

John Crawley, 423, Pyrenees

Researched by Marcia Watson

Name variation: Crowley

John is indexed as both Crowley and Crawley in historical records, often due to the difficulty of distinguishing the handwritten names. He generally used Crowley.

He said his father was William Crawley, a mariner, and his mother was Sarah Steward. However, the family history is a little more complicated.

William Crawley was apprenticed as a fisherman in 1793 at Whitstable, Kent.¹

On 7 July 1798, at All Saints, Eastchurch, on the Isle of Sheppey, Kent, William Crawley, bachelor of this parish and Jane Green, spinster of this parish, were married by banns. William signed, and Jane made her mark.

Children:

Sarah Ann 1800

Elizabeth 1812, died aged 1 month

Matilda 1814

Mary Ann 1817 - 1819

Jane Crawley died in June 1819, at the age of 42.

William remarried in August 1819 to widow Susanna Ansell. He died at Seasalter, aged 67, and was buried on 14 March 1844 at Whitstable.

Sarah Ann Crawley.

Children:

William John Crawley, base son of Sarah Crawley, born 11 March 1814 and baptised on 10 July 1814 at Whitstable, Kent.

17 June	10 July	Matilda Daughter of	William of Jane	Crawley	Seasalter	Mariner
	No. 99.					
11 March	10 July	William John base born son	of Sarah	Crawley	Seasalter	Single Woman
	No. 100.					

Sarah was only 14 years old when John was born. It is likely his grandparents brought him up.

A second base child, Elizabeth, was born to Sarah Crawley, spinster of Seasalter, born 19 February 1817, baptised 4 May 1817. Elizabeth died at the age of 2 and was buried on 15 June 1819, at Whitstable.

Just after the birth of Elizabeth, Sarah Crawley married John Steward, a bachelor and Mariner, both of Seasalter parish, on 6 April 1817. John signed, and Sarah made her mark. Witness to the marriage was William Crawley.

Sarah Steward, 22, of Whitstable, was buried on 13 September 1822.

John Steward remarried the following year in October 1823.

William John Crawley

By the time John was 8 years old, he had lost his grandmother and mother, Jane Crawley and Sarah Steward, the two adult females in his life. It appears he continued to live with William Crawley.

¹ The National Archives (TNA) UK, Apprenticeship Books: Series IR 1; Class: IR 1; Piece: 66

In 1828, Charles Deane and his brother John modified the "smoke helmet" for firefighting, patented by Charles in 1824, into a diving bell. The helmet was placed over the head and kept in place by straps, but was not attached to the diving suit. A hosepipe supplies air from the surface. The diving bell was not ideal as it could fill with water if the diver bent over. It was, however, very successful and was later improved and modified.

In 1833, John Deane and William Edwards had set out, by sea, from Whitstable to dive on HMS *Colossus*. This 74-gun Royal Navy warship sank in the Isles of Scilly in December 1798. The dive team successfully raised some cannons. They then sailed to the wreck of the *Enterprise* near Mew Island, part of the Copeland Islands off County Down. This wreck had no owner, so it was available to anyone to salvage. They arrived in October 1833 and were able to visit the site and recover a small quantity of dollars before winter set in. They returned in April 1834 with a much larger group of divers and three support vessels. The Deane brothers and other Whitstable divers they employed, including John Crowley, were able to gain considerable wealth from this salvage.²

Wife 1.

John Crowley married Mary Ann Mitchell, the daughter of John and Esther Mitchell, on 22 June 1834 in the parish church of Ardkeen, in the county of Down. Ardkeen is about 30km from Mew Island and the Copeland Lighthouse.

After completion of the salvage operation, the couple returned to Seasalter.

At some stage, John appears to have joined the Merchant Navy.

13655. John Crowley, 22, born Seasalter, sailed on the *Mandamus* in December 1835 and June 1836.³

Their son, John William Mitchell Crawley, was born on 27 November 1836 and baptised on 2 April 1837 at Seasalter, Kent. His father, John, was described as a mariner who resides in Seasalter.

John said he was in Ireland in 1839, in command of a cutter under the superintendence of James Watt Esq, then cruising on the coast of Dublin.

Another son, George Sharp Crowley, was born on 8 July 1842 and baptised on 29 September 1842 at St. Mark's, Dublin. John was described as a mariner and lived at 73 Sandwith Street, Dublin.

