

Born	15 August 1825
Baptism	28 September 1825, St Giles without Cripplegate, London
Parents	Charles Gilson Norcott and Sarah Yates
Parent's marriage	30 June 1822 at St. Giles Cripplegate, London, by Banns. Charles needed his parent's consent.
Siblings	Ruth (1823), Charles Gibson (1829), half-sibling Ellen Norcott (1832)
Wife	
Married	
Children	

When Isaac was 3½ years old, his father, Charles Gibson Norcott, a carver and gilder, died of Typhus Fever at age 27. He was buried on 22 January 1829 at St Mary-Le-Strand, Westminster. The family lived at 4 Holywell Street, a street parallel to Strand near the church. Sarah Norcott was seven months pregnant and had two small children, Ruth and Isaac. On 22 March 1829, she applied to go into the 'House' to lie in for the birth of her third child, born on 31 March.<sup>1</sup>

Later in the year, Sarah Norcott applied for Settlement. Middlesex. Sarah Norcott, aged thirty-three and upwards, (residing at No 4 Holywell Street, Saint Danes in the said County, together with her children hereinafter described, to which Parish they have become actually chargeable).

Upon her Oath saith that she legally intermarried with her late husband Charles Gibson Norcott in the Parish Church of Saint Giles, Cripplegate, London on the thirtieth day of June in the year one thousand eight hundred and twenty two (by the surname Yates). That she has three children living, namely Ruth born the thirtieth day of August one thousand eight hundred and twenty three, Isaac born on the fifteenth day of August one thousand eight hundred and twenty five and Charles Gibson born on the thirty first day of March last; And that the said late husband died on the fourteenth day of January last and that she has not been married since his death. And the examiner particularly saith That the said late husband rented the House at No 4 Holywell Street in the said Parish of Saint Clement Danes.

Comments in pencil at the bottom of the page are unreadable.<sup>2</sup>

Sarah Norcott widow of Charles Gibson Norcott deceased being under proceedings for removal to St Mary le Strand but the signing having been declined by Mr Minshall the Magistrate under the Idea that the Renting of the late Husband and the widow might be so united as to form the year required by the Act of 59 Geo.3 but which was referred to the Clerk for investigation by the Magistrate – applied. Two shillings has been given as present relief, 3 shillings more promised for the week or until the Removal.<sup>3</sup>

Saint Clement Danes New Year's Day 1830. Mr Thomas Scrivener, Senior Churchwarden, distributed the Gifts of Ladies Bridgman & Middleton to 29 Poor Widows of this Parish. Sarah Norcott, 4 Holywell Street, received 8/6. The other 28 poor widows received 8/0. Sarah is not listed in a similar gift to widows on Good Friday, 1830.<sup>4</sup>

In 1833, the Westminster Parish Poor Law Records 1832–1833 show that £1 from Will Manning towards the maintenance of his child by Sarah Norcott, up to 6 March last was received. The child

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<sup>1</sup> Westminster Church of England Parish Registers, SML/PR/4/12; Westminster. Overseer Accounts 1827–1828, Overseer Records 1740, 1742, 1827–1828, 1828-1830, p349

<sup>2</sup> City of Westminster Archives Centre, Settlement examination books, 1828-1833, STC/B/120, p189

<sup>3</sup> St Clement Danes. Churchwarden Records 1825–1832, Parish Records 1825–1832, p225

<sup>4</sup> Westminster. St Danes Parish records

was Ellen, born 13 August 1832 and not baptised until 1837, when the family lived in Princes Row, St George Hanover Square. No father was recorded on the baptism.

Life was improving for the Norcott family by the 1841 census. Living at Little College Street, St Luke Chelsea, Kensington, were Sarah Norcott, 45, Sempstress, Charles Norcott, 14 and Ellen Norcott, 8. Ruth Norcott, 15, was living as a servant to Mary Yeates at Strand, St Martin in the Fields, London. Isaac Norcott, 15, was a tailor's apprentice living with tailor William Sayer, 30, in Mare Street, Hackney, London.<sup>5</sup>

On 18 September 1848, Isaac Norcott and his brother, Charles Gibson Norcott, were tried at the Old Bailey. They were charged with stealing, in the dwelling-house of Joshua Frederick Denham, clerk, 1 watch, 1 bill-case, and 1 cash-box, value £3 2s; and 3 sovereigns, 20 shillings, and 16 sixpences, his property; and burglariously breaking out of the said house.

Mr. Platt conducted the Prosecution.

Rev. Joshua Frederick Denham. I am the rector of St. Mary-le-Strand, and reside in chambers at 1, New Inn, St. Clement Danes. On Tuesday evening, 5 September, before going to bed, I placed my gold watch on a watch-stand, on a little bracket, in my study—I had in a cupboard a deed-box, containing a cash-box, and an empty bill-case—I must have left my keys on my table, for I found them there next morning—in a money-box, on the chiffonier I left three sovereigns, 20s., about sixteen sixpences, and about 9d. in copper—the box was locked—I came down next morning, between five and six o'clock, and my watch was gone, and the gold and silver from the box; nothing but the pence remained—the box was locked, apparently as it had been the previous evening—the cash-box was gone—I found the outer-door unbolted inside—the prisoners were in the habit of coming to my chambers to see my housekeeper, who is their aunt, and has been with me twelve years—they have had an opportunity of seeing where I kept my money; they have seen me take money out to give to one of them.

