

Eliza Smith

POLICE NUMBER 444 ¹	LITERACY read only
TRIAL DATE 1 February 1841	AGE ON EMBARKATION 18
TRIAL PLACE Central Criminal Court (Old Bailey), London	AGE ON ARRIVAL 18
OFFENCE stealing clothes	HEIGHT 4' 8¾"
SENTENCE 7 years	COMPLEXION pale
GAOL REPORT poor, single	HEAD oval
PREVIOUS CONVICTIONS first offence	HAIR brown
SURGEON'S REPORT quiet	VISAGE oval
ON THE TOWN 3 weeks	FOREHEAD medium
MARITAL STATUS single	EYEBROWS light brown
CHILDREN 0	EYES light blue, large
FAMILY	NOSE medium
NATIVE PLACE New Road, London, England	MOUTH wide
TRADE ON EMBARKATION	CHIN round
TRADE ON ARRIVAL housemaid, nurse girl	MARKS large scar on right side of neck

c1823

Born at New Road, London, Middlesex, England.²

1 February 1841

Tried at the Central Criminal Court (Old Bailey), London, England indicted for larceny in stealing on 13 January 1841 1 box value 2 shillings, 1 cape value 1 shilling, 6 gowns value £2.14.0, 5 pairs of stockings value 5 shillings, 1 pair of cuffs value 1 shilling, 2 handkerchiefs value 2 shillings, 1 waistband value 6 pence, 1 shift value 2/6, 2 brooches value 3 shillings, 1 tea caddy value 3 shillings and 6 yards of ribbon value 4 shillings from servant Ann Capelin Mace Betts; found guilty; sentence 7 years transportation; aged 18.³

Statement of witness Ann Capelin Mace Betts:

I am single, and am a servant. On the 13th of January I met the prisoner in Castle-street, Leicester-square – I never saw her before – I was taking my box, containing the articles stated, to Mr. Wilson's, near Russell-court, having fetched it away from my place that day, at two o'clock – the prisoner spoke to me first, and said she was a girl out of place – I said I would give her a dinner if she would help me carry the box – I gave it up to Mrs. Wilson myself, in her presence – she went away directly – I was looking about for a situation, leaving the box there – on returning I found the box gone – I have lost all but a few things – I have scarcely any thing to wear, and not a friend – I was going to another place the next night – I was going after it that very evening, but not having clothes, I could not go at all.³

Statement of witness John Wilson:

I keep the Two Spires public-house, in Catherine-street, The prosecutrix left her box in my bar – I was not there then, but I was there when the prisoner came, and said she had come for the box she had left a short time ago – I turned round to my boy – he said it was all right, and she went away with it.³

Statement of witness Hannah Morris:

I am the wife of James Morris, and keep a clothes-shop, at Westminster. The prisoner came this day three weeks to sell a cape, two pairs of stockings, a handkerchief, and two pairs of cuffs – I bought them of her – the prosecutrix came to my door, and seeing the cape hanging out, claimed it, and the articles were given to the policeman – on the Monday night the prisoner came to sell a pocket-handkerchief, which the prosecutrix claims, and I gave her in charge.³

¹ TAHO, CON40/1/10 p.50 No.444 [image 53] (Eliza Smith); TAHO, CON19/1/1 p.254 [image 130] (Eliza Smith); ML, CY 1282 p.153 (Eliza Smith); ML, CY 1197 p.153 (Eliza Smith); ML, CY 958 p.441 (Eliza Smith)

² TAHO, CON19/1/1 p.254 [image 130] (Eliza Smith)

³ *Old Bailey Proceedings Online*, t18410201-697 (Eliza Smith)

This biography supplements our book *Patchwork Prisoners* available from www.researchtasmania.com.au.

Statement of witness Anthony Rose:

*I took the prisoner into custody, and found this gown on her, which the prosecutrix owns.*³

Statement of witness Ann Wilson:

*I am the publican's wife. The prosecutrix and prisoner came together, and left the box at our house – I thought the prisoner was a friend, or the box would not have been given to her. (Property produced and sworn to)*³

Statement of defendant Eliza Smith:

*The young woman met me, and asked me to help her with the box, and said she would give me a dinner; I stopped a long time, but she never came to give, me the dinner; I met a young woman, who asked where I had been; I told her; she asked me to lend her my bonnet and shawl to put on, which I did; she said she was going into Holborn to get some clothes, and when she came back she brought a bundle, containing two shawls, a gown, and velvet cape; I said, "Is this what your father sent you from the country?" she said, "Yes;" she lent me the gown to put on; in the afternoon she sent me to sell a handkerchief, which I took to that woman, and she gave me into custody; she said I might sell the things, which I sold that woman; the shift she claims is my own.*³

- 5 April 1841 Departed Woolwich, England on the *Rajah*.⁴
19 July 1841 Arrived at Hobart on the *Rajah*.⁴
c24 July 1841 Upon arrival at Hobart, sent to Launceston for assignment.⁵
31 December 1841 Mustered in the service of Mr Bastian, Launceston.⁶
2 June 1842 Charged with being absent without leave from the service of Hill; sentence 10 days in solitary confinement at Launceston Female Factory.⁷
21 June 1842 Application for Ticket of Leave.⁷
29 August 1842 Charged with being absent without leave from the service of Burnett; sentence 10 days hard labour in the Crime Class at Launceston Female Factory.⁷
20 July 1843 Charged with being drunk; in the service of Mahon; sentence 10 days in solitary confinement.⁷
7 February 1844 Classified as a 3rd class probation pass-holder, gazetted 9 February.⁸
10 July 1844 Hired in private service as a probation pass-holder to Samuel Levy, Launceston.⁹
13 July 1844 At Launceston.⁷
23 July 1844 Hired in private service as a probation pass-holder to James Barclay, Launceston.¹⁰
31 July 1844 Hired in private service as a probation pass-holder to George Alexander, Launceston.¹¹
7 August 1844 Ticket of Leave granted; gazetted 9 August.¹²
6 March 1845 **Died** from natural causes at Launceston; informant A Gardiner, coroner, Launceston.¹³
Inquest held into death at Launceston before Arthur Gardiner, coroner.
Verdict: died by the visitation of God from natural causes; aged about 21.¹⁴

