



From Tharston to Australia

**The Life and Voyage of William Hunt
of Tharston, Norfolk 1828 - 1890**

Phil Buzzard & Nigel Peacock

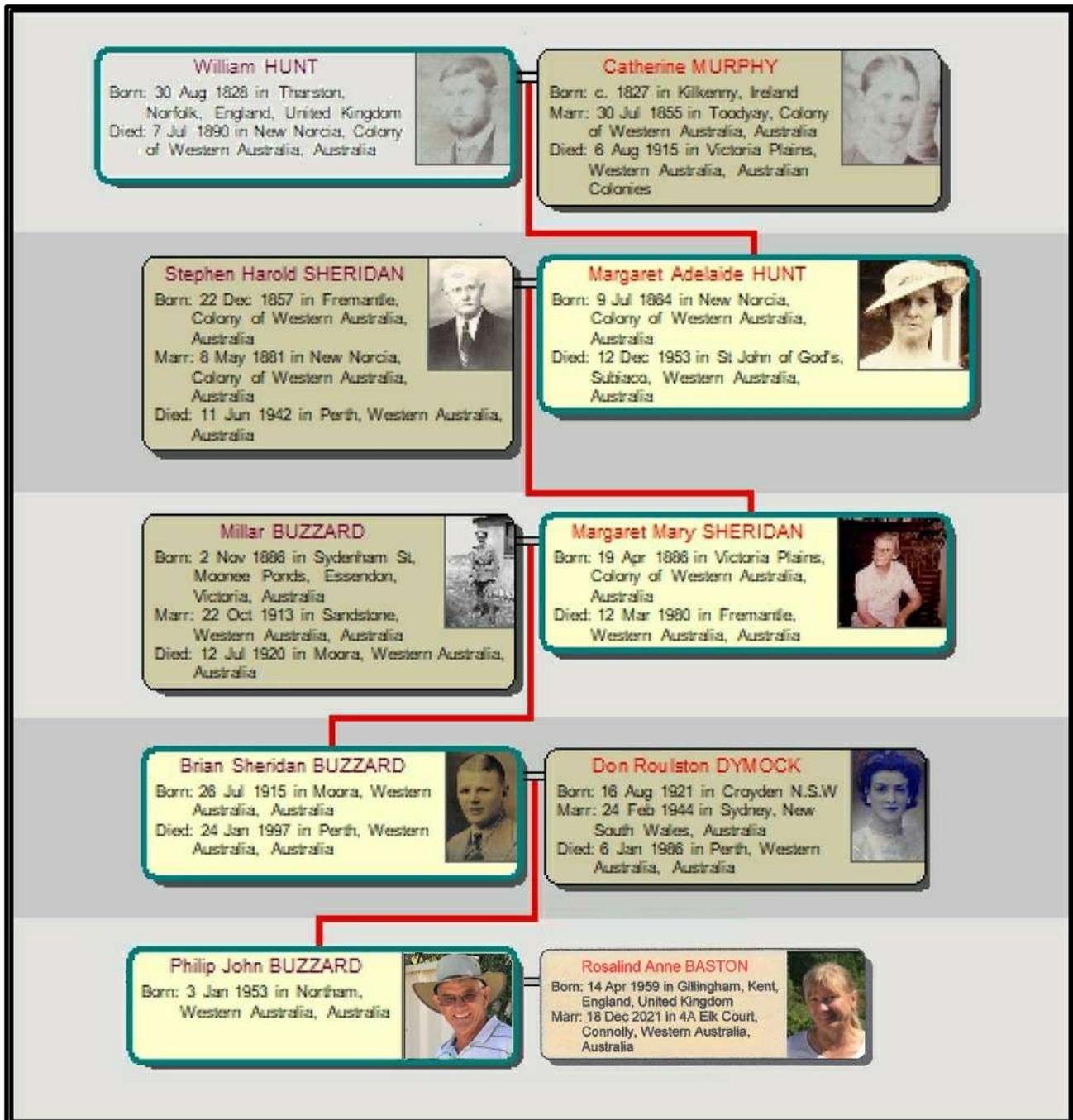
**The title picture is of a part of Tharston
shown within an outline of Australia.**



William and Catherine Hunt c.1875

In this booklet are details of the life of William Hunt. If anyone has any further information about this man or his family in Norfolk or in Australia please make contact.

From Tharston to Australia



Family tree from William Hunt (Tharston) to Phil Buzzard (Australia)

Introduction by Phil Buzzard

William Hunt was my great-great-grandfather born in Tharston, Norfolk, England in the July of 1828.

William surfaces as a 17 year old when he appears at the Norfolk Assize Court on the 22nd of July 1845, one of many appearances at the courts. Investigations are still proceeding into other possibly family members (including his father and brothers) who may have also been before the courts.

William's life was, as for many people in England at the time, a difficult one in trying to survive as an agricultural labourer, as it was for his father and brothers. The crimes he committed were various but larceny (theft) was his main pre-occupation although over the years he was also charged with burglary and poaching.

These crimes were his undoing and at the apparent age of 24 years (actual age 21 years), in April 1850, he was sentenced to 7 years transportation for stealing 3 geese and a gander, and for 2 of his previous felonies. On sentencing he was transferred to the Norfolk County Gaol before being sent to Wakefield Prison, West Yorkshire. He was then sent to Portland Prison in Dorset in March 1851, there to await his transportation.

At the time, he could have ended up on one of the hulk ships converted to prisons off the coast of England but William was "fortunate" to have been sent to Portland where conditions were better than on the hulks. The hulks were ships that had served their useful lives as merchant ships or naval ships and then were converted to floating prisons. As the prisons on land were filled, the hulks expanded the capacity of the justice system to incarcerate those found guilty of crimes. Prisoners on the hulks, according to a medical journal of John Bower, Surgeon aboard the "Pyrenees" in 1853, had a "pale and waxy look" whereas land-based prisoners were much healthier with a "ruddy and florid" look.

Leaving Portland in January 1853, aboard the convict ship "Pyrenees", William was transported to Australia's Swan River Colony. The journey took 3½ months,

in which time, William became ill with fever onboard ship but survived to land in Fremantle.

Surgeon Bower's journal records "The greater part of the prisoners were disembarked by the 6th May: the others waited on board, for a passage in a vessel shortly expected, until the 16th May and the 2nd June on which date all that remained were sent ashore".

Little is known of his life from this point until he marries Catherine Murphy in the Catholic Church, under special license (William Protestant, Catherine Catholic) in Toodyay, Western Australia, on 3rd December 1855. What is known is that he was granted a Ticket of Leave (TOL) on 1st July 1854 and therefore was allowed to work. His type of work around this time is being investigated but like many TOL men, he was probably employed in the construction of civic buildings and roads for the Town of Toodyay or as a labourer on a farm.

William probably worked from the Convict Depot at Toodyay and was granted a conditional pardon for his crimes in July 1854. Conditional meant he would not be able to return to England.

William and Catherine gave birth to their first child Anna in Bolgart, approximately 38km north of Toodyay, in 1856. The Benedictine Community, who William was associated with till his death, had a farm at Wyening, near Bolgart. The family is next found at New Norcia, where William and Catherine, have 4 more children, James Patrick in 1858, Maria in 1859, Mary Ann in 1861 and Margaret Adelaide in 1864. Mary Ann died in 1875, aged 14 years and was buried in New Norcia.

From 1866 to 1873 William is documented as digging wells for the Benedictine Community. When not well digging he was employed on general farm work in the area.

William is baptized into the Roman Catholic Church in 1878 by a priest of the Order of St. Benedict at New Norcia. In 1880 he took up a lease of 50 acres of land, 8 mile north west of New Norcia and called the holding "Norfolk Farm".

William died after a “protracted illness” on Monday the 7th of July 1890 after receiving the final rites from Father Coll. The two major newspapers in the State, together with the Catholic newspaper the Record, carried notices of his death. He was buried at the New Norcia Cemetery, Western Australia.

“Deceased has left a widow and numerous family” – one descendant is me, Philip John Buzzard, his great great grandson.



