

## John Sheen, 88, *Hashemy*

Researched by Marcia Watson and Pauline Millar

Baptism	~1828
Parents	
Parent's marriage	
Siblings	
Wife	Jane Adams
Married	1856
Children	Unnamed son (1861) [Edward] Emily (1862-1869) Amelia (1865) Anna (1868) Matilda (1870) [Family trees on Ancestry.com mention Margaret (1867) and Joseph (1855)]

At Gibraltar in 1848: John Sheen, 56<sup>th</sup> regiment, was tried at Gibraltar for theft on 30 September 1848 and sentenced to 14 years transportation.<sup>1</sup>

John Sheen, 19, single, a bricklayer, was convicted on 30 September 1848 at Gibraltar of stealing various articles. He was sentenced to 14 years transportation. John was twice tried by Court Martial. From Gibraltar, he was received at Millbank Penitentiary, London, on 24 October 1848. While in Millbank, he was visited by his parents and sister on 26 February 1849. On 3 May 1849, he was transferred to Pentonville Prison.

The Pentonville register states: Convicted at a General Court Martial of stealing silk handkerchiefs & other property of Captain Hague. John was single, could read, and was a soldier in the 56<sup>th</sup> regiment.

On 4 March 1850, he was removed to Portland Prison. John boarded the *Hashemy* on 19 July 1850 for the voyage to Fremantle.<sup>2</sup>

During the voyage, he appears on the sick list:

Folio 2: John Sheen, aged 22, prisoner; sick or hurt, hernia humeralis; put on sick list, 20 August 1850, discharged 26 August 1850 well.<sup>3</sup>

On arrival at Fremantle, he was described as:

88. John Sheen, 22, 5' 6½", dark brown hair, hazel eyes, thin face, dark complexion, slight build, marks – T.M. and 2 figures on right arm, small pox marks, a bricklayer and single.<sup>4</sup>

From Pauline Millar:

*John Sheen was born at Rath Luirc, Co. Cork, Ireland, c1828. In one of the convict records his father is listed as John Sheen, in another as Dennis/Diarmid Murphy. The convict John also used the name Timothy Murphy, and had a tattoo "T.M." on his arm, so we will never know exactly who he was and as you read on you will find he had a habit of being careless with the truth.*

*In October 1846, aged eighteen, John joined the British Army and was stationed at Brompton Barracks, Chatham. He was a private in the Reserve Battalion, 56th Regiment. It didn't take him long to get into strife. Army life was evidently not to his liking as he deserted in early December, and sold his uniform and equipment. He was brought before the (army) court in January 1847 and sentenced to three months hard labour. He must have kept to the straight and narrow for a year or so, but was back in court in March*

<sup>1</sup> WO90/2, p169

<sup>2</sup> HO24/4; HO24/16; HO8/205

<sup>3</sup> ADM 101/32/6/1-6

<sup>4</sup> SROWA Acc 128/40-3

1848, this time for giving the drill sergeant 'a mouthful' - I imagine anyone who has ever been in the army has had the same urge. This brought a sentence of 50 lashes and 84 days imprisonment with hard labour, however the punishment actually inflicted was 124 days imprisonment.

At some point his regiment transferred to the garrison at Gibraltar. It was here that his misbehaviour resulted in his conviction and eventual transportation to the Swan River Colony.

Rath Luirc is also called Charleville. There is a John Murphy born to Denis Murphy in 1828, but this John appears to have married in Charleville. There is no Timothy Murphy or John Sheen born there. One possibility is that John Sheen's father died, and his mother remarried Dennis Murphy.

General Register:

88. John Sheen, 23, single, labourer, Roman Catholic, parish school, can read well, write and maths a little. He said his father, Dennis Murphy, a labourer, lives in Marylebone, London.

