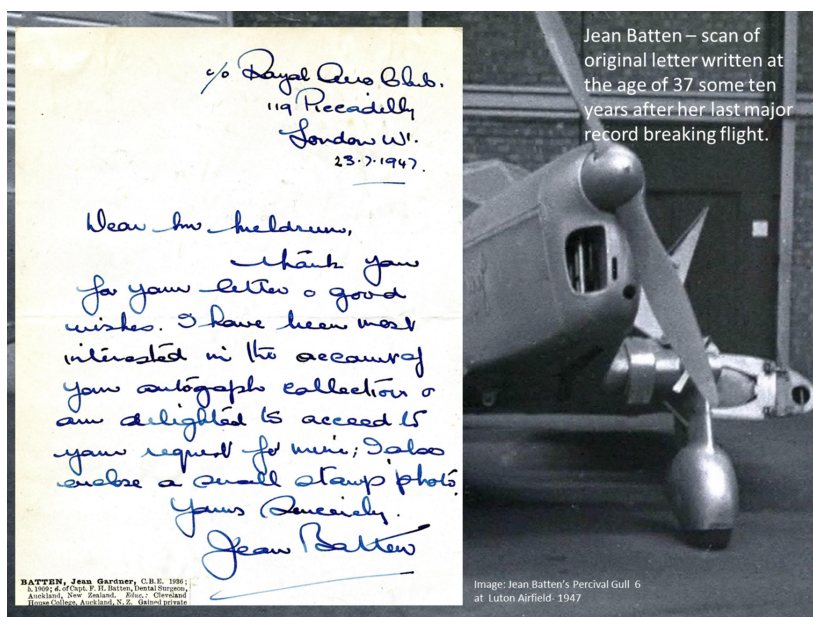
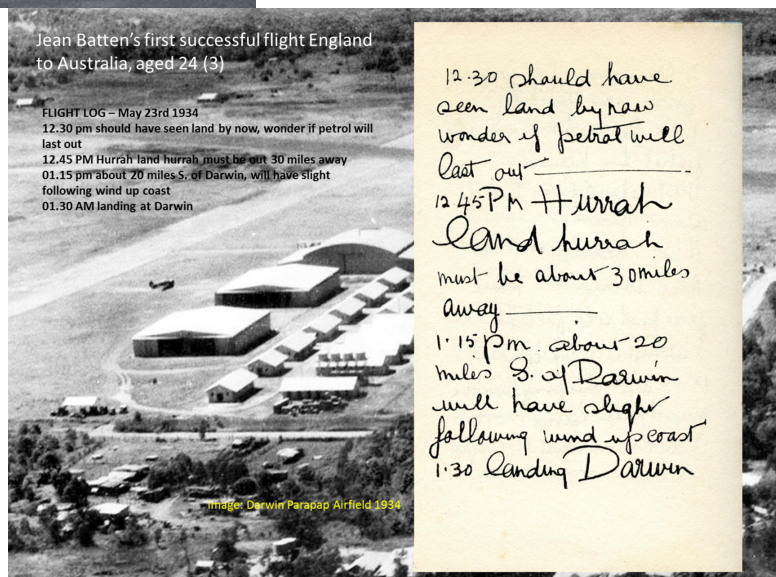


Fig. 4 (top): Letter written by Jean Batten one decade after her successes.

Fig. 5 (right): Extract from Jean Batten's logbook written in the cockpit under abnormally stressful conditions at the end of her record flight from England to Australia in 1934.



Somato-Psyche – Jean Batten

(Underlined aspects apply to Jean's writing)

Sensation 1st Radical Concept	Impulse/Drive 2nd Radical Concept
<p>PASSIVE (SENSORY, RECEPTIVE) SIDE</p> <p><u>Sensorial Responsiveness</u></p> <p><u>Experiencing events and be totally absorbed by them</u></p> <p><u>Emphasis on everything that is practical and concrete</u></p> <p><u>Drive dependency</u></p> <p>Merging with nature</p> <p>Motherlihood</p> <p><u>Earthiness</u></p> <p>Primitivity, plumpness etc.</p>	<p>ACTIVE (MOTOR, EFFECTUATING) SIDE</p> <p>Animalistic drive to live</p> <p><u>Drive to expand, to conquer, to dominate</u></p> <p><u>Active mastering of the world around you</u></p> <p><u>Temperament, impulsivity</u></p> <p><u>Affectivity</u></p> <p><u>Impatience, addiction, greed</u> etc.</p>

Impressions evoked by the handwriting

Sensation	Impulse / drive
<p>Natural, dense, genuine</p> <p>resting, inactive</p> <p>heavy, juicy</p> <p><u>colourful, warm</u></p> <p><u>full, pasty</u></p> <p>blurred, indistinct</p> <p>coarse, raw</p> <p>plump, primitive</p> <p>patchy, smeary</p> <p>etc.</p>	<p><u>Energetic, powerful, dynamic</u></p> <p><u>Expansive, pushy</u></p> <p>brisk, speedy</p> <p>fresh, <u>lively</u>, free</p> <p><u>fluent, explosive</u></p> <p>hasty, driven</p> <p><u>uninhibited</u></p> <p>precipitated etc.</p>

Fig. 6: Somato-Psyche findings based on the handwriting of Jean Batten

Thymo-Psyche – Jean Batten

(Underlined aspects apply to Jean's writing)