Later, in 1848, Mary Ann's father was reported as saying:

"John Mitchell, a highly respectable-looking old gentleman, an officer of the Coast Guards, and at present residing at Rathmullan, in the county of Donegal, Ireland, deposed that on Sunday, 22 June 1834, the prisoner married his daughter in the parish church of Ardkeen [Ardkeen], in the county of Down. He also verified the correctness of the marriage certificate that was produced. On cross-examination by the prisoner, Mr Mitchell stated that he had known the prisoner only a month previous to his marriage with his daughter. The prisoner was at that time employed as a diver near the Copeland Lighthouse, diving for dollars that had been lost in a vessel wrecked in 1801. He continued to reside with his first wife until 1845, at which time he abandoned her".⁴

Wife 2.

John William Crowley, 28, bachelor, Mariner, residing at 37 Welsh Back, Bristol, father John Crowley, a Mariner, married on 13 August 1848 at the Registry Offices, Clifton Union, to Anne Eliza Morgan, 22, spinster, dressmaker, residing at Hotwell Road, Clifton, father William Morgan, a farmer. Both signed the Register.

Welsh Back and Hotwell Road are both near the dock area of Bristol.

² <https://www.liverpool.ac.uk/~cmi/books/miscWr/enterpWr.html>

³ TNA, BT112/16. Lloyds Register for 1835 shows *Mandamus*, Master J. Gann, 50 tons, with a home port of Faversham. No other information was available for different years. Faversham, near Seasalter and Whitstable. No other information was available for different years. Faversham, near Seasalter and Whitstable.

⁴ Supplement to Sheffield and Rotherham Independent, 16 December 1848, p3

1844. Marriage solemnized at the Registry Office in the District of <i>The District Union</i> in the County of <i>Lancaster and Bristol</i>								
No.	When Married.	Name and Surname.	Age.	Condition.	Rank or Profession.	Residence at the Time of Marriage.	Father's Name and Surname.	Rank or Profession of Father.
125.	<i>Thirteenth of August 1845</i>	<i>John William Crowley</i>	<i>28 years</i>	<i>Bachelor</i>	<i>Mariner</i>	<i>N. 37. Welsh Back Bristol</i>	<i>John Crowley</i>	<i>Mariner</i>
		<i>Ann Eliza Morgan</i>	<i>22 years</i>	<i>Spinster</i>	<i>Dress maker</i>	<i>St. Anne's Road, Bristol</i>	<i>William Morgan</i>	<i>Farmer</i>
Married in the <i>Registry Office</i> according to the Rites and Ceremonies of the <i>Anglo</i> by me, <i>Henry Head Registrar</i>								
This Marriage was solemnized between us,		<i>John William Crowley</i>	in the Presence of us,		<i>William Beathan</i>	<i>Charles Arthur Latham</i>		
		<i>Ann Eliza Morgan</i>			<i>William Truchard</i>	<i>Superintendent Registrar</i>		

From the same newspaper report of the court case in 1848:

"In the summer of 1845, John Crowley became acquainted with a very interesting-looking young woman (Ann Eliza Morgan) in Bristol. After a courtship of several months, he persuaded Miss Morgan to leave her father's house and go on board a ship with him. He procured the mate of the vessel to impersonate a clergyman and to read the marriage service. The woman, however, after finding that she had been deceived, induced the prisoner to marry her at the registry office in Bristol, making her his lawful wife. He married the young woman, Ann Eliza Morgan, at the District Union Registrar's Office, Bristol, on 13 August 1845. She continued to reside with him until July last (1848). At that time, she discovered that he had married a woman named Isabella Hall in the church of St. Nicholas, in Liverpool".

Wife 3.

John William Flore Crowley, 33, can write, was committed on 20 November 1848, charged with having, at Liverpool, feloniously married Ann Elizabeth Morgan, and Isabella Hall, his former wife being then alive. ⁵

At the trial, Isabella Hall stated that she was married to the prisoner in the Church of St. Nicholas on 18 July 1848; he had represented himself to her as a bachelor. She continued to reside with him until 19 October 1848. She had known him for more than a year, during which time he had paid his addresses to her. ⁶

John William Flore Crowley, full age, bachelor, Mariner, residing at 8 Lonsdale Street; his father is William Crowley, a Mariner, married Isabella Hall, full age, widow, residing Lower Lonsdale Street, father John Wallace, Attorney, on 18 July 1848 at Liverpool.

