

James Wilson, 173, Hashemy

Researched by Marcia Watson

Baptism	13 September 1816 at Bubwith, Yorkshire.
Parents	John Wilson and Rebecca <i>née</i> Dealtry,
Parent's marriage	25 November 1805, Wressel, Yorkshire
Siblings	Sarah (1805), Hannah (1810-1825), George (1812), William (1814), Henry (1819), Charles (1822), John (1825)
Wife 1	Unknown
Marriage 1	
Wife 2	Mary Blenkin
Marriage 2	6 February 1848, Church of St John, Beverley, Yorkshire
Children	Sarah Ann Wilson (1849-1850)

James Wilson was nine years old when his father died; his mother did not remarry and lived with her son George in Bubwith on the 1841 and 1851 census. ¹

On the 6 February 1848, by Banns, at Church of St John, Beverley:

James Wilson, 27, (bachelor crossed out) widower, labourer of Lair Gate, father John Wilson, a labourer. Mary Blenkin, 19, spinster of Lair Gate. No father named. Mary signed her name, James made his mark. A previous marriage for James has not been found. Mary Blenkin had a daughter, Deborah, born on 19 December 1846 at the Beverley Workhouse.

At the Yorkshire Winter Assizes, York, in December 1848:

Matthew Horsfield (32), Nathaniel Horsfield (44) and James Wilson (28) were charged with a burglary in the dwelling-house of John Ford and stealing therefrom a quantity of pork, hams, butter, spirits, and other articles, at Bentley, on 10 November last; Mary Wilson (20) was charged with having feloniously received some of the stolen property, well knowing it to have been stolen. All the prisoners pleaded Guilty, with the exception of Nathaniel Horsfield. On the night prior to the robbery, the prosecutor and housekeeper retired to rest, as usual, leaving the house securely fastened. The next morning, it was discovered that the thieves had entered the premises by means of one of the windows, and the articles already enumerated stolen away. The same morning a watchman met the prisoner and an Irishman named McCracken, in Beverley, and being suspicious that they had been concerned in the burglary, he took them into custody. On their persons being searched, two pistols were found. In order to escape punishment, the Irishman confessed his guilt. He said that Nathaniel Horsfield watched near the premises whilst he and two other male prisoners proceeded to break into the house. In the prisoner's house were found some pieces of pork similar to that which the prosecutor lost. The prisoner, in defence, said that he was at home on the night in question; but he could not produce a witness to corroborate his statement. Guilty – The three male prisoners were sentenced to be transported for 15 years, and Mary Wilson was to be transported for seven years. ²

In sentencing the three men to transported for fifteen years, His Lordship said that it appeared the prisoners were part of a gang of burglars who had infested the county for some years, and therefore he should treat them with some degree of severity. The female prisoner had assisted them, far possible, in disposing of the produce of their nefarious proceedings. He should therefore transport her for seven years. ³

The York County Criminal Register notes James was 28 and could not read or write. There is no reference to a previous conviction or an alias.

¹ HO107/1216/9, p14; HO107/2358/102, p19

² Hull Packet, 22 December 1848, p5

³ Hull Advertiser and Exchange Gazette, 22 December 1848, p6

James was sent to Leicester County Gaol, from York Castle, on 11 April 1849. The register says he is 28, married, could read and is a labourer. He was once previously imprisoned and was 'indifferent at times'. After just over a year later, he was transferred to Portland Prison on 6 May 1850.⁴ From there, he boarded the *Hashemy* on 19 July for the voyage to Western Australia.

The ship arrived at Fremantle on 25 October 1850. A description of each convict was recorded.

173. James Wilson was 29 years old, 5' 6¼", dark brown hair, blue eyes, oval visage, brown complexion and stout, and had a mole on the right side of the mouth and a cut on the forehead right side. He is a brickmaker and married with two children.⁵

General register:

James is 30 years old, married, a servant, Methodist and never attended school. He could read a little, was taught to write at Fremantle, and his maths was improving; his mother was Rebecca, lived at Bubwith, Yorkshire.

