

William Hodges, 85, Hashemy

Researched by Marcia Watson

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| Baptism | 26 March 1823, St Mary, Cheltenham, Gloucestershire |
| Parents | William Hodge and Sarah Cratchley |
| Parent's marriage | 10 November 1807 at Rodborough, Gloucestershire |
| Siblings | Henry (1810), Eliza (1815), Mary Ann (1815), Emma (1817), John (1820), Thomas |
| Wife | |
| Married | |
| Children | |

On the 1841 census, living in Ambrose Street, Cheltenham, Gloucestershire were:¹
William Hodges, 55, plasterer; Sarah, 55; William, 15, plasterer

His parents were still living at the same address in 1851. William Hodges, a plasterer, died in the Union Workhouse at Cheltenham, aged 88, buried 11 July 1872. Sarah was buried on 29 January 1856 at Cheltenham, aged 75.

The first record of William's life of crime was the Gloucestershire County Assizes on 28 June 1842: Joseph Palmer, 23, and Wm. Hodges, 18, were charged with stealing, at Cheltenham, about 40lbs. of lead affixed to a building, the property of Frederick Monroe, Palmer was found guilty, and sentenced to six months hard labour in the Penitentiary. Hodges was acquitted.²

Prison register:

56. William Hodges, 18, 5'7½", brown hair, grey eyes, long face, common complexion, on right arm, a sem. two flags half-moon, W.H. 3 anchors, a mermaid, a glass two pipes on the hand, three dots on left arm, a very slim make, can't read or write, labourer. He was admitted to prison on 7 May 1842.

Charged on the oath of Henry Waite of feloniously stealing at Cheltenham forty pounds of lead from a building belonging to Frederick Munroe. Not Guilty.³

At the Michaelmas Quarter Sessions, Gloucester. 17 October 1843.⁴

William Hodges, 18, for stealing at Cheltenham. ten solk handkerchiefs, &c. Sentenced to 18 months hard labour.

Prison register:

39. William Hodges, 18, See 56 Summer 1842, imperfect read & write, weighs 126 lbs. Charges on the oath of David Hearne of feloniously stealing at Cheltenham on 23 July, ten silk handkerchiefs and 20 yards of ribbon, his property. Eighteen calendar months in Penitentiary.

Discharged on 20 October 1843 (to Penitentiary), behaviour in prison orderly.

Penitentiary register of prisoners. Term expired 17 April 1845.

Then at the Gloucestershire Quarter Sessions, Gloucester. 1 July 1845.⁵

William Hodges, 20, and Thomas Pritchard, 18, were acquitted of stealing a coat and a hat from Thomas Mitchell, at Cheltenham.

Prison register:

Admitted on 16 June 1845. 753. William Hodges, a plasterer of Cheltenham, 20, 5'9", brown hair, brown eyes, long face, fair complexion. Charged on the oath of Thomas Mitchell of feloniously stealing from his

¹ HO107/353/15, p52

² Gloucestershire Chronicle, 9 July 1842, p6

³ Gloucestershire Archives, Reference: Q/Gc/5/7, Q/Gc/7/1, Q/Gc/6/1

⁴ Cheltenham Chronicle, 26 October 1843, p3

⁵ Cheltenham Journal and Gloucestershire Fashionable Weekly Gazette, 07 July 1845, p2

person at Cheltenham on the 14 June 1845, a coat and a hat the property of the said Thomas Mitchell. Acquitted.

“I have led a dissolute life for some time”. His character cannot be worse. “My father is living, he is plasterer”. Behaviour in prison good.

William faced the judges again, at Gloucester on 4 August 1847.⁶

William Hodges and Thos. Groves by T. Pilkington, and S. Wightwick, Esqrs., for breaking into Joseph Sims’ dwelling-house and stealing therefrom 500 pence, and 500 half-pence, his property.