**In Loving Memory
Of
William Hunt V. P. W.A.
Who Died 7th July 1890
Aged 59 Yrs
R.I.P**

[V. P. W.A. refers to Victoria Plains, Western Australia]

Life Events

William Hunt in Tharston

William Hunt was born in Tharston on 30 Aug 1828. He was [baptized](#)¹ on 31 Aug 1828 at St. Mary's Church, Tharston. His parents were William (1798 - 1871, originally from Stratton St. Michael) and Hannah Francis (1800 – 1861, originally from Morningthorpe) who [married](#)² on 6th November 1821 in Stratton St. Michael with St. Peter.



Church of St. Mary the Virgin, Tharston

The [1841 Census](#)³ shows him as 12 years old, an agricultural labourer, living with his parents William (40, agricultural labourer) and Hannah (35), and siblings Henry (15, agricultural labourer), John (15, agricultural labourer), Hannah (9), Edward (7) and Maria (6). The Census did not have addresses so it is impossible to say where abouts in the village he lived.

According to the 1851 and 1861 Census Returns, William's parents were still living in Tharston.

¹ St. Mary the Virgin Church, Tharston, baptism register - Norfolk Record Office, Microfilm MF1715

² Stratton St Michael with St Peter, marriage register – FindMyPast - <https://tinyurl.com/3r5jcms3>

³ 1841 National Census - Class: *HO107*; Piece: *757*; Book: *19*; Civil Parish: *Tharston*; County: *Norfolk*; Enumeration District: *12*; Folio: *9*; Page: *13*; Line: *1*; GSU roll: *438851*

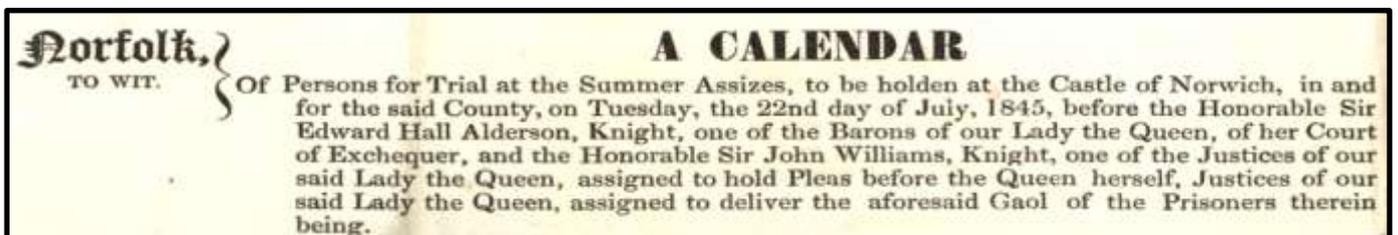
Norfolk 1845

William made his first recorded court appearance on the 15th of July 1845, at the age of 16 years and 10 months, charged with larceny (theft).

Over a period of time William was convicted on theft charges (stealing a pair of leather gloves and a horn comb, a gun, and 3 geese and a gander) and that was entered into his records as larceny. Under the sentencing system of the day, larceny “involved the unlawful taking or theft of the personal property of another or business”. It was classified in the 1840’s and 1850’s as a “serious crime”.

William was charged with having stolen a pair of leather gloves and a horn comb from a fellow labourer Isaac Nudds (appears in Census 1841 Forncett St Mary) on the 7th of July 1845 at Tharston. . He appeared at the [Norfolk Summer Assize Court \(Case no. 9\)](#)⁴ on the 22nd of July 1845, was found guilty and was sentenced to 1 week in gaol with hard labour.

[Court Appearance 22nd Jul 1845](#)⁵ (with transcript)



A Calendar

Norfolk, *Of Persons for Trial at the Summer Assizes, to be holden at the Castle of
TO WIT. Norwich, in and for the said County, on Tuesday, the 22nd day of July,
1845, before the Honorable Sir Edward Hall Alderson, Knight, one of the
Barons of our Lady the Queen, of her Court of Exchequer, and the
Honourable Sir John Williams, Knight, one of the Justices of our said
Lady the Queen, assigned to hold Pleas before the Queen herself,
Justices of our said Lady the Queen, assigned to deliver the aforesaid
Gaol of the Prisoners therein being.*

⁴ England & Wales, Criminal Registers – Ancestry - <https://tinyurl.com/2jdx7p8x>

⁵ in the England & Wales, Criminal Registers, 1791-1892 – Ancestry - <https://tinyurl.com/yjz45k2w>

1 wk. N. 9 WM. HUNT, aged 17, Committed July 15, 1845, by the Rev. Thomas Howes, Clerk, and Wm. Gwyn, Esq. charged on the oath of Isaac Nudds, of Forncett St. Peter, labourer, with having, on the 7th of the same month, at Tharston, stolen a pair of leather gloves and a horn comb, the property of the said Isaac Nudds.

1 wk. N. 9 W.M. HUNT, Committed July 14, 1845, by the Reverend Thomas Howes, Clerk, and Wm. Gwyn, Esq. charged on the oath of Isaac Nudds, of Forncett St. Peter, labourer, with having, on the 7th of the same month, at Tharston, stolen a pair of leather gloves and a horn comb, the property of the said Isaac Nudds.

[Norfolk News - 26 Jul 1845](#) ⁶ (with transcript)

—◆—

NORFOLK SUMMER ASSIZES.

The Summer Assizes for this county commenced on Tuesday. At three o'clock Mr. Baron Alderson arrived from Cambridge, and was met on the confines of the city by the High Sheriff and City Sheriff, with their respective equipages, and at once conducted to the County and City Courts, where her Majesty's commission was opened. Mr. Justice Williams arrived about half an hour after Mr. Baron Alderson, and at

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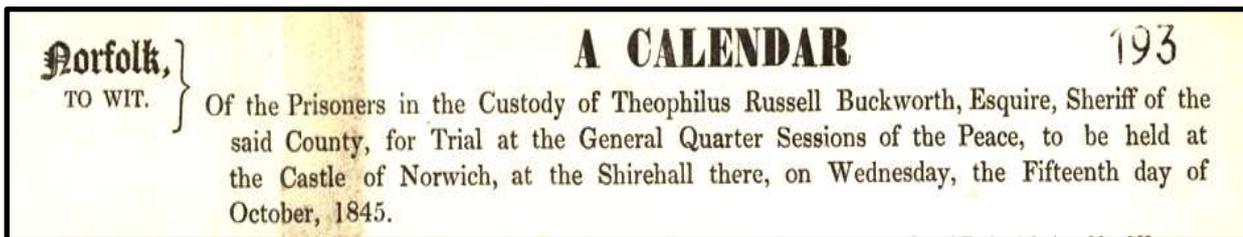
William Hunt, aged 17, stood charged with stealing a pair of gloves and a horn comb, the property of Isaac Nudds, of Tharston. The prosecutor was a poor labouring man, working in the fields, and had the articles stolen from him. Another labourer saw, through the hedge, the prisoner steal them. Guilty.— One week hard labour.

⁶ FindMyPast - [Newspapers & Periodicals](#) – Norwich Mercury, 26th July, 1846 - <https://tinyurl.com/3ryyaie7>

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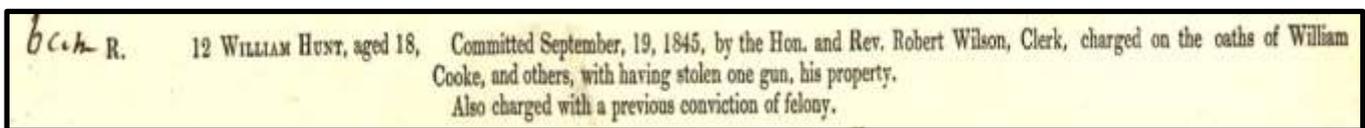
Court Appearance 15th Oct 1845 (with transcript) ⁷

Shortly after his release, William was again before the courts. He was committed on the 19th of September 1845 to appear at the General Quarter Sessions of the Peace (Case No. 12) on the 15th of October 1845 charged with stealing a gun from a William Cooke. He was also charged with a previous felony. He was again found guilty and sentenced, this time, to 6 calendar months in goal.



