

Harriet 1816 to 1873

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Harriet Harford was born about 1816. No christening record has been identified for her and her birth year is derived from the age of 25 supplied in the 1841 Census. She was the daughter of William Harford and his second wife Deborah Boffen. William died on 12 March 1837 and in the 1841 Census Harriet was recorded as living with her mother Deborah, a widow, and two siblings, Jane and David. Harriet is shown as Deborah's daughter with an occupation of Woollen Cloth worker.

David Harford	25	Labourer	✓
Deborah do	65	Pauper	✓
Jane do	35	Pauper	✓
Harriet do	25	Woollen Cloth m.	✓
James Pearce	65	Labourer	✓

1841 Census Little London Heytesbury

On 18 April 1842 Harriett married George Muspratt at Heytesbury. George was the son of George Muspratt and Jane Dix who had married at Heytesbury on 25 December 1814. George was born in Heytesbury in 1815 and was christened there on 3 July.

We identified George Muspratt in the 1841 Census at the New Prison Devizes in Wiltshire. He was shown as aged 25, the same as Harriet, and also a "Cloth Worker" like Harriet. Because Heytesbury was a small village they probably knew one another but it is likely they became close at their workplace. We have not established why George was in prison. However, we have established that he was earlier tried in the Wiltshire County Assizes on 16 July 1839 on a charge of "shop breaking" but was acquitted.

County of <i>Wills.</i>				Register of all Persons charged with INDICTABLE OFFENCES		at the Assizes and Sessions held within the County during the Year 1839.					
No.	Names of Offenders	Degrees of Indictment	Age	At what Session Tried or Discharged without Trial	Offences of which those Tried were Convicted or Acquitted—and of which those Discharged without Trial were charged on Indictment or Complaint	SENTENCES				Acquitted	Execution or Commutation of Capital Sentences
						Death	Transportation	Imprisonment	Whipping, Fines, &c.		
	<i>William Watts</i>	<i>Ind</i>	<i>26</i>	<i>County Sessions</i>	<i>Spent in Prison</i>			<i>6 Months and Swearing</i>			
	<i>John Bolwell</i>	<i>Ind</i>	<i>20</i>	<i>Do</i>	<i>Do</i>			<i>6 Months</i>			
	<i>Hannah Curtis</i>	<i>Ind</i>	<i>22</i>	<i>Do</i>	<i>Do</i>			<i>6 Months</i>			
	<i>George Bedford</i>	<i>Ind</i>	<i>22</i>	<i>Do</i>	<i>Spent in Prison</i>			<i>3 Months and Swearing</i>			
	<i>Elizabeth Lunn</i>	<i>Ind</i>	<i>16</i>	<i>Do</i>	<i>Do</i>					<i>Not Guilty</i>	
	<i>Edward Lloyd</i>	<i>Ind</i>	<i>28</i>	<i>County Sessions</i>	<i>Spent in Prison</i>					<i>No Bill</i>	
	<i>John Chalmers</i>	<i>Ind</i>	<i>24</i>	<i>Do</i>	<i>Spent</i>					<i>No prosecution</i>	
	<i>George Muspratt</i>	<i>Ind</i>	<i>23</i>	<i>Do</i>	<i>Shop breaking</i>					<i>Not Guilty</i>	

England & Wales Criminal Registers 1791 to 1892¹

¹ Ancestry.co.uk

It seems very likely that soon after this acquittal George reoffended and was then jailed.

Immediately after their marriage, George and Harriet were on a ship to Australia. Their ship was the *Simon Taylor* which sailed from London on 30 April 1842 only twelve days after their wedding. This was very quick and gives the impression that perhaps they wanted to leave before George was accused of some other crime.

The *Simon Taylor* was bound for Western Australia under the command of Thomas Brown. The ship arrived off Fremantle in the Swan River colony 111 days later on 28 August, 1842. It carried 242 passengers: 5 in cabin and the rest in steerage. The passage cost was four Pounds and eighteen Shillings. On arrival George and Harriet were quarantined for six days. George's age was given as 27 and his occupation as agricultural labourer. Harriet's age was given as 30. She was actually closer to 26.

On the 20th inst., the *Simon Taylor*, Brown master, from London ; left the Downs 1st May. Passengers, Miss Barrett, and Messrs. Beddingfield, Coventry, and King. The *Simon Taylor* brings out 219 government emigrants, of whom 5 are blacksmiths, 5 are carpenters, 2 shoemakers, 6 housemaids, 2 milliners, 18 tailors!! the rest are agricultural labourers, with their wives and children. Agents, Messrs. F. Mangles & Co.

