



Crime and Punishment

Woodborough

John Razey – Stealing a Quantity of Wheat in Sheaf - 1803

On Tuesday the General Quarter Sessions of the Peace for this county were held at Marlborough. Of prisoners for trial, four were ordered to be transported for seven years, viz. John West, for stealing a quantity of Spanish wool from the workshops of Mr. Lydeard, of North Bradley, and Samuel Jones, for receiving the same, knowing it to be stolen; John Pollard, for picking a linen handkerchief out of the pocket of W. Noad, at the last Chippenham Races; and **John Razey**, for stealing a quantity of wheat in sheaf, the property of Mr. Henry Robbins, of Woodborough. Others, for offences of less enormity, are to be imprisoned in the cells for different periods; the bills of indictment against two were thrown out; and several, not being prosecuted, were discharged.

The Salisbury and Winchester Journal – Monday, 10 October 1803

OPC Notes

Although John Razey was sentenced to 7 years transportation it appears that this was never carried out. The Prison Hulk Registers record that John (along with John West, Samuel Jones and John Pollard) was received into the prison hulk ship 'Captivity' in Portsmouth on 23 November 1803. The record also confirms that John, aged 26 years, was convicted at Marlborough on 3 October 1803.

Many prisoners were held in hulks pending transportation and the records indicate that some spent their entire sentence on the prison hulk. The Register records that John Razey died on the prison hulk Captivity on the 2 May 1806.

Aged 26 years in 1803, it is likely that this is the John Razey baptised in Woodborough on 13 October 1776, being the son of William and Mary Razey (nee Huntley).

John had married Jane Bristow at the parish church in Woodborough on 10 October 1796. There is no record of any baptisms in Woodborough for children of the couple, but Jane is recorded as being buried in Woodborough on 8 June 1800.

On 13th April 1802 John married his second wife (Ann Naish) in Woodborough parish church and their son, Charles, was born 12 months later, being baptised in Woodborough on 18th April 1803.

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The birth of Charles is just six months before John's conviction for stealing wheat and it is easy to speculate on the proximity of the two events.

No record for Charles Razey, or his mother (Ann), has been identified following the imprisonment and death of John.