A Calendar 193

Norfolk, *Of the Prisoners, in the Custody of Theophilus Russell Buckworth,*
TO WIT. *Esquire, Sheriff of the said County, for Trial at the General Quarter*
Sessions of the Peace, to be held at the Castle of Norwich, at the
Shirehall there, on Wednesday, the Fifteenth day of October, 1845.



6 cm R. 12 William Committed September, 19, 1845, by the Hon. And
HUNT, aged Rev. Robert Wilson, Clerk, charged on the oaths of
19. William Cooke, and others, with having stolen one
gun, his property. Also charged with a previous
conviction of felony.

⁷ England & Wales, Criminal Registers, 1791-1892 – Ancestry - <https://tinyurl.com/2p8vrzvu>

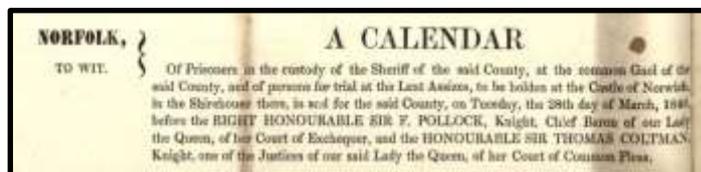
Norfolk 1847/48

William is absent from the courts for a couple of years until 1848 when he appears again. His age is given as 21 years of age. He is charged with having burgled the house of a widow, Jane Cooper, 72 years, (she appears on Census of 1841 living in Tasburgh) on the night of the 18th/19th of October 1847 and stolen some silver coins of the Realm. He was committed to trial at the Norfolk Lent Assize (Case no. 12) on the 24th of November 1847. He allegedly committed this crime with William Peck aged 23. In the Census of 1841, Peck was also shown living in Tharston.

Both Hunt and Peck had “[No Bill](#)”⁸ recorded against their names and were acquitted. “No bill” was recorded when the prosecution declined to proceed with the court case.

There is a discrepancy in ages recorded between appearances in court and I can only assume this is common for the times.

[Court Appearance 28th Mar 1848](#)⁹ (with transcript)



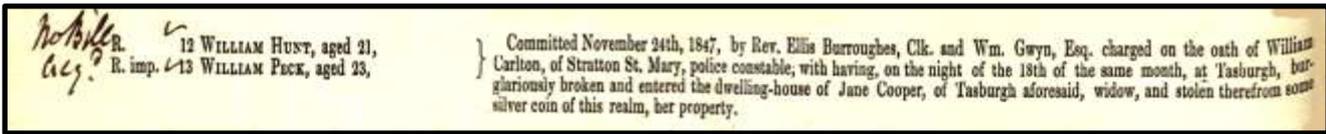
A Calendar

Norfolk,
TO WIT.

Of Prisoners, in the custody of the Sheriff of the said County, at the common Gaol of the said County, and of persons for trial at the Lent Assizes, to be holden at the Castle of Norwich, in the Shirehouse there, in and for the said County, on Tuesday, the 28th day of March, 1848, before the RIGHT HONOURABLE SIR F. POLLOCK, Knight, Chief Baron of our Lady the Queen, of her Court of Exchequer, and the HONOURABLE SIR THOMAS COLTMAN, Knight, one of the Justices of our said Lady the Queen, of her Court of Common Pleas.

⁸ England & Wales, Criminal Registers, 1791-1892 – Ancestry - <https://tinyurl.com/47ft5t83>

⁹ England & Wales, Criminal Registers, 1791-1892 – Class: HO 27; Piece: 85; Page: 342 (Ancestry) <https://tinyurl.com/5dez2ed>



| | | | | |
|--|-----------------------|------------------|--|---|
| <p>No Bill acq^d</p> | <p>R. R. imp.</p> | <p>12 13</p> | <p>William HUNT, aged 19. William Peck, aged 23.</p> | <p>Committed November 24th, 1847, by Rev. Ellis Burroughes, Clk. And Wm. Gwyn, Esq. charged on the oath of William Carlton, of Stratton St. Mary, police constable, with having, on the night of the 18th of the same month, at Tasburgh, burglariously broken and entered the dwelling-house of Jane Cooper, of Tasburgh aforesaid, widow, and stolen therefrom some silver coins of this realm, her property.</p> |
|--|-----------------------|------------------|--|---|

Norwich Mercury – 27th Nov 1847 ¹⁰ (with transcript)

A very determined burglary was committed on Friday morning, the 19th inst. in the village of Tasburgh. Mrs. Cooper, a widow, living upon her property, was, with her niece, who slept in the same room, alarmed about one o'clock in the morning by some one endeavouring to force the door of their bed-room. They asked who was there, when the door was directly broken open with such force as to break it completely from the hinges. A man wrapped up in a white tablecloth (taken from the kitchen), his legs enveloped in hay bands, to prevent noise, with a bludgeon in his hand, then entered the room, and upon the inmates calling out, he desired them to be quiet, or he would murder them. He then desired them to deliver all the money they had in the house, which they immediately gave him, when he quietly walked downstairs and out of the house. This was evidently the work of a person who knew the house well, or who had been minutely informed of its ways. On Wednesday two young men living in the neighbourhood, named William Peck and William Hunt, were committed to the Castle for the robbery by the Rev. Ellis Burroughes and William Gwynn, Esq.

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¹⁰ FindMyPast - [Newspapers & Periodicals](https://www.findmypast.co.uk/newspapers) – Norwich Mercury, 27th November, 1847 - <https://tinyurl.com/6nmtsr9k>

then desired them to deliver all the money they had in the house, which they immediately gave him, when he quietly walked downstairs and out of the house. This was evidently the work of a person who knew the house well, or who had been minutely informed of its ways. On Wednesday two young men living in the neighbourhood, named William Peck and William Hunt, were committed to the Castle for the robbery by the Rev. Ellis Burroughs and William Gwynn, Esq.”

1848 Poaching

Again in 1848, William was convicted of poaching but no record of the court appearance has been found, despite an intensive record search by the Norfolk Records Office. This crime does appear on Williams record when he is transferred Wakefield to Portland Prisons. For this crime he was sentenced to 2 months in prison.

Norfolk 1850

By 1850, William has two previous felony convictions recorded against him and it is his final crime in England that sent him on a journey across the world.

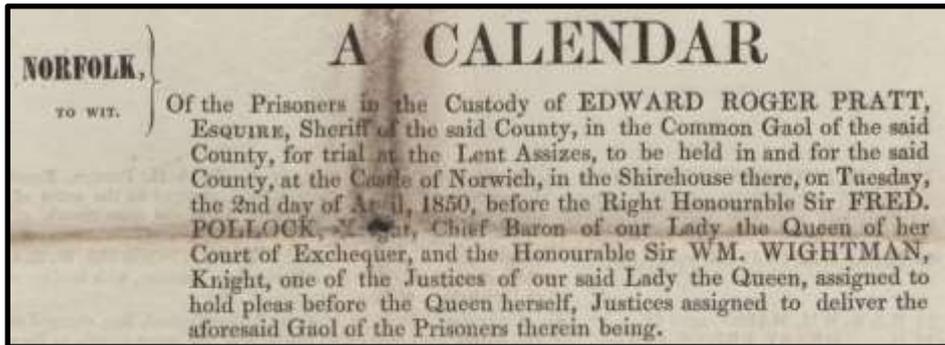
On the 26th of March 1850, before the [Norfolk Lent Assize, \(Case no. 29\)](#)¹¹ on the oath of a Samuel Took, William is alleged to have stolen, at Forncett St Peter, from one Samuel Took, 3 geese and a gander (Samuel Took appears the Census for 1851 in Forncett St Peter). He was also charged with 2 previous convictions of felony.

William was found guilty and sentenced to 7 years transportation.

