

What happened?

James Lines, born in 1803 in Fenstanton, Cambridgeshire asked Robert Bailey, a blacksmith from Benwick, Cambridgeshire, for a job but Bailey refused. In retaliation, James stole a stock and die set, which is a type of blacksmiths tools used for making screws and pipes, from him as he left. The missing item was quickly spotted and a friend of the blacksmith went out to search for James.

Now James knew his crime had been discovered, he tried to return what he stole but was caught while running away! He was arrested and sent to Ely Goal to await his trial.

His case was held at the Spring Assizes, a type of local court, that was held at the Sessions House in Ely in front of Henry Storcks, Esq. Chief Justice of the Isle of Ely. James was found guilty and sentenced to transportation to Australia for 7 years and was returned to Ely Gaol to wait for a ship.

While in Ely Gaol, as he was waiting to be moved to a convict ship, James and several other prisoners devised a plan to escape. James was the ringleader and wanted to also get revenge on the gaoler himself! The group of prisoners quickly put their plan into action and got the wife of one of the prisoners to throw tools and supplies over the wall so they were able to start cutting through their chains. However their plan was discovered, along with the cut shackles and a hidden note to the wife that was assisting the escape attempt.

The men were secured in extra irons and James, as the ringleader, was quickly transferred to a prison hulk, an old ship being used as a floating prison in Woolwich, London.

James finally sailed for Australia on the convict ship *Manlius*, along with 175 other convicts on July 16th, 1828. They reached Van Diemen's Land (now known as Tasmania) on November 9th, 1828.

Over the course of his seven year sentence James got in trouble numerous times for things such as running away and neglect of duty. His various punishments for these offences included periods of additional hard labour and even 25 lashes!

He did eventually complete his sentence and, as a free man he married the following year and started working as a blacksmith in Evandale, a town in Tasmania. However the tough conditions meant that his free life in Tasmania sadly did not last long. He died in May 1838 and he was buried at Evandale Cemetery.

