

John Fenton, 188, *Mermaid*

Researched by Marcia Watson

Born	~1827
Parents	John Fenton and Margaret
Parent's marriage	
Siblings	Mary, Michael (~1824)
Wife	
Married	
Children	

John Fenton may have been born 16 May 1826; and baptised 21 May at St Peter's Priory, Liverpool.

On the 1841 census, living at Glasshouse Lane, Walton on the Hill, West Derby, Lancashire were:

John Fenton, 40, stonemason, born in Ireland

Margaret Fenton, 35, born in Ireland

Michael Fenton, 20, slaters apprentice, born Lancashire

John Fenton, 14 born in Lancashire

John had previous appearances in court:

John Fenton, 17, at Liverpool Borough Sessions on 3 February 1845, larceny from the person, 12 months.

John Fenton, 20, Liverpool Borough Session on 7 February 1848, larceny from the person, no prosecution.

Then, at the Liverpool Borough Sessions on 22 October 1849, prisoners tried before Gilbert Henderson, Esq., Recorder, with their respective sentences:

John Fenton, 22, for stealing one watch, the property of Edward Emmet – ten years.¹

John Fenton, 22, single, cannot read or write, stonemason, weighed 10 stone 9 lbs, Catholic, convicted on 22 October 1849 at Liverpool Borough Sessions of stealing from the person, after a previous conviction. He was sentenced to 10 years transportation. John had four convictions for vagrancy and one at Sessions; it was eight months since his last conviction. His mother, Margaret Fenton, lived at Jones place, Sawney Pope street, Liverpool, and said his father, John Fenton, lived at the same address in another register.

John was received at Millbank Prison on 16 January 1850 from Liverpool. He was then transferred to Pentonville Prison on 5 March 1850. John boarded the *Mermaid* on 20 December 1850 in London with 23 other prisoners. The ship then collected prisoners from Parkhurst and Portland Prisons before sailing on 30 December 1850 for Western Australia.

John's brother, Michael Fenton, was also in trouble with the law. In 1844 he was sentenced to 12 months at Cheshire in July for riot at Dutton.² At some stage, he went to London, and at the Central Criminal Court on 2 July 1849, Frederick Collins, Michael Fenton, and John Murphy on a charge of burglariously breaking and entering the dwelling-house of Thomas Weir and stealing 245 yards of woollen cloth and other goods, value £105; his goods. All were sentenced to 10 years transportation. Michael Fenton, a slater, born in Liverpool, said his father was John Fenton, a mason who lived in Prince Edward (Edwin) Lane, Liverpool. Michael had one conviction in Cheshire and one in Liverpool; the last one was six years ago (i.e. the Cheshire conviction in 1844). He was sent to Tasmania per the *Oriental Queen* in 1852, arriving in 1853. In Tasmania, he said his father was John, mother Margaret, brother John and sister Mary near Liverpool.³

¹ Liverpool Mercury, 06 November 1849, p4

² Chester Courant, 09 July 1844, p3

³ Michael Fenton, 27, plasterer, fresh complexion, large head, brown hair, whiskers and eyebrows, blue eyes, nose had been broken, Catholic, can't read, single and from Liverpool. Tas. Archives Office, CON33-1-114

The 1851 census, living at 35 Court, Ford Street, Liverpool, Liverpool Howard Street, Lancashire were:
John Finton, 45, stonemason, born in Ireland
Margaret Finton, 46, born in Ireland
They were visitors, with others, to Michael Kelly's family. Michael was a stonemason.
Note: all the places mentioned where the Fenton family lived are within a few miles of each other in Liverpool.

Convict, John Fenton arrived at Fremantle in May 1851 and was described as:
188. John Fenton, 23, 5'6", light hair, grey eyes, round face, fresh complexion, no marks, a mason and single.

What became of John Fenton after he received a Conditional Pardon in 1855 is unknown.