[Court Appearance 2nd April 1850](#)¹² (with transcript)

¹¹ England & Wales, Criminal Registers, 1791-1892 – Ancestry - <https://tinyurl.com/yc2pit5b>

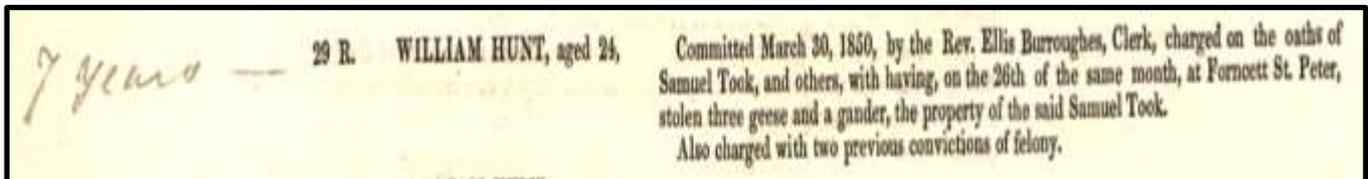
¹² England & Wales, Criminal Registers, 1791-1892 – Ancestry - <https://tinyurl.com/yc2pit5b>



A CALENDAR

Norfolk, *Of the Prisoners in the Custody of EDWARD ROGER PRATT, ESQUIRE, Sheriff of the said County, in the Common Gaol of the said County, for trial at the Lent Assizes, to be held in and for the said County, at the Castle of Norwich, in the Shirehouse there, on Tuesday, the 2nd day of April, 1850, before the Right Honourable Sir FRED. POLLOCK, Knight, Chief Baron of our Lady the Queen of her Court of Exchequer, and the Honourable Sir W M. Wightman, Knight, one of the Justices of our said Lady the Queen, assigned to hold pleas before the Queen herself, Justices designed to deliver the aforesaid Gaol of the Prisoners therein being.*

TO WIT.



7 years 29 R. William HUNT, Committed March 30, 1850, by Rev. Ellis Burroughs, Clerk, charged on the oaths of Samuel Took, and others, with having, on the 26th of the same month, at Fornsett St. Peter, stolen three geese and a gander, the property of the said Samuel Took. Also charged with two previous convictions of felony.

Norfolk News – 6 Apr 1850¹³ (with transcript)

FOWL STEALING.
William Hunt, aged 24, pleaded *guilty* to the charge of having, on the 26th instant, at Forncett St. Peter, stolen three geese and a gander, the property of Mr. Samuel Took. Sentenced to seven years' transportation. The prisoner had been convicted on several previous occasions.

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The details are summarized in the “ENGLAND & WALES REGISTER OF THE NAMES OF ALL PERSONS COMMITTED FOR TRIAL or BAILED FOR APPEARANCE at the ASSIZES and SESSIONS IN THE YEAR 1850 and the RESULTS OF THE PROCEEDINGS, VOL. 3”, [image 199](#) in FindMyPast.¹⁴

William spent approximately a month at the [Norfolk County Gaol](#)^{15 16}.

Wakefield, West Yorkshire 1850 – 1851

He was transferred on the 6th of May 1850 to Wakefield Prison in West Yorkshire and given the Prisoner number 1310. Wakefield was quite large and was used as an overflow prison by all counties.

¹³ Norfolk News - 6th April 1850

¹⁴ FindMyPast - “England & Wales Register Of The Names Of All Persons Committed For Trial Or Bailed For Appearance At The Assizes And Sessions In The Year 1850 And The Results Of The Proceedings, Vol. 3”, image 199 - <https://tinyurl.com/y772mrpu>

¹⁵ Youtube video of Norwich Gaol - <https://tinyurl.com/462jntat>

¹⁶ Norwich Castle gaol, prison and courtroom virtual trail - <https://tinyurl.com/yy9msxd9>



Wakefield Prison

Portland, Dorset 1851 -1853

The records show that on the 14th of March 1851, William was transferred from Wakefield to Portland Prison ¹⁷ and was to remain there until January 1853. He was given Prisoner no. 2319.

When transferred to Portland, a record lists William’s offences and sentences when he appeared before the courts over previous years.



| | | | | | | | | | | | |
|------|--------------|----|---|---|----------|---|-----------------------|-------|-------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------|
| 1310 | William Hunt | 24 | S | R | Labourer | 2 nd April 1850 Norwich Assizes | Larceny and Pre. Con. | Seven | 6 th May 1850 Norwich | 1845 felony 14 days & felony 6 cal. Mos, 1847 Burglary Bill Ignored, 1848 Poaching 2 cal. Mos. 1849 felony 4 cal. Mos. | 14 March 1851 Portland |
|------|--------------|----|---|---|----------|---|-----------------------|-------|-------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------|

¹⁷ Wakefield Prison Register – Find My Past England & Wales, Crime, Prisons & Punishment, 1770-1935 14/3/1851 HO23 p168

William's record at Portland was as a "Good Prisoner" according to the quarterly reports which prisons were required to make on all prisoners. His health from March 1851 to December 1852 was described as either "Good" or "Very Good" and his conduct between "Good" and "Exemplary".

An example of one of the 7 reports available on William's imprisonment whilst in prison at Portland is given below.

Conduct Report (one of quarterly reports) ¹⁹

| | | | | | | | | |
|------|--------------|----|----------------|---------|-----------------------|---|----|----|
| 2319 | William Hunt | 24 | Stealing Geese | Norwich | 2 ^d Apr 50 | 7 | do | 8. |
|------|--------------|----|----------------|---------|-----------------------|---|----|----|

| | | | | | | | | |
|------|--------------|----|----------------|---------|----------|---|----------------------|--------------------|
| 2319 | William Hunt | 24 | Stealing Geese | Norwich | 2 Apr 50 | 7 | do. [Good health] | Do. [Exemplary] |
|------|--------------|----|----------------|---------|----------|---|----------------------|--------------------|

In March 1851 William is on a work party from the prison. A report of their conduct says that none of the prisoners were reported for "irregularity".

Work Party Report at Portland ^{20 21}

| | |
|--|---|
| <p>/// 15th March 1851 Saturday</p> | <p>The Prisoners employed as usual - Reported for irregularity - none - The maintenance Prisons received and registered as follows - From Wakefield (44) John Higgins Regt No. 2296 Alfred Larwood Regt No. 2318 William Brooks . 2297 Wm Hunt . 2319</p> |
|--|---|

¹⁹ Find My Past - England & Wales, Crime, Prisons & Punishment, 1770-1935 H08

²⁰ Find My Past - England & Wales, Crime, Prisons & Punishment, 1770-1935

²¹ The National Archives - <https://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/details/r/C1193658>

111

15 March 1851
Saturday

The Prisoners employed as usual
Reported for irregularity – none

The undermentioned Prisoners received and registered as follows

–

From Wakefield (44)

John Higgins Reg. No. 2296

Alfred Larwood Reg. No. 2318

William Crooks .. 2297

Wm. Hunt .. 2319

Commencement of the Voyage of the Convict Ship Pyrenees

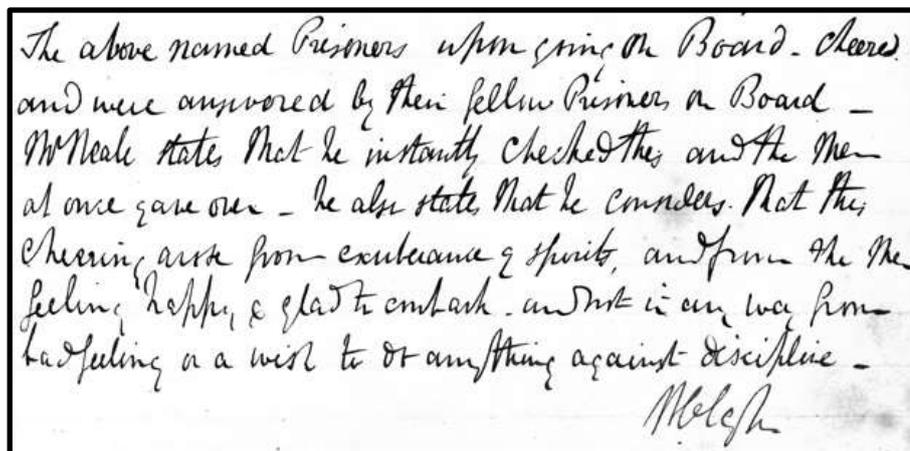
The Pyrenees started loading convicts on the Thames Estuary, at Woolwich, from the hulks Warrior and Defence and then went onto Portsmouth to load convicts from Portsmouth Prison and 2 prisoners from the hulk York in Portsmouth Harbour. (John Bower, ship's surgeon, incorrectly lists the 2 prisoners were from the hulk Stirling Castle). The ship then sailed to Portland, to pick up William and 87 other Portland prisoners and then onto Plymouth to load the Dartmoor prisoners.²²

