

Mary Jane Turner ID2685 per *Baretto Junior* 1850

John Turner or Todner aged 10

Margaret Jane Turner or Todner aged 13

Glasgow Criminal Justice Court January 1850

Larceny

7 years transportation

Gaol report – Convicted before.

Series – HO 18

Piece Number 273

This Petition is from a Committee of Ladies at Paisley praying that the sentence passed on the prisoners may be commuted to imprisonment. It is stated that these children were taught to thief by their mother who was convicted with them, that tho' very ignorant they are well disposed, and their conduct had been extremely good in prison. Their father is a sailor, and at best is willing to take care of them when released.

Unto the Right Honourable Sir George Grey Her Majesty's Secretary

Paisley

23rd February 1850

The Memorial of the undersigned Ladies of Paisley.

Sheweth

That your Memorialists are a Committee of Ladies who for some time past have been visiting the Prisoners at Paisley and using their humble efforts to reclaim the despaired and criminal female inmates, by communicating religious instructions and in the case of perpetual prisoners by endeavouring to provide for them the means and opportunity of recovering their position in society.

That in the course of their self imposed labours the attention of your Memorialists has been painfully attracted to the cases of John Turner or Todner aged 10 years and his sister Jane Turner or Todner aged 13 years, now along with their mother under sentence of transportation for 7 years.

That your Memorialists are satisfied from their intercourse with the girl and from what they know on good authority of the boy that these poor neglected children, although very ignorant are not hardened criminals, on the contrary your Memorialists have been much affected with the kindness and simplicity of their character and it is clear beyond question that they have been induced into the commission of crime by the instructions, if not by the command of their mother, to afford her the means of gratifying her depraved appetite.

And further that their conduct during their confinement had been such as warrants a belief that under proper training and education they may be reclaimed to habits of industry and made useful members of society. In proof of which your Memorialists would respectfully refer to the Certificates of the Governor of the Prison which accompany this Memorial.

Your Memorialists considering the extreme youth of these poor children the unfortunate circumstances that they have been placed the favourable prospects of reclaiming them which their conduct in prison [] would most respectfully but earnestly implore your Excellency to commute their sentence to imprisonment in one of the Penitentiaries in this country for such a period as to your Excellency may seem such.

Your Memorialists would mention as an additional inducement to the mitigation of the sentence, that the father who is a seafaring man has both the means and inclination to provide for the support of his family and that he is likely on the termination of their imprisonment to discharge the duty of a parent toward them.

May it there for please your Excellency to take the foregoing Memorial into your favourable consideration and grant the prayer of the Memorialists or to do otherwise your Excellency may seem right. And your Memorialists will ever pray.

Margaret Thomson

Sarah McQueen

Margaret Martin

Catherine Hodge

Mary Cochran

Eliza Farlee

Mary Hart.

Edinburgh

27th February 1850

In reference to the statement of Mr Smith the Chaplain and Mr Bird the Governor of the Paisley Gaol as to the two children of the name of Turner convicted at the last Glasgow Circuit – I have much pleasure in expressing my perfect confidence in the judgement of both of these gentleman.

[]

Sheriff

Paisley Prison

20th February 1850

I have much pleasure in being able to state that the boy John Turner or Todner has since his commitment to this prison conducted himself with propriety. He is docile and [hactable] and under proper management with God's blessing would if, spared, yet become a useful member of society

Robert Bird

Governor.

Paisley Prison

19th February 1850

I have much pleasure in being able to state that the conduct of the girl Margaret Jane Turner or Todner had during her confinement in this prison been uniformly good, she had paid attention to the instructions given to her, has shewn herself apt to learn and I believe under proper management she would if spared become a useful member of society.

Robert Bird

Governor

I concur in the above statement.

Debra Young

Matron

Paisley Goal

20th February 1850

John Turner and Margaret Turner since they became prisoners here have conducted themselves with the greatest propriety. They seem desirous to learn and are very attentive in time of learning. They are apparently of good natural disposition and of considerable intelligence and were they at liberty and under proper training for a period there is every reason to hope that with the blessing of God they would yet prove an honour to their selves and to their country.

