

Born	Fordingbridge, Hampshire, according to Prison Register
Baptism	11 March 1830, Romsey, Southampton
Parents	James Belbin (1798-1836) and Louisa Humby (1800-1881)
Parent's marriage	22 January 1822, All Saints, Southampton
Siblings	Mary Jane (1826), George (1824), Ellen (1826), Elizabeth (1832), Charles (1833), John (1835)

William's father, James Belbin, was a baker or confectioner, except for a brief period around 1826, when he was a victualler. He died when William was about 6 years old.

James Lockyear Belbin was buried 10 November 1836 in Southampton, aged 38. His address was Charlotte Street.

The 1841 census, Charlotte Street, parish of St Mary's, Southampton. ¹

Louisa Belbin, 36, seamstress

Mary 18, Thomas 12, Ellen 14, William 12, Eliza 10, Charles 8, John 6, all born in the county

In 1848, the newspaper reported: Before the Magistrates this week - William Belbin, for stealing four fowls, the property of Charles Collis, was committed for trial. ²

William Belbin, aged 20, (r. imp.) pleaded guilty to a charge of stealing five fowls, the property of Charles Collis. He pleaded for mercy on the ground that he had been out of work a long time, and was passing the place where the fowls were kept, and seeing the door open, he was tempted to take them. Guilty— Six weeks' imprisonment and one week solitary. ³

Then in 1850, a newspaper reported that yesterday, 8 February, William Evason and William Belbin were charged with breaking into the dwelling house of Solomon Solomon, in Oxford street, and stealing 20/- in coppers, some foreign copper coin, some cigars, a bottle of wine, and a bottle of bitters. ⁴

William Evason, who was convicted and sentenced to transportation with William Belbin, petitioned several times for a mitigation of sentence. One document describes their crime.

Received 30 March 1852. Answered 23 April 1852. 2nd petition of William Evason. ⁵

Borough of Southampton and County of the Town of Southampton.

The Jurors for our Lady the Queen upon their oath present that William Belbin late of the parish of Saint Mary in the Borough and County of the Town of Southampton laborer and William Evason late of the same parish laborer on 7 February in the year of our Lord One Thousand Eight Hundred and fifty with force and arms at the Parish of Saint Mary in the Borough and County aforesaid the Shop of Solomon Solomon there situate feloniously did break and enter and one hundred and forty four pieces of the current copper coin of the Realm called pennies to the value of Twelve shillings. and one hundred and forty four pieces of the current copper coin of the Realm called halfpennies of the value of Six shillings, ninety pieces of the current copper coin of the Realm called farthings of the value of Two shillings, fifty foreign coins of the value of Two shillings, fifty coins of metal value of Two shillings, one pint of Wine of the value of Three shillings, one pint of Bitters of the Value of Three shillings, Two bottles of the value of Fourpence, one half pint of Rum of the Value of One shilling, Fifty cigars of the value of Eight shillings and one pound Weight of Tobacco of the Value of

¹ The National Archives (TNA) UK, HO107/417/7

² Hampshire Telegraph, 05 February 1848, p4

³ Hampshire Advertiser, 15 April 1848, p3; TNA UK. HO27/86

⁴ Hampshire Independent, 09 February 1850, p4

⁵ TNA UK, HO18/317. William Evason, convict 1897, *Pyrenees* 2.

Eight shillings of the monies and goods and chattels of the said Solomon Solomon in the said Shop then and there being found then and there in the said shop feloniously did steal take and carry away against the peace of our Lady the Queen her Crown and dignity.

The Prison Registers show that William Belbin, 23, single, imp, labourer, was convicted 11 April 1850 at Southampton of felony and sentenced to seven years. He was received at Millbank Prison from Southampton on 19 August 1850. William had one previous felony.

William weighed 9 stone 11 pounds. His mother was Louisa Bilby, Orchard Lane, Southampton. He was a general labourer and soldier. According to this register, it was 7 years since his last conviction for robbing an orchard.

On 12 September 1850 he was removed to Pentonville Prison.

At Pentonville, his occupation was given as soldier. No trace of William serving as a soldier has been found, and it may be one of the many errors in the registers.

On 30 January 1851 he was transferred to the *Defence* hulk at Woolwich, on medical grounds.

Here it was also noted he was born in Fordingbridge, had red hair, grey eyes, sandy eyebrows and lashes, fair complexion, long face, slight build, 5'7½", read and write imperfectly, and was a labourer.

William was transferred to *York* hulk at Gosport, Hampshire, on 3 March 1851.

Just over a year later, he was removed to Portsmouth Prison on 12 May 1852.⁶

William was moved between various prisons.

Transferred to Millbank on 19 August 1850

Pentonville on 11 September 1850

Defence hulk on 30 January 1851

York hulk on 3 March 1851

Portsmouth on 12 May 1852

His conduct was good or very good, and he earned a Ticket of Leave.

William boarded *Dudbrook* on 6 November 1852 for Western Australia.

Before leaving England, he had visits from family members residing in Southampton:

His brother George Belbin, mother, two sisters and sister-in-law on 6 July 1852

His two sisters, brother and two cousins on 6 September 1852.⁷

The *Dudbrook* arrived at Fremantle, Western Australia on 2 February 1853. William was assigned number 1676, issued with a Ticket of Leave, and a physical description recorded.

1676. William Belbin, 26, 5'7½", light hair, grey eyes, long face, freckled, slight, scar on finger of right hand, labourer and single.⁸

The prisoners were removed from the *Dudbrook* and housed in the Fremantle Prison on 10 February 1853.

A Conditional Pardon was granted to William on 14 April 1854.

No further information has been found on him.

His mother:

In 1851, the census shows that Louisa Belbin, widow, 50, dressmaker, had her daughter-in-law, Mary Ann Belbin, 20, and son, Charles Belbin, 18, a sailor, living with her in No. 1 James St, Southampton.⁹

Louisa died in the March quarter of 1881, in Southampton, aged 80.

⁶ TNA UK, PCOM2/136, PCOM2/63 HO24/5; PCOM2/31, HO24/16, PCOM2/132

⁷ TNA UK, PCOM2/105

⁸ State Records Office, WA, Acc 128/1-32

⁹ TNA UK, HO107/1669