The Prisoners embarked on board the Pyrenees were received from the following prisons:

| | |
|--|-------------|
| 22 ^d Dec ^r 1852. Warrior Hulk | 55 |
| Woolwich Defence Hulk | 35 |
| 19 th Jan ^y 1853 Portsmouth Prison | 50 |
| " " Stirling Castle Hulk | 2 |
| 21 st " " Portland Prison | 88 |
| 28 th " " Dartmoor H ^o | <u>66</u> |
| Total Number embarked | <u>296.</u> |

²² From journal of John Bower, Ships Surgeon, Pyrenees

whether disciplinary action should be taken against the men, but it was decided not to.



The above named Prisoners upon going on Board - cheered and were answered by their fellow Prisoners on Board - Mr Neale states that he instantly checked them and the men at once gave over - he also states that he considers that the cheering arose from exuberance of spirits, and from the men feeling happy & glad to embark - and that in any way from his feeling a wish to do anything against discipline -
Melegh

The Voyage of the “Pyrenees” 1853

The voyage of the “Pyrenees”, for William, commenced at 4:30pm on the 24th of January 1853 with 94 passengers and 296 Prisoners.

The names of prisoners, guards and families aboard the Pyrenees are on the [Convicts to Australia](#) website ²⁵.

One notable prisoner was [Joseph Bolitho Johns, a.k.a. Moodyne Joe](#), ²⁶, who became infamous as Western Australia’s celebrated bushranger.

The [Lloyds Online Register of Shipping](#) ²⁷ shows that the most likely ship was the “[Pyrenees](#)” ²⁸ built in 1851 in Sunderland by D. Dunbar, a sail ship made of wood. Its captain/master was B. Freeman when William sailed to Australia.

The ships Surgeon Dr Bower was not impressed with the design of the prisoners’ bunks as he goes to some lengths to describe modifications carried out on them during the voyage to stop rotting food accumulating under the bottom bunk.

²⁵ Convicts to Australia website - <https://tinyurl.com/yb27su65>

²⁶ Wikipedia, Moodyne Joe - <https://tinyurl.com/hmyexzed>

²⁷ Lloyds Online Register of Shipping - <https://tinyurl.com/2p8n2drr>

²⁸ Lloyds Online Register of Shipping, Pyrenees - <https://tinyurl.com/yckm9xvv>

A '[Convicts to Australia](#)' website document gives [descriptions of the convicts](#) on board the Pyrenees ²⁹. William was recorded as Reg. No. 1878, a labourer, single with no children, 5' 8¾" tall, dark brown hair and hazel eyes, a long face with a sallow complexion, of stout build, with the little finger on his left hand crooked and a scar on his right wrist.

The voyage was described in some details by a log kept by [Alfred Gray](#) ³⁰, a religious instructor onboard the ship. The first page only of the transcript of the log is shown below. In the whole log some prisoner names were mentioned by Alfred but William's was not.

Tuesday, January 14th 1853.

3 p.m. Joined the "Pyrenees" at Portsmouth.

4½ p.m. Returned by Bumb Boat & spent the evening with Mr Shire the Governor's son of the "Stirling Castle". Captn. Freeman, Dr Bowyer and myself accompanied by Mr Garrett visited thoroughly the "Wellington" Man of War.

19th. Spent the day with Mr Williams the Sub. Governor of the above ship.

23rd. 10½ a.m. Held Divine Service. 4 p.m. Got under weigh & sailed from Portsmouth. 8 p.m. Most lovely evening.

Monday 24th. 2 a.m. Arrived at Portland Roads. 3½ p.m. Under weigh for Sea.

25th Head rather giddy, fine breeze.

26th Arrived yesterday at 10 a.m. at Plymouth.

28th. 3½ p.m. The Dartmoor Prisoners arrived in the "Queen Man of War's Boats.

29th. Plymouth, fine day, after breakfast Mr Wright a passenger joined the ship whom I accompanied ashore at 12 at noon and visited the "Royal Dockyard" at Devonport/ Rope making very interesting, the walk more than a mile in length. Six large Men of War are now being built but from some cause, the public are not

²⁹ Physical Descriptions Of Convicts On Pyrenees 1853 - <https://tinyurl.com/yexdbknx>

³⁰ Alfred Gray's Log 1853 - <https://tinyurl.com/2p9cdnem>

allowed to go in during work. Engineers shops are well worth notice, although not equal to some Engineers' Manufactories, that I have seen in the North of England. saw Nasmith's Hammers in use, for the making of Anchors very much pleased with my visit I returned to the Ship to Dinner.

Sunday 30th – Plymouth. As the sun this Sabbath casts its rays on our good Ship, so I trust the minds of the unfortunate people, whose care I have will be illumined, with the golden truths of the Gospel of Christ. The Rev. Mr Child of Devonport came on board, and performed Divine Service the whole of the unhappy prisoners were mustered 'tween decks, and a

Mr. John Bower, Ship's Surgeon³¹, details the names of persons ill on the ship and the treatment he gave them. William was one of them as he had a fever on the 18th of March and after treatment returned to duties on 29th April 1853.



A handwritten medical record entry on a lined form. The text is written in cursive and matches the typed text below. The entry is: "do. William Hunt 24 Convict Fever Apr 29 Duty Mar 9".

do. William Hunt 24 Convict Fever Apr 29 Duty
Mar 9

“A very strong and powerful young man. The disease in this case came on in the usual manner. The febrile excitement was treated by a small blood-letting and Diaphoretics. No unfavourable symptoms showed until the 12th day after the attack when the lungs became congested evidenced by cough and rusty expectoration this was relieved by large dose of Au. Pot Ash and blisters: the expectoration continued copious and bloody for a considerable time; under the constant use of Quinine and restoratives with a general diet and wine, he speedily recovered health and strength and returned to duty on 29th April.”

At 8 a.m., on 30th April 1853, a pilot from “Rottenness” Island, (Alfred Gray’s name for Rottnest Island) off Fremantle, came aboard the Pyrenees and the ship anchored at 5 p.m. a journey of 96 days.

On 6th May 1853 most of the prisoners were sent ashore. The remainder went sent ashore between the 16th May and the 2nd of June.

³¹ The journal of John Bower, Ships Surgeon, Pyrenees 1853 - <https://tinyurl.com/3mrk2aty>

William had arrived in the Swan River Colony.

Swan River Colony 1853

History of Transportation of Convicts to the Swan River Colony. ³²

The Swan River Settlement had been in existence for twenty years when it took the unusual step of electing to become a British penal settlement in 1849.

The British Government accepted the offer and quickly dispatched the vessel Scindian, which arrived off Fremantle on the 1st June 1850 with a cargo of 75 male convicts aboard. This was to be the first of 43 transportations of convicts to the colony over an 18 year period.

Although a total of 9,925 convicts were officially registered during this period, it is estimated that some 500 of these were local prisoners intermixed with the transported convicts.

Transportation of convicts to Western Australia ceased in 1868 as a result of a reassessment of British home policy. The last convict ship to Australia, the Hougoumont, arrived in the Swan River Colony on 10th January 1868 with 229 convicts aboard.

Wikipedia has an introduction to "[Convicts era of Western Australia](#)" ³³.

The [Fremantle Prison, Convict Database](#) ³⁴, shows William was admitted to the Swan River Colony on 30 April 1853, a slight difference to an earlier stated date. His year of birth is given as 1825, which is an error as he was actually born in 1828.

