

Margaret Wilkinson ID11995 per *Tasmania* 1844

Margaret Wilkinson aged 16

York Quarter Sessions Pontefract 8th April 1844

Larceny

7 years transportation

Gaol Report – Convicted before and twice imprisoned as a vagrant.

Series – HO 18

Piece Number – 135

The prisoner's mother declares her innocence and prays that her sentence may be mitigated.

Sheffield

27th April 1844

To the Right Honourable Sir James Graham Her Majesty's Secretary of State for the Home Department.

The humble Petition of Mary Wilkinson in behalf of her daughter Margaret Wilkinson a young woman of only 16 years of age, who was tried at the Pontefract Sessions on the 8th day of April 1844 on suspicion of being concerned in stealing some carpeting which lay contiguous to a Gentleman's house near Sheffield of which my Lord she declares herself perfectly innocent, it had been declared in Court by a female servant that she observed two women taking away the pieces of carpeting and without giving any notice or alarm to the people of the house at the time, fixes on my daughter as one of the women who had carried them away altho' nothing has been found on or about my daughter to substantiate that evidence, and it could

be proved that my daughter was not out of my house or premises on the day that the carpet was taken, which evidence as well as the assistance of Counsel I was unable to procure from extreme poverty. My Lord allow me to say that the two women known character to the police supposed to have committed the crime have absconded from Sheffield , one of them certainly was one of the two, and my daughter having been seen speaking to that young woman, in the only strongest evidence that could be produced.

My Lord I find not fault with the sentence of the Court as it was not in my power to bring forward evidence to prove my daughter's innocence, but humbly hope considering her youth and inexperience under all the circumstances of the case that your Lordship will be pleased to mitigate her sentence to the Penitentiary where I hope her future conduct will convince your Lordship she is no profligate hardened in crime, hoping for your Lordships favourable consideration allow me, her unhappy mother, as in duty bound will ever pray.

While it may please your Lordship to let your pleasure be known to me, at the Stagg Yard, Scotland Street, Sheffield.

Her mark Mary Wilkinson

We the undersigned have known Margaret Wilkinson for upwards of two years and have always considered her a honest industrious young woman and as such we recommend her to your Lordships most favourable consideration:

Mary Baggaly

John Taylor

William Lawton - Grocer

Thomas Pennington – Shop Keeper

J H Atkinson – Master Mason

Devin Gill – Schoolmaster

Thomas McGoven – Butcher.

To the Right Honourable Sir James Graham Her Majesty's Principle Secretary of States for the Home department.

The Petition of Margaret Wilkinson aged 16 a prisoner received into Millbank Prison on the 26th June 1844 having been convicted at Pontefract Sessions on the 8th April 1844 of stealing carpets from the Public Baths and sentenced to 7 years transportation.

Humbly Sheweth

That your Petitioner was born in Stockport and brought up in Ashton under Line and that her parents were honest people. When she was 9 years old she went to work in a cotton mill and continued to work in cotton mills until the turn out. She then went with her mother, brothers and sisters to reside in Sheffield where some of their relations lived.. Her brothers and a sister went to service and her mother got employment as a washerwoman and herself as a charwoman. On the 8th March she was sent by her mother to a family for some money which was due to her for washing and on her way she met a woman who sold oranges and who owed your Petitioner a few pence, she requested her to go with her to a Mr Wilson's where she was going to sell some oranges and she would pay her – but before they arrived at Mr Wilson's there were met by a servant maid with whom your Petitioner was acquainted and who invited them to come with her, saying the family is from home. When they arrived at the house a lady crossed the road and went to the back door which she found fastened she then rang the hall bell and on the door being opened she invited them to come in, and shewed them into a parlour placed two chairs and told them to sit down saying she had no change to pay for any oranges until the servant returned.

When the servant returned she bought one of the police with her and the lady gave your Petitioner into his charge.

On arriving at the police office she was informed that she was taken up on suspicion of having stolen carpets from the Baths.

Your Petitioner protests her innocence and could prove that on the day the theft was committed she was employed from half past seven in the morning till seven in the evening and the theft was said to have been committed about 4 o'clock in the afternoon.

Your Petitioner humbly solicits your kind consideration of the circumstances of her case and that you would be pleased to recommend a mitigation of her sentence and your Petitioner will ever pray.

The mark of Margaret Wilkinson

Witness A Maclesh

Ashton under Line

1844

Copy of character laid before the Court by which she was tried.

Margaret Wilkinson has been three years in my employment during which time I have always considered her to be a very honest industrious upright modest young woman and as such recommend her to the Magistrates.

George Southern

Cotton Manufacturer
