

James Busfield Longstaff, 172, *Hashemy*

Researched by Marcia Watson

Born	12 October 1823
Baptism	15 February 1824 at St Mary the Virgin, Hunslet, Leeds, Yorkshire
Parents	Richard Longstaff and Elizabeth <i>née</i> Busfield
Parent's marriage	1 September 1823 Saint Peter, Leeds, Yorkshire
Siblings	Mary Ann (1825), Jane (1828), Thomas (1831), Richard (1833), Margaret (1835), Susan (1838), Elizabeth (1849)
Wife	
Married	
Children	

James Busfield Longstaff was the eldest child of Richard and Elizabeth Longstaff. Richard was a potter and later became an engineer.

In 1841, living at Garden Place, Holbeck, Leeds were:¹

Richard Longstaff 35, engineer J (journeyman?); Elizabeth 35; James 15, woollen cloth draper; Mary 14, flax spinner; Jane 13, flax spinner; Thomas 10, flax machine minder; Margaret 8 (*sic*); Richard 7; Susan 2.

On 13 August 1842, County Assizes, James Longstaff, 24, read and write imperfectly, was sentenced to three weeks for sedition, conspiracy and riot.² He was part of a mob encouraging the rioters to break into a local mill and destroy machinery in Holbeck, Leeds. The age is wrong but it appears to be James.

Later in the year, on 24 November 1842, the Wakefield House of Correction records:

James Longstaff, 18, reads well, cannot write, pockmarked, large scar on right side of neck and chin, several moles on both arms. He is a fireman, born North Shields, and lives with his parents at 2 Garden Place, Brewery Fields, Holbeck. James was sentenced to two months hard labour for living in an outbuilding at Boro' of Leeds, not having any means of subsistence and not giving a good account of himself. This record notes he had a previous offence on 29 July 1840 was sentenced to two months in gaol. The record of this offence has not been found.³

James appears to have used the surname Busfield during the mid-1840s. At the Pontefract Sessions, Yorkshire, 7 April 1845, James Busfield, *alias* Longstaff, was found guilty of larceny and received one month in goal.⁴

Then in 1846, a newspaper reported: *Impudent Robbery.—On Thursday evening (24 September 1846), a man named James Busfield broke a square of glass in the shop window of Mr John Tomlinson, watchmaker, Kirkgate, Leeds, and stole watches which had been suspended in the window. The thief, who is an old offender, was apprehended shortly afterwards, Thos. Wilkinson, policeman, to whom he gave up the watch. Yesterday the prisoner was brought up at the Court House, before the Mayor and George Goodman, Esq., and was committed for trial the Sessions.*⁵ At the Leeds Sessions, on 27 October 1846, James Busfield, 21, imperfectly read and write, was found guilty of housebreaking, and sentenced to six months. He stole one silver watch valued at £1 and another watch valued at £1.⁶

At the Special Winter Sessions, beginning 9 December 1848 at York Castle:

¹ HO107/ 1344; Book: 7; Civil Parish: Leeds; County: Yorkshire; Enumeration District: 3; Folio: 34;

² HO 27/ 68, p 515

³ West Yorkshire Prison Records, C118, Wakefield House of Correction

⁴ HO 27/77,p 335

⁵ Leeds Intelligencer, 26 September 1846, p8

⁶ HO 27/ 80, p 414; Leeds Quarter Sessions, Order and Indictment Books

Thomas Hudson (19), Henry Colton (22) and James Busfield Longstaff (23) were indicted for having, on 18 October, at Leeds, assaulted a lad Hudson Sumpter (12), and robbed him of a bag containing £30. Longstaff and Hudson were each defended; Colton was undefended.

The prosecutors, Messrs Shackleton and Son, millers at Wortley in the parish of Leeds, were in the habit of sending money regularly to Messrs Marshall of Holbeck. On the morning of Wednesday, the 18 October, between 9 am and 10 am, Shackleton put about £30 of silver coin into a blue bag and gave it to Hudson Sumpter to take to Marshall's mill. On the way, he was knocked over by three men. They covered his eyes, then took the blue bag and ran off. Over the next few days, they tried to exchange silver coins for notes or sovereigns.

Several children witnessed the assault, and a publican stated that Longstaff had offered him £6 5s in silver coins for a £5 note the day after the robbery. The case against Thomas Hudson was not as strong as that against Colton and Longstaff, as he claimed he was in bed until 10 am.

The jury found all prisoners guilty. Colton and Longstaff then declared they had committed the robbery, and Hudson had nothing to do with it. They all received 15 years' transportation, having been previously convicted of a felony.⁷

James was sent to Leicester Gaol on 11 April 1849 from York Castle. Just over a year later, he was removed to Portland Prison on 3 May 1850, prison number 1403. The register says James was 25, single and a brick burner. One previous conviction for a felony and one misdemeanour, presumably his crimes under the name of Busfield, were not detected, or he might have received a longer sentence.⁸ James boarded the *Hashemy* from Portland on 19 July 1850.⁹

During the voyage, James was put on the sick list.¹⁰

Folio 4: James Longstaff, aged 26, prisoner; sick or hurt, ulcer; put on sick list, 4 October 1850, discharged 20 October 1850 well. Probably a leg ulcer from the shackles.

His description on arrival in Western Australia:

172. James was 27 years old, 5' 3½", black hair, hazel eyes, oval visage, dark complexion, large whiskers, a mole on the left temple, a scar on the upper lip, labourer, and single.¹¹

General register:

172. James was 28, single, brickmaker, Presbyterian, had private schooling, reads fairly, indifferent writing and maths, his father, Richard Longstaff, is an engineer and lives in Holbeck, Leeds.