The record also gives William a 'Ticket of Leave' on 1 May 1853. [A Ticket of Leave allowed a convict to work for themselves if they remained in a specified area, reported regularly to the local authorities and attended divine worship every Sunday if possible, and they could not leave the

³² The Australian Register UNESCO Memory of the World Program. Convict Records of Western Australia, 1838-1910

³³ Wikipedia "Convicts era of Western Australia" - <https://tinyurl.com/3kyuasv>

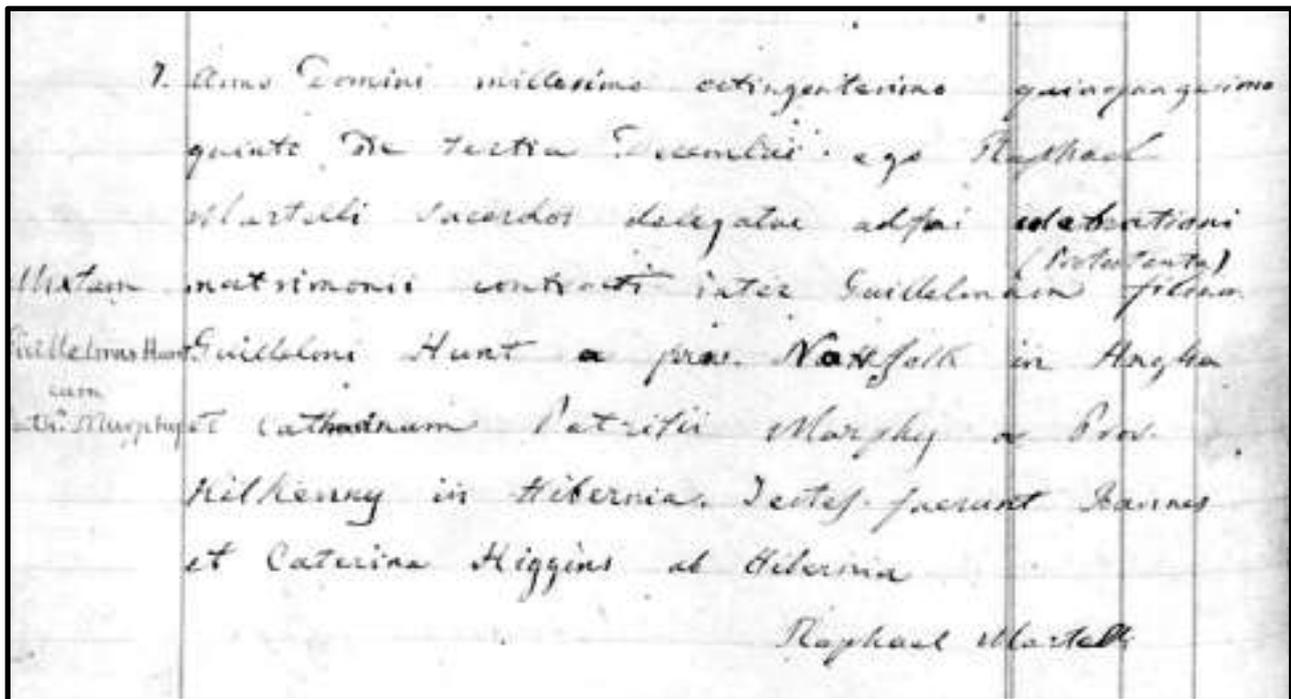
³⁴ Fremantle Prison – Convict Database (search for William Hunt) <https://tinyurl.com/27xna6da>

colony.] He received a '[Conditional Pardon](#)'³⁵ on 1 Jul 1854. [A conditional pardon allowed convicts with long sentences the freedom of the colony, but they were not allowed to return to the UK.]

William's conditional pardon was reported in the [Western Australian Government Gazette on Tuesday, 4th July, 1854, page 3](#)³⁶. William had a registration number of 1878, his convict number.

William was [married](#)³⁷ in Toodyay on 30th July 1855 to Catherine Murphy. She was born in 1830⁽⁴⁾, and [died in 1915](#)³⁸ in New Norcia, Victoria Plains, Western Australia.

Her father was Patrick Murphy. A translation of the marriage certificate in a letter from the Benedictine Community of New Norcia dated 24th March 1989 gives Catherine's origins as Kilkenny in Ireland.



"In the year of our Lord 1855, on the 3rd day of December, I, Raphael Martelli, the delegated priest, was present at the celebration of marriage between William

³⁵ Western Australian Government Gazette, 4th July 1854 - <https://tinyurl.com/pccdhtkh>

³⁶ The W. Australian Government Gazette, Tuesday, 4th July, 1854 - <https://tinyurl.com/pccdhtkh>

³⁷ Western Australia Marriage Index – Reg No:865/55 - FindMyPast - <https://tinyurl.com/4skxhr34>

³⁸ Western Australia Death Index – Reg No: 3 - FindMyPast - <https://tinyurl.com/dfpksnb>

[Protestant], the son of William, Hunt from (?) [province] Norfolk in England and Catherine Patricia Murphy from (?) [province] Kilkenny in Ireland. The witnesses James and Catherine Higgins from Ireland.

Raphael Martelli."

Research has shown Catherine was born in West St., Parish of Callan, Diocese of Ossory, Kilkenny, Ireland c. 1827 and baptized on 7th Jan 1827. She was one of four siblings. James b. 1825, Catherine b. 1827, Margaret b. 1830 and William b. 1833. ³⁹

| Western Australia | | | | | |
|--|---|---------------------|---------------|--------------------|-------------|
| MARRIAGE CERTIFICATE | | | | | |
| <small>Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Act</small> | | | | | |
| <table border="1"> <tr> <td>Registration Number</td> <td>0000865F/1855</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Certificate Number</td> <td>00057605136</td> </tr> </table> | | Registration Number | 0000865F/1855 | Certificate Number | 00057605136 |
| Registration Number | 0000865F/1855 | | | | |
| Certificate Number | 00057605136 | | | | |
| MARRIAGE | | | | | |
| Date of Marriage | 30 July 1855 | | | | |
| Place of Marriage | Office of the Sub Registrar, Toodyay, Western Australia | | | | |
| BRIDEGROOM | | | | | |
| Surname | Hunt | | | | |
| Given Names | William | | | | |
| Usual Occupation | Labourer | | | | |
| Residence at time of Marriage | Toodyay | | | | |
| Marital Status | Bachelor | | | | |
| Age | Over 21 years | | | | |
| Father's Name | -- | | | | |
| Father's Occupation | -- | | | | |
| BRIDE | | | | | |
| Surname | Murphy | | | | |
| Given Names | Catherine | | | | |
| Usual Occupation | Servant | | | | |
| Residence at time of Marriage | Toodyay | | | | |
| Marital Status | Spinster | | | | |
| Age | Over 21 years | | | | |
| Father's Name | Edward Murphy | | | | |
| Father's Occupation | Labourer | | | | |
| rites | Act of Council | | | | |
| CELEBRANT | J S Harris | | | | |
| Registered on 31 December 1855 by Registrar General | | | | | |

After leaving Toodyay, William was most probably employed by the monks of the Benedictine Community at Bolgart near Toodyay. His first daughter was born here on 10th Jan 1856.

Bishop Salvador ⁴⁰, Head of the Benedictine Community, took up land in Wyening, in 1856 on the monks' journey from Fremantle to **New Norcia** ⁴¹.

³⁹ National Library of Ireland parish registers of the Catholic Church

⁴⁰ Bishop Salvador on Wikipedia - https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rosendo_Salvado

⁴¹ The Story of New Norcia - <https://www.newnorcia.wa.edu.au/heritage/history>

Before William eventually became a farmer, he was documented by the Benedictine Community, New Norcia with the digging of 13 wells, starting with his first well in 6th Feb 1866 at the last on 30th April 1873. “Holy Waters: the development of criteria for the identification of the monkish wells of New Norcia in colonial Western Australia”, a [journal written by ROSS BERTINSHAW](#)⁴², notes William’s activity:

“The well sinkers do not appear to have had any particular expertise in well construction before their arrival in the colony. The convicts came from a number of occupations though they were mostly labourers, with only a few having occupations that would have been useful. The three convicts who were the most prolific well diggers were Charles Delaney (35 wells) a labourer and soldier, John Ryder (15 wells) a Parkhurst boy trained as a farm servant, and William Hunt (13 wells) a labourer/sawyer who became a local farmer. The small farmers probably brought some suitable prior experience in well sinking but they typically only contracted for one or two wells, perhaps to gain some experience or earn extra cash.”

