

## Henry Stevens

Henry Stevens was born in 1823 in England and came to Western Australia in January 1852 as a convict. He had been convicted of larceny in 1849 and sentenced to transportation to Western Australia. He was granted a ticket of leave on 31 January 1852. He was a blacksmith and a whitesmith.<sup>1</sup>

Upon being pardoned in 1854, he had set up shop as a blacksmith on the property to the south of what is now the York Palace Hotel, which was owned by Solomon Cook, so is likely to have worked for Solomon Cook. He is probably the person who was described in the press as “John Stevenson” who had made Solomon Cook’s steam engine for his mill out of tires. He was also likely to have made the weather vane for Cook’s mill which can still be found on the roof of the post office.

Henry Stevens was also a builder.

In 1860, he was awarded the contract and paid £104 to rebuild St John’s Church for the Anglican Church.<sup>2</sup> In that year, Henry Stevens also purchased from John Taylor, the farmer who owned *Yangedine*, the property to the south of his shop, and started building Settlers House. He also married Sarah Fisher (a widow) in that year.<sup>3</sup>

The next year he bought what is now the pharmacy property two lots to the south for £30<sup>4</sup>.

In 1862, he was awarded the contract to build a veranda for the Boys and Girls School for £45.<sup>5</sup>

He sold back what is now the pharmacy property to William Edwards for £180 in 1866<sup>6</sup> with a price margin which indicates that some building had been constructed there (though Edwards built another building there in 1871)<sup>7</sup>.

In 1866, he was also awarded the Beverley / York mail service once a week in a spring cart for £24 per annum, and in the following year the York to Newcastle service twice per week in a spring cart for £96 per annum.<sup>8</sup>

By 1868, he was one of three auctioneers and commission agents in York, advertising “good and commodious warehousing at hand”.<sup>9</sup> In 1868 he bought his own blacksmith’s shop from Solomon Cook’s mortgagee for £180<sup>10</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> Rica Erickson, Dictionary of Western Australians, p.798.

<sup>2</sup> The Perth Gazette and Independent Journal of Politics and News, 3 August 1860, p.2. This church was situated diagonally opposite what is now the Gull service station.

<sup>3</sup> Rika Erikson: The Bicentennial Dictionary of Western Australians.

<sup>4</sup> Landgate Deeds and Ordinances Index: VI/144/961.

<sup>5</sup> Roger Jennings: Over the Hills: A History of York 1834-1880, p.233 and the references therein.

<sup>6</sup> Landgate Deeds and Ordinances Index: VI/350/2183.

<sup>7</sup> “Over the Hills” William and Jane Edwards, compiled by LR Jupp, 1983, p.28.

<sup>8</sup> Roger Jennings: Over the Hills: A History of York 1834-1880, pp.265 and 266 and the references therein.

In 1873 Henry Stevens sold his blacksmith's shop property to Richard Hoops for £10 more, £190.<sup>11</sup>

In 1875 he sold Settlers House to Mary Craig for £462, making a profit of £432.<sup>12</sup>

Henry Stevens died in 1902.<sup>13</sup>

Rob Garton Smith

President

The York Society (Inc)

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<sup>9</sup> Roger Jennings: Over the Hills: A History of York 1834-1880, p.269 and the references therein.

<sup>10</sup> Landgate Deeds and Ordinances Index: VI/421/2662.

<sup>11</sup> Landgate Deeds and Ordinances Index: VII/136/1048.

<sup>12</sup> Landgate Deeds and Ordinances Index: VII/266/1776 and VII/290/1899.

<sup>13</sup> Rika Erickson: The Bicentennial Dictionary of Western Australians.