Impressionability / experiencing 3rd Radical Concept	Giving form and gestalt / creativity 4th Radical Concept
<p>PASSIVE (SENSORY, RECEPTIVE) SIDE</p> <p><u>Psychic impressionability</u></p> <p><u>mood</u>, empathy</p> <p><u>Intuition (?)</u>, sensitivity</p> <p><u>readiness to experience</u></p> <p><u>emotionality</u></p> <p><u>projection</u></p> <p><u>extreme subjectivity</u> etc.</p>	<p>ACTIVE (MOTOR, EFFECTUATING) SIDE</p> <p><u>Drive to self-fulfillment</u></p> <p><u>desire to be active and productive</u>, <u>urge for expression</u></p> <p><u>need to be stylish</u>, <u>need to express one's individuality</u></p> <p><u>values as unconscious guidelines</u></p> <p><u>associations</u></p> <p><u>phantasy, inspiration</u></p> <p><u>exaggeration, need to create effect</u> etc.</p>

Impressions evoked by the handwriting

Impressionability / experiencing	Giving form and gestalt / creativity
<p><u>Open, wide, relaxed</u></p> <p><u>embracing space, round, full</u></p> <p>subtle, swinging</p> <p>devoted, soft, <u>curvy</u></p> <p>fine, tender, calm</p> <p>plastic, <u>mouldable (?)</u></p> <p>letting go etc.</p>	<p><u>Expressive, genuine, intensive</u></p> <p>diversified, differentiated, <u>formed</u></p> <p>special, <u>individual</u></p> <p><u>Cultivated (?)</u>, fine, personal, <u>artistic, striking</u></p> <p><u>exaggerated, artificial, affected</u></p> <p><u>demanding, too much of everything</u> etc.</p>

Fig. 7: Thymo-Psyche findings based on the handwriting of Jean Batten

Noo-Psyche - Jean Batten

(Underlined aspects apply to Jean's writing)

Intellectual Grasp 5th Radical Concept	Intentionality 6th Radical Concept
<p>PASSIVE (SENSORY, RECEPTIVE) SIDE</p> <p><u>Mental comprehension, conscious uptake, apprehension</u></p> <p>distance from things and events, objectivity</p> <p>recognition of essentials, clear insight, <u>systematical thinking</u></p> <p>abstraction, <u>logical and analytical thinking, capacity to combine</u></p> <p>soberness, <u>fact-related</u></p> <p>Intellectual, operating with abstract concepts etc.</p>	<p>ACTIVE (MOTOR, EFFECTUATING) SIDE</p> <p>Will that becomes active: <u>capacity to take conscious decisions, to be sure of reaching one's goal, to pursue goals with firmness</u></p> <p><u>Readiness for action, courage, initiative, tough and regardless mindset, stubbornness</u></p> <p>Will that is rather passive: <u>Self-discipline, resistance, endurance, sense of duty (?), readiness to adapt</u></p> <p><u>steadiness, monotony, automatisme</u></p> <p>Will that is reactive: <u>Will to impose, defiance, individualism, righteousness, obstinacy, abrasiveness</u></p>

Impressions evoked by the handwriting

Intellectual Grasp	Intentionality
<p><u>Clear, orderly, systematic</u></p> <p><u>independent, skillful, accomplished</u></p> <p>concise, scarce, reduced to the essential</p> <p>„mental“, differentiated</p> <p>functional, sober</p> <p>down to the bare necessity, meager etc.</p>	<p>Will that becomes active: <u>Decided, firm, stable</u></p> <p><u>forceful, tense, straight</u></p> <p>hard, <u>determined</u>, dynamic, <u>goal oriented showing a clear (?) plan</u> etc.</p> <p>Will that is rather passive: moderate, <u>restrained, controlled, steady</u>, unlively, monotonous, mechanical</p> <p>Will that is reactive: Edgy, inhibited, cumbersome, blocked, too <u>individual</u></p> <p>abrupt, tensed up, cramped etc.</p>

