

James McDonald, 148, *Hashemy*

Researched by Marcia Watson

There were ten convicts called James McDonald who came to Western Australia. James McDonald, who came on the *Hashemy*, was born about 1827.

Trial papers relating to James McDonald, 23 April 1847, High Court, Glasgow. Precognition against James McDonald for the crime of assault and robbery. James was a cotton mill worker, of Bridgegate Street, Glasgow, sentenced to 15 years Transportation.¹ From Lanarkshire – James McDonald, assault and robbery.²

Glasgow Spring Circuit Court, 23 April 1847

James McDonald was accused of assault and robbery, in so far as, on the 20th of February last, he did assault and rob John McNeil. It appeared that, on the day in question, McNeil had been drinking with an acquaintance in Gorbals and left him about ten o'clock in the evening to come to Glasgow to make some purchases. He was tipsy, but not so much as not to know what he was doing. As he was going to Jamaica Street, he heard some footsteps behind him, and on looking round, he saw a man in moleskin clothes, closely followed by the prisoner; they spoke to him and asked him to give them some drink, which he agreed to. They took him to a close, and there he saw there were two others, a male and female, and he suspected something, and endeavoured to get away, but was followed by all the party, who got hold of him, and he felt a hand in his pocket. He immediately gave the alarm and seized the person who had his hand in the pocket. He was then knocked down and carried the prisoner down with him. Some money was taken out of his pocket, and all except the prisoner managed to escape, but he was handed over to the custody of the police. Guilty. Sentenced to be transported for 15 years.³

James was sent to Millbank prison, arriving on 15 June 1847. It seems James may not have behaved himself as the registers records pages in Misconduct Book and Governor's Journal.⁴

James McDonald, 18, single, reads and writes imperfectly, has no trade and twice previously been convicted of theft.⁵ He was removed to Pentonville Prison on 11 March 1848.

A slightly different description of James appears in the Pentonville Register.

James McDonald, 20, convicted of assault and robbery on 23 April 1847 at Glasgow and received 15 years transportation. He was single, could read and write, a factory labourer, and the gaoler's report said he was 'indifferent'. On 1 May 1849 he was transferred to Portland Prison.⁶ During his time here, James was reported four times, between 20 June 1849 and 25 April 1850, for irregularity and disposed of as in Report Book and Misconduct Book.⁷ Just over a year after he arrived at Portland Prison, he boarded the *Hashemy* on 19 July 1850, for the voyage to Fremantle, Western Australia.⁸

His description on arrival at Fremantle in October 1850:

148. James McDonald, 22, 5'7½", black hair, hazel eyes, long face, dark complexion, stout, no marks, a labourer and single.⁹ Convict Books says he was a bricklayer.¹⁰

The General Register notes: Books delivered to the prisoner from time to time-¹¹

¹ NRS, Crown Office precognitions and related records, AD14/47/304 and JC26/1847/327.

² Glasgow Herald - Monday 19 April 1847, p4

³ Glasgow Herald - Monday 26 April 1847, p1

⁴ PCOM

⁵ HO24/3

⁶ HO24/16

⁷ Portland Prison. Governor's Journal, 24 November 1848 to 9 August 1850. PCOM 2/354

⁸ HO8/105

⁹ SROWA Acc 128/40-3

¹⁰ Erickson and O'Mara. Convicts in Western Australia 1850-1868. Dictionary of Western Australians Volume IX. UWA Press, 1994.

Cowper's Poems Task & Truth
Bowdler's Poems Task & Truth
Milton's Paradise Lost
Readings in Poetry

Cooks Voyages
Nelson's Life
British Reformers

Casual sick list, Fremantle. Note: The first convict named John McDonald did not arrive until January 1852. The John McDonald on this list could be James McDonald, as often the names are wrong. He may also be a staff member, although they are usually recorded as "warder".¹²

		Complaint	Treatment
McDonald James	14 November 1850	Nyctolopia	Shade
McDonald J	21 November 1850	Nyctolopia	
McDonald Jno	24 January 1851		
McDonald James	25 January 1851		
McDonald James	27 January 1851	Pain in gums	Lotion of Borax
McDonald Jas 148	11 February 1851	Febricula	Emetic
McDonald Jas 148	14 February 1851	Constipation	
McDonald	17 February 1851	Feb. C.C.	Fever mixture
McDonald Jno	18 February 1851	Feb. C.C.	Continue fever mixture
McDonald Jno	19 February 1851	Feb. C.C.	Discharged
McDonald Jno	20 February 1851	Feb. C.C.	Quinine mixture
McDonald Jno	21 February 1851	Feb. C.C.	Quin. Mixture
McDonald John	22 February 1851		Continue Quinine
McDonald James	9 March 1851	Sore throat	Gargle
McDonald James	14 March 1851	Diarrhoea	Pul Aper
McDonald	15 March 1851		Discharged
McDonald Jno	26 March 1851		
McDonald	27 March 1851	Morn blind	Lotio: Cinchinee
McDonald James	2 April 1851	Nyctolopia	Shade

Feb. C.C. is Febricula or Fever; Aper is aperient

James was issued with a Ticket of leave on 10 April 1851, and he was released from Fremantle Gaol the same day.¹³ However, another register wrongly records his ticket of leave date as 10 August 1851.¹⁴ 148. James McDonald, a labourer, worked for Mr Jeeks in the Swan district. Rate of pay was 4s per day.¹⁵

James was later engaged on:

7 August 1851 – Stephen Hyde of Perth.

28 August 1851 – Bishop Serra

15 December 1851 – working for himself.¹⁶

On 29 June 1854, James McDonald, Ticket of Leave holder, was admitted to hospital. He was discharged on 6 July 1845.¹⁷

On 30 October 1856, James was sentenced to 6 months imprisonment for escaping from the police. He was released to Ticket of leave on 28 April 1857.¹⁸ While in Fremantle Gaol he reported sick to the medical officer.¹⁹

¹¹ SROWA Acc 1156 R21A

¹² SROWA Acc 1156 CS1

¹³ SROWA Acc 128/40-3; SROWA Acc 1156 RD1-2

¹⁴ SROWA Acc 1156 R21B

¹⁵ Further correspondence on the on the subject of Convict Discipline and Transportation. Presented to both Houses of Parliament by Command of her Majesty. 30 April 1852, p196

¹⁶ PD Vol 1, .Rica Erickson's notes on Family Search.

¹⁷ SROWA Acc 1156 R&D1-2

¹⁸ SROWA Acc 1156 R10; SROWA Acc 1156 RD1-2

14 February 1857	148, McDonald Jas, 27, <i>Hashemy</i> , HL, Bowel complaint, sleeping in cells, present occupation – Quarry, 4 th division.
16 February 1857	148, McDonald Jas, 27, <i>Hashemy</i> , HL, Bowel complaint, sleeping in cells, present occupation – Quarry, 4 th division.

HL = hard labour

On 3 January 1860: Conditional Pardon (CP) withheld on account of his re-conviction. On 22 March, it looks like he could get a CP on 5 April 1860.

A handwritten note on a piece of paper, possibly a document or a card. The text is written in cursive and is divided into three sections by vertical lines. The first section contains the name 'J. McDonald', the second section contains the number '148', and the third section contains the text 'C.P. on 5 April 60.'.

However, on 19 October 1860, J McDonald 149 - Conditional Pardon refused".²⁰
James finally received a Conditional Pardon on 12 March 1861.

No further trace of James has been found.

¹⁹ SROWA Acc 1156 CS3

²⁰ SROWA Acc 1156 S1-2