
NO(R)STER NEWS

June 1999

What is this all about?

Well, I decided to send one of these out on an irregular basis to keep you all informed of what has been happening.

In this edition there are various articles, some relating to me, some to you, and some to the family.

If you would prefer to see other subjects covered, or some not covered, I'd be pleased to hear from you.

Examples could be a section for notification of Births and Marriages, or perhaps a list of contact points - whatever you want, I will try to incorporate.

If any of you are on the net, I can send this newsletter via e-mail. If you wish this, please let me have your e-mail address.

As for me, I have changed my job. I now work for a business software company in Altrincham, Cheshire. I will be moving on 16th July 1999 to :-

6 White Broom
Lymm
Cheshire
WA13 9JA

01925 / 756758

I have registered the names Norster, Noster and variants with the Guild of One-Name Studies (GOONS), so that makes me the principal researcher in the world!

I would like to welcome the New Zealand branch to the family. Their family name is Noster, which may explain the title, and they live around Christchurch, New Zealand.

I had contacted the Commonwealth War Graves Commission as I had been told that the name Norster was on a war memorial in Gosport, Hants.

The CWGC told me the details of the Norster, and then I asked, out of interest, if there were any Noster's. Imagine my surprise when they said 'Yes', and that he came from New Zealand.

I am a member of the Kent Family History Society, and they have a New Zealand branch. I contacted them and offered reciprocal work if they could look up the New Zealand records of Births, Marriages and Deaths, together with the census records.

This duly done, I felt I would like to contact the family, and chose Bill Noster. It is nerve wracking sending a letter blind, not knowing whether you will get a reply, and if you do, whether it will be favourable.

Much to my relief, Bill wrote back with enthusiasm.

The connection is through the eldest son of Samuel Norster who was transported. Samuel (the son) presumably left these shores to seek a better life, maybe with his Father, but decided to move on to New Zealand. Who knows?

Abraham & Samuel, the transportees.

These two were accused, tried and found guilty of theft. They are probably the most documented members of the family. They both used the name Norster, but after the trial and their transportation, their families started to use Oster. This appears to be where the split began. It worked, for only a few generations later, nobody knew of the connection between the two family names.

Reproduced here is a copy of the original affidavit, which was used to arrest Abraham and Samuel.

Sunday Dec 21st 1834

~~Some person or persons~~ Samuel and Abm Norster Brok into my House between the Hours of 6 & 8 O'clock in the evening I and my Wife left the House about 6 or little before I fastened the window with the Shut and Locked the Dwelling House door & the Back House Door and the yard door, And we returned Home about 8 O'clock when I tried to unlock the yard Door I found I could not for it was unlocked. I hopened it I and my wife went into the yard I found the window of the Dwelling House with the under sash raised three or four inches up & one square of glass broken and the Shut forced down I unlocked the back-house Door & the Dwelling House Door and went in and went upstairs and my wife followed me we went in to our Sleeping room I found a drawer of the Chest of Drawers on the Table and the other drawer out of which the money was taken in its place with a hole cut in the side of it I unlocked the drawer and found that between sixty & seventy pound had been taken out Sovereigns half Sovereigns and about ten pounds of Silver and one Guinea, I found a bunch of keys on the Chest of Drawers which was our own and we went into the other room and unlocked the Bureu and found that a few shillings had been taken out These were left in the Drawer of the Chest of Drawers 4 tea spoons apap spoon & a silver snuff Box 9 Sovereigns 11 half ones & 4 shillings.

This is a copy, including spellings and punctuation, of the original that was found under floorboards when the house was being renovated recently.

On the next page is a copy of the report in the Dorchester County Chronicle for the 19th March 1835, detailing the trial.

Samuel Norster (35), Joan Norster, his wife (25), and Abraham Norster (32), were indicted for having broken into the dwelling-house of W m . Pearce, in Portland, and stealing money therefrom to the amount upwards of £ 60, his property, on the 21st Dec. last.

Mr. Hodges, with whom was Mr. Horsford, addresses the Jury for the prosecution, stating the facts of the case: and the following witnesses were called.

W m . Pearce: I am a shopkeeper living in Portland, on the evening of 21st Dec. I and my family went to chapel, about six o'clock, fastening up the house. On our return, about eight, I found the yard door had been unlocked, and the window of the dwelling-house broken. I went upstairs and found one drawer in a chest taken out, and a hole cut through the bottom of one over it, and that more than £ 60 had been taken from it. There was a guinea, sixty sovereigns, several crowns and half crowns. I also lost some keys. I obtained a warrant from the Rev. Mr. Dade at Broadway, in consequence of some suspicion, and the prisoners were apprehended.

Robert Pearce: I am a constable of Portland; I obtained a warrant on Tuesday evening, the 23rd Dec., and went on the following morning to search the house of the prisoners who live together. The men were at home. When the woman returned, she asked what was the matter? I said I had apprehended her husband and Abraham Norster on suspicion of stealing money. She said there was no money in the house: and that she was so poor that yesterday she borrowed 6d. from her brother's wife, for she had not a penny to buy some castor oil. This was in the presence of her husband. W m . W ay and W m . Pearce, other constables, were with me. We searched the house, but found nothing while I was there.

W m . Pearce: I am a constable of Portland, and went with a search warrant to take the prisoners into custody, with the last witness. Samuel Norster took 4s. 4d. from his pocket and said that was all the money he had. On searching him I found four sovereigns in his waistcoat pocket. He said he had five sovereigns given him the day before by a gentleman at Weymouth; but he did not know the gentleman's name, nor where he lived. Joan Norster, after a search, and with much hesitation, produced a small purse, with a sovereign, seventeen shillings, and a sixpence.