Attended Divine Service?	Regularly as a soldier
Received Sacrament?	Never before being in prison
Habits?	Not exactly a sober man
Intellect?	Sound
State of Mind?	Hopeful
Knowledge, Secular?	Limited
Knowledge, Religious?	Limited
Alleged Cause of Crime?	Drink

Name of Person referred to for Character, &c. Mr Bennett, builder of Paddington, London. <sup>5</sup>

On 6 December 1850, John had his tobacco stopped for three days for disobedience. <sup>6</sup>

John was on the Casual Sick list, Fremantle Prison. <sup>7</sup>

Ap or Aper = aperient. Feb. or febris C.C. = fever of unknown cause.

Sheen John	10 November 1850	Headache	Ap: medicine. Pils Dovers
Sheen John	2 December 1850	Diarrhoea	Chalk mixture
Sheene Jno	24 December 1850	Constipation	Pilul & draught
Sheen Jno	16 January 1851	Pain in limbs	Ap & Dovers powder at night
Sheen John	25 January 1851		
Sheen John	26 January 1851		
Sheen John	6 February 1851	Fever	Cold sponging
Sheen John	7 February 1851	Fever	Continue mixture
Sheen Jno	8 February 1851	Fever	Continue mixture & sponging
Sheen John	9 February 1851	Febris	
Sheen Jno	10 February 1851	Febris	Continue fever mixture
Sheen Jno 88	11 February 1851	Febris C.C.	Fever mixture
Sheen John 88	12 February 1851	Feb. C.C.	Aperient mixture
Sheen John 88	13 February 1851	Feb. C.C.	
Sheen John 88	14 February 1851	Feb. C.C.	Continue Quinine
Sheen John 88	15 February 1851	Feb. C.C.	Continue
Sheen John 88	16 February 1851	Feb. C.C.	Continue Quinine
Sheen John	17 February 1851	Feb. C.C.	Continue Quinine. Discharged
Sheen John	18 February 1851	Feb. C.C.	Discharged
Sheen Jno	23 February 1851		Continue Quassia
Sheen Jno	17 March 1851		
Sheen John	18 March 1851	Debility	Infus: Gent

<sup>5</sup> SROWA Acc 1156 R21A

<sup>6</sup> AJCP. CO18/58, p245

<sup>7</sup> SROWA Acc 1156 CS1

Sheen John	19 March 1851	Indigestion	Continue Gent Pil : Aper
Sheen John	20 March 1851	Debility	Continue medicine. Beer
Sheen John	31 March 1851		Quinine
Sheen John	4 April 1851		Liniment
Sheen John	19 April 1851	Bad eye	
Sheen John 88	18 May 1851		Powder Aper
Sheen 88	22 May 1851		

On 26 November 1851, John received a Ticket of leave issued.

He appears to have been back in prison as of 1 May 1852: J *Sheene*, 88, discharged from Fremantle to MES (? Mt Eliza Station). Later the same year, on 7 September:

John Sheen, ticket-of-leave holder, on suspicion of theft; remanded for the purpose of collecting further evidence.<sup>8</sup> On 10 September, the case was dismissed. Ten days later, he was fined 3s for being out after hours.<sup>9</sup>

John next faced the court on 21 January 1853, at Guildford:

John Sheen, t.l., forging and uttering an order for £2, with intent to defraud Mr S. A. Barker; two years hard labour.<sup>10</sup> He was received at Fremantle Prison on 24 January. Note: he appears to have been only sentenced to 12 months.

On 18 November 1854 at Fremantle Court:<sup>11</sup>

John Sheen, t.l., was charged with stealing a pair of boots and a hat, also about 10s in cash. The owner of the boots, &c, recognised them on Sheen's person, who attempted to shew that he had purchased them from another man at Mrs Lloyds, but failing to do so, was sent to the Convict Establishment, from which he had been liberated only a few days, for 12 months.