On 11th August 1878 William converted to Catholicism.

Anno Domini 1878, die 11^a Augusti,
1878, ego infrascriptus in Ecclesia S^{ae} Trinitatis
Nova Norcia Australia Occidentalis, baptizavi
Guillelmus **Hunt.** sub conditione visum nomine Guillelmi Hunt,
originarius ex insula Anglia, sed actualiter habi-
tans in loco vulgo dicto Jiriol hujus Benedicti-
anae Missionis, annorum quinquaginta plus mi-
nuse, qui prius fecit publicam abrenuntiationem
Protestantismi sectae cui pertinebat, et post legit-
sollemnem Professionem Catholicae et Apostolicae
Fidei secundum Sanctam Romanam Ecclesiam.
Patrini fuerunt Jacobus, et Anna, filii
ejusdem Guillelmi Hunt et Catharinae Murphy.
Bernardus Mastence, P^{re}ter. N. N. B.

“On 11th August 1878, I the undersigned, did conditionally baptise in the church of the Most Holy Trinity at New Norcia, Western Australia, a man called William Hunt, from the island of England, but actually living in the place commonly called Jiriol of this Benedictine mission. He is about fifty years old and has publicly

⁴² JSTOR – source of academic journal articles - <https://www.jstor.org/stable/26350195>

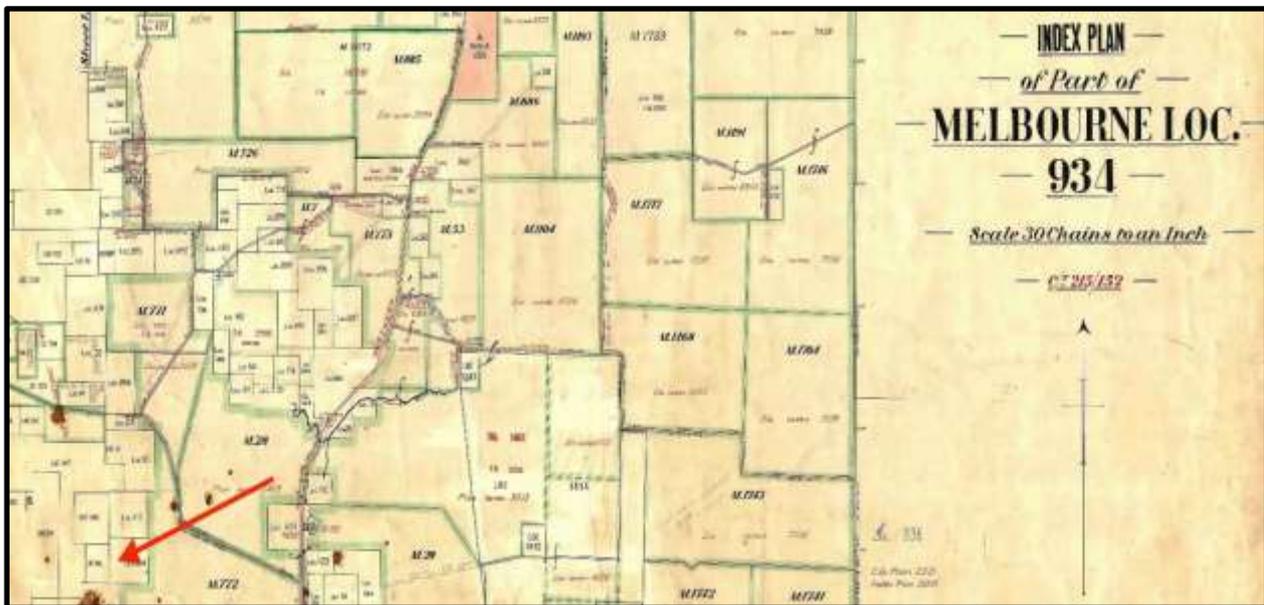
renounced Protestantism and has accepted the solemn profession of the Catholic and Apostolic faith according to the Holy Roman Church. The witnesses were James, and Anne, the children of William Hunt and Catharine Murphy.

Bernard Martinez, priest, OSB”.

This and other events relating to William are noted in [Bishop Salvado’s Diaries](#), Vol 15 ⁴³ , transcriber unknown.

1880 saw William take on a farm; he called it “Norfolk Farm”.

“William Hunt, a ‘Glentromie’ workman took up Location 496, 50 acres of land, in 1880, which he called ‘Norfolk Farm’.”



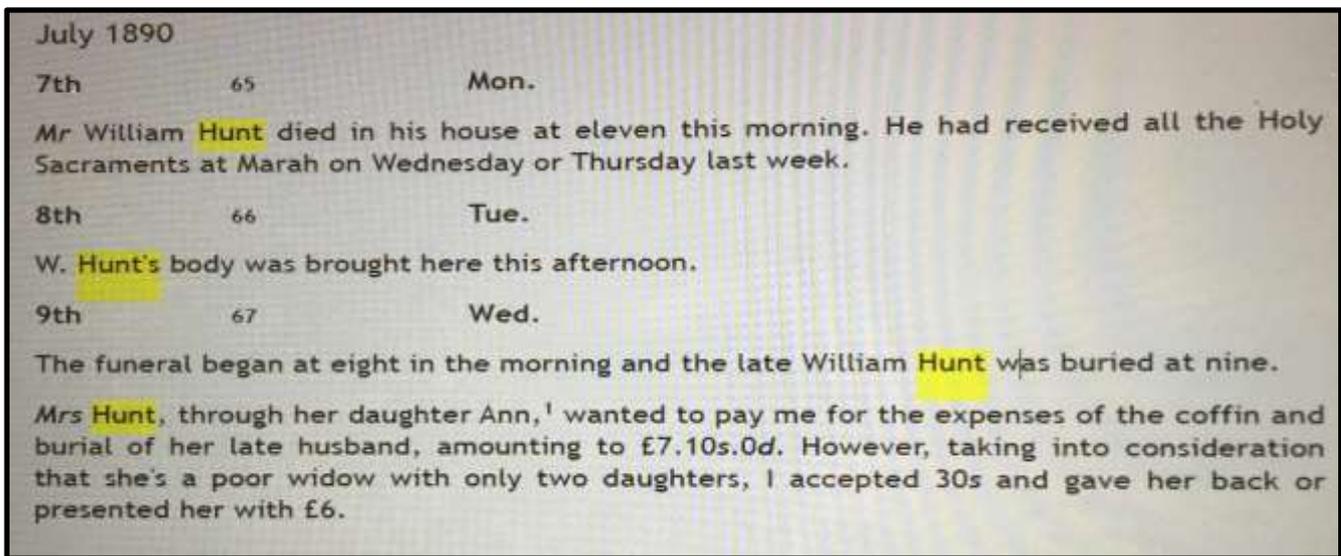
Norfolk Farm, Melbourne Location Lot 496



The Original “Norfolk Farm” farmhouse with thatched roof

⁴³ Bishop Salvado’s Diaries, Vol 15 - <https://tinyurl.com/55td39y7>

William **died**⁴⁴ on 7 Jul 1890, actually aged 61 years, of natural causes. Bishop Salvado's⁴⁵ diary recorded the events following William's death.



(No explanation can be given for the reference by Bishop Salvado to Mrs Hunt "she's a poor widow with two only daughters" as she had a son and three daughters at the time.)

