

## Excerpt from "Grey County's Semi-Centennial"

the county's prisoners. Although the gaol was not fully completed the keys were handed over to the late J. Miller on March 1st, and a short time afterwards the first prisoners were placed in his custody. Greenway Steele, a mulatto, and his Mother, Marcha Watt, were the first prisoners to enter the gaol. They were arrested for a robbery near Johntown — now the villiage of Chatsworth and were sentenced to terms in Kingston penitentiary. One night before their removal friends came along, and as the gaol wall had not been built, they took some of the scaffolding from around the building and pried off the bars. Thus the first prisoners in the county gaol escaped. Martha Watt was captured the next year in Chatham, and brought back to Owen Sound. She was then removed to Kingston by the stage to serve a two year's sentence. It took two weeks to make the trip to Kingston. The son Greenway Steele was never recaptured. Many years afterward he came back to Owen Sound, but his crime had been long forgotten and he was not arrested. With the largest

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There is an entry in the book, *“Preserving the Peace: A History of the Owen Sound Police Force 1840 to 1990,”* that relates this escape.<sup>1</sup> It spells the son’s name as “Greenaway,” but all other points mentioned are the same. Despite extensive searching in census and other records, no information on either of the two escapees can be located, except an entry in Ancestry.com for two possible siblings in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, listed in the death records. Anna Steele, born 1842 and died at the age of 71, is listed as having Martha Watt as her mother. James Steele, born October 8, 1837 and died July 24, 1914, also has Martha as his mother. Their father is listed as James Steele from Ireland. There is no mention of Greenway.

Source: *The Durham Chronicle* March 10, 1904

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<sup>1</sup> Glenn Hepburn ed. *Preserving the Peace: A History of the Owen Sound Police Force, 1840 to 1990*: The Owen Sound Police Commission, 1990, p. 15