Both signed the Register—witnesses: Richard Warbrick and Elizabeth Everson (her mark).

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1848. Marriage solemnized at <i>St. Nicholas Church</i> in the Parish of <i>Liverpool</i> in the County of <i>Lancaster</i>								
No.	When Married.	Name and Surname.	Age.	Condition.	Rank or Profession.	Residence at the Time of Marriage.	Father's Name and Surname.	Rank or Profession of Father.
195	<i>18th July 1848</i>	<i>John William Flore Crowley</i>	<i>33</i>	<i>Bachelor</i>	<i>Mariner</i>	<i>8 Lonsdale St</i>	<i>William Crowley</i>	<i>Mariner</i>
		<i>Isabella Hall</i>	<i>34</i>	<i>Widow</i>		<i>Lower Lonsdale St</i>	<i>John Wallace</i>	<i>Attorney</i>
Married in the <i>Church of St. Nicholas</i> according to the Rites and Ceremonies of the Established Church, by <i>James</i> or after <i>Banns</i> by me, <i>J. Phillips M. of W.</i>								
This Marriage was solemnized between us,		<i>John William Flore Crowley</i>	in the Presence of us,		<i>Richard Warbrick</i>	<i>Elizabeth Everson her mark</i>		
		<i>Isabella Hall</i>						

⁵ Supplement to Sheffield and Rotherham Independent, 16 December 1848, p3; TNA, PCOM2/322

⁶ "Paid his addresses to her" is an antiquated phrase meaning a man pursued a woman romantically, typically with the intention of courting or proposing marriage.

On trial for two counts of Bigamy, the newspapers reported that John William Crowley, aged 34, was a rather well-looking man, a native of Whitstable, in Kent. On the first charge, he was accused of marrying Ann Eliza Morgan while his first wife, Mary Ann Mitchell, was still alive. The prisoner cross-examined the second wife, Morgan, in the most coarse and disgusting manner. During the course of his examination, his Lordship interrupted him several times.

His Lordship directed that the Jury should find on the first case of Bigamy before they proceeded to take the second case. The Jury, without the slightest hesitation, returned a verdict of Guilty.

The foreman - Can we be allowed to make an observation?

His Lordship -Yes, if it is favourable to the prisoner.

The Foreman - Oh, but it is the reverse. (Laughter)

John was also found guilty of representing himself as a bachelor and marrying Isabella Hall. His Lordship then proceeded to pass sentence on the prisoner, who, he said, appeared to be a very bad and wicked man. He had led a very dissolute life, as could be gleaned from his character. He thought, however, that it would be better if he were sent out of the country. The court's sentence, therefore, was that he should be transported for seven years.⁷

John's side of the story.

Notes from the Petitions.⁸

1st application. Kirkdale Gaol, Liverpool, 28 December 1848. Received 30 December 1848.

Petition of John William Flore Crowley.

He had the misfortune of being connected with a worthless woman from whom he was compelled to separate in 1844 through an unremitting course of improper conduct for a long series of years, subsequently, however, he took charge of his four children - placed them under care of a pious matronly preceptor, to whom he paid a monthly allowance of 32/- for their support.

Your petitioner is a man of unimpeached character up to the period of this untoward affair, and has been for the last 10 years following the respectable occupation of a ship master, and that his employers are prepared to bear testimony to his strict integrity during that period, and as a further proof of the high esteem in which he was held - not only for his moral rectitude - but also for his scientific abilities, he has the honor of being appointed by the Board of Admiralty in 1839 to command of a cutter under the superintendence of James Watt Esq then cruising on the coast of Dublin.

In 1845, he became acquainted with his second wife, who was introduced to him as being a most exemplary woman. He, being desirous of providing a permanent woman with a moral and religious instructor for his children, was induced at the suggestion of his friends to enter into a matrimonial engagement with her, having previously ascertained that his former wife was no longer alive.

Being called away by his professional duties, after making ample provisions for his family in his absence, on his return a few months afterwards, he was horrified to find that his faithless partner was, is possible, more wicked and depraved than the first and subsequently instituting enquiries he discovered that instead of being a credible person as represented initially, she was nothing less than the Concubine of a gentleman residing in Wales.

