

William Calchon 294, *Mermaid*

Researched by Marcia Watson

William Calchon *alias* Alexander, 40, single with two illegitimate or bastard children, was convicted on 4 October 1848 at Ayr of attempting to commit bestiality and sentenced to 14 years transportation. He had never before been convicted. William was received at Wakefield Prison on 13 July 1849 and transferred to Portland Prison on 2 July 1850. He boarded the *Mermaid* on 18 December 1850 for the voyage to Western Australia.^{1, 2}

The court case was not reported in newspapers.

A newspaper report from a correspondent - Victoria Plains, dated 3 June 1881:

A fatal accident occurred yesterday morning at a spot about ten miles from New Norcia. As the mail van was coming up, the driver's attention was attracted by an object a short distance off the road, and he at once stopped to see what it was and, to his horror, found that a man had been crushed to death by a fallen tree. It appears the unfortunate man (a tramp) had camped there the night before and made a fire against a dead tree, which soon got alight, and while he slept, burnt through and fell right on his head. Death must have been instantaneous. Mr Purser reported the accident to the police on his arrival at New Norcia, and immediate steps were taken to get the body extricated. I have heard no further particulars as yet.³

¹ HO23/14

² Scotland, NRS Reference JC26/1848/199

³ The West Australian (Perth, WA : 1879 - 1954), 7 June 1881, p3