

Frederick Williscroft 1831-1899

Frederick was the youngest of the three boys and exiled to Tasmania. At the time of his trial in 1844 he was aged 12 and unable to read or write. He was working as a labourer. He arrived at Hobart, Tasmania aboard the William Ratcliffe on the 12 November 1848. The ship had set sail from Spithead on the 29 July 1848. Frederick was a 'ticket of leave' exile and had retrained as a tailor whilst at Parkhurst Prison. He was described as a 'boy', aged 15, 4' 9" tall with brown hair, his native place was given as Birmingham. (*Conduct Record, Tasmanian Archives, CON33-1-91_00244_L*)



Arial view of Hobart, Tasmania
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He was employed as a tailor on his arrival in Tasmania for a wage of £3 per annum. He received the lowest wage compared to the other exiles who were on the same ship, perhaps because of his age. Frederick appeared before the magistrates in Hobart and found guilty of pick pocketing on the 27 Nov 1851. As a result he was to be severely transported for 7 years. He eventually gained his freedom in February 1857. Frederick was still living in Hobart in 1861 and employed as a tailor. He appears in the Hobart Town Gazette living at 5 Watchorn Street. He isn't mentioned in the Tasmanian records after this.

However, Frederick is most likely the Frederick who married Mary Ann O'Keefe in 1862 at Braidwood, New South Wales. This Frederick was also from Birmingham the son of Joseph and Mary Ann Williscroft according to his death certificate. However, I have not found Frederick on a passenger list from Tasmania to the main land but perhaps he didn't want to be found. There is also a discrepancy between his age on his death certificate which was 56 which means he was born in 1843. He gives his place as Dale End, Birmingham which is in the city centre where Joseph and Mary Ann were living at the time.

Frederick appears several times in the New South Wales Police Gazette. In 1875 "about 37 years of age, 5 feet 7 or 8 inches high, stout build, fair hair, long sandy whiskers and moustache, "MS" tattooed on left arm." (NSW Police Gazette; 24 feb 1875; p56.) In 1882 he was "49 years of age, 5 feet 7 or 8 inches high,

fair complexion, whisker's turing grey; dresses in a dark-brown jacket, moleskin trousers, soft felt hat; a labourer." (NSW Police Gazette 31 May 1882 p208) In 1893 he was "about 50 years of age, 5 feet 7 1/2 inches high, stout build, light hair, and florid complexion, sandy beard and moustache slightly turning grey." (NSW Police Gazette 19 Sep 1893 p365.)

Frederick was born on the 5 December 1831 and christened at St Martin's Church, Birmingham, Warwickshire on the 6 January 1834, the son of Joseph and Mary Ann Williscroft (nee Jackson). At the time the family were living in Fisher Street. In 1843 Frederick appeared at the Magistrates Court in Birmingham on a charge of larceny (for stealing an umbrella, the property of William Phillips) and sentenced to 3 months imprisonment. He must have moved to Dudley following his prison sentence.

Paddington. — Stolen, between the hours of 10 a.m. And noon, the 16th instant, from a stable, at the rear of No. 1, Under-wood street, Paddington, the property of Frederick Williscroft, "Waratah Hotel," William street South, — One pair white blankets, two calico sheets, one pillow, one blue and white quilt, and two three-bushel bags; value £1 10. Identifiable.

*New South Wales Police Gazette 24 Dec 1879,
p.471*

The first reference I have to Frederick on the Australian mainland is in 1862 when he married Mary Ann O'Keefe at Braidwood, NSW. Three years later Frederick at Langley's Lane, Sydney (Sands Directory). His occupation was given as a sawyer. In June 1878 the couple were living at Rushcutters Bay when Mary Ann appeared as a missing person in the Police Gazette. By 1879 Frederick had moved to Paddington and was running the Waratah Hotel in William Street when items of linen were stolen from him on the 16 December.

Frederick and Mary Ann are known to have had seven children between 1863 and 1892. Frederick died in 1899 at Parramatta, NSW and was buried at Rootwood, NSW. Mary Ann passed away in 1919 whilst living in Randwick, Sydney and was buried at Waverley Cemetery, Sydney. [More](#)