By such untoward circumstances, he was almost bereft of reason. Having once more placed his children under proper guardianship, he resumed the duties of his calling. Not until the month of July in the present year was he persuaded once more to look abroad for a suitable helpmate; he felt it the more incumbent on him to take this step. From the combined circumstances of his children being deprived by death of their adopted mother, himself growing old apace, and his former mistresses being gathered to their pastures. In the last case, however, he was sadly misinformed, for after the passage of time following his third marriage, he discovered his first wife living under the protection of another man in the north of Ireland, and consequently under a fictitious name.

⁷ Supplement to Sheffield and Rotherham Independent, 16 December 1848, p3

⁸ The National Archives (TNA) UK, HO18/219/53

Your petitioner is a stranger in Liverpool, and unwilling to wound the feelings of his relations by making known the unpleasant situation in which he was placed, was thus deprived the advantages of professional assistance on his trial, the attendance of witnesses to controvert the exaggerated statements made by the opposite parties and the presence of those gentlemen to whom he was known and in whose services he had been employed for a lengthened term of years. Placed under such unfavourable circumstances he was at first resolved to make no defence, satisfied that the hardship of his case, and the purity of his intentions would suffice to establish his innocence, but, in the course of examination of several witnesses he was shocked with their inconsistencies, that a sense of justice and duty impelled him to interrogate them, to assist the Court in elucidating the real facts of the case, unfortunately, however, his unprofessional mode of cross-examination, and untechnical expressions gave such offence that the Court manifested its displeasure by the rigorous sentence which it almost immediately awarded.

That by this unlooked-for vicissitude, his four little children are deprived of their only protector, and are now thrown upon the bounty of the parish for support. And, that, if he has erred and violated the law, he has done so inadvertently and not with malice prepense, and is now truly sincerely penitent for his transgression.

He asks for a revision of his case.

2nd application. Received 31 March 1849

Petition of John William Flore Crowley.

He received the severe sentence of seven years' transportation; other prisoners tried for crimes of a similar nature received 3 to 12 months.

I humbly beg to remark to your Lordship that it is well known that the last woman I was married to knew that I had been married before, and that the character of my first wife was bad.

3rd application. Petition of William Holden and others of Whitstable. Received 10 April 1849.

John William Flore Crowley, a prisoner in Kirkdale Gaol under sentence of Seven Years' transportation.

Your petitioners have personally known the prisoner from his earliest boyhood and up to this unfortunate circumstance; they have always considered him a highly respectable member of Society. Your petitioners must lament several questions that the prisoner, much to his own detriment, asked of the prosecutors; these questions were not only ill-timed but also unnecessary and worse than helpful.

Your petitioners, knowing so much of the natural temper and disposition of the prisoner, firmly believe it was through severe mental excitement and an entire absence of all self-control and respect that he thus so surely and fatally committed himself.

Your petitioners have a communication from the prisoner in which he expresses himself truly sorry at the course he then pursued, a course which now appears to him anything but creditable, manly and honest and a course which your petitioners fully believe was neither premeditated nor advised, but solely the spontaneous suggestion of a mistaken misjudgement.

Signed by 36 people from Whitstable, many of them mariners. Answered 28 April 1849

4th application. Received 7 December 1849

The petition of John William Flore Crowley, now a prisoner in the Leeds House of Correction, for Bigamy.

He has served 12 months in separate confinement.

Never been in prison before.

He is extremely sorry that he has committed this offence, and if restored to liberty, the lessons he has learnt in prison will be the means of making him a wiser man.

He is anxious to obtain his discharge on account of his children, that he may be enabled to watch over and shield them from the vices that have been the cause of his misfortune.

Three other Prisoners tried at the same Assizes on similar charges received sentences varying from 3 to 12 months.

All the petitions were unsuccessful in having his case re-examined or his sentence reduced.

The Prison Registers show that John Crowley, 33, married, can read and write imperfectly, was convicted on 9 December 1848 at Liverpool of Bigamy and sentenced to seven years. He had not been previously convicted. John was received at Leeds prison on 8 May 1849 from Kirkdale Gaol. On 3 April 1850, he was transferred to the *Warrior* hulk at Woolwich. From here, he boarded the *Pyrenees* on 5 March 1851 for the voyage to Western Australia.⁹

Western Australia

On arrival at Fremantle, Western Australia, on 28 June 1851, John was assigned number 423, issued with a Ticket of Leave and a physical description was recorded.

