

22 Elizabeth Longstaff (nee Pearson) d 12 July 1921



Elizabeth Longstaff was the mother of Bram Longstaffe (with an E!), buried elsewhere in Barrow Cemetery, a conscientious objector during WW1, but later Mayor of Barrow 1934 – 36.

IN AFFECTIONATE REMEMBRANCE OF
ELIZABETH LONGSTAFF,
WHO AS CAPTAIN PEARSON, A YOUNG OFFICER
EVANGELIST ACCOMPANIED COMMISSIONER
G. S. RAILTON AND SIX OTHERS TO THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO ESTABLISH
IN THAT CONTINENT THE WORK OF THE
SALVATION ARMY IN THE YEAR 1880.
BORN JULY 4TH 1858,
CALLED HOME JULY 12TH 1921.
AND OF HER HUSBAND MAJOR
WILLIAM TURNER LONGSTAFF,
DIVISIONAL OFFICER OF THE SALVATION ARMY,
CORNWALL AND DEVON, NORWICH, MIDLANDS
AND OTHER COMMANDS.
BORN AUGUST 21ST, 1856.
CALLED TO HIS REWARD MAY 10TH, 1928
AFTER 50 YEARS FAITHFUL SERVICE.
HONOURED PARENTS
MAY YOUR CHILDREN AS WORTHY BE
PIONEER O PIONEERS

The Salvation Army USA website says: ... Meanwhile, the Army was gaining a foothold in the United States. Lieutenant Eliza Shirley had left England to join her parents, who had migrated to America earlier in search for work. In 1879, she held the first meeting of The Salvation Army in America, in Philadelphia. The Salvationists were received enthusiastically. Shirley wrote to General Booth, begging for reinforcements. None were available at first. Glowing reports of the work in Philadelphia, however, eventually convinced Booth, in 1880, to send an official group to pioneer the work in America.

On March 10, 1880, Commissioner George Scott Railton and seven women officers knelt on the dockside at Battery Park in New York City to give thanks for their safe arrival. At their first official street meeting, these pioneers were met with unfriendly actions, as had happened in Great Britain. They were ridiculed, arrested, and attacked. Several officers and soldiers even gave their lives. Three years later, Railton and other Salvationists had expanded their operation into California, Connecticut, Indiana, Kentucky, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Missouri, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, and Pennsylvania. President Grover Cleveland received a delegation of Salvation Army officers in 1886 and gave the organization a warm personal endorsement. This was the first recognition from the White House and would be followed by similar receptions from succeeding presidents.¹

Wikipedia says: With male officers being few in number, Railton took Captain Emma Westbrook and six other young women with the intention of training them for the work on the voyage to the United States.

On 10 March 1880 Railton arrived at Castle Garden, New York with his seven 'Hallelujah Lassies' and immediately set about preaching to the New Yorkers and joining with the unofficial work already begun by the Shirley family in Philadelphia. He also began the work in Newark, New Jersey, leaving two young women in charge there, while he himself set off for St. Louis, Missouri to begin preaching there, but here he was unsuccessful. Meanwhile, in New York the work had gone so well that by May there were sixteen officers, forty cadets, and four hundred and twelve soldiers. By the end of 1880 one thousand five hundred had been converted. In January 1881 Railton received orders from William Booth to return to England. Railton protested that he was needed in the United States but Booth insisted that he should return home.

In March 1880, George Scott Railton and Captain Emma Westbrook, accompanied by six female soldiers: Alice Coleman, Rachel Evans, Emma Elizabeth Florence Morris, Elizabeth Pearson, Clara Price and Annie Shaw, brought The Salvation Army to the Greater New York area.²

After Eliza Shirley and her parents had made some converts in Philadelphia, U.S.A. (W. Booth knew about her trying to start the work), William Booth, in March 1880, sent George Scott Railton, Captain Emma Westbrook, and six women soldiers to the Greater New York area to establish The Salvation Army officially. All the officers knelt on the dockside at Battery Park in New York City to give praise and thanks for their safe arrival.

¹ <http://www.salvationarmyusa.org/usn/history-of-the-salvation-army>

² <http://newyork.salvationarmy.org/who-we-are/history/>

The seven women who accompanied Railton are often referred to as the “seven hallelujah lassies.” A “lassie” was Lancashire slang for a girl or a young woman who was unmarried. The seven soldiers included Captain Emma Westbrook, who began her work in Notting Hill Corps and was at North Shields, her first station, when she received the orders to go to New York. “Attaining the rank of major, she continued in the service until her promotion to Glory in 1933.”

The other six soldiers were Alice Coleman, Rachel Evans, Emma Elizabeth Florence Morris, Elizabeth Pearson, Clara Price, and Annie Shaw. These women are described as strong forces whose goal was to spread the gospel and the work of The Salvation Army. Because the training home for women officers wouldn’t open till the following May, “the training the valiant six had, was twenty-six days tossing on the tempestuous Atlantic Ocean.” The entire group progressed quickly with their desire for missionary work and began a Salvation Army in Newark, New Jersey in the United States.³

The death notice in the *Barrow News* Saturday 16 July 1921 gives an address of 52 Greengate-street, and an age of 65 which does not tally with the gravestone. As is apparent in my researches, her achievements were forgotten in comparison with her husband’s (*Barrow News* Saturday 19 May 1928):

Late Mr. W. T. Longstaffe - The death has taken place in Barrow of Adjutant W. T. Longstaffe, father of Alderman B. Longstaffe, with whom he resided at Belmont Villa, Roose-road. The deceased was for many years a devoted member of the Salvation Army and rose to become a Divisional Commander. When he came to Barrow he had left the “field to take up the insurance branch of the Army’s work. For many years he took a prominent part in the Army work in Barrow, and was given the retiring rank of adjutant. He was 74 years of age.” (*Again, this does not tally with the gravestone*).

³ <http://www.crossdenominationalmission.org.uk/Salvationarmy.html>