Prison register:

Admitted on 24 June 1847. 1869. Thomas Hodges, a plasterer of Cheltenham, 21, 5’8¾”, brown hair, brown eyes, long face, fair complexion. Marks – the sun, banners W half-moon H, 3 anchors, mermaid on the right arm, glass and piper across the back of the right hand, ring on third finger of left hand. Charged on the oath of Joseph Sims and others of burglariously breaking and entering the dwelling-house of said Joseph Sims in the night of the 22 June 1847, and feloniously stealing 500 pence and 500 halfpence, his property.[£3 20d]. Charged with Thomas Groves.

Not a True Bill. Discharged by Proclamation.

Native of Cheltenham, Father a plasterer, Mother stops at home. “Since I was here last, I have been working for Wm Hicks, a plasterer in Westminster”. Goes to no place of Worship. Orderly in prison.

Once again, William was committed to the County Gaol, in March 1848, to await trial.⁷

On Monday, a young man of noted character, named William Hodges, apparently about 22 years of age, was brought up, charged with having, on the 23d at December last, broken and entered the dwelling-house of Henry Hall, a farmer residing Swindon, and with stealing therefrom, £86 in banknotes and gold and silver coin. It may be premised that a few days after the offence was committed, a notorious character named George(*sic*) Groves, who was taken at the time of the robbery, was committed for trial at the assizes, charged with being concerned in the robbery. The prisoner escaped at the time but was captured in London on Saturday last. None of the money was found upon Groves, and it is, therefore, presumed that Hodges had it in his possession at the time of his escape.

The first witness examined was the wife of the prosecutor, from whose evidence it appears that she left her house at ten minutes past eight o’clock on the night in question. She locked the door safely after her and put the key in her pocket. When she returned home at half-past nine, she found several of her neighbours in her house, who told her several robbers had broken in during her absence. Upon going to her bedroom, she found that chest where she kept her money had been forced open, and all the money was carried away. It consisted of nine £5 banknotes, and one £10 note, about £30 in gold, and £1 in silver coin, amounting altogether to £86 Her boxes and drawers were all rummaged, but no other property was taken.

John Wilson, youth in the service of the Rev. S. Raymond, of Swindon, deposed to seeing Mrs Hall go out, and shortly after, he saw the prisoner, whom he had known before, near the house, and another man (Groves) standing short distance off. Witness went into his master’s stable but remained only about a minute. When he came out, he saw the prisoner and his companion standing close to Mr Hall’s gate. Thinking they were up to no good, he went along to his brother’s, about one hundred yards, and told him. In company with another young man, named Francis Teal, and his brother, the witness returned to Hall’s house, and they approached it, they saw the light in the upstairs window. When they got to the door, the prisoner and his companion rushed out and made off at full speed around the house, through the orchard, and over the hedge, closely pursued Teal, and the two Wilsons. After crossing the hedge, the prisoner out off to the left and his companion to the right. Teal, in his evidence, deposed that they followed Groves, who took the right-hand direction. When the witness caught up with him, Groves turned around and struck him.

⁶ Wilts and Gloucestershire Standard, 29 June 1847, p3

⁷ Gloucester Journal, 18 March 1848, p4

He followed, however, and succeeded in holding him until assistance arrived, and he was given up to the police. The prisoner escaped. This witness also identified the prisoner.

P. S. Seyes deposed that he proceeded to Hall's house upon bearing the robbery, about ten o'clock on that night, and from the description of Hodges, he went in search of him but found him not at the place where he believed he at the time resided. The prisoner had not since been seen in Cheltenham, although frequently seen before that. Since the robbery, the witness had searched for him both in Birmingham and London. He succeeded in apprehending the prisoner on Saturday evening last, in a public house known Johnny Broom's, in Ayr-street, London. When informed of the charge against him, the prisoner said he knew nothing about it. This was the case against the prisoner, who made no defence. He was committed to trial at the assizes.⁸

At the Gloucestershire Lent Assizes, held at Gloucester in April 1848.

Thomas Groves, 23, and William Hodges, 23, were indicted for entering the dwelling-house of Henry Hall, at Swindon, on 23 December 1847, and stealing therein, about £16. Mr Phillimore conducted the prosecution, and Messrs. Cooke, Millman, and Vaughan defended the prisoners, whom it appears had been seen by a man named Simons on the 12 December, near Mr Hall's gate. They said they had forgotten something and must go back for it; they wished him "good night" and went through the Swindon churchyard.