William Smith

Chaplain

Statement of Mary McCabe or Turner or Todner – mother of Margaret Jane and John Turner or Todner

I was married about 17 years since to my present husband, he is a ships carpenter and goes to sea. I have four children alive to him. The boy and girl who are in the case with me, one girl older and one girl younger. The age of the girl who is transported with me is 12 years and the boy is 10 years of age.

About ten years ago my husband went to sea I was then living in England, he left me his half pay to draw monthly from the owners it was £2. The ship went to America and in consequence of the men leaving her I only got one month's pay of £2. I put my family on the town and received 5s per week for some time. At the end of 12 months my husband sent me £12 from America, but I had to pay back £7 to the town. The next year he sent me £7 and after being away for 3 years he came into Greenock when he sent me £18. At this time I came to Greenock leaving my family in England and staid with my husband about 10 weeks until he again went to sea. He was away only two or three months when he returned and sent me £5 to bring the family to Greenock, this is about 6 years ago, and where we have resided since. My husband's first voyage was 10 months he gave me on going away £3 of his advance and left me a note to draw 30s monthly while he was away which I got. My husband had £18 to receive on coming home with which he took and furnished a house for me, his next voyage was a short one he gave me on going away £4 of his advance and left me a note to draw £2 monthly but the ship returned before any was due (it may be remarked that as seamen get 2 months pay in advance the monthly notes do not become payable until the third month). The ship came into Greenock on the Sabbath day, I was at church and when my husband came home we quarrelled because I had all his things in the Pawn. He did not give me any money on his return this voyage, it was the first time. I suppose he was angry at his thing being away. On his next voyage which was 12 months, he left me 30s out of his advance and a note for £2 monthly which I got until his return. Since that time I have received all I got through Mr [McAulence] of Greenock generally from 6s to 7s per week for provisions although sometimes only 4s, besides this I got clothing for myself and children, my house rest was paid and sometimes I got coals.

I am not aware of my children taking anything they did not buy home to me, except once, I challenged the girl with taking some things and selling them, and the[said] her and the other girl who was a witness had sold something to buy ribbons.

I have sometimes sold the provisions received to get other things with.

Written by Robert Bird.

On making enquiries at Greenock about the family of the Turners, I learnt that sometime since the mother and an elder daughter was in the Prison and on being liberated Mrs McKay the Chaplain took the mother to his house, but in a day or two after he missed so many things that he put her away. It appears that the mother and another woman and a girl lived in a house that the two woman staid at home while the children were sent out to steal from the Marley Greens, the mother and the woman keeping a good fire one to dry the things bought in, which some of them took next day to Glasgow or elsewhere and sold. Altho the mother says it was want anyone who reads her own statements must see at once it could not be so. The children sat they were often hungry and I have reason to believe it is true. I saw from the books of Mrs McAulkand that she has had through her hands about 7s per week since her husband [cashed] to leave her his half pay, this for provisions in addition to clothing and house rent. It has been my lot to make enquiries into many cases but I must confess this appears on the part of the mother to be about the worst. In proof that the father is willing to do what is right I may state that he now at sea and he had left behind for the use of his children (they were not tried when he went away) £22. I believe that the mother had been the sole cause of the children being placed as they are, both the boy and girl appear naturally of a good disposition, and although very ignorant are apt to learn and if they could be got off for a

short imprisonment and placed under proper management might become useful members of society.

Robert Bird.

Downing Street

23rd April 1851

Sir

With reference to your letter of the 12th June last stating that Her Majesty had been pleased to grant to Margaret Turner or Todner , a pardon for the crime of which she stood convicted, upon condition of her being received into the Institution of the Refuge for the Destitute at Dalston, I am direct by Earl Grey to transmit to you the copy of a dispatch from the Lieutenant Governor of Van Diemen Land, with a Petition from Turner who prays that on the grounds stated by her, she may be allowed to remain in the Colony

I am to request that you will submit this application for the consideration and decision of Secretary Sir George Grey.

