

## Timothy Curtin, 2299, Robert Small

Researched by Marcia Watson

Name variations: Curtain, Curtan,

Timothy Curtin was born about 1819, possibly in Dungarvan, County Waterford. The first time he appeared in court was in 1849:

830. Timothy Curtin, 30, 5'5½", grey eyes, brown hair, sallow complexion, Catholic, resides Dungarvan, no education, labourer, committed on 19 May 1849 for having in his possession concealed arms and stolen shirts, convicted 2 July 1849 at Dungarvan of larceny and having arms, he was sentenced to 15 calendar months hard labor. Discharged from prison on 2 October 1850.<sup>1</sup>

Two months after being discharged from Gaol, he was back before the court:

1281. Timothy Curtin, 31, see No 830 of 1849, 2nd conviction. He was committed on 10 December 1850 for having in possession a stolen mortar, convicted of larceny on 8 January 1851 at Dungarvan and sentenced to one calendar month hard labor. He was discharged from Gaol on 8 February 1851.<sup>2</sup>

His appearance in court was reported in the newspaper with a warning:

Timothy Curtin was placed at the bar and charged with having in his possession a copper mortar, the property of Patrick Coman Esq, an apothecary, with a value of 5/-. Sentenced to one-month imprisonment and hard labor. The Barrister gave the prisoner this admonition "that if he (prisoner) should come before the court again, and found guilty of a similar offence, surely, he (prisoner) should cross the seas, as this had been the second offence against him". The prisoner kindly thanked the court for their partiality towards him on the present occasion and hoped that he would never come to trouble them again. (laughter).<sup>3</sup>

Timothy took little notice of the warning and appeared in court a month later:

Timothy Curtin, Jeremiah Colbert, Patt Sullivan and James Finger, charged with breaking and feloniously entering the house of George Keily Esq, Solicitor, Spring Mount, on the 13th instant, and stealing six silver teaspoons, six silver forks, two silver table spoons, a silver marrow spoon, one table cloth, a large lot of ivory-handled knives and some towelling. Five of the silver spoons were found on T. Curtin's person. The Magistrate held a private investigation in the case, the result of which is not known at this time.<sup>4</sup> Timothy and his accomplices James Finger, Patrick Sullivan and Jeremiah Colbert here tried Dungarvan Quarter Sessions in April for burglary and robbery and were sentenced to 10 years transportation.<sup>5</sup>

The Gaol Register records:

395. Timothy Curtin, 32, see 1281 of 1850, third conviction, committed 15 March 1851 for having in possession stolen silver spoons etc., convicted of burglary and robbery on 10 April 1851 at Dungarvan and sentenced to 10 years transportation. The image has been cut off in microfilming, but at some stage.<sup>6</sup>

In a letter to the editor of the Waterford News on 14 July 1851, Timothy is mentioned:

One Timothy Curtin, a "rag and bone" merchant, having received from one of the 'gents' a quantity of silver plate, the property of a gentleman convenient to this town, was on his way to Waterford to dispose of it when detected by the police, he with his associates, was prosecuted at our Quarter Sessions, and transported for a period of ten years; and while such conduct is carried on by these "roving cadgers" so long shall Waterford Union be supplied with a sufficient share of "live stock".<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Waterford Prison General Register 1849-1850, Book number 1/39/3, Year 1849, item 2

<sup>2</sup> Prison Registers Waterford Prison General Register 1850-1851, Book number 1/39/4, 1850, item 1

<sup>3</sup> Waterford News, 17 January 1851, p2

<sup>4</sup> Waterford News, 28 February 1851, p2 Dungarvan Petty Sessions

<sup>5</sup> Waterford Mail, 19 April 1851, p2

<sup>6</sup> Prison Registers Waterford Prison General Register 1850-1851, Book number 1/39/4, 1851, item 1

<sup>7</sup> Waterford News, 18 July 1851, p3

Timothy and his associates were possibly among the 61 convicts transferred from the County Gaol to Spike Island Prison near Queenstown, Cork, on 9 September 1851 in readiness for the voyage to Western Australia. The *Robert Small* arrived on 20 April 1853 from Deptford and, after embarking 309 convicts, sailed on 1 May. Six convicts died before the ship reached Fremantle on 19 August 1853, and several convicts were admitted to hospital over the next few days.<sup>8</sup>

On arrival at Fremantle, he was described as:

2299. Timothy Curtin, 33, 5'5", dark brown hair, blue eyes, oval face, swarthy complexion, stout stature, scar on right side of chin, a labourer and widower with two children.<sup>9</sup>

His two children appear to be:

Maria Cartain was baptised on 15 May 1842 at Dungarvan, daughter of Timothy Cartain and Margarita Cusack.<sup>10</sup>

Thomas Curtin was baptised on 28 January 1844 at Dungarvan, son of Timothy Curtin and Margarita Cusack.<sup>11</sup>

No trace has been found of a marriage, the death of Margarita or what happened to the children.

Timothy was among the last convicts to be transferred to the prison from the ship on 12 September 1853. He is recorded as Timothy Curtin.

