

Henry Cook is a common name, and conflicting information on the Prison Registers makes his family hard to locate.

1. Newgate Gaol Register says he was born in Colchester, Essex.

2. *York Hulk* Register says he was born in Bury, Somerset, and his father, James, lived in Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk, on the opposite side of the country. Somerset is possibly an error.

In December 1848, Henry Cook was charged, on his own confession, with setting fire to the stable of Mr Cook, market gardener, of Plumstead. John Baker remanded from the previous day, was charged with suspicion of setting fire to the same stable and was also placed at the bar for re-examination. Mr. Jeremy remanded both the prisoners till Saturday for further enquiry.<sup>1</sup>

Subsequently, John Baker, charged with setting fire to the stable of Cook of Plumsted, was discharged. Henry Cook, remanded from Thursday, charged on his own confession, with having set fire to the stable of Mr Cook, was again remanded till Thursday.<sup>2</sup>

At the Central Criminal Court, 21 December. Henry Cook, 26, labourer, a miserable-looking creature, was indicted for feloniously setting fire to an outhouse and a stack of rushes at Plumstead, belonging to John Cook, with intent to injure him. It will be recollected that the prisoner gave himself up, confessing that he had set fire to the premises of the prosecutor and that his object was to be sent out of the country. He appeared to be an entire stranger to the prosecutor and did not have the slightest animosity toward him. The value of the property destroyed was at least £25. Upon being placed at the bar, the prisoner pleaded guilty and was sentenced to be transported for seven years.<sup>3</sup>

Initially in Newgate Gaol, Henry Cook, 26, 5'6", brown hair, hazel eyes, fresh complexion, slender, labourer, from Colchester, was brought into custody on 15 December 1848 for feloniously setting fire to a stack of rushes and sentenced to 7 years transportation. On 13 February 1849, he was transferred to Millbank Prison. Here, it was noted he was a stage coachman, and it was unknown if he had been convicted before. On 2 August 1849, he was transferred to Pentonville Prison, and 5 months later, on 2 January 1850, sent to the *York hulk* at Gosport.<sup>4</sup>

The *York Hulk* Register gives a slightly different description of Henry: Light brown hair, blue eyes, proportionate mouth and nose, fresh complexion, an oval face, stout, single, 5'3¼", wart on stomach, back of neck and right arm. He boarded the *Pyrenees* on 10 March 1851 for the voyage to Western Australia.<sup>5</sup>

On arrival at Fremantle on 28 June 1851, Henry was assigned number 457, his description was recorded, and he was issued with a Ticket of Leave.

457. Henry Cook, 27, 5'4½", light brown hair, hazel eyes, oval face, fair complexion, moles on stomach, coachman, single, no children.

4 July 1851. The following prisoners from the ship *Pyrenees* will be located in Division No. 3: 45 men from the *York hulk* at Gosport and 12 men from the *Stirling Castle* hulk, including 457 Henry Cook. On 11 July 1851, the newspaper listed Ticket of Leave men at Mt Eliza station, including 457 Henry Cook, a Miler.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Kentish Independent, 09 December 1848, p6

<sup>2</sup> Kentish Independent, 16 December 1848, p6

<sup>3</sup> Morning Herald (London), 22 December 1848, p7; Bell's New Weekly Messenger, 24 December 1848, p7; Morning Advertiser, 22 December 1848, p4

<sup>4</sup> TNA, UK, PCOM2/211; HO24/16; HO24/4; HO8/103

<sup>5</sup> TNA, UK, PCOM2/136

<sup>6</sup> The Perth Gazette and Independent Journal of Politics, 18 July 1851, p2

20 November 1851, he worked for John Gregory of Barndons Hill near Guildford. Four days later, he went to work for Joseph Woody of Beverley, and almost a year later, on 27 September 1852, he was working for J. Tuovy.<sup>7</sup>

Henry Cook possibly appears at the Perth Police Court on 18 January 1854. — For driving three horses with a cart without reins, H. Cook was dismissed with a caution.<sup>8</sup>

Perth Police Report, 18 January 1855 — Henry Cook, drunk and lying in the streets, fined 5s. Perhaps he was celebrating being granted a Condition Pardon in December 1854.<sup>9</sup>

Indian Mutiny Relief Fund raised money for the survivors.

The Convict Establishment raised £17. 13. 6. of which an H. Cook gave 5/-. It is unknown if this is Henry Cook.<sup>10</sup>

Henry may have left Western Australia in 1859.

Departure. 20 February, the barque *Dolphin*, 370 tons, Dixon, master, for London via the Cape.

Passengers — Mrs Pennyfather, three children and servant; steerage, J. Smith, M. Condron, T.

Machie, T. Mason, **H. Cook**, J. Irwin.<sup>11</sup>

No further information has been found in Western Australia or England after 1859.

**Note:** Another Henry Cook, born in 1817, arrived in Western Australia in 1831 with his family. He married Mary Farley and initially lived in the York area.

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<sup>7</sup> Rica Erickson Collection on FamilySearch.

<sup>8</sup> *Inquirer*, 25 January 1854, p3

<sup>9</sup> *The Perth Gazette and Independent Journal of Politics and News*, 19 January 1855, p3

<sup>10</sup> *The Perth Gazette and Independent Journal of Politics and News*, 4 June 1858, p3

<sup>11</sup> *The Inquirer and Commercial News*, 23 February 1859, p2