423. John Crowley, 35, 5'8⁵/₈ ", dark grey hair, dark hazel eyes, round face, fresh complexion, scar on right foot and left, and a very deep one above the knee, master mariner, married, two children.¹⁰ In his petitions, he claims he had four children. Only two children have been found.

The Superintendent's Journal notes:

1 July 1851. The first 50 men from the ship *Pyrenees* were received at the prison and located in Division No. 3, including 423. John Crowley.

3 July 1851. The following men holding passes will be detached from the Establishment and proceed to North Fremantle Station tomorrow, 4 July. They will be arranged in the following order of Messes, with a Boatswain to each. Mess No. 1, John Crowley, 423, will be boatswain. Each mess had about eight convicts.¹¹

Perth District, Ticket of Leave Register shows: John Crowley, 423, *Pyrenees*, 35 years old.

He was hired by George Glyde, of Perth, as a boatman on 16 July 1851. Wages: £1.1s per week. Trade or calling: Boatman.¹²

A Conditional Pardon was granted on 5 August 1853, although not collected until 30 September 1853.¹³

Charged with immoral conduct.

At the Perth Court on 25 November 1851, John Crowley, a ticket-of-leave holder, was charged with immoral conduct with the wife of Henry Vince and returned to the Convict Establishment. His ticket of leave forfeited, by order of His Excellency the Governor. John appears to have lodged with the Vince family. [Mary Ann Vince died in childbirth in 1854, aged 38]

A few days later, William Budge, a ticket-of-leave holder, was brought before the Bench, charged with stealing from the dwelling-house of Henry Vince (where he had been a lodger) a white shirt and other articles, the property of John Crowley and Henry Vince. Case dismissed.¹⁴

John was received at the Fremantle Prison on 25 November 1851 and discharged to Garden Island on 2 February 1852.

On 3 September 1852, the barque *Eglinton* on its maiden voyage struck a series of reefs and sank off the coast, about 50km north of Perth. The vessel was carrying mail, cargo, gunpowder, and £15,000 in coin, which the Government was keen to recover. The newspaper reported:

⁹ TNA, HO23/3

¹⁰ SROWA, Acc 128/32

¹¹ SROWA, Superintendents Orders, So1-So3, p46, p47

¹² SROWA, Perth TOL Register Cons 1386/1 1851 - Aug 1854, p41

¹³ SROWA, Perth TOL Register Cons 1386/1 1851 - Aug 1854, p41 Government Gazette 4 October 1853, No 410

¹⁴ Inquirer, 3 December 1851, p2

"On 29 September 1852, the Boatmen who up to that time had been recovering cargo from the *Eglinton*, determined upon abandoning her to her fate. They all returned to Fremantle and refused to work anymore unless receiving half salvage. While negotiations to this effect were in contemplation, Crawley, a ticket-of-leave holder boating on the river, agreed with the Government to organise a party to recover such Government and other stores as remained for one third salvage, provided they might be allowed the use of the diving apparatus, for which they had agreed to pay one twelfth of all goods they may recover. These terms were acceded to, and on Wednesday morning, Crawley started from Perth, accompanied by Rodriguez, who was also a ticket-of-leave holder."¹⁵ His share of the salvage allowed John to buy a boat.

By October that year, he was operating the *Lady Fitzgerald* between Fremantle and Perth.¹⁶

By December 1852, John had repaid £4 3s 6d of his passage money, and repaid all of the money (£7) by June 1853.

In January 1853, there was a fare increase for boats operating on the Swan River.¹⁷

The following year, in August 1853, the newspaper reported that the passage boat belonging to John Crawley capsized in Rocky Bay. The prompt assistance rendered by F. Caporn's boat, which was nearby, enabled some of the passengers who were in the water to be picked up and saved.¹⁸

In December 1853, John certified that he had examined the bottom of the barque *Northumbria*, which was slightly damaged in Gage Roads in November 1853. He used Bush's patent diving apparatus and found that the false keel of the boat had splintered approximately 3 feet and was rubbing off a small amount of copper from the bottom of the rudder. The ship was still seaworthy.