Fig. 8: Noo-Psyche findings based on the handwriting of Jean Batten

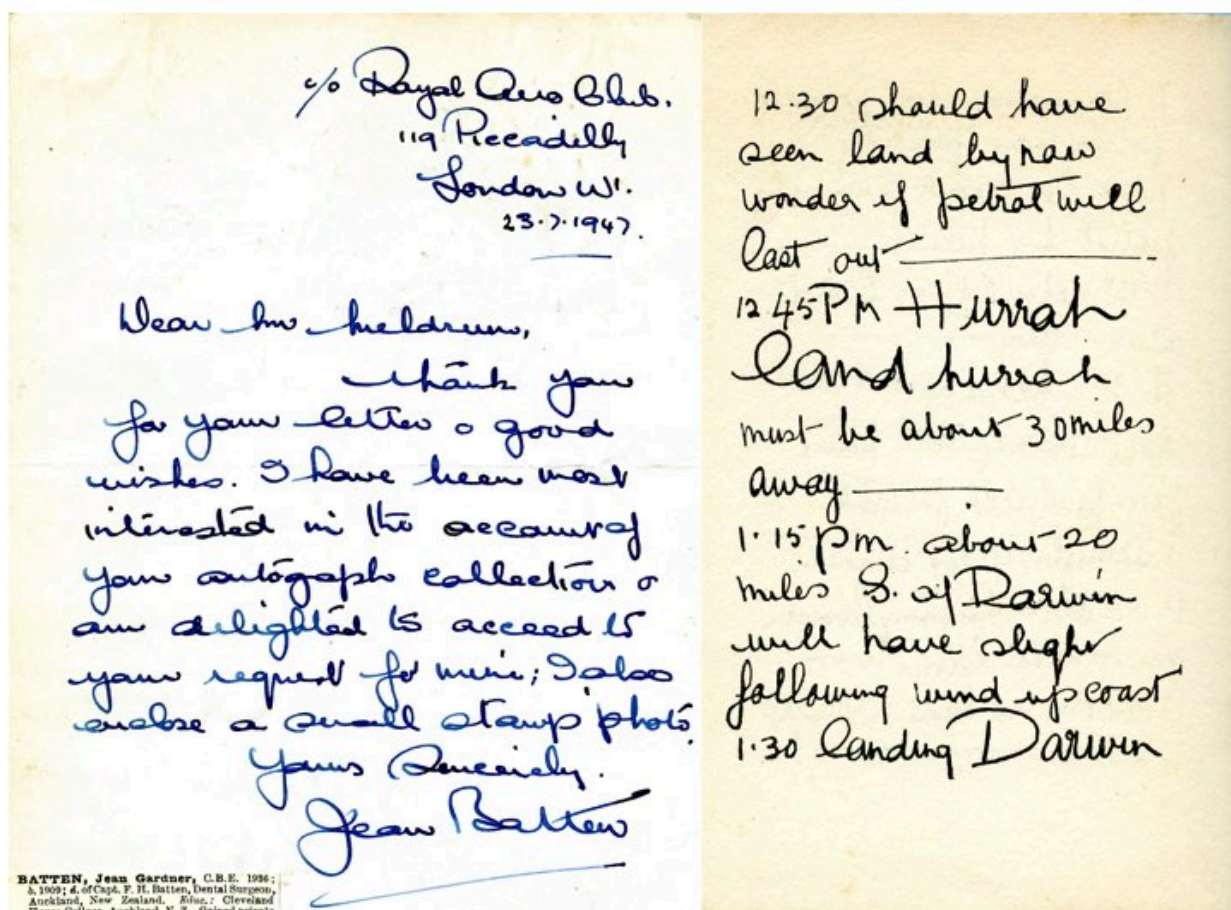


Fig. 9: Repetition of two handwritings of Jean Batten as a reminder (Fig. 4 and 5)

With the aid of the Six Radical Concepts we already gathered some major impressions that are common to the various writings of Jean. Let us translate them into graphological terminology:

- Energetic, expansive and flowing movement, highly connected, combined, with pressure, mainly in the down strokes
- Stroke that is partially pasty and partially neat
- Prolongations upwards and downwards, produced by a mixture of M and intention, creating at times vastly inflated capitals, inflated lower and upper loops causing tangled lines
- Primary but also secondary width, t-bars, placed ahead or thrown in an exceptionally extended fashion, sometimes clubbed
- Prolonged initial strokes; underlined signature
- Tangled, otherwise on the whole orderly
- Little garlands, little arcades and soft angles
- Writing between vertical and left-slanted
- Pronounced left-tending movement i.e. scrolling or embryonic forms, ovals that are locked by circling motions, backwards curbing endings and endings that move vertically upwards or abruptly and with pressure downwards to the baseline

One could highlight the most important features in a few sentences: There is an enormous drive and at the same time, there are highly effective brakes. Therefore you have the marriage of M and F. The writing is wide and spreads

via primary and secondary width along the horizontal line, but we are equally faced with important movements in the vertical dimension, firstly through the slant that is between vertical and to the left, secondly through all the left-tending letters that are firmly closed, enrolled or scrolled and lastly through upper and lower loops that are remarkably inflated.

Portrait of Jean based on the handwriting

General impression: Jean Batten is a person with a strong presence and the capacity to express herself in various ways; she has pronounced willpower, takes space and demands space; loves presentation and needs recognition; appreciates art and aesthetics but is also practical and down-to-earth; has traits of an adult, (e.g. capacity to plan, to analyse, to discipline herself) and those of a narcissistic, adolescent person (e.g. irresponsible drive to do things in order to enhance her ego and to attract attention); Jean is open to a lot of stimuli that comes from the outside but she also protects herself, is selective and closes herself off with respect to events that she shies away from.

Intelligence: Jean has analytical and logical skills, is equipped with an extraordinary level of concentration, combines and interconnects quickly; can, on the one hand, focus on essential aspects of a situation and react accordingly; on the other hand, she becomes totally subjective as soon as her ego and her search for inflationary importance play a role.

Performance: Jean is highly ambitious and ready to take initiative; attacks projects in an independent and reflected way; uses highly developed sensory perception, has the capacity to enjoy sensory inputs, shows pronounced attention to details and formal aspects, but is also ready to “wangle” things and to improvise if the situation demands it; sets herself an aim, pursues aims without letting herself be distracted, is highly consequent up to a degree of being driven, carries on, no matter what and against all other forms of rational insight.

Interpersonal contact: Is communicative, expresses herself with ease, needs people but on her terms, can be anything between warm, empathetic, charming, dominant and commanding, plays the diva, wraps people round her little finger, can be very subjective in interpreting events, tends therefore to create her own version of truth, is rather a taker than a giver, has a vastly inflated Ego, needs a stage, needs admiration but also withdraws abruptly when she feels that way inclined.

Let us now identify the main features of Ellen's writings, all from 1936. We are fully aware that we are dealing with scanned and partially faded handwritings in pencil. All statements concerning the stroke have to be treated with care. The analysis is also based on the 6 radical concepts, but the resulting house storeys are not shown here for brevity reasons:

- The stroke appears to be firm and neat, the M is determined, in some documents very controlled, in others showing more hidden impulsivity; the pressure is medium, some down strokes seem to have more pressure
- The slant is to the right, the forms are mostly clear and rather regular; however, in some documents the clarity of the writing suffers from the closeness and the tangling of the lines, the reason of which may be due to the paper format but also due to more impulsivity