I am Sir

Your obedient servant

[Numan Menvale]

(Copy)

Van Diemen's Land

Government House

9th December 1850

No 266

Executive

My Lord

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your Lordships despatch No 94 of the 19th June last, notifying that Her majesty had been pleased to grant to Margaret Turner or Todner who was sentenced at Glasgow in January 1850 to seven years transportation, a pardon for the crime which she stands convicted upon condition of her being received into the Institution of the refuge for the Destitute at Dalston; and instructing me to cause a passage to be provided for this woman by the first opportunity onboard some vessel proceeding to England.

I now enclose a petition which IO have received for Margaret Turner praying that she may be allowed to reside in this country, on the grounds of her not wishing to leave her mother who was transported at the same time with herself. From enquiries I find that she is now though only a girl of 14 years of age in a respectable service as a Passholder, and pending the receipt

of your Lordship's further instruction, I have not thought it expedient to enforce her return to England.

(signed)

W Denison.

To His Excellency Sir William Thomas Denison Lieutenant Governor of the Island of Van Diemen's Land and its dependencies.

The humble Petition of Margaret Turner per "Baretto Junior"

Sheweth

That it has been notified by the Comptroller General of Convicts that Her Majesty the Queen had been graciously pleased to grant to your Excellency's Petitioner a PARDON upon condition that she return to England and enter an Institution known as a Refuge for the Destitute at Dalston. That Petitioner cannot but ever feel grateful that such an Act of Royal Clemency should be extended to her.

That Petitioner having gone a Primary Stage of Probation, subsequently endorsed the hardships of a long and perilous voyage and having an affectionate mother near her in this Colony and moreover being in a good situation, humbly prays your Excellency will be pleased to recommend that Her Majesty's pardon may be extended to her without the condition annexed thereto of her returning to England.

And your Petitioner as in duty bound will ever pray.

Edinburgh

2nd May 1850

Sir

I received on the 24th the Royal warrant for a pardon in favour of Margaret June Turner or Todner, pardoning her of the crime of Larceny and of the sentence of 7 years transportation passed upon her for the same, on condition of her being removed to and received in the Institution of the Refuge of the Destitute in the County of Middlesex, there to remain and continue and be specified to all the orders and regulations thereof, until duly discharged therefrom. The receipt of the warrant having been communicated to the Prison Authorities here, it was found that the convict had been removed to Millbank Prison on 20th March last, and a letter having been addressed by the Governor of Paisley Prison to the Governor of Millbank Prison on the subject, I am informed that an answer has been received to the effect that the prisoner Margaret Jane Turner embarked onboard the ship "Baretto Junior" on the 8th April and shortly after sailed for Van Diemen's Land.

In these circumstances I seem it proper to return to you the Royal Warrant enclosed, in order that the proper means may be taken for carrying it into effect Her majesty's gracious

intentions. If it is necessary that a letter of Remission be expected before communicating with Van Diemen's Land, I shall direct this to be done, but in that case the Royal Warrant will require to be returned here.

I have the Honour to be

Sir

Your most obedient servant

{] Brodie

The Crown Agent

Letter to the Colonial Office

12th June 1850

Van Diemen's Land

The Sheriff of Renfrew states that after the intimation of an intention to place this girl in the Refuge for the Destitute much disappointment had been occasioned in finding that she had meanwhile been sent to the Colonies, and suggests to the propriety of bringing her back to this country.

It was decided that this girl should be sent to the refuge but it subsequently appeared that pending the reference of her case to the Lord Justice Clarke and the requisite enquiries at the refuge she had been embarked for V.D.L.

Refuge for the Destitute

8th April 1850

The Revd. W Hooley

States that Margaret Turner will be received at once if necessary, but that it will be more convenient if she can be kept back until a vacancy occurs for which immediate notice will be given.