Prisoner Profile

Name: *James Lines*

Trade: *Blacksmith Farrier*

Height: *5ft 8"*

Age: *26, born 1803*

Complexion: *Dark*

Head: *Large*

Hair: *Brown*

Whiskers: *Dark brown*

Visage: *Oval*

Forehead: *Very narrow*

Eyebrows: *Brown*

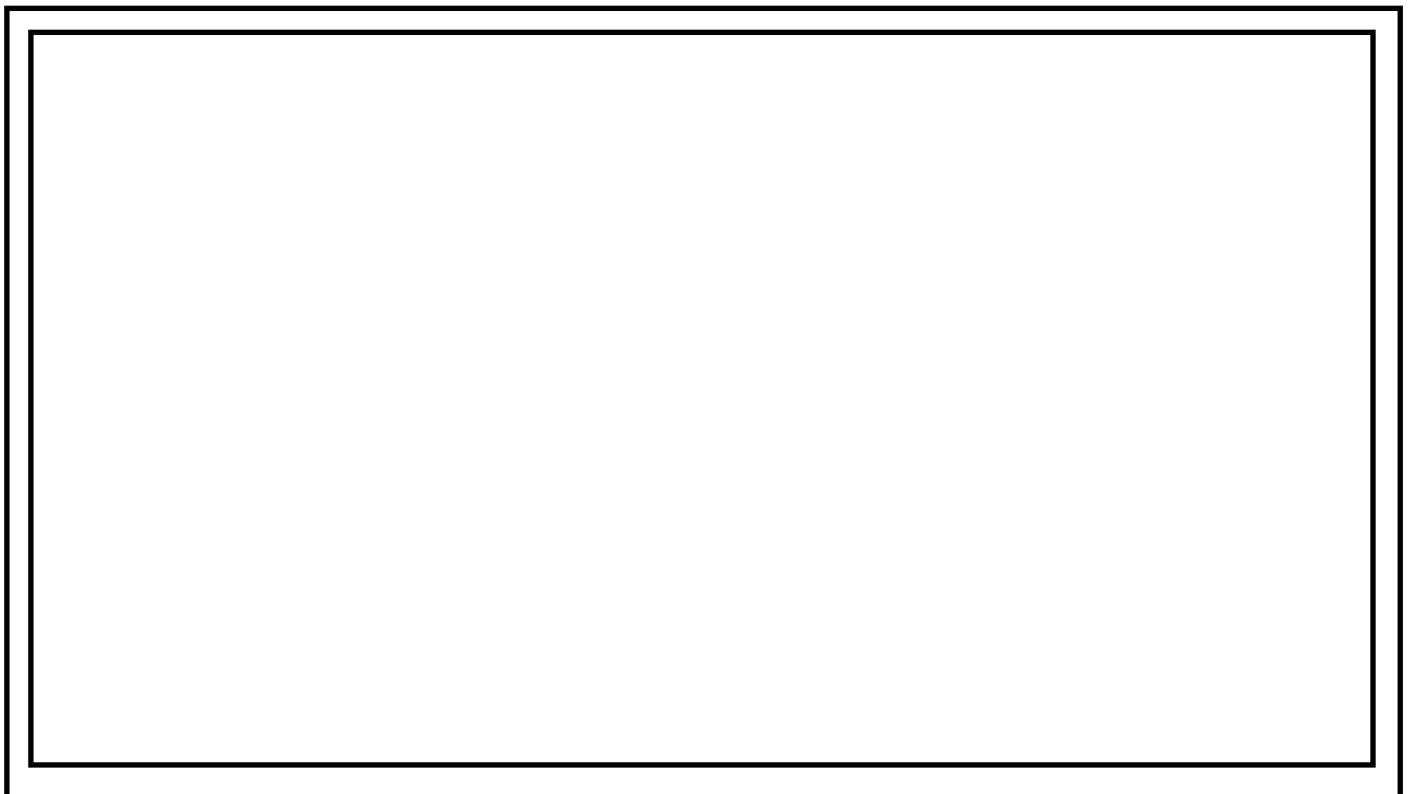
Eyes: *Hazel*

Nose: *Medium, pointy*

Mouth: *Narrow*

Chin: *Medium length & width*

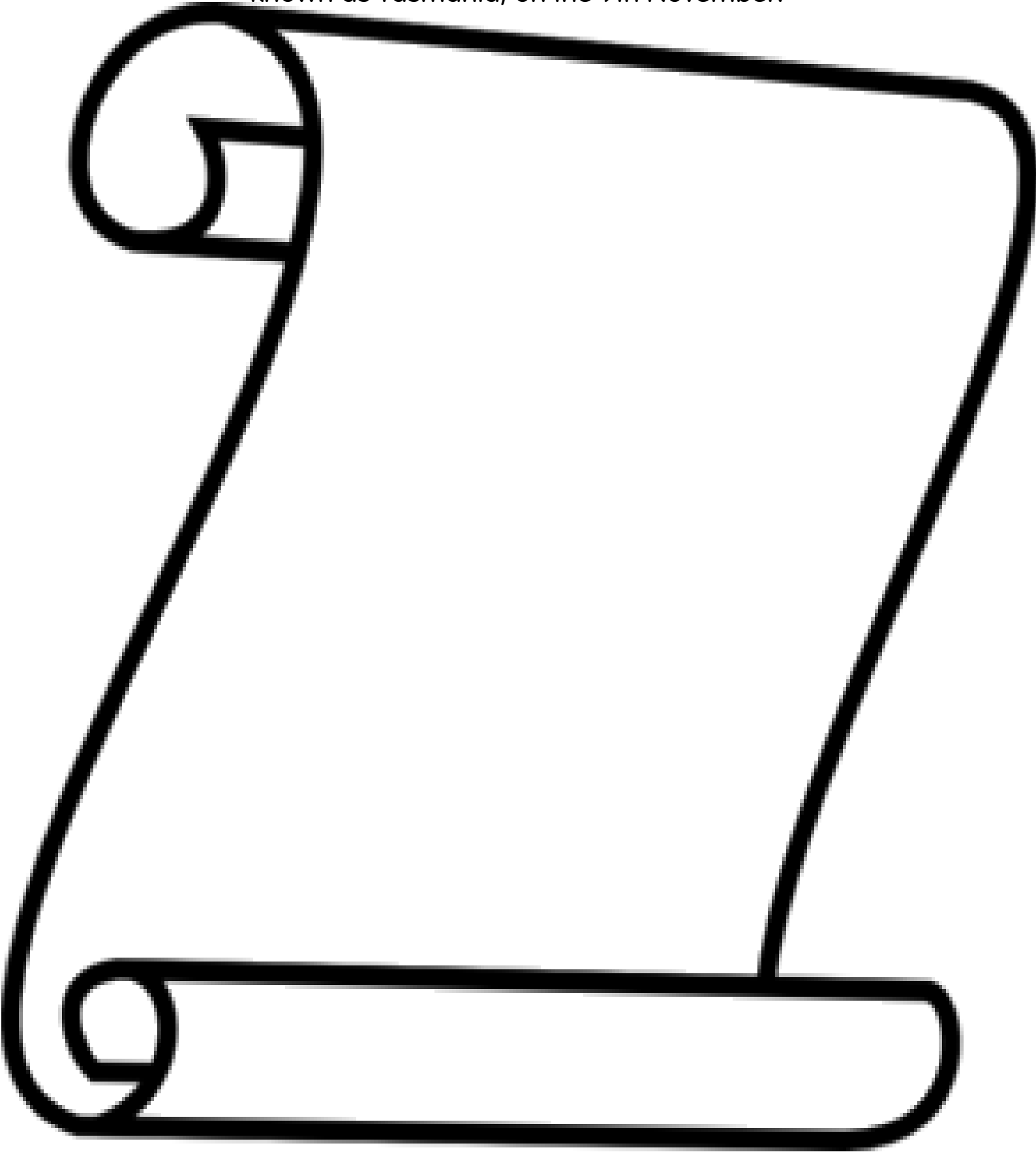
Remarks: *Brown mole on left cheek*



Using his description, draw a picture of James Lines.

Write a letter home

Imagine you are prisoner James Lines who has just arrived in Australia, having been transported from Ely gaol. Write a letter home to tell your family about your long, scary voyage to Australia on HMS Manlius with 175 other convicts. You set sail on the 16th July 1828 and reach your final destination, Van Diemen's Land (now known as Tasmania) on the 9th November.



Write a letter home

Your prison sentence is now over! Write a letter home from James Lines, to his family who still live in Cambridgeshire. After a seven year, hard labour sentence in Australia, you've decided to stay in Australia and return to work as a blacksmith.

Tell your family how life is different for you in a foreign country!

