

Samuel Jackson – Scindian Convict # 16

Samuel Jackson was 22-years-old when he was convicted for his part in the robbery and assault of a young woman named Mary Ellison at Nether Knutsford, Cheshire on 12 December 1847. Mary was walking on the road from Stockport to Mobberly at around 6pm when she was attacked by four men. The *Ipswich Journal* and *Chester Chronicle* reported the crime as Highway Robbery:

“HIGHWAY ROBBERY. - On Sunday evening, about 6 o'clock, a young woman named Mary Ellison, of Stockport, was proceeding along the Mobberly-road from Knutsford on her way to a relative's at Knowles-green, when within 200 or 300 yards of Booth's Mill, four men came up to her from the side of the road, the first of whom seized her by the left wrist and the others by her cloak. One of them – the first that came up – demanded her money. She replied that she had none, and screamed aloud for assistance. The man then called on one of his comrades for a knife, that they might take her into the field and stab her. On hearing which, the object of the attack, being greatly in fear, called upon them to spare her life, and she would give them her money. She gave them two halfcrowns. The men, however, demanded more; and on her continuing screams, one of the ruffians struck her three violent blows on her side and chest. After struggling with them some minutes, she got away, and ran off as fast as she was able towards Mobberly, followed by two of them. She made for the first house by the road side, a beer shop, kept by a person named Johnson, on entering which she fell into an hysterical fit, and continued in that state about half an hour. As soon as she was enabled to give an account of what had happened, information was sent to the police officers of Knutsford and Mobberly. A man named George Oliver, and a man named Thomas Norbury were afterwards apprehended and fully committed for trial at the ensuing assizes at Chester. – Chester Chronicle.”

The Ipswich Journal (Ipswich, England), Friday, December 24, 1847; Issue 5668. *British Library Newspapers, Part I: 1800-1900.*

On 7 April 1848, the *Liverpool Mercury* reported the outcome of the trial:

“At Chester

Thomas Norbury, 25, George Oliver, 23, and Samuel Jackson, 22, charged with robbing and assaulting Mary Ellison, at Nether Knutsford, were convicted and sentenced to fifteen years' transportation.”

This was not Samuel's first conviction. Convict registers report Jackson as being an illiterate, unmarried sawyer, although the Wakefield Prison Register recorded that he was able to read. He spent 8 ½ months at London's notorious Millbank Prison, before being transferred to Wakefield in West Yorkshire. His final move was to Portland Prison on 30 October 1849 in readiness for transportation early the following year. His physical description on arrival in the Swan River Colony was: height 5' 3", brown hair, grey eyes, oval visage, fresh complexion, stout appearance. He was one of the younger convicts to arrive on 1 June 1850, aged around

24 years. George Oliver, his co-convicted was also transported aboard the *Scindian* as convict #65.

From the time of his arrival until he was issued with his ticket-of-leave Samuel Jackson likely laboured in a convict work party, building much needed roads and bridges. He was listed as working as a sawyer in the Superintendent's Orders (SO1) p4, 20 September 1850:

"Extra rations for men employed at sawyers, blacksmiths, mortar mixers and washers on such days as they are fully employed at their respective trades or occupations.

Sawyers - 6oz, bread, 8oz meat, 1 Pt Beer

67 John Morris, 16 Saml Jackson, 60 John Willson, 37 Saml Smith"

His ticket-of-leave was issued on 16 June 1851, a year and two weeks after he arrived in the colony. In September 1853 he was sent to work at Port Gregory. This was the location of the Lynton Convict Depot, the hiring station and accommodation for convicts sent to the area north of Champion Bay (later Geraldton). At this time the convict depot buildings were under construction and Jackson and others were living in tents. The convicts sent there were used as a labour force for the nearby Geraldine lead mine, to build roads, construct buildings and also work for pastoralists in the region. Jackson's record indicates that he stayed in the Lynton Depot and Northampton region as in June 1856 he was convicted of leaving the service of Conditional Pardon man John Bryant. The Lynton depot closed in January 1857.

Another Samuel Jackson arrived as convict #4365 aboard the *Clara* in July 1857. He is known to have been in the Geraldton region and, according to convict records, died there aged 60 years in 1876. Samuel Jackson #19 is likely the other man listed in the BDM WA who died in 1873. He would have been aged around 46 years at that time. One of the two Samuel Jacksons employed two ticket-of-leave men as labourers and general servants at Champion Bay between 1867 and 1872. Samuel's co-convicted George Oliver, #65, also ended up in the Champion Bay area.

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Sources:

Births, Deaths, Marriages, Western Australia;

Erickson, R., O'Mara, G., *Convicts in Western Australia 1850-1887 : dictionary of Western Australians*. Volume IX, p. 284;

Fremantle Prison Convict Database;

State Library of Western Australia, British Library Newspapers Online:

The Ipswich Journal (Ipswich, England), Friday, December 24, 1847; Issue 5668. *British Library Newspapers, Part I: 1800-1900*;

Liverpool Mercury etc (Liverpool, England), Friday, April 7, 1848; Issue 1976. *British Library Newspapers, Part I: 1800-1900*;

State Records Office of Western Australia, Convict Registers: Acc 1156 R17, R21A, R21B, Superintendent's Orders SO1, p 4.