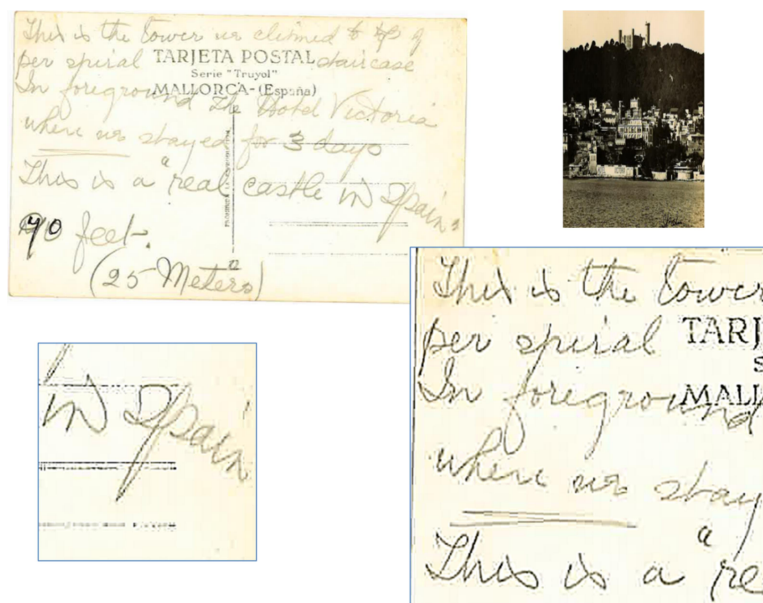


Fig. 10: Handwritings of Ellen Batten 1936

- The letters mainly correspond to a copy book model that could be a European one, occasionally they are mixed with reversed forms and with individually formed letters (e.g. the little 'e' is at times written as small 'E' and some l-dots are placed in an individual or spectacular way)
- The writing is connected – mainly arcades and angles - but with more interruptions than in Jean's writing
- The capital letters are emphasised (but not as inflated as in Jean's writing), the tightly closed forms embrace little space; we see underlining of words, left-tending M and thrown t-bars (less excessive than in Jean's writing)

Portrait based on Ellen's handwriting

General impression: Ellen has a strong persona with two sides to her character; she puts a great emphasis on appearance, presentation and perfect conduct in public; values social status, honour and aesthetics. Doing formally the right thing is in most circumstances important to her. Ellen Batten is conventional but also rebellious; sticks to norms and brakes norms; associates ambition with a strong will and firm presence; is ready to take on responsibility but also to drop it, is consequent once she has chosen a path; she dominates, is defensive and offensive in her behaviour; puts up a wall if necessary.

Intelligence: Ellen combines and

interconnects well, is a concrete thinker, needs measurable and countable data for her thought processes, trusts her 'gut-feeling' but also follows logical thought chains provided they are not too abstract. Her objectivity can become totally clouded by subjective judgement. (As there are only postcards at our disposition the use of space and its bearing on "intelligence" cannot really be interpreted.)

Performance: Ellen is highly enduring and resistant, is not easily beaten or defeated, sticks rigorously to projects and plans that she has started, pays attention to details, maintains style even under difficult circumstances.

Interpersonal contact: Is selective, secretive and categorical in her contact, prefers talking to people of important social standing or people that are useful; is polite, knows how to behave in public, can be charming but also very hard, cold and cutting. She is feminine on the outside and with a strong animus inside.

Brief Comparison of Jean and Ellen as reflected in their Writing

Ellen writes more according to copy book-writing, is on the whole more controlled and less expansive than Daughter Jean. However, she also varies more. Whilst Ellen is on the left postcard of Fig. 11 "well-behaved" and very regular, she tests the boundaries more clearly e.g. in the right sample of Fig. 11. The form continues to dominate but the enormous forces that have to be kept under control are also apparent. There is a cohabitation of the polite, always perfect Ellen who allows no sign of weakness towards the outside world, who values status, fame and material things. But there is also the rebellious person that feels restricted within given limitations and needs more room for irrational actions. Ellen is harder, more categorical and regardless in her behaviour. As already mentioned, her persona is strong and so is her identification with the animus.



Fig. 11: Handwritings of Ellen Batten 1936

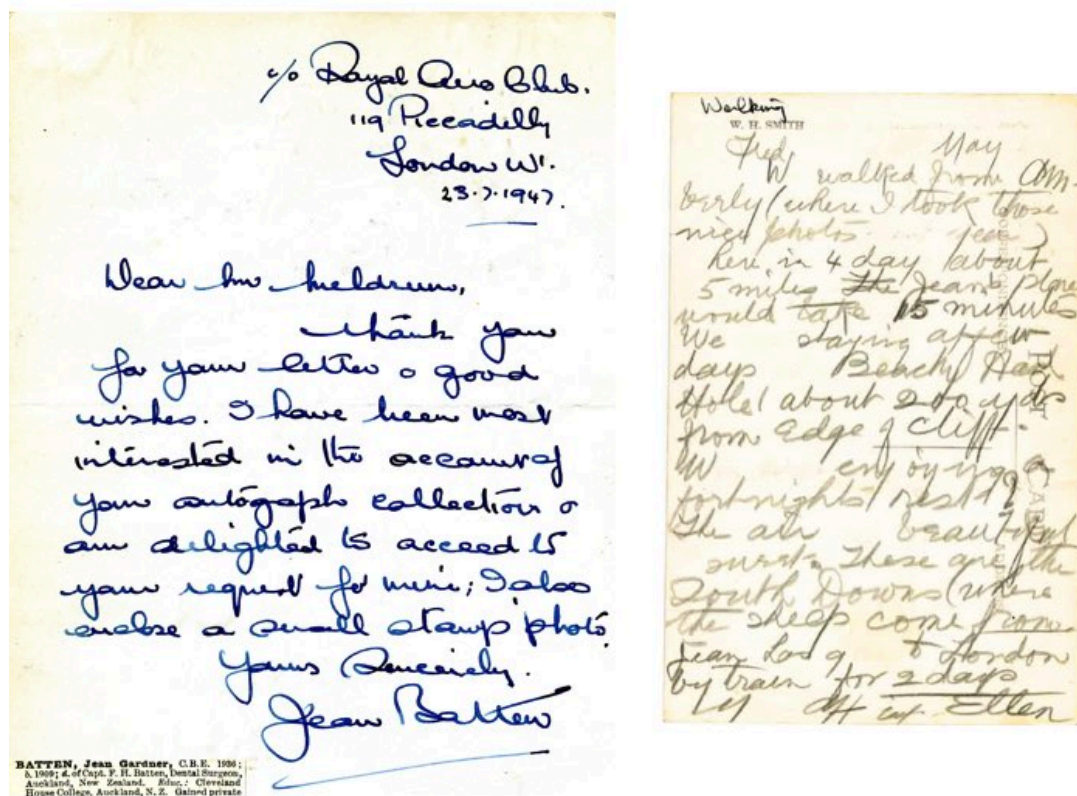


Fig. 12 from left to right: Handwriting of Jean Batten (1947) and handwriting of Ellen Batten (1936).