The above is the last evidence found of John in Western Australia.

Victoria

John was living in Belfast, Victoria, now known as Port Fairy, by February 1855.

The immigrant ship *Nestor* arrived at Portland in September 1854. She was about to depart for Madras in November when she slipped her mooring and eventually sank in the harbour. Captain Brown, carpenter Jolly and 2nd mate Robertson were all charged with feloniously injuring the barque with intent to destroy her. At their trial in December, they were found not guilty. Among other problems with the old ship, a diver found a hole in the bottom. A company was formed to salvage the *Nestor*.

In a letter to the Portland Guardian, the acting manager of the Nestor Company, Thomas Clarke, said:

"From the disappointments I continued to meet in not procuring a diving helmet, I was induced to endeavour to have one made in Portland. This was done under the superintendence of a person who

NOTICE.
THE Gig **LADY FITZGERALD**
will leave Perth every morning at
half-past Seven o'clock, with or without
Passengers, weather permitting. Leaving
Fremantle same day at half-past Two in
the afternoon.
JOHN CRAWLEY.

Notice to the Public.
WE, the undersigned boatmen on the
river, between Perth and Fremantle,
hereby make known that in consequence of
the high prices of provisions, &c., we have
raised the fare for passengers to 2s each way,
and freight of goods to 15s per ton; to take
effect from 10th of January.
J. CRAWLEY, of the Lady FitzGerald
and Chief Ranger.
J. JOYCE, of the Mary Ann.
W. REWELL, of the Swan.
W. LAWRENCE, of the Amelia and
the Native Chief.
Jan. 8, 1853.

¹⁵ The Perth Gazette and Independent Journal of Politics and News, 1 October 1852, p4

¹⁶ The Perth Gazette and Independent Journal of Politics and News, 22 October 1852, p3

¹⁷ Inquirer, 26 January 1853, p4

¹⁸ The Perth Gazette and Independent Journal of Politics and News, 19 August 1853, p2

professed to understand it. On the completion of the bell, he was unable to go down in it, and as there was no person in Portland that would undertake the submarine work, I went down to Belfast. I engaged a competent diver to come to Portland and give me his opinion on the state of the property as it now lies."

The diver engaged was John Crowley. In a letter to Clarke, he said:

- 1st. I consider the small quantity of sand accumulated in her of no consequence whatever.
- 2nd. I consider that the whole or greater part of the remaining property can be saved if proper apparatus can be procured.
- 3rd. The apparatus given to me will not do for the work. If you obtain the apparatus in its entirety, I will be ready to perform the work. I am perfectly satisfied it will pay the company to go to the expense of a complete apparatus.

Clarke stated in his letter to the newspaper: The person who submitted this report is a person of experience and character, currently serving as the coxswain of the harbour master's boat in Belfast. I have made arrangements for him to attend the production of the helmet, which I have also taken prompt steps to ensure, although unforeseen delays have occurred. I believe I may congratulate the company on some signs of success in the enterprise.¹⁹

Around this time, John met Sarah Gwilliam in Portland.

Wife 4.

Sarah Gwilliam arrived on the immigrant ship *Oithona* at Portland on 30 January 1855. On board the vessel were John Brobyn, Hannah Brobyn (Sarah's sister) and Elizabeth Brobyn. Mrs Must hired Sarah on 17 February 1855 for a period of three months.

On 24 March 1855, at Portland by the Presbyterian minister, John Crowley, 36, Master Mariner, born in Kent, son of William Crowley, Master Mariner, and Sarah Stewart, married Sarah Gwilliam, 24, born in Gloucestershire, daughter of James Gwilliam, farmer, and Elizabeth Ambrey. Both John and Sarah were residing in Portland.

March 24. 1855	John Crowley	Kent
at Portland	Sarah Gwilliam	Gloucestershire

Master Mariner	36	Portland	Portland	William Crowley	Master Mariner
	24	do	do	Sarah Stewart	
				James Gwilliam	Farmers
				Elizabeth Ambrey	

This Marriage was solemnised between

us

According to

In the presence of us

By (or before) me

(Officiating Minister,

John had not been paid for his salvage work at Portland. In October 1855, he applied to settle his claim against the Nestor Company through a lawyer. If not paid, he would commence action against the gentlemen composing the company.²⁰

¹⁹ Portland Guardian and Normanby General Advertiser, 15 February 1855, p2

²⁰ Portland Guardian and Normanby General Advertiser, 29 October 1855, p2

Their son, Alfred John Crowley, was born in 1856 in Portland. However, around the same time, the newspaper reported a case of marital desertion.