Attended Divine Service?	Attended regularly
Received Sacrament?	Never
Habits?	Not exactly sober but attentive to work
Intellect?	Sound
State of Mind?	Hopeful
Knowledge, Secular?	Limited
Knowledge, Religious?	Limited
Alleged Cause of Crime?	Bad company
Name of Person referred to for Character, &c. ⁶	

James appears on the Casual Sick List, Fremantle Prison.⁷

Wilson Jas	8 December 1850	Costive [constipated]	Op: medicine
Wilson James	13 January 1851	Bad chin	Pulil Al..
Wilson James	2 March 1851	Bad eye	Lotion
Wilson James	3 March 1851	Eruption	Pill plummer, twice a day
Wilson James	21 March 1851	Sore ankle	Dress & bandage
Wilson James	1 May 1851	Febricular	Mist febril
Wilson James	2 May 1851	Febricular	Continue fever mixture
Wilson James	3 May 1851	Feb. C C	Mist Quin
Wilson James	4 May 1851	Bad finger	Poultice
Wilson James 173	6 May 1851	Gathered finger	
Wilson James 173	7 May 1851	Bad finger	
Wilson James	8 May 1851	Gathered finger	Poultice
Wilson James 173	9 May 1851	Bad finger	Continue poultice
Wilson James 173	10 May 1851	Bad finger	Continue poultice
Wilson James 173	12 May 1851	Bad finger	Dressing
Wilson James 173	13 May 1851	Bad finger	Infus quassion
Wilson James 173	14 May 1851	Bad finger	Dressing
Wilson James 173	15 May 1851	Bad finger	Dressing

A ticket of leave was issued on 17 February 1852, and he was sent to Toodyay.^{8,9}

⁴ HO 23/4, piece 31

⁵ SROWA Acc 128/41-43

⁶ SROWA Acc 1156 R21A

⁷ SROWA Acc 1156 CS1

⁸ SROWA Acc 1156 R21B

⁹ SROWA Acc 128/40 - 43

James was reconvicted in 1855.¹⁰ He was charged and convicted of stealing rum from Mr Von Bibra, the publican at the Lynton Hiring Depot, during the temporary absence of the barman. He received two years and was sent to Fremantle Prison, arriving on 9 February 1856.

While in prison, he appears on the Casual Sick List.¹¹ H.L=hard labour

Wilson James 171 H.L.	3 August 1856	Injury hand	Allowed to remain in his cell on Sunday & wear his blanket as a sweater
Wilson James 173 H.L.	4 August 1856		Repeat Op: medicine
Wilson James 173 H.L.	6 August 1856	Bad hand	Excused work
Wilson James 173 H.L.	20 March 1857	Constipation, in cell, shoemaker, aged 37	
Wilson James 173 H.L.	13 April 1857	Constipation, in cell, shoemaker, aged 37	
Wilson James 173 H.L.	15 April 1857	Bowel complaint, shoemaker, aged 37, in cell	
Wilson Jas 173 H.L.	26 September 1857	Inside (occupation), aged 38, constipation, cell	

On 15 December 1857, James was recommended for a ticket of leave.¹² He worked for: James Oliver, Bassendean, a farmer in the Swan District.

From 30 December 1861 until 30 June 1862, he worked for A Warren. His wage was £20 per year.

On 12 February 1863, he was re-engaged for £2 10s per month.¹³

A Conditional Pardon was sent to the Resident Magistrate at Swan district on 17 March 1863, and James received it on 28 March.¹⁴

Then in April 1871, at the Supreme Court in Perth, James Wilson, an expirer, pleaded guilty to stealing a mare at Guildford. He was sentenced to 5 years of penal servitude.^{15, 16}

On reconviction, his description was:

10019 (former Reg. No 173) James Wilson, convicted On 8 April 1871, sentenced to 5 years, aged 45, 5' 7", grey hair, brown eyes, long face, sallow complexion, stout, finger on right hand injured, labourer, single, no children.¹⁷

He was discharged from prison on 16 March 1875 with a ticket of leave to the Perth district.¹⁸

18 March 1875: worked for G Hamilton of Perth as a labourer
 24 April 1875: worked for Edward Connor as a general servant.
 6 May 1875: worked for T Haddrill of Swan as a general servant
 7 September 1875: worked for H Warren of Bush Jun as a labourer
 30 June 1876: no employer listed¹⁹

In October 1877, a newspaper reported: *Human Remains- On the 11th inst., the remains of a human body were found about seven miles from Gingin, near the Guildford Road. The body was in a perfectly nude state, lying face downwards, and appeared to be that of a middle-aged person, the hair being grey. The police are instituting inquiries as to identity.*²⁰

¹⁰ SROWA Acc 1156 V23; SROWA Acc 1156 RD1 - RD2

¹¹ SROWA Acc 1156 CS3

¹² SROWA Acc 1156 RD1 - RD2

¹³ SROWA Acc 1171, p135

¹⁴ SROWA Acc 1156 R21A

¹⁵ The Inquirer and Commercial News (Perth, WA : 1855 - 1901), 29 March 1871, p2

¹⁶ The Herald (Fremantle, WA : 1867 - 1886), 15 April 1871, p3

¹⁷ SROWA Acc 128/1 - 32

¹⁸ SROWA Acc 1156 V18; SROWA Acc 1156 RD5 - RD7

¹⁹ Rica Erickson's notes on Family Search, PD 3.