Jean is more impressionable and mouldable. She also identifies with her animus but in a more constructive way. Jean shows emotions, is spontaneous and allows her drives to partially carry her away. At the same time she reveals the potential clarity of her mind, her capacity to focus on an aim and to keep cool in spite of all emotions.

Both of the ladies have imperial tendencies. Jean and Ellen want to dominate and push their will through. They take initiative, show courage and are highly enduring. Mother and Daughter put an enormous emphasis on the importance of their personalities, on representation, perfection and on social status. Both have a persona, although the one of Jean has the potential to become more permeable just as much as her identification with the animus is less offensive. Both ladies enjoy the limelight and seek fame. They are primarily takers and not givers. They are selective in their choice of company and they both have the capacity to fend people off and to withdraw.

Biographical data concerning Jean and her Mother

Now, that we have done our graphological homework we "deserve" to look at the lives of Mother and Daughter.

In 1909, Jean was born in New Zealand shortly after the French Aviator Louis Blériot, as the first human-being, crossed the English Channel. Mother Ellen pinned a newspaper clip and a photo of Blériot above the cradle of her little baby.

Jean was frequently ill as a little child and got all the attention of Mother, Father and two brothers. Father Fred was a surgeon-dentist and Mother Ellen showed ambitions as an actress. The traditional role of a housewife was obviously not enough. It appears that Ellen started very early to influence Jean in the sense of: "You have to compete with men and become an achiever in a masculine world!"

Swimming and dancing was important to the family. So was music. Jean took piano lessons and later became a promising player. But also very early Mother Ellen introduced her girl to the world of flying and took her to watch the flying boats of New Zealand's first flying school. Not long after that Jean was invited with her two brothers to have a look inside a cockpit of an aeroplane. There is no doubt, Ellen was somewhat obsessed by planes and pilots and

some people reckon that she projected her wish to fly upon her little daughter.

Whatever, one fact is sure: it did not need much effort in order to transfer Ellen's wish dream onto her daughter. Mother and Daughter had always been close to each other. But the intermingling of their lives became stronger when Jean started to be obsessed by the idea of wanting to learn to fly.

Both brothers admitted that the affection that Jean received from Mother Ellen was immense compared to the love that Ellen showed towards the boys. In fact, when the marriage of the parents broke down (Jean was roughly 8 years old) Ellen quite cold heartedly abandoned the boys and left them with their Father. By the way, towards the outside world Ellen always maintained the image of an intact marriage and never wanted an official divorce.

Father Fred categorically refused to let Jean learn to fly but Mother Ellen was firmly on Jean's side and gave her all the support needed in order to enter at the beginning of 1930 into a then highly masculine world.

Ellen's identification with her animus became apparent in many ways: One of her philosophies was: "True freedom could only be attained by training the mind to master the emotions. To be governed by the body was to enslave one-self." Ellen was ahead of her time, engaged herself on behalf of the Suffragettes, a radical female movement in Europe and in the USA fighting for the right of women to vote. Ellen rode horses and in order to help financing the family, she turned to gambling on horses. She kept her girl updated with latest information about pilots that set up new records. Ellen realised that flying not only represented a man's world but also a way to fame, status and money. At the beginning of the Thirties there had been a few women in their starting blocks in order to become famous and wealthy through flying and establishing records. Why should Jean not participate in that race?

Jean's Brother John said about Mother Ellen: "Mother was a bit of a gipsy in spirit –.....– she was definitely theatrical in temperament. Dad, on the other hand, was this.....easy going man married to a temperamental woman with a much stronger personality. She was always striving to do something with her life – things that women just did not do in those days." (Quotation from *The Garbo of the Skies*)

The years between 1915 and 1930 were restless years for the family. Due to the broken marriage, caused by Fred's many infidelities, Jean went through an Odyssey of pain seeing Father and Mother fighting, insulting and hurting each other. She moved with her Mother from one apartment, sometimes only one room, to the other, from one school to the other, partially under very restrained financial conditions. She fell ill and was no doubt psychologically traumatised. The seeds for never wanting to enter into the real life of adults, to never want to face marriage and all the associated responsibilities were laid down in those years.

At the age of 15 life became temporarily a bit more stable and for a while the family maintained the aura of a good social standing. But already then an important trend started: Mother Ellen kept other people at arm's length in order to hide the family unrest but also the very modest standard of living. Jean went to college, learned all the behaviour patterns of a good middle class lady. She learned shorthand, typing, continued piano and ballet lessons with the aim of becoming professional in both. But somehow this was not really Jean's world. It became more and more apparent that Jean wanted to break out of her life in New Zealand and expected to learn to fly. Her strongest ally was her mother. It was Ellen's endeavour to make sure that Jean was independent and completely free of the restraints that she



Fig. 13: Jean Batten, her Mother and Father before 1925

had suffered. The thought of being able to fly opened up new horizons for both: Mother and Daughter. They ganged up and made plans how to realise the dream of Jean.