Attended Divine Service?	Seldom
Received Sacrament?	Never
Habits?	Generally sober and attentive to work
Intellect?	Sound
State of Mind?	
Knowledge, Secular?	Limited
Knowledge, Religious?	Limited
Alleged Cause of Crime?	Company

Name of Person referred to for Character, &c. Mr Thomas Jackson, miller, Wortley, Leeds. .¹²

⁷ Leeds Intelligencer, 23 December 1848, p7; Bradford Observer, 21 December 1848, p6

⁸ Registers Of Prisoners In The County Prisons Of Leicester, HO23/4 (pdf)

⁹ HO8/105

¹⁰ Medical journal of the *Hashemy*, ADM 101/32/6 1850

¹¹ SROWA Acc 128/40 - 43

¹² SROWA Acc 1156 R21A

His health was not good during the first year in Western Australia, and the Casual Sick List, at Fremantle Prison records: ¹³ [Note: James, Wm and Thomas Longstaff appear to be the same people. H=hospital]

Longstaff James	1 November 1850	Bad leg	Dressing	
Longstaff J	2 November 1850	Scorbutic	Continue	
Longstaff J	3 November 1850	Sore throat	Blue pill	
Longstaff	4 November 1850	Bad lead	
Longstaff	10 November 1850	Bad lip	Lime juice	
Longstaff	14 November 1850	Nyctalopia	Shade	
Longstaff J	23 November 1850	Scorbutic	Plummer's pills ..., Hop lime juice	
Longstaff Jno	3 December 1850	Scorbutic	Guam of tarta	
Longstaff James	5 December 1850	Scorbutic	Ppen draught	
Longstaff	19 December 1850	Diarrhoea	Chalk mixture	
Longstaff James	22 December 1850		Infus quasim?	
Longstaff	29 December 1850	Scorbutic	Lime juice	
Longstaff James	15 January 1851	Scurvy	Lime juice	
Longstaff James	19 January 1851			
Longstaff John	31 January 1851	Scurvy	Lime juice	
Longstaff James	2 February 1851	Scurvy	Lime juice	
Longstaff James	29 March 1851	Indigestion	Pil Infus Gent	
Longstaff James	23 April 1851	Indigestion	Pil Rhub & ...	
Longstaff Wm 172	20 May 1851	Diarrhoea	Pil... chalk mixture	
Longstaff James 178	21 May 1851	Rheumatic	puli dover q (Dover's powder)	
Longstaff Thomas	23 May 1851	Diarrhoea	Chalk mixture	
Longstaff James 171	30 May 1851	Pain in limbs	Dover's powder	
Longstaff James	31 May 1851	Febricula Dover's powder	H
Longstaff Wm	1 June 1851		Continue powder	H
Longstaff Wm	2 June 1851	Rheumatic	Dover's powder	H
Longstaff Wm	3 June 1851	Rheumatic		H
Longstaff Wm	4 June 1851	Diarrhoea	Pil ... chalk mixture	H
Longstaff Wm	5 June 1851		Continue Soup	H
Longstaff Wm	7 June 1851		Discharged	H
Longstaff James	10 June 1851	Debility	Mist tonic	
Longstaff James 172	14 June 1851	Diarrhoea	Pil Dover..& Cal.. mixture	
Longstaff James	15 June 1851		Repeat powders, discharged	H

On 12 December 1850, James refused to work and received bread and water for three days¹⁴

He was issued with a Ticket of Leave on 17 February 1852 for the Perth district. ¹⁵ Four months later, he was back in prison on 23 June 1852 and discharged on 26 July 1852 to Perth. On 2 October 1852, he was again in prison and discharged on 10 January 1853. ¹⁶

An unclaimed letter for a J.B. Longstaff was at the Post office in October 1852. ¹⁷ The letter may have come from England informing him his father had died in May 1852.

James was granted a Conditional Pardon on 26 September 1861 or 12 December 1861. ¹⁸

About six months later, James was in trouble again. On 4 July 1862, James Longstaff, 46, expirée, was guilty of stealing six bottles of Hollands from Geraldton Hotel and sentenced to six months. He was

¹³ SROWA Acc 1156 CS1

¹⁴ AJCP. Co 18/58, p245

¹⁵ SROWA Acc 1156 RD1 - RD2

¹⁶ SROWA Acc 1156 RD1 - RD2, p42, p45, p50, p59

¹⁷ The Perth Gazette and Independent Journal of Politics and News (WA: 1848 - 1864), 15 Oct 1852, p5

¹⁸ Two different dates recorded. SROWA Acc 1156 S1 - S3 and SROWA Acc 1156 R-21B.

received back at Fremantle Prison on 27 July 1862 and discharged on 3 January 1863.¹⁹ While in prison, James appears on the Casual Sick list with a cough between 4 and 16 August. His age is recorded as 46 when he was 38 years old.²⁰ James was admitted to the hospital on 17 August 1862 and discharged on 15 October 1862 with an abscess.²¹

James died at Geraldton Convict Depot Hospital on 1 April 1865 and was buried the same day. The death index says he was 53; however, he was only 42 years old when he died.

¹⁹ SROWA Acc 1156 V16, p66

²⁰ SROWA Acc 1156 CS8 - CS10

²¹ SROWA Acc 1156 (M32, p108)