"Sarah Guelliem Crowley, wife of John Crowley, late Diver at Portland, laid a complaint at the Police Office against her husband for not supplying her with maintenance. Complainant deposed: My husband left me about four months ago, and has contributed nothing towards the support of either my infant child or myself since. I am in a state of utter destitution, being without the means of procuring any of the necessaries of life, and as my husband is well able to maintain me, I pray that a warrant may be granted for his apprehension with a view to his being compelled to do so. He is now, I have been informed, in Melbourne. A warrant was granted".²¹

Later in the month, the same newspaper said: "We reported some days ago that a warrant had been issued against Crowley, a diver, for deserting his wife. Defendant was brought back and has been ordered by the Bench to pay fifteen shillings weekly for the support of his wife".²²

Electoral District of Portland, 21 July 1856 to 30 June 1857, shows John Crowley, Glenelg Street, Mariner, household, owner by R. Herbertson, Glenelg St. John seems to have moved on by the time the roll was published.

Possible Paternity Case.

Affiliation. In February 1857, Bridget Mealey summoned John William Crowley as the father of her nearly six-month-old illegitimate child. Mr O'Brien appeared as attorney for the complainant and Messrs Read and Muttelbury for the defence. The evidence engaged the attention of the Court from eleven until one o'clock, when the Police Magistrate dismissed the complaint; and Mr O'Brien gave notice of appeal. Mr Muttelbury told Mr O'Brien there was no appeal in such a case, but Mr O'Brien said he would see about that.²³

His wife, Sarah Crowley, did not stay in Portland; she moved to Hamilton to be near her sister, Hannah Brobbin/Brobyn.

In 1862, Joseph Wilson v. Brobbin, a case under the Master and Servant Act, was before the court in Hamilton.

On 11 March 1862, Joseph Wilson contracted with Sarah Crowley for her to serve him as housemaid or general servant for a period of three months, at a salary of £15 per year. An agreement to this effect was signed. It appears that the woman had been residing with the plaintiff for a considerable time on terms of greater intimacy than those specified in the Masters and Servants Act. A child was born - Josine Wilson Crowley Wilson, born in 1859 in Hamilton. After a disagreement, Sarah left Wilson and went to her sister, Hannah Brobbin. She refused to return, and Wilson now prosecuted Brobbin for harbouring his hired servant. The defendant (John Brobbin) said he and his wife were anxious to prevent their sister (Sarah) from continuing to live an immoral life. They would rather see her in prison than fulfil the agreement she had made with Wilson. He hinted that she was not of very sound mind. The defendant (Brobbin) was fined 20s.²⁴

There were numerous people called John Crowley or Crawley in Australia around this period. John would have been in his mid-40s in 1860. He would have had little trouble gaining a position on a vessel either within Australian waters or elsewhere. What became of him has not yet been discovered.

²¹ Portland Guardian and Normanby General Advertiser, 16 April 1856, p3

²² Portland Guardian and Normanby General Advertiser, 28 April 1856, p3

²³ The Age, 9 February 1857, p5.

²⁴ Hamilton Spectator and Grange District Advertiser, 22 March 1862, p2

Summary of marriages found.

William John Crowley	
Born	11 March 1814, Seasalter, Kent, England
Baptism	10 July 1814, Whitstable, Kent
Parents	Sarah Crowley
Wife 1	Mary Ann Mitchell
Marriage 1	22 June 1834, Ardkeen, Co. Down, Ireland
Children	John William Mitchell Crowley (1836); George Sharp Crowley (1842)
Wife 2	Anne Eliza Morgan
Marriage 2	1845, Clifton Registry Office, Bristol
Children	None documented
Wife 3	Isabella Hall
Marriage 3	18 July 1848, St Nicholas Church, Liverpool
Children	None
Wife 4	Sarah Gwilliam
Marriage 4	24 March 1855, Portland, Victoria
Children	Alfred John Crowley (1856)