**John Rampling – Scindian Convict #46**

John Rampling was a 24-year-old soldier of the 30th Foot, an infantry regiment of the British Army, when he was court-martialed for striking a Sergeant, although his court-martial records also mention desertion of his post. On 30 August 1847 at the Newcastle Barracks, Rampling was sentenced to 14 years’ transportation. He was transported to Western Australia aboard the first convict ship the *Scindian*, arriving on 1 June 1850. The description of John’s physical appearance at this time was: height 5' 11", dark brown hair, grey eyes, long visage, fresh complexion with a slender appearance. He also had tattoos, a sailor on his right arm, a half-man on his left arm and ER on the back of his right hand.

On his arrival, John was earmarked to work for the Comptroller-General of the Convicts, possibly as a groom but most likely because he was literate. His trade was listed in an article in the *Perth Gazette* on 26 July 1850 as servant. A literate man schooled in the discipline of the British Army would be highly useful. During John’s military service in the 30th Regiment he would likely have served in Ireland, Canada, Bermuda and England, however it was a period of peace following the Battle of Waterloo in France and the regiment did not see active service whilst he was employed with them.

John received his ticket-of-leave on 3 January 1851, 6 months after his arrival and he applied to have his wife Eliza and four-year-old son Patrick brought out from their home in County Galway, Ireland. A file note in 1851 states that the parish had declined to contribute to the family’s passage out to Western Australia although John had already begun saving and had put £2, 10s. towards the voyage. The *Inquirer* newspaper of 21 April 1852 reports from the Fremantle Courts that John Ramplen (sic) had been found to be drunk and in neglect of his master’s service and he was fined 10s. and expenses for this transgression but also dismissed from that master’s service in which he had been employed for the previous twelve months. Was his drunkenness related to him being so far away from his wife and son? It was to be another five years before Eliza and ten-year-old Patrick were finally able to join John, arriving on the emigrant ship *Travancore* on 29 April 1857*.* (Eliza’s maiden name of Daniels was recorded in Convict Establishment documents for the half-yearly return, 31 December 1855.)

By 15 December 1859, still on his ticket-of-leave but now having his family with him, John is listed as working at Mrs Slades’ (widow of Frederick Slade), Glenavon property at Toodyay. Lieutenant Frederick Slade R.N. and his wife Jane (nee Thomson) had arrived from Scotland in 1840 and taken possession of the property in 1841. Slade was among those who petitioned for the introduction of convict labour however he died in July 1850 shortly after the arrival of the first convict ship. John Rampling was issued with his conditional pardon on 22 September 1860 and from then was able to take more control over the choices in his life.

John’s son Patrick married Fanny Martin in Northam in 1877. By this time the family name had been changed to Ramplin. Patrick and Fanny had three daughters, Mary, Eva and Martha and one son, Arthur Andrew who sadly died aged just 14 days old. All were born in York. John and Eliza were also living in York at this time and it is thought that John died aged 65 years in 1890 and Eliza aged 85 years in 1899. Patrick did not long outlive them, dying aged 57 years in 1905.

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