By the age of 19 Jean announced to her father that the aim of her life was to be the first person on the planet to fly from England to New Zealand. At that moment she could neither fly nor had she the money to learn it. Father Fred categorically refused to help; therefore the two ladies had to activate the more devious sides of their character, a tendency which they showed increasingly more when finances became short. Vis-à-vis the Father, Mother and Daughter pretended to want to go to England in order to let Jean take professional piano lessons there. In fact they sold the piano in order to pay for the boat journey to England. After their arrival in England Jean's dream justified all means. They subjectively believed that this was their holy right. A feeling of superiority and the conviction of entitlement was omnipresent. Jean mercilessly used her charm in order to get money for lessons and money for aeroplanes. After all, their attitude to men, certainly the one of Ellen, was a negative one. Therefore a few broken hearts and a few emp-



Fig. 14: Jean Batten in Calcutta with her DH Gipsy Moth 1934

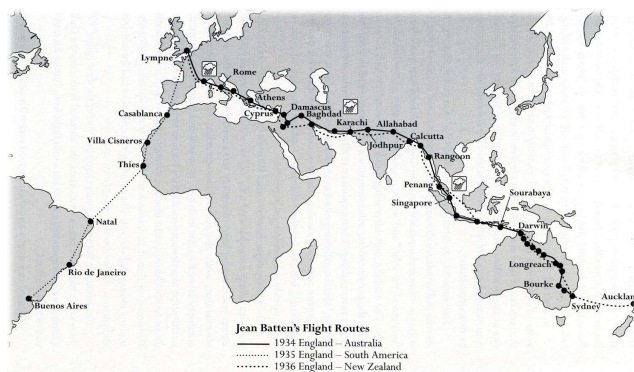


Fig. 15: Jean Batten's Flight Routes

ty tied pockets here or there did not matter. They were all serving an important goal and that goal was for Jean to be the fastest person in a plane to Australia and later the first person in a plane to New Zealand. Jean considered herself to be a pioneer with a higher mission helping to open up air-routes across to the other side of the planet.

In England events happened fast. Pretty Jean let herself be sponsored by men that she met in a London flying club and that had fallen in love with her. She learned to fly, got all the necessary flying and navigation licences, learned how to repair planes, got her hands dirty and, well and truly, shared the world of men.

In 1933, at an age of nearly 24, a series of eventually record-setting and record-breaking flights began. The first two attempts in an open Gipsy Moth ended in crashing the plane and the third one in 1934 was successful. Jean was the first woman to fly alone in 14 days 22 hours 30 minutes from Lympne in England to Darwin in Australia, i.e four days faster than the record held by another female aviator, called Amy Johnson.

In 1935, Jean was the first woman to fly alone from England across the Atlantic to South America; 1936 she was the very first person to fly from England over the very dangerous Tasman Sea to New Zealand, breaking at the same time the male and female record for the intermediate distance to Australia. In 1937 she flew solo from Australia back to England, setting up yet another record for being the first person that flew from England to Australia and back to England again. By this time she

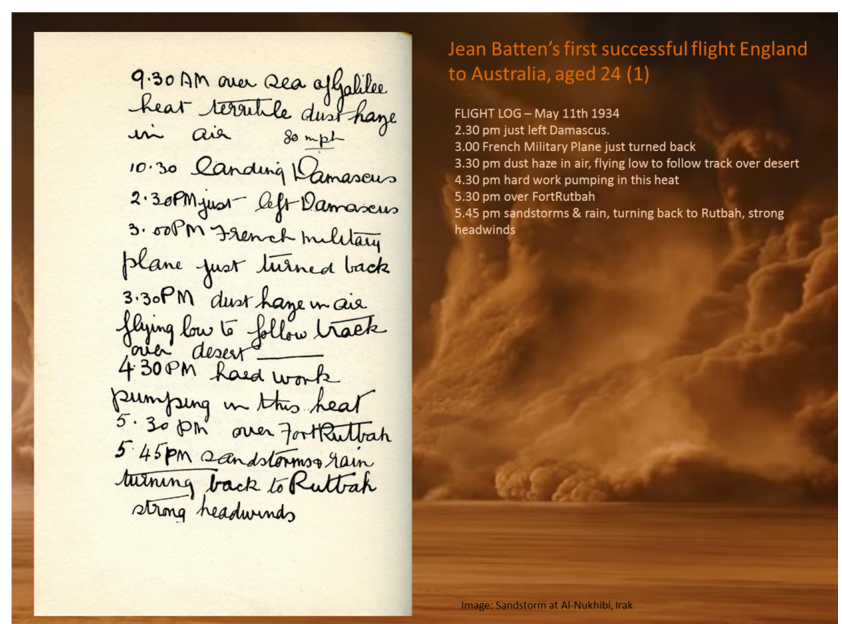


Fig. 16: Jean Batten's first successful flight England to Australia (1)

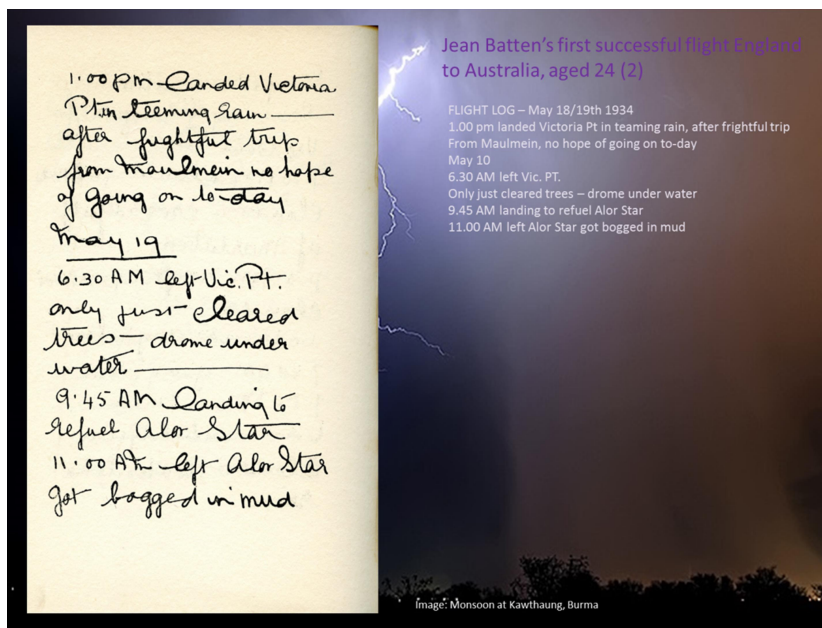


Fig. 17: Jean Batten's first successful flight England to Australia (2)