On the night of the robbery, a boy named Wilton, in the service of the Rev. Mr Raymond, observed them near Mr Hall's house. He went for his brothers, and they returned with another man when the two men rushed out at the door of the house, and through the garden, over the wall of which they jumped and then separated, one going to the right, and the other to the left. The witnesses pursued them, and in Mr Surmon's Park, they captured Groves, who swore if they did not let him go, he would blow their brains out. A search was made for Hodges at his father's house in Cheltenham, but he was not found there.

Sergt. Seyes went to Birmingham and London for him and apprehended him on the 11 March, in the metropolis, at the house of Johnny Broome, the fighter. On telling him the charge against him, he said he knew nothing of it.

On Mrs Hall's return home, she found an entrance had been obtained into the house by picking the locks of the door, a chest in one of the bedrooms forced, and money to the amount of in cash and notes, as named in the indictment, stolen.

Superintendent Hambidge found a bunch of thirteen skeleton keys in Mr Surman's Park, where it was supposed Groves had thrown them, just before he was taken. There appears little doubt but that Hodges had the money with which he made his escape to London. Previous convictions were found against both prisoners, and they were severally sentenced to be transported for fourteen years.

[These two convicts were the most daring depredators in Cheltenham, and Groves, in particular, has been three times tried for burglary, besides other offences.]⁹

Prison register:

Admitted on 13 March 1848, 2369. William Hodges, plaster, can't read or write, 20, 5'8¾", brown hair, brown eyes, long face, fair complexion. Marks – the sun, banners W half moon H, 3 anchors, mermaid on right arm, glass and piper across back of right hand, ring on third finger of left hand. Charged with feloniously breaking and entering the dwelling-house of Henry Hall at Swindon on 23 December 1847 and stealing therein nine five pound notes, one £10 note, thirty Sovereigns and other monies. Guilty.

Transported for 14 years. Secretary of State's Order. Since he has been here last, he has been working in London for Mr Brown in Westminster Church. Behaviour was good in prison.

The following transports have just been removed from the Gloucestershire County Gaol to Millbank: Thomas Groves, William Hodges and 18 others.¹⁰

⁸ Gloucester Journal, 18 March 1848, p3

⁹ Cheltenham Journal and Gloucestershire Fashionable Weekly Gazette, 10 April 1848, p2

A Petition for a mitigation of sentence was sent to the Home Office:

Received on 6 December 1848.¹¹

Cheltenham Dec^r 5th 1848

Sir

I beg to enclose a memorial which I have requested to present to you. I know nothing of the merits of the case, & can only answer for the signatures being genuine,

I have the honor to be, Sir, your ... servant, Grenville Berkeley.

The Rt Hon^{ble}, Sir Geo. Grey Bart M.P.

&c &c &c

Home Office

To the Right Honourable Sir George Grey

Her most Gracious Majesty's Secretary of State

We the undersigned humbly petition for a Commutation of the Sentence passed at the late Gloucester Assizes on William Hodges Son of an old man and respectable Tradesman of Cheltenham whose name is William Hodges and who is sentenced to be Transported for a Term of 14 Years unless prevented by your Kind interference.

We therefore humbly Pray that in Consideration of his Youth together with the deep Affliction of his aged Parents and relatives this appeal may meet with your Kind and Merciful Consideration

And your Petitioners will ever pray.

Signed by 24 men, appear to mostly trades or business people.

Cover of Petition 230/18

William Hodges, 20, Gloucester Lent Assizes, March 1848, Housebreaking, 14 Years Transportation

Gaol report - convicted and thrice tried before

Nil GG

Mitigation of the prisoners sentence & prayed for in consideration of his youth & the affliction of his parents.

Answered 20 December 1848.