²⁰ The Herald (Fremantle, WA : 1867 - 1886), 27 October 1877, p3

Death certificate. A person supposed to be James Wilson, labourer, about 50, was found dead in the bush near Gingin. He was supposed to have died about June 1877. The cause of death was not ascertained. His death was registered by the undertaker, S Montgomery, on 24 October 1877.

James Wilson is buried in Guildford Cemetery.²¹

Mary Blenkin, second wife of James Wilson, convict 173

Baptism	~1829
Parents	Elizabeth?
Parent's marriage	
Siblings	Margaret (1823?), William (~1826)
Husband 1	James Wilson (1816-1877)
Marriage 1	6 February 1848, Church of St John, Beverley, Yorkshire
Husband 2	William Stapleton (~1833-1897)
Marriage 2	5 February 1855, Church of St George, Hobart, Tasmania
Children	Deborah Blenkin (1846) Sarah Ann Wilson (1849) Margaret Stapleton (1856) Mary Ann Stapleton (1858) John Stapleton (1860)

Mary Blenkin was born about 1829. She said her native place was Bishop Burton in Yorkshire. However, there are no Blenkin births, marriages or burials in the parish register.

Living in the village of Bishop Burton was widow Ann Mortimer. As Ann Sykes, she married Caleb Mortimer in Beverley in 1803. They had one child, Ann (1803-7), at Bishop Burton. On the 1841 census, Mary Blenkin, 12, lived with widow Ann Mortimer, aged 60. It appears Ann may have been caring for Mary Blenkin.

Mary Blenkin gave birth to a daughter on 19 December 1846 in the Beverley workhouse in Yorkshire. The birth was registered as Deborah *Lenkine* by the Master of the Workhouse, John Wilkinson, three days after the birth.

A year later, she married James Wilson, by banns, Beverley, on 6 February 1848. James Wilson, 27, widower ~~Bachelor~~, labourer of Lair Gate, his father was John Wilson, a labourer. Mary Blenkin, 19, spinster of Lair Gate, signed her name. Her father is not recorded in the register.

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1848 Marriage solemnized by *Thomas* in the Church of *St. John Beverley* in the County of *York*

No.	When Married.	Name and Surname.	Age.	Condition.	Rank or Profession.	Residence at the Time of Marriage.	Father's Name and Surname.	Rank or Profession of Father.
359	<i>Feb 6</i>	<i>James Wilson</i> <i>Mary Blenkin</i>	<i>27</i> <i>19</i>	<i>Widower</i> <i>Spinster</i>	<i>Labourer</i> <i>—</i>	<i>Lair Gate</i> <i>do do</i>	<i>John Wilson</i>	<i>Labourer</i>

Married in the Church of *St. John* according to the Rites and Ceremonies of the Church of England by me, *James Sykes*

This Marriage was solemnized between us, *The master of James Wilson* in the Presence of us, *Peter Duncan*
Mary Blenkin *John Robert Periss Clark*

²¹ Guildford Church of England parish register transcripts, 1852-1934, LDS film, 284853, Item 3

Mary Wilson, 20, was charged with having received stolen property, knowing it to have been stolen. The property was stolen by her husband James and the Horsfield brothers, Matthew and Nathaniel.

According to the Hull Packet newspaper: The parties who committed the burglary at Bentley New Inn, viz., Matthew Horsfield, Nathaniel Horsfield, James Wilson, and Mary Wilson, have been tried at the York Assizes and sentenced to transportation; the men for fifteen years, and Mary for seven years. They all resided at Beverley and have been connected together for a number of years; they were a gang of most dangerous and determined villains. When apprehended, they had loaded pistols upon them, and there is no doubt that they would have used them had they been disturbed when committing the robbery. It appears by the confession of one of the party and that they have lived almost entirely on plunder. He stated that they had stolen a sheep from Mr Langdale, of Leckonfield; one from Mr Lindley, of Beverley; one from Mr Atkinson, of Beverley; and a lamb from Westwood; also that they had stolen corn from Mr Cattle, of Esk, and Mr Sorby, of Tickton; a bag of flour from Mr Catton, of Routh; a quantity of poultry from Mr Holmes, of Arram; and a number of other robberies. It must be a great consolation to the inhabitants of Beverley and to the farmers in the neighbourhood that they have got rid of such characters, and much praise is due to Mr Swift, the constable, in bringing the parties to justice.