Statement of witness Margaret Bass:

I reside in St John Street Launceston next door to the house in which deceased died. I saw deceased at the play house last night. This morning about three o'clock I heard some one screaming. I went to the house from which the scream came. In a room in the house I found

⁴ AJCP, ADM 101/63 *Rajah*

⁵ ML, CY 1282 p.142 (Eliza Smith); ML, CY 1274 p.262 (Eliza Smith)

⁶ AJCP, HO 10/51 p.396 No.444 (Eliza Smith)

⁷ TAHO, CON40/1/10 p.50 No.444 [image 53] (Eliza Smith)

⁸ *Hobart Town Gazette*, 9 February 1844 p.204 (Eliza Smith)

⁹ *Hobart Town Gazette*, 12 July 1844 p.802 (Eliza Smith)

¹⁰ *Hobart Town Gazette*, 26 July 1844 p.878 (Eliza Smith)

¹¹ *Hobart Town Gazette*, 2 August 1844 p.914 (Eliza Smith)

¹² *Hobart Town Gazette*, 9 August 1844 p.944 (Eliza Smith)

¹³ TAHO, RGD35/1/16 1845/404 Launceston (Eliza Smith)

¹⁴ TAHO, SC195/1/15 No.1254 (Eliza Smith)

deceased when I went in. She held out her hand to me and said she ... – she was on her knees on the floor. I raised her head I found she was dying. I asked for a powder I did not give her one in a few minutes afterwards she died.

I have known deceased only a month she frequently complained of palpitation of the heart. The body I have this day viewed with the Jury.¹⁴

Statement of witness Margaret Collard:

I reside at the house of George Merchant in St John Street. This morning about three o'clock deceased came to my room I was in bed. She said she felt very bad since she came home from the races. She asked me to put my hand to her heart I did so it was beating dreadful. She said she had palpitation of the heart. She screamed out for Mrs Martin who resides next door. Mrs Martin deceased asked her to bring her a powder she pointed to her box where she kept the powders. Mrs Martin went to the box but could not find the powder. Deceased asked for a hot drink. Some hot coffee was brought to her but she could scarcely drink. She fell down on the floor and screamed out not to touch her. Mrs Martin went to lift her up and she died in her arms. I have known deceased twelve months she held a Ticket of Leave. She has been complaining some time of palpitation of the heart. Deceased appeared to be about twenty one years of age. She was a sober woman and very steady. I saw deceased coming from the races[?] she appeared to be not drunk[?] and quite sober.¹⁴

Statement of witness James Grant, surgeon, Launceston:

I was called to the house of Merchant Shoemaker St John Street, during the night to visit a female named Eliza Smith. She had expired before I reached the house.

I have since examined the body & found both sides of the chest and the pericardium filled with serum to a very considerable extent, the heart was enlarged and the valves of the aorta diseased, which was probably the cause of the dropsy in the chest. But the immediate cause of death was in my opinion owing to congestion of the lungs & the presence of an immense quantity of frothy mucus which had been caused by her having suddenly left a crowded theatre, the night being rather chilly, and this sudden engorgement of the lungs together with the presence of fluid in the chest became rapidly fatal.¹⁴

Newspaper report:

INQUESTS.

The same day [Thursday last] an inquest was held at the same place [Wharf Wine Vaults] to enquire into the death of Eliza Smith, who expired suddenly about half-past one o'clock, p.m., at her lodgings in St. John-street.

Margaret Dowling deposed that she was well acquainted with the deceased, lived in the same house, and occupied an apartment immediately adjoining hers. Mrs. Merchant, the shoemaker, resided next door. Deceased was about twenty-one years of age, and of remarkably steady and sober habits; she held a ticket of leave. This morning about half-past one o'clock deceased came to deponent's bedside and complained of severe illness; she asked deponent to feel how her heart was beating; did so, and found it fluttering with much violence, directly afterwards deceased screamed out for Mrs. Martin, who resides next door; her landlord came up and brought her some hot coffee, before Mrs. Martin came up she asked deponent to go to her box, and bring her a certain powder which she said she would find there; deponent however did not succeed in finding it, and directly afterwards Mrs. Martin came up; should say that deceased was perfectly sober at the time of her death, although she had that day been both to the races and the play.

Margaret Martin deposed to hearing the screams of deceased about the time described by last witness; hurried on her clothes and hastened up stairs; found deceased on her knees in the middle of the floor; on observing deponent, she extended her hands towards her and exclaiming – mother, fell backwards on the floor. Deponent endeavoured to raise her, but found she was dead; medical assistance was sent for immediately on her being taken ill.

The evidence of Dr. Grant was to the effect that deceased had long laboured under a pulmonary affection, producing palpitation of the heart, and other distressing symptoms. He had no doubt whatever, but that she had expired in the manner previously described. The jury returned a verdict that the deceased died of "palpitation of the heart."¹⁵

¹⁵ Cornwall Chronicle, 8 March 1845 p.2 (Eliza Smith)