While in prison, John appears on the Sick registers at Fremantle Prison.<sup>12</sup>

Sheen John 88	5 June 1854	Head ache	Thaust? cathartic
Sheen John 88	2 August 1854	Constipation	Thaust? cathartic
Sheen John 88	6 August 1854	Head ache	Thaust? Cathartic
Sheen John 88	2 November 1854	Lumbago	Wet sheet
Sheen John	3 November 1854		Pulv Dovers ....
8 November 1854. John Sheen discharged from prison to ticket of leave.			
15 November 1854. Reconvicted prisoner, John Sheen 88, received at Fremantle prison.			
13 February 1855	John Sheen 88 HL	Bowel constipation	Haust ? cathartic
14 February 1855	John Sheen 88 HL		Admitted
John Sheen, 26, London, Soldier, Dysentery. Previous health good, good, middling.			
14 <sup>th</sup> . Admitted from outdoor Book, labouring under ordinary dysentery symptoms. (given purgative treatment). Bringing away a quantity of pea soupy matter with blood and mucous. Was brought off the works originally. This morning symptoms of faeculent matter on surface of ... evacuation of oche stools.			
15 <sup>th</sup> . No evacuations. ...bowels partially moved? (treatment repeated??)			
16 <sup>th</sup> . Wishes to return to duty. Spent ..... in room. Discharged, relieved.			
16 February 1855	John Sheen 88 HL		Discharged
25 March 1855	John Sheen 88 HL	Constipated	Hospital, unreadable treatment
25 April 1855	John Sheen 88 HL	Dysentery	Hospital, unreadable treatment
13 May 1855	John <i>Shean</i> 88 HL	Dysentery, chronic	(Purgative treatment)
14 May 1855	John Sheen 88 HL	Dysentery	To hospital, unreadable treatment

<sup>8</sup> Inquirer (Perth, WA : 1840 - 1855), 22 September 1852, p2.

<sup>9</sup> The Perth Gazette and Independent Journal of Politics and News (WA : 1848 - 1864), 24 September 1852, p4

<sup>10</sup> Inquirer (Perth, WA : 1840 - 1855), 23 February 1853, p3

<sup>11</sup> Inquirer (Perth, WA : 1840 - 1855), 13 Dececmber 1854, p3

<sup>12</sup> SROWA Acc 1156 M3; M14-16, RD1-2

31 May 1855	John Sheen 88		Discharged
9 June 1855	John Sheen	Removed to new Establishment	

John was granted a Conditional Pardon granted 14 July 1855 and discharged from prison on 16 October 1855.

John applied to be married on 23 July 1856 to Jane Adams.

In 1858, he was sentenced to two years in prison on 6 March for stealing a pair of boots. While in prison, John was given permission to change from Roman Catholic to Protestant, having obtained the sanction of both chaplains.<sup>13</sup> He was discharged on 1 June 1859.

John had regular brushes with the law during the 1880s:

19 August 1882. John was discharged from Perth Gaol after serving 3 months for stealing 5 vases. He had been committed at Fremantle.

29 November 1883. Discharged after one month in Perth Gaol for being loose, idle and disorderly in Fremantle.

16 June 1884. Discharged from Perth Gaol after serving 14 Days for being drunk in Fremantle.

29 January 1885. Released from Perth Gaol after serving one month for vagrancy. Committed at Perth.

16 November 1885. Discharged after serving 7 days for loitering about for some unlawful purpose.

23 October 1886. Released from Perth Gaol after serving one month for vagrancy.

13 November 1886. Released from Perth Gaol, fined 5 or 7 days for being drunk.

John *Shean* died in 1895, aged 66, at Fremantle. He was probably buried in the Skinner Street Cemetery, Fremantle.

Jane Sheen died on 20 August 1907 and is buried at Fremantle -Anglican MON a, 0411- the grantee of plot was Amelia Anderson.

The Friends of the late Mrs Jane Sheen (relict of the late Mr John Sheen of Fremantle) are respectfully invited to follow her remains to the place of interment, the Church of England portion of the Fremantle Cemetery.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>13</sup> SROWA Acc SO6-8, p13, 8 November 1858

<sup>14</sup> The West Australian (Perth, WA : 1879 - 1954), 21 August 1907, p1

## JOHN SHEEN - OR WAS IT TIMOTHY MURPHY?

Pauline Millar

My husband's grandfather, William Sheen, was one of those old fellows who was often just outside the law, he seemed to enjoy the challenge of outwitting anyone in authority. He was a professional fisherman in the Murray District and one of his many minor sins was fishing where he shouldn't. He also enjoyed a drink - quite a few in fact - and after numerous charges of driving under the influence, the frustrated policeman at Pinjarra won the battle, if not the war, by removing the steering wheel of William's car. Can you imagine the outcry from the Civil Libertarians these days.