W m . W ay: I accompanied last witness to the house of Abraham Norster, Joan Norster's brother's wife, and the sister of Joan were there. There are two rooms upstairs divided by a partition. The male prisoners were apprehended and taken away before I got there. I went upstairs, and searched in a dark closet; and put my hand on a parcel, which I gave to Benjamin Pearce. It contained one pound for shillings and sixpence in silver. I went again the day following and searched in a dark room downstairs, and found £ 6.10s. 6d. all in silver; wrapped in a handkerchief, and buried in the dirt. I gave it to Robert Pearce. All the prisoners lived in the house.

Benjamin Pearce: I am a constable of Portland, and went to the dwelling house of the prisoners, with the two Pearces, constables. I was there also with W m . W ay, when he found some money, all in silver.

The guinea was produced, and put into the hands of the prosecutor, who said it was of the same coinage as that he had lost, and appeared the same in every respect.

George Cull: Clerk to the Magistrates' Clerk for Dorchester Division. The prisoners were brought before the Magistrates on the 27th Dec. the examination of Samuel Norster, now produced, was then taking in writing.

The examination was read, it was a statement of Samuel Norster, that he had been given £ 5 by a gentleman of Weymouth whom he did not know. His wife had said she would not take it unless she knew who gave it, and he had, to pacify her, said it was given by Mr. Roper Weston.

John Randall: Overseer of Melcombe Regis in 1833. From Sept. 7, 1833, to Jan 1, 1834, Samuel Norster, received parochial relief.

John Dyne: Overseer of Portland. The prisoner Abraham, had received parochial relief in November last; and on the 4th of Dec, when witness gave him an order for 3 loaves of bread.

Samuel Norster declined saying any thing in his defence; and Abraham said he was merely a lodger in his brother's house; and knew nothing about the money.

The learned Judge, in summing up, said there was no evidence at all against the female; and explained the law on the subject as affecting women.

The two male prisoners were found guilty, and the female prisoner acquitted.

Sentence of Death Recorded; and the learned Judge intimated that they would be transported for life.

Small handwritten note in Portland Museum .December 21st 1834 .

'William Pearce's house was robbed Sunday evening while they were at Chapel and suspicion fell upon Samuel Noster who was committed to Dorchester Jail and at March 12 Assizes he was convicted for the offence with his brother Abraham .Transported for life May 4th at 1 O 'clock in the morning went away to join the convict ship lying at Portsmouth for New South Wales'.

DETAILS OF SAMUELS TRANSPORTATION, ESCAPE, CAPTURE AND RE-TRANSPORTATION (Abraham Died on the journey out and never reached Australia).

TRIAL: Dorset Assizes, 12th March 1835.

SENTENCE: Transportation for Life.

TRANSPORT SHIP: Bardaster sailed from Portsmouth September 1835; arrived Hobart Town, Tasmania, 13th January 1836.

MASTER: Alexander McDonald.

SURGEON: Joseph Street. The Bardaster carried 240 male convicts and there were 5 deaths on board.

CONDUCT RECORD: (384) Transported for Burglary.

GAOL RECORD: Habits of Life bad, convicted before of smuggling.

HULK RECORD: Good, married with 4 children.

SURGEONS REPORT: Good, very useful.

NATIVE PLACE: Portland. Stated this offence, 'Burglary at Native Place, (property?) of William Pearce; twice for smuggling, 3 months and 6 months; one brother, Abraham transported with me, died on Board; married with 4 children, wife Joan.

13 January 1838 Public Works/Misdemeanor - reprimanded.

31 January 1838 Absconded and escaped from the Colony and remained illegally at large until he returned to the Colony by the ship Layton 3.

TRANSPORT SHIP: Layton— sailed from Portsmouth 13th July 1839; arrived Hobart Town 7th December 1839.

MASTER: Simon Cuddy.

SURGEON: Isaac Noot. The Layton carried 263 male convicts, 3 were relanded and 4 died on the voyage.

CONDUCT RECORD: (496) (348 Bardaster) Transported for Burglary.

GAOL RECORD: A returned convict from Van Diemen's Land, habits of life bad, convicted before.

HULK RECORD: Good, married with 4 children. Stated this offence, 'Transported and came out on the Bardaster. I was cockswain of the York Boat, George Town, stowed away on a schooner at the night, do not know her name, was 9 days stowed away arriving the cattle, and went to South Australia and landed in the night, no one knew I was on board, remained there about a week and shipped on board the Royal Admiral as a seaman and went to Valperiso, and then shipped on board the Visper. I was identified by a Countryman and was taken by the London Police; married and 4 children, wife Johanna at Portland.

SURGEONS REPORT: Very well conducted'.

(REF: AOTAS CON 31/32 p209)

cont....

23 December 1839 to be kept to hard labour in chains 2 years and recommended to be removed to Port Arthur, Port Arthur Chain Gang - conduct to be reported vide Lieut Governors decision 27 December 1839.

4 January 1840 Absconding him self from his Gang without cause and suspicion of at the absconding of a fellow Prisoner - 5 days solitary confinement on Bread and Water.

30 May 1841 Gross misconduct in being in company with an absentee boy from Point Puer and having a quantity of Tobacco in possession - 17 days solitary.

19 July 1841 Gross misconduct - 6 months in chains recommended to be performed at Port Arthur.

29 March 1844 3rd Class

17 February 1846 Ticket of Leave.

(REF:PRO HO 11/10;AOTAS CON 31/33 p73)

[.... indicates difficult to read, or missing words]

For those of you who have access to the Internet and e-mail, you can contact me on:

Family@norster.freemove.co.uk

Or, please visit our (your) website at:

www.norster.freemove.co.uk/genstart.htm

Please e-mail me, or write, or phone and let me know what you think of it.