Mary was about six weeks pregnant with her second child when she was apprehended and charged in November 1848. After the trial in early December, Mary and James were imprisoned in York Castle before Mary was sent to Millbank Prison on 28 March 1849. She, about six months pregnant, and had her two-year-old daughter travelled the 200 miles to London, possibly by train as the York-London railway line opened in 1840. By the 1850s, there were 13 trains a day between the two cities.

Sarah Ann Wilson, daughter of James and Mary Wilson (formerly Blenkin), was born in Millbank Prison on 27 June 1849. James was recorded as a labourer but did not say he was in prison. Interestingly, the birth was said to be registered by Mary on 20 July at St James the Evangelist, Westminster. Her address was Millbank Prison.

Mary Wilson boarded the *St Vincent* on 7 December 1849, with her two children, and sailed on 19 December for Tasmania. She was no doubt hoping James would also be sent to Tasmania. He, however, was sent to Western Australia on the second convict transport, the *Hashemy*, in 1850. When her husband James Wilson arrived at Fremantle, he said he was married with two children. It is not known if he had children for his previous marriage or he was referring to Deborah Blenkin and baby Sarah Wilson. Would the authorities or the Prison Chaplain pass a message to James saying Mary had given birth to a daughter in Millbank?

Baby Sarah Ann Wilson died, aged seven months, of marasmus (undernourishment) on 25 January 1850 during the voyage to Hobart.

The *St Vincent* arrived at Hobart on 4 April 1850. After a stint in the Brickfield Hiring Depot, Mary was assigned to Charles Cawthray, a dairyman, in Davey St, Hobart for 12 months, at £8 a year.

Her next assignment was on 13 July 1852 to John S Butler in New Town Road, whose wife ran a school for young women. The assignment was short as Mary returned to Brickfields on 19 July. Perhaps she was not suitable for the position as Mrs Butler advertised for staff a few weeks later.

Mary was then assigned to Miss Ellen Blackmore in Elizabeth Street, Hobart, on 22 August 1852. A week later, she received her ticket-of-leave on 31 August 1852. She was free by servitude on 9 December 1855, and a Certificate of Freedom was issued on 12 December.

Mary married again on 5 February 1855 at Church of St George, Hobart

Mary Wilson, 24, spinster, married William Stapleton, 27, a labourer. Both made their mark William Stapleton was probably the convict who arrived on the *Pestongee Bomangee (3)* in 1849. He was from Galway, married to Fanny with two children, and a Catholic.

At some stage, Mary appears to have become a Catholic and taken on the name of 'Mary Catherine'.

William Stapleton died on 25 August 1897 near St Marys, Tasmania. He was 64, a labourer, born in Ireland and died of cystitis and exhaustion.

Mary Catherine Stapleton died on 7 March 1898 at St Marys, Tasmania. She was 69, a widow, died of old age and was born in England. She and her husband are buried at the Old Catholic Cemetery, St Marys.

Children:

Deborah Wilson. Shortly after the St Vincent arrived in Hobart, Deborah Wilson, aged 4, was placed in the Queen's orphanage in Hobart on 15 April 1850. She was discharged when she was 6½ years old, on 17 February 1853, to her mother. In the 1870s, Deborah worked for Ellen McLaren, licensed victualler at the Telegraph Hotel, corner of Morrison and Brook-streets, Hobart Town.

No further information has been found on Deborah.

Margaret Stapleton, 21, servant married John William Spratt, 26, labourer on 27 December 1876 at Avoca. They had six children.

Mary Ann Stapleton, 23, married Robert Roberts, 24, a mariner on 9 August 1881 in Hobart. Her father, William, was a witness to the marriage. They had two children

John Stapleton, 22, butcher, married Martha Harriet Plummer, 28, on 5 July 1882 at Hobart. His mother, Mary Catherine Stapleton, was a witness. Martha died on 30 January 1892 of an enlarged heart and childbirth.

John married again in 1893 to Margaret Maxfield *née* Chalmers at Hobart.

John had four children from his first marriage and three from his second marriage.

Mary Blenkin's siblings.

Mary said she had a sister Margaret and a brother William.

Her brother, William Blenkin, 15, was a servant at Rowley, Yorkshire, on the 1841 census. On the 1851 census, William, 25, was an ag lab at Rowley. He said his native place was Bishop Burton. Banns were read in the Rowley Church on the 13, 20 and 27 April 1851 for the marriage of William Blenkin and Hannah Thirsk of Lockington. No marriage has been recorded. No further record has been found of William.

Margaret, possibly the illegitimate daughter of Elizabeth Blenkin/Blenken, baptised on 13 April 1823 at North Dalton. No trace of Margaret has been found, apart from being mentioned on the convict records of Mary Wilson, her sister, in Tasmania.