led her plane with water and completely blinded her navigation over endless stretches of jungle. Shown is an excerpt from her Flight Log of 19th May 1934.

More often than not Jean got into these totally life threatening circumstances because she was irrationally driven by her ambition. She ignored all advice and any warning once she had made up her mind to go on a journey. However, each time she proved, next to her frequently nonsensical stubbornness, that she had nerves out of steel and a talent for navigation that was absolutely unique. No telecommunication through the air, just a compass and calculations from observing the wind drift on the surface of the water! The possibility of going wrong over thousands of miles of endless ocean was immense. But Jean calculated exceptionally well.

Between 1934 and 1937 Jean was the queen of the air, celebrated by newspapers and High Society, flooded by honours and medals from all over the world (fig. 18).

With the beginning of the Second World War Jean's time as a pilot ended abruptly. For a while Jean continued earning money with public speaking-tours. In the mid-forties she and her Mother disappeared from the scene. They led a totally withdrawn life in Tenerife, Jamaica and different parts of Spain. Mail had to be sent to an agency and not to a personal address. There are signs that Jean partially enjoyed her life in exotic destinations and partially suffered from a lack of challenges. She and her Mother were inseparable. Mother died 1966 in Jean's arms at the age of nearly 90 (fig. 19).

During the last ten years of her life in the 70's, Jean resurfaced from time to time, trying with little success to reanimate some of her fame of the past and then disappeared into anonymity again.

was famous enough to finance her flights with her own money and with the money of an important official sponsor.

In the space of two paragraphs I summarised achievements of Jean that are totally breath-taking when you look at them in detail. Jean described her experiences in three books, (the third one was a new edition of the second one). It is unimaginable what she went through: There was hunger; there were freezing cold or boiling hot temperatures.

She crossed through ferocious sandstorms that blocked her vision, threw her into a spin and forced her to land in the desert. Shown is an excerpt from her Flight Log of 11th of May 1934.

She flew through monsoon storms that fil-



Fig. 18: Newspaper clippings about Jean Batten

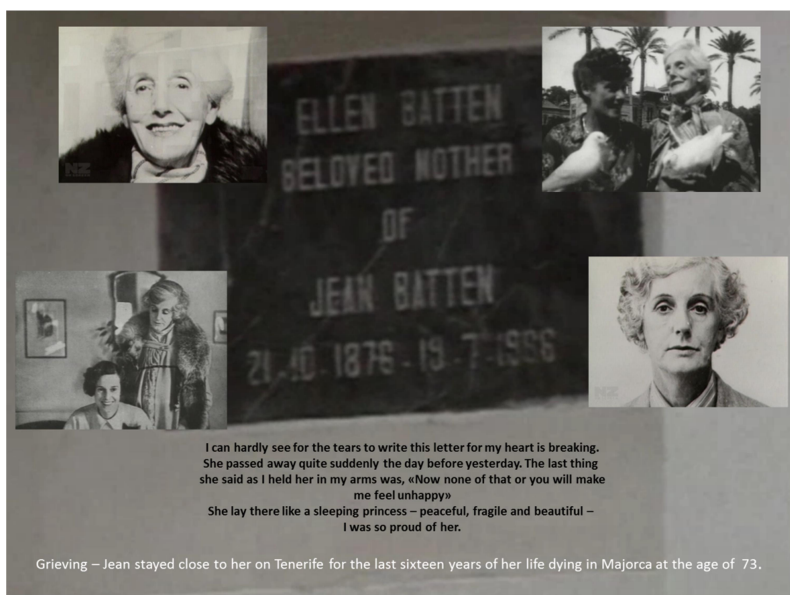


Fig. 19: Jean Batten and her mother — an inseparable relationship

that she had into the pot in order to cover the basic needs for their life in England. Ellen instilled the double moral of using society and obeying its rules and at the same time going ruthlessly against the norms when it appeared useful. Ellen defined a range of values that guided Mother and Daughter all through their lives: Be perfect, don't show weakness, use men and don't become emotionally dependent, seek fame and fortune in order to have your freedom.

Jean, on the other side, had the real passion, determination and courage needed to go through everything that was required in order to fulfil the dreams of Mother and Daughter. She got her hands dirty by repairing and maintaining planes, she studied in order to get the required licences, she planned her flights in a totally meticulous way, attracted men, got them to pay and above all she put her head at stake during the high-risk flying. There was no Mother to support her whenever she had to take lonely decisions in the sky or on airfields in Asia. More often than not Jean decided, driven by nearly fatal ambitions and not on the grounds of cool reasoning. From her books the reader gets the impression that even in utterly critical moments in the air Jean never had a telepathic communication with her Mother asking her advice. However, whenever she failed and crashed a plane and was back on the earth one of her first thoughts was: What will Mother say?