Isaac Norcott. Q. Can you swear the bill-case was in the box?

A. Yes—I believe I have not given you any money for the last three years.

Jane Blake Norcott. I have had charge of the prosecutor's chambers for twelve years—there was no other servant—the prisoners are my nephews, and have been in the habit of visiting me at Mr. Denham's—they have seen Mr. Denham take money out in my presence—on the 5th, Charles came to see me, about eight or half-past eight, and remained till ten o'clock—after he had been there a short time he asked me for the key of the water-closet—I heard a noise, as he was going out—it was dark, and I thought he could not find the door—he returned in five or six minutes—he and I went out together at ten—he wished me good night, in Wych-street, and I came back directs and went to bed about half-past eleven, about the same time as my master—I believe I bolted the out and inside doors of the chambers, as usual; I will not be positive—there is only one outside-door—next morning I saw a good many brown lucifer-matches on the mat, by the door of a little room, next to the parlour; not like those used in the chambers—they were not there the night before—when I came back from Bow-street I missed the keys of the outer and inner-doors, they were safe the day before.

William James Thorogate. I am one of the gate-porters of New-inn, I went on duty, at the gate, on Tuesday evening, 5 September, at ten o'clock, and remained there till seven next morning—the gates are closed during that time—I saw the prisoner Isaac come out of the gate about a quarter-past five—I said nothing to him, knowing he was Mr. Denham's housekeeper's nephew—he came in a direction from Mr. Denham's chambers.

Thomas Henry Prosser. I am chief constable at Coventry. From information, on 16 September, I took the prisoners into custody in Wells-street, Coventry—I took from Isaac's pocket this gold watch (produced)—I told them I apprehended them both, on suspicion of Mr. Denham's robbery in the Strand—I opened the watch, and told them it was Mr. Denham's—they said nothing—I found a

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<sup>5</sup> The National Archives, UK, HO107/688/7; HO107/739/5; HO107/699/1

carpet bag in the room, which they said was then—I found in it a quantity of wearing-apparel, and this bill-case (produced) I found 10s. 6d. on Isaac, and an old silver watch on Charles.

Isaac Norcott. Q. Who pointed out the carpet bag?

A. Your uncle—you said it was yours, and put the key in yourself.

Rev. Joshua Frederick Denham re-examined. This watch is mine, but not the chain—this is the bill-case that was in the box.

Isaac Norcott's Defence. On the night of 5 September. I came, with my brother, from Horsleydown, and left him by St. Clement's Church; he said he was going to his aunt's; I went to the theatre; I picked up a few acquittances, and going home, about six o'clock in the morning, met my brother in Tooley-street; I asked him if he had told his aunt he was going to Coventry—he said, "No"—I said, then we would return, and go to Coventry that morning; we returned; I left him in the churchyard, while I passed up towards the Angel; I passed in at the gate, and saw the porter, and as I went round the staircase of the inn I met another porter; I said, "Good morning," and he said the same to me; I passed up-stairs, and hearing the chimes go a quarter to six, I altered my mind, and returned to my brother, who was out-side; we then proceeded over Waterloo-bridge, and I picked up the gold watch; it is not the first time I have done so, for I picked one up a few years ago, and advertised it, as I did this, to see if I could obtain a reward for it; the bill-case had been in my brother's possession a month, and there is sewing about it which I did myself.

Charles Gibson Norcott's Defence. On the night of the 5th I went to see my aunt, and was there two hours and a half; I went out with her for her beer, and bid her good night in Wych-street.

Rev. Joshua Frederick Denham re-examined. I am quite sure the bill-case was in my possession within two or three days of the robbery, and I believe, the day before.

Isaac Norcott— GUILTY. Aged 23. Transported for Seven years.

Charles Gibson Norcott— GUILTY. Aged 20. Recommends to mercy by the Prosecutor and Jury, confined Twelve Months in House of Correction.<sup>6</sup>

**Petition**, received 2 May 1849. <sup>7</sup>

No. 1, New Inn, Strand. 1 May 1849.

Sir,

I trust that my motion will be accepted by you as my apology, when I request permission to bring before your notice the case of Isaac Norcott, now a prisoner in the Model Prison Pentonville, to which he was removed last week from Millbank Penitentiary. He is nephew to a respectable female who has been my housekeeper for the last twelve years and whose whole family have been long known to me as well conducted parishioners.

The prisoner was also known to me from his infancy as a youth of excellent conduct till the time, that owing as I believe to the influence of a younger brother, he conceived a strong desire to emigrate to Australia, and in order to obtain the means was induced by him to rob my abode in September last, when Isaac Norcott was sentenced to seven years transportation and his younger brother to twelve months imprisonment. I have received some letters from him and seen others to his friends, in which he expresses a hope that he shall be sent abroad and then receive a ticket of leave in about eighteen (missing word?) of this mitigation and that it would tend much to the feeling of his respectable and deserving relations.