On 27 March 1854, it appears he was appointed a constable, although no convict number is recorded to confirm this.<sup>12</sup>

The image shows a handwritten document with the following text:

1854 Mar 27	The undermentioned prev. prisoners are appointed Constables
1415	Edward Rowe
1458	J. Ferrant
1345	W. Osborne
1521	W. Blackford
1341	J. Wick
2569	Mc Eoy
	J. Curtin

Like many convicts, he suffered from ophthalmia and, on 10 March 1855, was sent to hospital. He was still there on 16 March.

He applied for permission to marry on 5 June 1855, which was granted as he could support a wife. No marriage has been recorded, and he has disappeared from Western Australian records.

He possibly went to Victoria. There is an unmarried Timothy Curtin, 55, miner, leaving Victoria for London, per *Essex*, on 1 March 1873, travelling 3<sup>rd</sup> class or steerage. However, other people have the same name, so he may not convict Timothy Curtin.

<sup>8</sup> Waterford Mail, 06 September 1851, p2, 10 September 1851, p2

<sup>9</sup> SROWA, Acc 128, 1-32.

<sup>10</sup> <http://registers.nli.ie/registers/vtls000632182#page/1/mode/1up>

<sup>11</sup> <http://registers.nli.ie/registers/vtls000632182#page/1/mode/1up>

<sup>12</sup> SROWA, Description: Superintendent Orders, 1850 - 1854 (So1 - So3)

## Prison history of men sentenced with Timothy Curtin.

**Jeremiah Colbert**, 19, arrived per *Robert Small*, convict 2297

1222. Jeremiah Colbert, 18, 5'6¼", hazel eyes, brown hair, fair complexion, from Kilgobenet, Catholic, can't read or write, a labourer was convicted 8 January 1851 at Dungarvan with stealing sheets and sentenced to one calendar and to be privately whipped the day before his discharge. Discharged 8 February 1851.<sup>13</sup>

He was back in court the following month:

397. Jeremiah Colbert, 19, see No 1222 of 1850, second committal. Committed on 15 March 1851 and fully committed on 26 March on a charge of breaking into a dwelling house and stealing. He was convicted on 10 April 1851 at Dungarvan of burglary and robbery and sentenced to ten years transportation.<sup>14</sup>

2297. Jeremiah Colbert, 21, 5'11½", brown hair, grey eyes, long face, fresh complexion, stout stature, C on back of right hand, a labourer and single.<sup>15</sup>

**James Finger**, 19, arrived per *Phoebe Dunbar*, convict 2452.

694. James Finger, 18, 5'3¼", hazel eyes, black hair, swarthy complexion, Catholic, can read, a labourer from Dungarvan was convicted of stealing Union clothes on 8 June 1850 at Dungarvan was fined 6d and 9s costs or 14 days had labor and once privately whipped. End of record cut off.<sup>16</sup>

907. James Finger, 18, 2nd conviction see 694 of 1850. convicted on 24 October 1850 of stealing sheets and sentenced to one calendar month and to be privately whipped the day before his discharge in presence of M. Officer. Discharged 24 November 1850.<sup>17</sup>

396. James Finger, 19, see No 907 of 1850, third committal. Committed on 15 March 1851 and fully committed on 26 March on a charge of breaking into a dwelling house and stealing. He was convicted on 10 April 1851 at Dungarvan of burglary and robbery and sentenced to ten years transportation.<sup>18</sup>

2452. James Finger, 22, 5'6¾", brown hair, hazel eyes, oval face, swarthy complexion, stout, slightly freckled, I T & cross on left arm, 2 circles and 5 dots on back of left hand, a labourer and single.<sup>19</sup>

**Patrick Sullivan**, 16, he stayed in Ireland.

389. Patrick Sullivan, 15, 4'8", from Kidmore, breach of workhouse rules, was convicted on 16 April 1850 at Dungarvan and sentenced to one month hard labor.<sup>20</sup>

1221. Patrick Sullivan, 15, see No 389 of 1850, second conviction. Convicted 8 January 1851 at Dungarvan of stealing sheets and sentenced to one calendar month hard labor and be once privately whipped the day before discharge. Discharged 8 February 1851.<sup>21</sup>

398. Patrick Sullivan, 16, see No 1221 of 1850, third committal. Committed on 15 March 1851 and fully committed on 26 March on a charge of breaking into a dwelling house and stealing. He was convicted on 10 April 1851 at Dungarvan of burglary and robbery and sentenced to ten years transportation.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Prison Registers Waterford Prison General Register 1850-1851, Book number 1/39/4, item 1

<sup>14</sup> Prison Registers Waterford Prison General Register 1850-1851, Book number 1/39/4, 1851, item 1

<sup>15</sup> SROWA, Acc 128, 1-32.

<sup>16</sup> Waterford Prison General Register 1850-1851, Book number 1/39/4, item 3

<sup>17</sup> Prison Registers Waterford Prison General Register 1850-1851, Book number 1/39/4, item 1

<sup>18</sup> Prison Registers Waterford Prison General Register 1850-1851, Book number 1/39/4, 1851, item 1

<sup>19</sup> SROWA, Acc 128, 1-32.

<sup>20</sup> Waterford Prison General Register 1849-1850, Book number 1/39/3, item 2 1850

<sup>21</sup> Prison Registers Waterford Prison General Register 1850-1851, Book number 1/39/4, item 1

<sup>22</sup> Prison Registers Waterford Prison General Register 1850-1851, Book number 1/39/4, 1851, item 1