WA Inquirer 24 August 1842

Eighteen of the passengers were Parkhurst Boys. These were juvenile prisoners from Parkhurst Prison on the Isle of Wight, who were sentenced to "transportation beyond the seas" and transported to Australia and New Zealand. Either before leaving England or on arrival at their destination, they were pardoned on the conditions that they be "apprenticed" to local employers, and that they not return to England during the term of their sentence. In the ten years between 1842 and 1852 nearly 1500 boys aged from twelve to eighteen were transported to Australia and New Zealand from Parkhurst Prison.

The newspaper provided some details of the voyage and also the passengers and how they fared after their arrival:

By the arrival of the *Simon Taylor*, we have English news down to the 30th April last. The *Simon Taylor* brings to this colony 219 emigrants, men, women, and children, being the first lot consigned by the home government upon our labour-fund. The health of the emigrants is reported to be very good; two out of the whole number shipped died on the passage, from what cause we have not as yet heard stated, and two children were born. The new-comers were received on their landing by R. Mc Bride Brown, Esq., the Resident Magistrate at Fremantle, and were apparently well pleased with the premises lately purchased by the local government for their accommodation. They are chiefly agricultural labourers, of the good old English sort, ruddy and smock-frocked, which we take to be the distinguishing marks of the English peasant. Of the whole number, there are not more than 150 adults, with a very large proportion of women and young children. Of the latter there are 33 between the ages of 7 and 14 years, 31 between the ages of 1 and 7, and 9 infants in arms; we fear that many of these are more likely to prove an incumbrance than a benefit. We observe upon the list a string of 18 tailors, all of them young lads sent out by Sir James Graham to the particular care of His Excellency the Governor. These youths are all to be apprenticed to some trade, and are to be kept at the expense of the home government until so apprenticed. We congratulate his Excellency upon the admirable opportunity thus afforded to him of repairing the damage lately done to his coat-tails. We know not what arrangement the local government will make for distributing the new-comers—at present they are kept at Fremantle at an aggregate cost of £25 per day; our agriculturists have long been complaining of a want of labour to carry on their farming operations, and now that it is come, we trust they will not allow the immigrants to remain long a burthen on the public funds. Several applications have been made already, and we are informed that by far the greater proportion will be employed in the course of a week; we hope it may prove so.

George's occupation was given as an Agricultural Labourer and it appears from the newspaper report that he would not have had any problem getting a job fairly quickly. The colony was still young but was growing fast and had a need for workers. We have no details specifically relating to George but the following article indicates he would have had a job within a month of their arrival.

OUR readers will be pleased to hear that out of the whole number of emigrants lately brought in by the *Simon Taylor*, not one is now remaining in the depôt, all of them having found employment in the several ways most suited to each. We were not prepared for so satisfactory a proof of the wants of the colony in this respect.

Inquirer 21 September 1842

We have no details, reports or records of Harriet and George in WA. Birth registrations commenced in 1841 but there are no Muspratt births.

We believe Harriett and George stayed in WA until 1847 when on 17 April the brigantine "Empress" sailed from Swan River and King George's Sound (Albany) for South Australia². This trip was reported in the South Australian newspaper on 20 April 1847. However, the names mentioned were given as "*Geo. Murgratt and wife*". We believe this was a simple and not unusual error by the paper.

There was a reference to a George Muspratt as a witness in a court case in 1849.³ George was working as an Ostler at a livery stable owned by a G Watts. A person had been charged with stealing a saddle from the stable and George was one of the employees giving evidence.

We are unaware of whether Harriet made contact with Samuel and his family or even tried. She would have known he was in South Australia but it is unlikely she would not have known where he was. At that time literacy levels were not high and we suspect they may not have been able to read or write. Despite this the only other references in newspapers were George's name in two lists of unclaimed letters.⁴

We do not believe Harriet and George had any children. Both of them did not live particularly long lives. Harriet died at Brompton, South Australia on 6 April, 1873 at the age of 57. George died later the same year on 3 July 1873 aged 58.

Strangely we have not been able to establish where Harriet and George were buried. We would have expected them to be buried at West Terrace but they could not be found there.

² The Biographical Index of South Australians 1836-1885, Volume III page 1159

³ SA Register 31 October 1849

⁴ South Australian 7 October 1850 & SA Register 14 February 1853