William Hodges was sent to Millbank Penitentiary, received there on 24 April 1848 from Gloucester Gaol. According to the register, he was 20 years old, single, could not read or write, a plasterer, convicted on 29 March 1848 at Gloucester Assizes of housebreaking, and sentenced to 14 years transportation. He had been convicted once previously and thrice acquitted. William was then sent to Pentonville Prison on 6 December 1848, although the Pentonville register says he was received on 9 December. No Gaoler's report as to the character of the prisoner was received. Eight months later, William was removed to Portland Prison on 9 August 1849. He was reported twice, on 29 August and 11 October, for irregularity and disposed of as in Report Book and Misconduct Book.¹² From Portland, he boarded the *Hashemy* on 19 July 1850 for the voyage to Fremantle.¹³

His description on arrival at Western Australia in October 1850:¹⁴

85. William Hodges, 23, 5' 7³/₄", brown hair, blue eyes, long face, fair complexion, fresh appearance, a ring mark on 3rd finger of left hand, a plasterer and single.

General Register.

William could read and write well, and was indifferent to accounts. No family information was recorded.¹⁵

¹⁰ Cheltenham Journal and Gloucestershire Fashionable Weekly Gazette, 01 May 1848, p2

¹¹ HO18/230

¹² Portland Prison. Governor's Journal, 24 November 1848 to 9 August 1850. PCOM 2/354

¹³ HO24/4; HO24/16; HO8/105; PCOM2/383

¹⁴ SROWA Acc 128/40-3

He appears a few times on the Casual Sick list at Fremantle.¹⁶

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|-----------|--------------------------|-----------|--|
| Hodges Wm | 16 November ember1850 | Headache | Opening medicine |
| Hodges Wm | 2 December 1850 | Diarrhoea | Powder, Chalk mixture three time a day |
| Hodges Wm | 25 March 1851 | Headache | Pil: & draught |
| Hodges Wm | 26 March 1851 | | Infus Gent |
| Hodges Wm | 27 March 1851 | | |
| Hodges Wm | 29 March 1851 | | Mixture febris |
| Hodges Wm | 30 March 1851 | Debility | Quinine |
| Hodges Wm | 31 March 1851 | | Quinine |
| Hodges Wm | 5 April 1851 | | Aper: medicine, Puls Dovers |

William was issued with a Ticket of leave on 26 August 1851.¹⁷ [Register Acc 1156 R21B says 10 August]

A few months later, at the Fremantle Court, 12 February 1852:¹⁸

W. Fox, W. Hodges, and Edward Harley were charged with disorderly conduct and assaulting B. M'Gee, fined 10s each and expenses.

William was granted a Conditional Pardon was granted on 2 February 1856.

William Hodges went to South Australia, probably leaving Fremantle on the *Thane of Fire* on 4 March 1856. William Stanley, *alias* John Green [Staniland 125], also is thought to have travelled on the same ship to South Australia.

At Adelaide, in July 1856:

William Stanley, *alias* John Green, William Hodges, William Thompson and George Atkinson, were charged on suspicion of having broken into the dwelling house of John Clark jun, Brighton, and stolen £38 in Banknotes on Sunday last. Mr Andrews appeared for the prosecution. Mr Parker for G Atkinson, and Mr Smith for the other prisoners.

John Clark, a farmer, Tapley's Hill, said he knew Stanley, who had worked for the witnesses father during last ploughing season when he went by the name of Green. On Saturday last saw the prisoner in Adelaide when he asked the witness if he had sold his bullocks. He replied, yes, for £35. Prisoner said he then lodged at the Flagstaff Inn. On Saturday night witness put £38 in notes in a box, which was placed in a closet upstairs, over the staircase. Both the door of the latter and the box were locked. On Sunday morning, witness went from home, having locked all the doors, five in number, and, on his return, about 9 in the evening, found the front-door half-open. On examining the other doors, I found the locks had been picked. The box was broken open and the money taken. He left a dog tied up to watch the premises, which had been let loose.

Richard George, a driver of the Eclipse, Brighton omnibus, remembered seeing four men walking down the South road, near the Hand and Heart public house, together, about 4 o'clock on Sunday evening. I identified Hodges and Atkinson; they were going towards Mr Clark's house.

John Cocking jun, son of the landlord of the Flagstaff Inn, deposed that, as he was returning from Adelaide about 6 o'clock on Sunday evening, he overtook four men going in the direction of the prosecutor's house. I could not identify any of them. Green had lodged at his father's for about a fortnight.

