

John Woods, 238, *Mermaid*

Researched by Marcia Watson

Baptism	27 April 1821, Andover, Hampshire
Parents	James Woods and Elizabeth Goodluck (d.1826)
Parent's marriage	16 January 1816, Andover, Hampshire.
2 nd marriage	Sarah Tamlyn in 1829, Andover
Siblings	James William (1816), Charles (1819) Half-siblings: Henry Tamlyn (1831-1831), George Frederick (1833), Edward Tamlyn (1834), Benjamin (1837-1837), Elizabeth Jane (1838)
Wife	
Married	
Children	

In 1841, living at Winchester Street, Andover, Hampshire, were:

James Woods, 40, gardener; Sarah, 40; John, 20, labourer; George, 8; Edwin, 6; Jane, 2.

All were born in Hampshire. ¹

John's father, James Woods, was born in 1792 and died in 1877 at Andover, aged 85

The following year, at the Andover Borough Quarter Sessions, held at the Town Hall on 3 April 1842, H Kerr Esq, Recorder presiding:

For stealing lead belonging to Mr John Woodward, John Woods, of the Star Inn, six months imprisonment with hard labour. The Criminal Register shows that John was 17 and could not read or write.²

Then, at the Andover Borough Quarter Sessions at the Guildhall on 11 April 1843:

William Wear and John Woods, for stealing potatoes from a pit belonging to T. P. Clarke, Esq. were sentenced to be transported for seven years.³

He was received at the *York* hulk at Gosport on 8 May 1843 from Winchester Gaol.

John Woods, 21, single, cannot read or write, is a labourer, and had been convicted before. He had dark brown hair, dark grey eyes, swarthy complexion, slight build, 5'1", had a scar on a finger of each hand and a large mole on his shoulder blade. His father was James Woods, a gardener of Andover. John was transferred to the *Stirling Castle* hulk on 1 January 1846, pardoned on 13 May 1847, and returned to Andover. ^{4,5}

On 7 February 1849, John Woods, of Andover, an old offender, was brought up in the custody of the police, charged with breaking into Mr J. Perkin's grocer stores on the night of 3 February and stealing 20 pounds of pork. John was fully committed to Andover borough gaol for trial at the ensuing quarter sessions.⁶ The Quarter Sessions were held on 16 April, and John was sentenced to 15 years transportation.⁷

John, who was now 27 years old and could read imperfectly, was received at Millbank Prison on 28 April 1849 from Winchester Gaol. After nearly a year, he was transferred to Portland Prison on 6 March 1850. He embarked on the *Mermaid* on 28 December 1850 for the voyage to Western Australia.⁸

The *Mermaid* arrived at Fremantle in May 1851, and John was described as:

238. John Woods, 30, 5'3", dark brown hair, grey eyes, sallow complexion, long face, black whiskers, no marks, single and a mason's labourer.⁹

¹ HO107/411/1

² Hampshire Chronicle, 11 April 1842; HO27/68, p117

³ Hampshire Advertiser, 15 April 1843, p3

⁴ HO9/15, p115

⁵ HO8/92, p10

⁶ Hampshire Advertiser, 10 February 1849, p5

⁷ Hampshire Chronicle, 21 April 1849, p1

⁸ HO24/4; HO8/106

General Register:

John Woods, 29, single, labourer, Church of England, went to National School, reading is improving, indifferent to writing and accounts, his father, James Woods, a gardener, lives in Winchester St, Andover.

Attended Divine Service?	Not very attentive to previous commitments
Received Sacrament?	Never
Habits?	Mostly sober and attentive to work
Intellect?	Sound
State of Mind?	Hopeful
Knowledge, Secular?	Very limited
Knowledge, Religious?	Limited
Alleged Cause of Crime?	Company

Name of Person referred to for Character, &c. Make no reference ¹⁰

John worked as a sawyer in the Guildford area. In July 1857, he was admitted to hospital, from Guildford, with chronic chest disease. He was treated with quinine and said he felt better, although he suffered from flatulence and pain over his heart. He was discharged in September, and the surgeon recommended he be sent to Freshwater Bay Depot as an invalid. He must have been back in hospital as he was discharged again in November 1857. John received a Conditional Pardon on 5 November 1859 and worked for himself.

⁹ SROWA Acc 128/1-32

¹⁰ SROWA Acc 1156 R21A