

here is a summary of Duncan Christie's story: bootmaker aged 17, a single whose literacy was improving was arrested, tried 30 September 1850 at the High Court of Justiciary processes, Glasgow, Scotland and found guilty of theft by housebreaking and opening lockfast places (with another Elizabeth Wilson). His 10 year punishment reflected being twice convicted, once acquitted and twice attempting to steal. On 7 January 1851, he left Glasgow goal for Millbank, London for transportation and on 22 October 1851 boarded the ship "Marion" bound for Western Australia.

The Glasgow 1841 Census for Albion Street at 93 High Street shows 13 people living together including his parents Dennis, a cotton spinner & his wife Margaret McKendrick with 7 sons and 4 other relatives. Firstly his older brother died and by 1845 his father had died of 'consumption' and was buried in a common grave. This left his mother a widow with 6 young sons.

The 1851 census shows Duncan CHRISTIE in the parish of St John the Evangelist, Westminster, unmarried, 18 year old inmate, Millbank Prison, a shoemaker born Fife (sic), Scotland along with 101 other prisoners. Maybe Duncan was better off than on a hulk in the Thames working onshore each day but descriptions of Millbank are horrendous where they worked picking rope with no privacy, even in their cells.

Convict 1085, Duncan CHRISTIE arrived in Fremantle on the Marion, February 2 1852. On 31 January 1853 Duncan is listed as belonging to the Convict Department of Western Australia per Ship "Marion", 1085 aged 20, 5' 5½" dark complexion, round faced, stout, D.E. tattooed on his left arm but with no occupation, single with no children. The 'Inquirer' (Perth, WA: 1840-1855) Wednesday 4 February 1852, page 2 reports that .....

Duncan received his Ticket of Leave on 15 June 1835 having been a 1st Class protestant prisoner in the Character Book with VG against 1852 and May-June 1853. In August 1855 he is recommended, with four other convicts who were under sentence in Toodyay Goal, to the Governor that the remainder of his sentence be remitted as a further indulgence by the Resident and Committee Magistrates and as a reward for good conduct and industry on the works during their confinement. However, he does not receive his conditional pardon till 7 November 1860, after serving over ten years.

On 8 November 1858 at the Toodyay School House Duncan CHRISTIE married Mary Ann JONES, 14 year old motherless, illiterate daughter of Royal Marine, Pensioner Guard, Prison Warder John JONES by Rev. Charles Harper with Church of England rites. She was born and baptised in 1844 at St Mary Magdalene Church, Woolwich, Kent while John was still serving and residing at Artillery Place. Why would a teetotaler, conservative, religious man like John Jones agree to this marriage apart from respecting Duncan Christie and the understanding he would care for John's eldest daughter? The previous year 1857 William JONES, John JONES' infant son, had died following the death of his wife Ann JONES on 9 January 1857. John's youngest daughter Agnes suffered from diabetes and died in 1865 so the earlier tragedies may have influenced John Jones to relinquish the care of his eldest daughter. No, she does not appear to have been pregnant as Duncan and Mary Ann's first child was born in 1861. John's middle illiterate daughter Jane JONES 1848-1937, was born in Greenwich when he was a discharged Pensioner, 'Sick Attendant' at Greenwich Hospital, and she may have found employment with the widowed local Magistrate, who later remarried and moved to Geraldton, where she married William MOORE in 1870. The daughters' illiteracy is interesting as their

parents were literate but without a school in Toodyay, their father possibly too busy and their mother too ill to teach them, they missed out on education but were religious, could sew, cook, were teetotallers and kept house fastidiously. The education of their descendants was extremely important to them.

By 1863 when their son George was born Duncan and Mary Ann CHRISTIE were residing in York where Duncan worked on building cottages and the York Hospital. He enrolled to vote after Federation and is listed in the Post Office Alphabetical Directory. By the time of his retirement, he described himself as a builder and they moved to Martha Street, Beaconsfield to be near several of their children. In 1919, after 66 years in Western Australia and 61 years of marriage, Duncan died at 85 of "senile decay" with eight living children and was buried in Fremantle Cemetery, leaving his cottage and possessions to Mary Ann who died in 1923 and was buried next to Duncan. Duncan and Mary Ann named their unmarried son Duncan CHRISTIE, timber hewer as sole executor who inherited £80.00.00 and a weathered board cottage worth £80.00.00 with no liabilities. Did Duncan CHRISTIE gain from the indiscretions of his youth? Comparison with the social climate in Scotland 1843-1919 shows that yes, he did. He was unlikely to become a financially independent builder with property and a respectable family if he had remained in Glasgow.

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