Sergeant Badman – Knew the prisoners for about four months. He had frequently seen them together. Thompson had recently arrived from Melbourne. Saw three of them together on Saturday night in the City Bridge Inn. Atkinson, Hodges and Thompson occupied a house together in Brown-street, in which was only

¹⁵ SROWA Acc 1156 R21A

¹⁶ SROWA Acc 1156 CS1

¹⁷ SROWA Acc 1156 R&D1-2; Acc 128/40-3

¹⁸ The Perth Gazette and Independent Journal of Politics and News (WA : 1848 - 1864), 20 February 1852, p4

a box containing old clothes. I apprehended Stanley in the Castle Inn on Monday. Witness asked him what his name was. He said, "Why do you wish to know?" The witness replied that he was a policeman and apprehended him on suspicion of felony. Prisoner said his name was Stanley; that he came in the Than of Fife from England. Witness said that he did not come thence, on which the prisoner admitted he came from Fremantle. The prisoner said he had been working at Tapley's Hill. I took him into custody on Tuesday evening in company with Shackel and another policeman. I took Thompson and Hodges into custody. On the former, he found £9 9s 6d and on Hodges £1 6s, in notes, gold and silver. Took Atkinson in the Cumberland Arms, and on searching him in a private room, he put on the table £57 10s in notes and gold. On searching the house where prisoners lived, they found seven files which Hodges said were his. The files produced were sharpened at the point as if intended for use as picklocks.

Mr Andrews said there was no further evidence at present but begged the prisoners might be remanded. Mr Parker and Mr Smith contended that there was no evidence against their clients, who should be discharged.

His Worship said he was informed that evidence would be forthcoming, and he should remand all the prisoners till Monday. Bail was applied for on behalf of Atkinson, which His Worship said he would take, provided due notice was given to the police to institute the necessary enquiry.¹⁹

Further information: Atkinson, Hodges and Thompson were discharged, Stanley acquitted in August.

<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/207094278?searchTerm=atkinson%20hodges&searchLimits=l-decade=185||l-state=South+Australia||l-year=1856||l-month=7>

<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/49761624?searchTerm=atkinson%20hodges&searchLimits=l-decade=185||l-state=South+Australia||l-year=1856||l-month=7>

Adelaide Gaol Register. 23 June 1856: William Hodges, 30, cannot read or write, single, CofE, plasterer, acquitted and discharged 30 July 1856.

Then on 11 May 1871, Magistrate Court, Strathalbyn, South Australia William Hodges was brought up on a warrant charged with giving drink to an aboriginal female. The prisoner pleaded not guilty.

P.T. Crofton deposed that on 24 March, the day of the Wellington Races, a great number of natives were drunk, and amongst them Tom Walker, who threatened the life of his lubra. He told him he got the liquor from his lubra.

Tommy Walker, an aboriginal, stated that he got red wine on Race day from his lubra. He thought it was colonial wine. He got a bottle and drank half of it.

Mary Walker, an aboriginal, said — Prisoner gave me a bottle of wine on the race day. Young Buffalo got me to get the wine because I had a blanket and could put it underneath. It was near Burford's tent.

Young Buffalo said — On the race day, got wine from the prisoner. I gave him a shilling for it. Told him to pass the wine to his lubra, because she had a blanket. It was red wine.

By Court — Have got wine from prisoner before.

Fined £2 and costs.²⁰ [note this is different from the Gaol Register]

Gaol Register: 12 May 1871, William Hodges, 45, cannot read or write, single, CofE, plasterer, came to South Australia in 1853 from Liverpool, fined £4 16s or one month. He served the time.

On 17 June 1880, at Adelaide [Possibly William Hodges]

A William Hoges and James Green, labourers, were fined 10s for drunkenness.²¹

What happened to William Hodges is unknown.

¹⁹ South Australian Register (Adelaide, SA : 1839 - 1900), 24 July 1856, p2

²⁰ Southern Argus (Port Elliot, SA : 1866 - 1954), 12 May 1871, p3

²¹ South Australian Register (Adelaide, SA : 1839 - 1900), 18 June 1880, p1