

John Ford, 587, *Pyrenees*

Researched by Marcia Watson

John was possibly in Witheridge Town, Devon, when the 1841 census was taken. ¹

John Ford, 15, ag lab. He appears to be lodging with Richard Hodge, 50, ag lab and his wife and five children. Richard's son Henry, 20, was a mason.

At the Gloucestershire Assizes, beginning on 29 March 1849.

Sheep Stealing. Four men, named Ford, Bailey, Gillard and Walker (not on calendar), were charged with killing and stealing a sheep, at Dryham Park on 30 March last, the property of G.W. Blathwaite Esq. A second count charged the prisoners with stealing the carcass only. Walker was acquitted, and the other three prisoners, having been found guilty, were sentenced to seven years' transportation. Although the Assizes began on 29 March 1849, the four were not tried until 4 April 1849.²

Prisoners admitted to the Gloucester Gaol show:

31 March 1849. John Ford, read imp, from Witheridge, Devon, labourer, 22, 5'4¼", dark brown hair, hazel eyes, oval face, dark complexion, scar left brow, scars on legs and left knee, scar left wrist and upper left arm,

John was charged with feloniously stealing at Dyrham and Hinton on 30 March 1849, a wether sheep, the property of G.W. Blathwayt, Esq. Found guilty at the Lent Assizes on 29 March 1849 and sentenced to 7 years' transportation. His conduct in Gloucester Gaol was good. John was removed to Reading Gaol on 7 May 1849. The register noted he was a native of Witheridge in Devon, single, and had been working on the Reading and Rygate line for 2 weeks, before that in South Wales. He was "Church".

Other Prison Registers records that John Ford, 22, single, read and write imperfectly, an excavator, was convicted on 29 March 1849 at Gloucester of sheep stealing and sentenced to seven years. John had not been in prison before. On 6 April 1850, he was transferred to Portland Prison from Reading Gaol. He boarded the *Pyrenees* on 13 March 1851 for the voyage to Western Australia. ³

His co-accused, William Bailey 584, was on the ship with him. Robert Gillard, the other co-accused, was sent to Tasmania, arriving there on 4 July 1852 per *Fairlie*.

On arrival at Fremantle, Western Australia, on 28 June 1851, John was assigned number 587, issued with a Ticket of Leave and a physical description was recorded.

587. John Ford, 23, 5'5", dark brown hair, light brown eyes, round face, dark complexion, stout, scar on the shoulder of left arm, scar on left hand, mole on left shoulder, mole under left ear, two scars on right shin, one scar on left shin, bricklayer's labourer, single. ⁴

The Superintendent's Journal shows:

16 July 1851. The following 71 men will be received today from the ship *Pyrenees* and located in No. 3 Division, including 587 John Ford and his co-accused, 584 William Bailey.

22 July 1851. List of 40 men with their trades proceeding this day to York, including 587 Jno Ford, excavator.⁵

By the end of December 1852, John had repaid £5.7.9¾ of his passage money.⁶

A Conditional Pardon was granted the following year on 3 September 1853.

¹ The National Archives (TNA) UK, HO107/261/12

² Bristol Times and Mirror, 07 April 1849, p3

³ TNA, HO23/12; PCOM2/133; PCOM2/383.

⁴ SROWA, Acc 128/32

⁵ SROWA, Superintendent's Orders, So1-So3, p 61, p66

⁶ TNA, CO/8/69, Half yearly returns.

John was possibly still at York when the 1859 census was taken:

John Ford, 35, Protestant, farmer, can read and write, born in England. A labourer was lodging with him ⁷

No further information has been found on John Ford. He probably left the colony.

⁷ SROWA, 1859 York Census