I have the honour to be, Sir, your very obedient servant

Joshua Frederick Denham, M.A. Rector of St Mary Le Strand, Westminster.

Isaac was about to get his wish to go to Australia. The Prison Registers record Isaac Norcott was received at Millbank Prison on 23 October 1848 from Newgate Prison. He was 24, weighed 9 st 9 lbs, 5'4", with a fresh complexion, dark brown hair, slender, a labourer, single, a tailor, could read and

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<sup>6</sup> Old Bailey online, Reference Number t18480918-2124

<sup>7</sup> The National Archives, UK, HO18/244/2

write well, and it was his first conviction. He said he was born at Strand near Temple Bar, London, and his father, Charles Gibson Norcott, a carver, is dead.

He was removed to Pentonville Prison on 23 April 1849 and transferred to *Justitia* hulk at Woolwich on 27 December 1849. From there, he boarded the *Pyrenees* on 5 March 1851 for the voyage to Western Australia.

Isaac arrived at Fremantle, Western Australia, on 28 June 1851; he was assigned number 491 and issued a Ticket of Leave.<sup>8</sup>

491. Isaac Norcott, 26, 5'3", has black hair, blue eyes, a round face, a sallow complexion, is stout, has no marks, is single, and is a tailor.

12 July 1851. He was removed from the *Pyrenees* and taken to prison. The same day, he was to proceed on Ticket of Leave to Mr Frederick Waldeck, Perth.<sup>9</sup> Waldeck was a tailor and woollen draper. A Conditional Pardon was granted on 23 April 1853.

A report from Bunbury dated 9 August 1853:<sup>10</sup>

A melancholy accident occurred a few days since at the Blackwood; Fourkum, Campbell, Kelly, a Brazier (name unknown), and Norcott, a tailor lately residents at Fremantle, were on their way to the Sound from this place. On reaching the Blackwood, they found it running with great force, and they waited on its right bank in hopes of its lowering till their provisions were nearly exhausted. Two of the party, Campbell and Kelley, were good swimmers and then volunteered to swim the river, walk to Kojenup, and come back with provisions. This they effected in safety and with a praiseworthy regard for their companions. While they were gone, the river continued to rise, and the difficulty of crossing became greater on their return. The Brazier could not swim and would not attempt it; Norcott, however, determined to make the effort, but after swimming more than three-fourths of the way over, was carried away with the current when within a few yards of the opposite bank and was no more seen.

On his way to join the *Chusan* at the Sound, accompanied by our worthy Resident and party, Captain Eliot met the Brazier returning and learnt from him this unfortunate matter; but proceeded on to the Blackwood. However, The river had little run down, and the difficulty of crossing the luggage was such as to determine Capt. Eliot did not to attempt the passage of the river, though he was prepared to swim it himself. The distance across is not great, and I understand he considered that there would be no difficulty in bridging the river at the part where he intended to cross, which was the spot where Mr Watson's temporary bridge was constructed, opposite to the mouth of the Balgarrup. The bed of the river being there dry for nine or ten months, the bridge might be constructed in the year without any of the difficulties usually experienced in such works. The spot where poor Norcott drowned was a few hundred yards above this crossing; as I learnt from the Brazier, the banks were high and dry on both sides, and the waterway was not more than 40 to 50 yards wide. Surely, the government will order the construction of a bridge at this part of the Blackwood, where no such impassable causeways as those at the Canning and Capel bridges will require engineering skills to form or repair.

### **The family:**

Sarah Norcott was buried in a common grave on 24 September 1863 at Brompton Cemetery, aged 67. She lived at 27 D'Oyly Street, Chelsea.

Charles Gibson Norcott, plasterer and labourer, left Plymouth on 23 October 1849, a month after being released from gaol. The *Asia* reached Adelaide on 17 February 1850. He married Bridget Hare on 13 August 1861 in Adelaide. Bridget Hare was from County Clare and arrived per *Admiral Boxer* in

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<sup>8</sup> SROWA, Acc 128/32

<sup>9</sup> SROWA, Superintendent Orders, 1850 - 1854 (So1 - So3), p56

<sup>10</sup> The Perth Gazette and Independent Journal of Politics and New, 12 August 1853, p2

1855 as a farm servant. They didn't have any children. Charles bought 42 acres of land near Gumbowie in 1877. He sold the land after his wife Bridget died on 13 February 1895, following a long illness, in her 70th year. Charles said, "Through 36 years of married life, she was a true and faithful wife".

Charles was in and out of the Destitute Asylum in Adelaide for the last years of his life. He died on 25 September 1902 of a strangulated hernia and is buried at West Terrace Cemetery, Adelaide.

Ruth Norcott married George Martin, a Gentleman's servant, on 27 May 1861 at St Mary, Newington, Surrey.

Ellen Norcott never married and worked as a charwoman. On 8 June 1895, she was admitted to hospital after being knocked down and run over. She died 17 days later, on 1 July 1895, aged 62.