

Thomas Jones, 285, *Mermaid*

Researched by Marcia Watson

His real name is Robert Nugent

Baptism	23 June 1823, Manchester, Lancashire
Parents	James Nugent and Susannah Hemmings
Parent's marriage	
Siblings	Sarah (~1828), Elizabeth (~1830-1831), Mary (~1831), James (1833-1833), John (1835), Paul James (1837), Samuel Turnbull (1841), William (1844)
Wife	
Married	
Children	

In 1841, living at Bedfords Court, Manchester, Lancashire, were:
James Nugent, 40, a weaver, and his wife Susannah, 38, were born in Ireland.
Their children, Robert, 16; Sarah, 13; Mary, 18; John, 6; Paul, 3; all born in Lancashire.
Also, two lodgers, Jane Brambell, 44 and Charlotte Bramwell, 17, were born in Ireland.

Susannah Nugent died in the first quarter of 1847, aged 43. Her husband, James Nugent, probably died in 1859, aged 64.

Robert Nugent, 21, was convicted at the Manchester Borough Sessions on 22 February 1847 of shop breaking and stealing two lamps, the property of John Wells. He received two years in Lancaster Gaol.¹

Then, as Thomas Jones, *alias* Robert Nugent, was convicted on 18 April 1849 at Manchester of breaking and entering a dwelling house and stealing jewellery. He was sentenced to 15 years transportation. While at the New Bailey in Salford, he attempted to escape and was flogged. Thomas was transferred to Wakefield Gaol on 11 August 1849 and moved again on 3 July 1850 to Portland Prison. He embarked on the *Mermaid* on 28 December 1850 for the voyage to Western Australia.²

On arrival in May 1851, his description was:

285. Thomas Jones, 22, 5'4", dark brown hair, hazel eyes, long face, sallow complexion, cut on left thumb, a carpenter and single.³

On 25 June 1851, Thomas was on the 'casual sick list' at the prison with diarrhoea and was treated with a purgative. On the following two days, he received a chalk mixture.⁴

Thomas was convicted of stealing tobacco on 24 August 1854 and sentenced to 18 months hard labour. He was discharged on 11 February 1856. He was convicted at Guildford of refusing to work and disobedience and sentenced to three months hard labour. Then, on 3 July 1858, he was committed to prison for "Illegal &c", and was to remain there at the Governor's pleasure. He was released to a ticket of leave on 19 April 1859.⁵ The following week he began working for John de Silva of Perth.⁶

Missing Friends.

Information is requested of the present whereabouts of Thomas Jones, expirée, late 285; description – aged 50, 5'4", grey hair, hazel eyes, sallow complexion, cut on left thumb, a carpenter, would have received his Certificate of Freedom about 1868; Officers in charge of Sub-Districts will cause strict inquiry to be made

¹ Manchester Courier and Lancashire General Advertiser, 03 March 1847, p7

² PCOM2/283

³ SROWA Acc 128/1-32

⁴ SROWA Acc 1156 CS1-3

⁵ SROWA 1156 R10

⁶ Rica Erickson collection, LDS film 1560477

and report the result to the Detective Office, Perth. This man may be passing under the name of Robert Nugent. The inquiry is instituted by his brother Paul J Nugent, 271 Middleton Road, Oldham, Lancashire. ⁷

⁷ WA Police Gazette, 1879, p52