About a hundred years ago, I attended a librarian's talk-fest at Curtin University, and one of the speakers mentioned that he had a set of microfiche listing all the convicts who had been transported to Western Australia. Microfiche at that time were the last word in advanced technology, and during the following tea break, we were invited to view this wondrous resource. As I knew the background of my side of the family in Victoria, I wondered about my husband's rellies. Who more likely to have a convict ancestor than the aforesaid grandfather. I checked under the surname Sheen and sure enough there was a John Sheen. I had a bit of a giggle about this co-incidence and thought no more about it.

As the years rolled by, the time eventually came when I decided to trace the history of our families and sure enough John Sheen was my husband's great great grandfather, and William the re-incarnation.

John Sheen was born at Rath Luirc, Co. Cork, Ireland, c1828. In one of the convict records his father is listed as John Sheen, in another as Dennis/Diarmid Murphy. The convict John also used the name Timothy Murphy, and had a tattoo "T.M." on his arm, so we will never know exactly who he was and as you read on you will find he had a habit of being careless with the truth.

In October 1846, aged eighteen, John joined the British Army and was stationed at Brompton Barracks, Chatham. He was a private in the Reserve Battalion, 56th Regiment. It didn't take him long to get into strife. Army life was evidently not to his liking as he deserted in early December, and sold his uniform and equipment. He was brought before the (army) court in January 1847 and sentenced to three months hard labour. He must have kept to the straight and narrow for a year or so, but was back in court in March 1848, this time for giving the drill sergeant 'a mouthful' - I imagine anyone who has ever been in the army has had the same urge. This brought a sentence of 50 lashes and 84 days imprisonment with hard labour, however the punishment actually inflicted was 124 days imprisonment.

At some point his regiment transferred to the garrison at Gibraltar. It was here that his misbehaviour resulted in his conviction and eventual transportation to the Swan River Colony.

The event is described in the transcript of his court martial which I obtained from London. He had stolen a silver pin (tie-pin perhaps?), a small knife and two silk handkerchiefs from Captain Hague. The batman came into the room to find John with one leg either side of the window sill and the goods in his pocket. However, when confronted, John cheekily affected a surprised "Who? Me?" response. This went down like a lead balloon, and in view of his previous conviction, he was summarily court-martialled on 30 September, 1848.

He was transferred to Millbank Prison, on the banks of the Thames, on the 24 October 1848. John remained there for more than six months, almost certainly in 'separate confinement', as was the practice of the day. It is noted in the records that during this time he was visited by his parents and sister, so they must have been living in London.

On the 3 May 1849 he was moved to Pentonville Prison, also in London, and stayed there for ten months. His next 'residence' was Portland Prison in Dorset where he arrived on 4 March 1850 and stayed until July when he sailed for the Swan River Colony, aboard the Hashemy.

He eventually married Jane Adams, the daughter of a pioneering family and they had seven children. The demon drink seemed to be his downfall and he continued to be in and out of minor trouble for many years to come. At one stage when he was 'doing time', Jane pleaded with the authorities for him to be released, claiming hardship in bringing up their children by herself. This request was granted but then a couple of months later she requested that he be returned to prison as he was 'drinking and being indolent'. He died at the Mt Eliza Depot in December 1895, aged 67.

John and Jane Sheen's son, also named John, married Ellen Nettle, the daughter of convict Michael Nettle who was convicted of receiving stolen goods and transported to Fremantle on the Phoebe Dunbar. Michael married Anne Furlong, an Irish servant girl who arrived on the Emma Eugenie - but that's another chapter.

The moral of the story is - do your family tree before you get married! However in the interests of giving equal time to the pros and cons, I must add that my mother-in-law who was the downstream progeny of these two Irish scallywags was one beautiful lady - good on ya, Mum.

Rath Luirc is also called Charleville