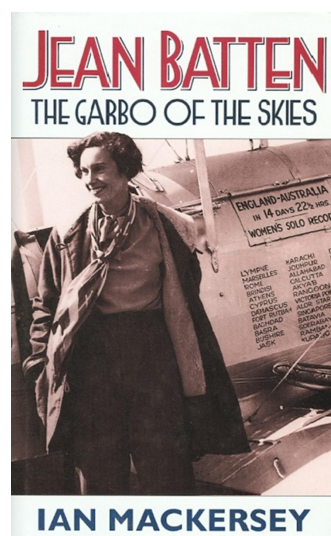
There is no doubt; Jean enjoyed the solitude of the air and the getting away from all problems. In her plane she did not need Mother to hold her hand. Back on the ground, however, she could not escape the influence of her Mother. Most probably Jean was led on a long lead, but Mother tightened the lead whenever she considered it necessary and whenever she saw her philosophy being jeopardised.

Nobody really knows what went on behind the closed doors of the two ladies. They never let anybody into their home, wherever they were on this planet. In the beginning, they were too poor in order to reciprocate invitations at the level they had been invited. And later they kept all their money tightly together in order to never fall back into the poverty they had been in before. The style which they pretended to have in public did not correspond to the style they could afford or wanted to afford at home.

After an unusually protracted silence, it was the author Ian Mackersey (fig. 20) and his wife and not the rest of the existing family who researched patiently until they detected in 1987 what had happened to Jean. Jean had died in 1982 at the age of 73 totally anonymously and alone after having been bitten by a dog. She was buried in a pauper's grave in Mallorca and nobody missed her.

And now let us try to give an answer to the initial questions concerning the relationship between Mother and Daughter:

Ellen's feministic attitude, her fight for freedom and independence opened in a catalytic way the window to aeroplanes and the men's world. She provided substantial support against the Father and put all the pennies



Ian Mackersey's book is the most authoritative biography of Jean Batten. His wife Caroline was to finally find out the fate of Jean Batten after years of silence and speculation. (thanks go to his daughter Paula for supplying the handwriting scans of Ellen batten)

Fig. 20: Ian Mackersey's Biography about Jean Batten

Most likely Mother Ellen kept her cool and was the supportive backbone when Jean had temper tantrums. She had them in public and she most certainly had them at home. Jean also fell into long phases of depression after flights that had failed or during months without a challenge on the horizon. Jean never needed to fully grow up. There was room for ONE strong Ellen on the ground and there was room for ONE strong Jean in the air. Jean earned a fortune with flying records and Ellen multiplied the fortune on the stock market. It was an incredible symbiosis between Mother and Daughter but in crucial moments it became apparent that Mother Ellen had the upper hand with respect to power. Jean was, no doubt, the product of her Mothers philosophy and of a difficult childhood. When you look at her disposition you find that she could have had the chance to live her femininity in a different way.

Mother Ellen, however, like a lot of feminists in the beginning of women's liberalisation, threw out the baby with the bath water and denied to herself and Jean everything that makes a woman a woman. Only the outer shell was allowed to celebrate female elegance. Jean was left in mid-air, had passionate love affairs but never really managed to integrate into her life the concept of responsibility for others or to show unselfish love and unselfish giving.

Note of thanks

Special thanks go to Paula Mackersey, daughter of Ian Mackersey, who has given permission to use all the pictures published in her father's book (Jean Batten, The Garbo of the Skies) and the TV-documentary of the same title. She also contacted the National Museum in Wellington, New Zealand, to obtain handwritings of Mother Ellen Batten. The curator of the Museum made an extraordinary effort to find in a short period of time the only known existing handwriting samples. Via Paula Mackersey the present-day family of Jean Batten generously gave authorisation to this investigation.

For people who wish to experience Jean Batten on film we recommend the following links

- Golden Age Pioneers: Jean Batten — Garbo of the Skies: <https://youtu.be/9ESVfJxCHh0>
- 'Talking Portraits' created for 'The Story of Auckland': <https://youtu.be/JbmhEXDaQ7U>
- Jean Batten beating the record Australia to Britain: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FHZ35_EKJGU <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GQPW8Md9pys>

Image Sources

- Fig. 1: Mackersey I. (1991): Jean Batten, The Garbo of the Skies, MacDonald: London & Sydney
- Fig. 2: Private possession
- Fig. 3: Self production
- Fig. 4: Private possession
- Fig. 5: Batten J. (Autobiography 1934): Solo Flight, Jackson & O'Sullivan: Sydney (Autobiography including facsimile of logbook)
- Fig. 10: National Library Wellington, New Zealand
- Fig. 11: National Library Wellington, New Zealand
- Fig. 12: Private possession and National Library Wellington, New Zealand
- Fig. 13: Photomontage by J. Burns with pictures from public domains
- Fig. 14: Photo by Keystone, published in autobiography Batten J. (1938): My Life, George G. Harrap: London
- Fig. 15: Mackersey I. (1991): Jean Batten, The Garbo of the Skies, MacDonald: London & Sydney



Fig. 21: From the World at your feet to a pauper's grave

- Fig. 16: Batten J. (Autobiography 1934): Solo Flight, Jackson & O'Sullivan: Sydney
- Fig. 17: Batten J. (Autobiography 1934) : Solo Flight, Jackson & O'Sullivan: Sydney
- Fig. 18: Montage of newspaper clips from the time of Jean Batten's flight success, i.e. between 1934 and 1937, J. Burns
- Fig. 19: Ellen and Jean Batten, photomontage from <https://www.nzonscreen.com/title/jean-batten-the-garbo-of-the-skies-1988> and the corresponding book by Ian Mackersey
- Fig. 21: Photo left from https://www.google.com/search?client=firefox-b&biw=1562&bih=966&tbm=isch&sa=1&ei=P8_1WpLcl-yP6ASllav4Bw&q=oztypewriter.blogspot.co.uk+batten&oq, photo right from book by Ian Mackersey