According to Bishop Salvador's diary, he was given the Holy Sacraments at Marah on the 2nd or 3rd of July and died in his house (Norfolk Farm?), on the 7th of July 1890 and his body was transported to New Norcia on the 8th July for burial. There is doubt where William actually died. A Benedictine archival entry states Father Coll brought William's body from Marah, which was a farm purchased by the Benedictine Community near Watheroo.

Marah is 100km north of New Norcia and William is credited with digging a well there on 13th of May 1871 so he could have been back there digging wells when he died.

⁴⁴ Western Australia Death Index - FindMyPast - <https://tinyurl.com/48vnptjy>

⁴⁵ Transcript of Bishop Salvador's Diary 1890 from New Norcia Archives

BENEDICTINE COMMUNITY OF NEW NORCIA INC.
— — — — —
 New Norcia, Western Australia 6509

Telephone: (08) 96548 018 Facsimile: (08) 96548 097
 email - norciawa@newnorcia.wa.edu.au

24-mar-1998

Re: William Patrick Hunt

I have found the burial registration for William Hunt dated 7th July, 1890 aged 60 years. The long entry indicates that Fr Coll bought his body from Marah having given him all the rites before death.

(There is an error in the above as it references William Patrick Hunt.)

— — — — —

In July last two deaths occurred in the Victoria Plains district, those of Mr. W. Hunt, and Mrs. Duncan Campbell, the latter, a resident of thirty- five years, in her 82nd year.

— — — — —

W.A. Record, Thursday 7 August 1890, page 6

| Western Australia | | Registration Number 0000451L/1890 |
|---|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| DEATH CERTIFICATE | | Certificate Number 00052344986 |
| <small>Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Act</small> | | |
| DECEASED | | |
| Surname | Hunt | |
| Given Names | William | |
| Place of death | Vict Plains, Western Australia | |
| Date of death | 7 July 1890 | |
| Occupation | Farmer | |
| Sex | Male | |
| Age | 69 years | |
| CAUSE OF DEATH | Natural Causes | |
| <small>(Approximate interval between onset of disease or condition and death shown in brackets)</small> | | |
| Informant's name | James Hunt | |
| Address | — | |
| Description | Son of W Hunt | |
| Registered on 8 July 1890 by C Gee | | |

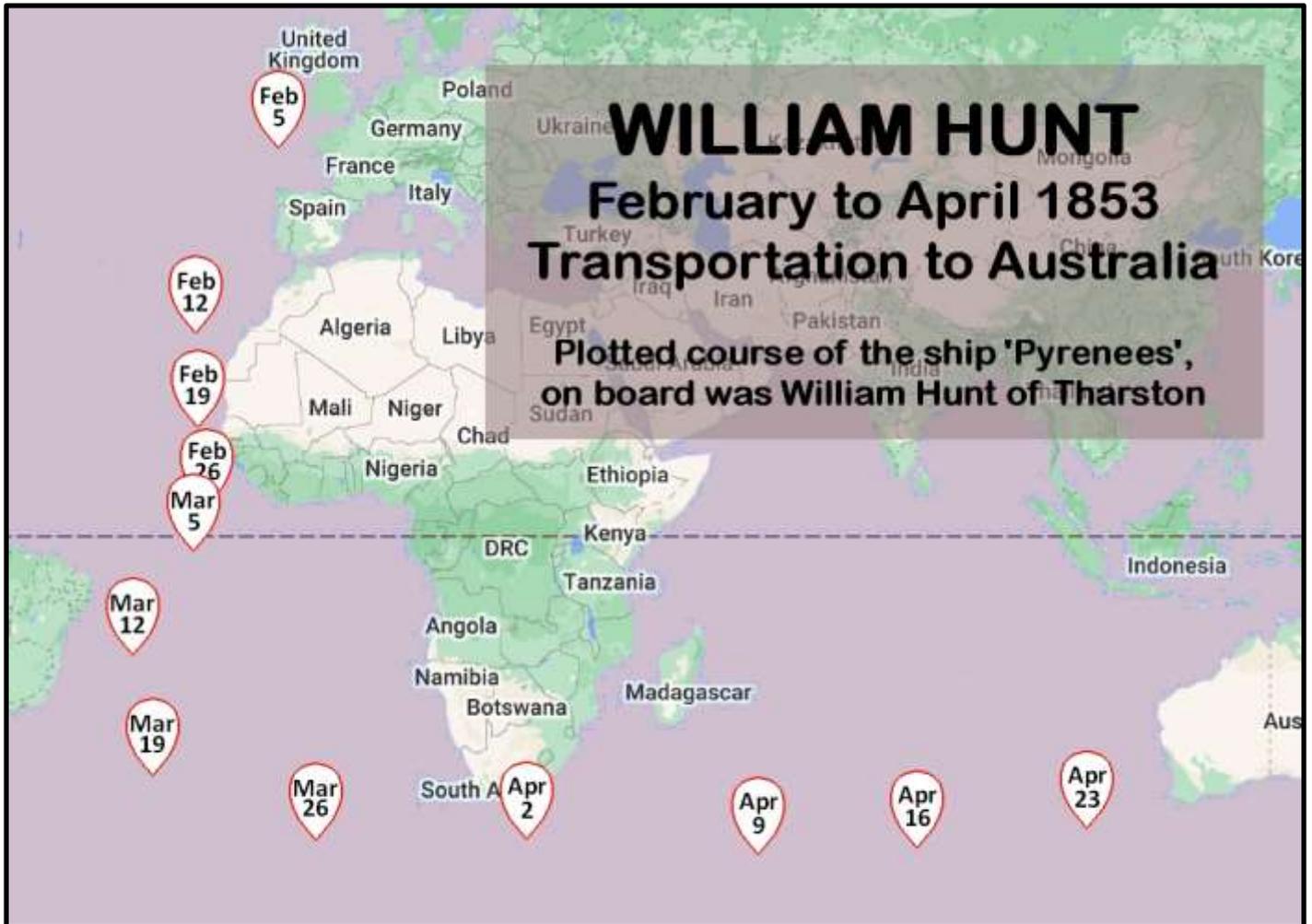
Western Australia – Death Certificate

The death was registered by William's eldest son James.

The graveside service started at 8 a.m. on Wed the 9th of July, 1890 and he was buried at 9 a.m. in the New Norcia Cemetery, Victoria Plains, Western Australia.



**In Loving Memory
Of
William Hunt V. P. W.A.
Who Died 7th July 1890
Aged 59 Yrs
R.I.P.**



The dates and positions of the 'Pyrenees' have been taken from Alfred Grey's log of the 1853 journey from England to Australia. Alfred was the ship's 'chaplain', looking after the spiritual welfare of those aboard, regularly performing acts of worship with the prisoners and the ship's company.

Links and documents:

- AJCP Public Record Office (PRO) - <https://tinyurl.com/2p8evkn6>
- Alfred Gray's Original Log from Pyrenees 1853 - <https://tinyurl.com/2p9cdnem>
- Australian Cemeteries - <http://www.australiancemeteries.com.au/>
- Convict Records of Australia - <https://convictrecords.com.au/>
- Fremantle Prison, History and Heritage - <https://tinyurl.com/2p8vu8k6>
- Friends of Battye Library Inc. – Convict Records of Western Australia - <https://tinyurl.com/2p9yfsn4>
- JStor : Holy Waters: the development of criteria for the identification of the monkish wells of New Norcia in colonial Western Australia : ROSS BERTINSHAW - <https://tinyurl.com/2p8umw34>
- Medical Report - Convicts On Pyrenees Dr Bower - <https://tinyurl.com/d3jp5phv>
- Midwest of Western Australian Heritage - <https://midwestwaheritage.com/>
- National Archives of Australia - <https://www.naa.gov.au/>
- National Library of Australia - Medical Records Of Convict Ships Including Pyrenees - <https://tinyurl.com/55ky3p5u>
- Project Gutenberg ebook library - <https://www.gutenberg.org/>
- Toodyay Convicts - <https://tinyurl.com/ceps7b6x>
- TROVE, Newspapers and Periodicals - <https://tinyurl.com/85wh85wk>
- Western Australian Legislation – Government Gazettes for 1854 - <https://tinyurl.com/2p9xpwk6>



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