

More Than Oliver Twist: Biography

Name: John Marshall

B. 1803-1806, d. 1884

John Marshall was born in Ireland between 1803 and 1806 (1, 2.). It is possible he was from Coleraine, in Northern Ireland, because two of his children, Mary and Thomas, were born there (3, 4).

In 1851, John Marshall and his family lived at 20 Lower Templar Street, North Leeds (5). John worked as a general porter and lived with his wife Margaret and children William (aged 24), Joseph (aged 11), Thomas (aged 8) and Margaret (aged 6). His daughter Mary (aged 16) worked as a domestic servant at 56 Springfield Place in West Leeds (6). According to the records, all the family were born in Ireland, so it is likely that they moved to England in the mid to late 1840s to escape the Great Famine (7).

In 1853, John's son Joseph died and was buried in Beckett Street Cemetery on 21 April 1853 at the age of 13 (8). John's wife Margaret died three years later in 1857 (9) and was also buried in Beckett Street Cemetery on 17 May 1857 (10).

It is possible that in 1858 John Marshall remarried a widow, Mary Nicholson from Holbeck (11). John's place of birth was left blank in the 1861 Census return for Cave Street, Holbeck where they lived after their marriage (12). The couple had married in an Anglican ceremony. On the 1861 census return John was described as a Warehouseman (working with corn) (13). In 1864, Mary Marshall, John's possible second wife, died and was buried in an Anglican ceremony at St Mary's Church Beeston (14).

Whether or not John remarried is difficult to confirm. By that time, his surviving children had moved on. William had married (15), Thomas was apprenticed on a ship, the *Romp of Woolley*, off the Yorkshire coast (16) Margaret may have been working as a servant in Northumberland (17) and daughter Mary had married (18).

By 1871, John was a pauper inmate in Leeds Union Workhouse (19). He was described as a Porter and Packer in a China Warehouse and a widower. In 1881 he was still an inmate, whether he had moved in and out is not known (20). He was described as a China and Glass Warehouseman.

John Marshall died in 1884 (21). The cause of death on the death certificate was 'gangrene of the lung' (22). His eldest daughter, Mary Woolham, signed the death certificate (23). John was buried on 15 June 1884 in Beckett Street Cemetery in a non-conformist ceremony (24)

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