

## JEREMIAH WILLIAM LONG 1834-1891

### 'THE GRAND OLD MAN OF CATHOLIC EDUCATION IN QUEENSLAND.'

*Br Brian Steele cfc*

#### **Introducing Mr J W Long**

In the Brisbane Catholic Advocate of March 12, 1913, James Joseph Dempsey wrote about Mr J W Long. He had been a former pupil and pupil-teacher of his at St James's School, Boundary St, Fortitude Valley, Brisbane. He rose to being a Head Teacher in the Education Service, briefly returning to St James's as Head Teacher at the school. He recalled his memories of Mr Long:

Fr J Horan continued in the school, till the arrival from Ireland, of Mr J W Long - the first teacher to hold a Class 2, Division 1 certificate in Queensland. He was 'the grand old man of Catholic Education,' and he raised St James's to the proud pinnacle of being recognized as 'the best school in Queensland.'#

#### **'Grand Old Man of Catholic Education'.**

My question was: Was this title justified and just what was his background and consequent life?

Jerome William Long was born in Cork, Ireland, May 3 1834, the son of Jerome and Mary [nee McCarthy].<sup>i</sup>

His father and mother died when he was young. His sister, his only sibling, was sent to an uncle in Liverpool. Jerome was placed in the care of his uncle, Fr Daniel Murphy, who became the second Bishop of Hobart in 1855 and later Archbishop there, until 1907.<sup>ii</sup>

# Throughout this chapter, this mark, indicates the undated quote has been obtained from the records of the State Education Department commencing from when it was called the Board of Education (1860-785), subsequently Department of Public Instruction followed by several other name changes to the present day.

At that stage, Jerome was only twelve years old. He began to train as a Pupil-Teacher at Clonmel Model School in 1852 at the age of eighteen. In 1858, Jerome Long married Margaret Gallagher, at Phillipstown, Co. Offaly [King's Co.], Ireland, and there were three children from that marriage.<sup>iii</sup> The death of Margaret occurred about 1864. Browning (1997, p.2) says:

This profoundly affected Jerome who had lost both his parents and his sister as a boy, and now his young wife; and I guess it was a fairly daunting position to be in, a widower at age 28 with three small daughters, no experience of family life and no family support. Apparently he never quite got over this tragedy.

His second marriage took place soon after this, to Catherine Williams in *c.*1865, very likely in Waterford, Ireland. Family memories suggest this second marriage was not a happy one. He taught at the Dublin Model School from 1866-70. In all he had spent some nineteen years of teaching in Ireland, including two and a half years in an Irish Convict Prison School.<sup>iv</sup>

Fr Pat Tynan, in his life of Fr Joseph Canali, in the chapter on St James's, where Canali taught 1875-77, writes of Mr Long:

An Irishman brought out by Bishop Quinn, he took over St James's in 1871. He had a 'Duplicate Certificate of Third Division of First Class'.<sup>v</sup>

His wife Catherine Williams, by 1876 had borne him eight children aged between seventeen and one year of age.<sup>vi</sup> He lived in Boundary St a short distance from the school. He needed to be 'an energetic teacher and a capital manager' as one inspector described him. His task was to cope with the school and a staff that were far from qualified. He would leave St James's to enter the State system, becoming Head Teacher at Kelvin Grove School in 1877.

In July of 1883, he was appointed as Head Teacher at the State School at Allenstown, a suburb of Rockhampton. He resigned from this task in June of the following year.

There followed a gap of five years, and we know he was not employed by the Board of Education, Queensland. Was he working in a Catholic School? Briefly he was back at St James's in charge in the late 1880's. His last posting was to Ingham State School, as Head Teacher, in March 1890.

### **Under Sail to Australia**

Bishop James Quinn encouraged many to come to the new diocese of Queensland that he was appointed to in 1859. There were priests, teachers, artists, musicians (Irish and Italian), the Sisters of Mercy and Christian Brothers [Irish] and Irish families. Mr J W Long was one such Irish teacher. Mr Long, age thirty four, came out ahead of his second wife and family, and left Gravesend, London, on the 'Storm King' on 25 November 1870.

Mr 'Jeremiah' W Long was admitted to the Service of the Queensland Board of General Education as Head Teacher, classified 111, Section B, at St James's on March 1 1871. The following was recorded under Miscellaneous facts: 'Came out to this colony under an engagement with Bishop Quinn for five years'.#

He would be the third Head Teacher there succeeding B.O. McGauran 1868- 70 and Fr J. Horan 1870-1871.

It would be midway through the following year, 1872, when his wife Catherine, aged thirty-eight, would arrive with seven children

## **His 'Glory Days at St James' the 'Best School in Queensland' 1871-1877.**

Sometimes the question is raised: How far back was it called St James's? Was it only since 1893, when the Christian Brothers were asked to take it over?

In early records it is described in Inspectors' Reports as: 'FORTITUDE VALLEY, Non-Vested, Roman Catholic [BOYS], No. 9'; however the Report of 1871, Long's first year there clearly states 'St James's'.

The Report is nothing less than glowing:

School is held in excellent new brick building, fairly furnished with all needful apparatus. The attendance is punctual but not regular. Order and discipline are very good. The teacher's excellent knowledge of school management is applied with energy to the organization and instruction of his classes and to the direction of his subordinates. The work of the school is full of life. Good progress was made in the interval between inspections, and the proficiency averages fair #.

The August, 1872 Report on the one hundred and thirty five present (of the one hundred and eighty boys on the roll) was again very positive:

### **'Bird-Nesting'**

However, at times, the very young pupil-teachers under his charge, were not always perfect. One father, Mr Brodie, wrote pleadingly to the Under Secretary for Education, saying that 'My son has been seduced by bad boys to go bird nesting in the bush, and in a day or two, I think he will return home'. #

The curt one-word reply was merely 'Suspended'! So the fourteen year-old pupil-teacher had the doors of a teaching career closed on him.

## **Scholarships**

The school was also able to compete successfully in the public educational domain. In 1873, all the available secondary scholarships to Brisbane Boys' Grammar School, were shared between applicants from the two non-vested Catholic Boys Schools of St James's and that in Ipswich! This was the cause of widespread sectarian admiration from the Catholic sector, and of disconcerting consternation for many others. (The Age, 26 July, p.9.)

A most significant source for background on Mr Long, comes in the same year, from the Minutes of the 1874 Royal Commission<sup>vii</sup>. This had been appointed to 'inquiry into the educational institutions of the colony'. The presenter was described as Jerome [sic] William Long, Esquire.

## **Then, you are a Professional Teacher?'**

Education Inquiry of 1874: # 'It is as you say,' could have been his Christ-like answer to his questioners. Mr Long simply replied 'Yes.' to His Honour, Mr Justice Lilley, in the Chair, on Tuesday 29 September 1874.

I found the questions incisive, and Long's answers brilliant, if at times bordering on boastfulness: 'I conducted St James's School for two years and with an attendance of over 200 children, I had only one assistant and a boy'.#

He had figures at his finger tips, which he quoted, whether about St James's, or other Non-vested Schools, including those of the Sisters of Mercy.

Prior to his arriving at St James's, attendance there had fallen drastically to only 110 pupils. This was in the days when a priest, Fr James Horan was in charge. Long had to attract pupils to raise these attendance. His techniques I consider were different for his times.

I believe I was the first one in Queensland who adopted the plan of making every child get his own books and I believe that every child here is able to buy his own books...[so] that the children prepare oral lessons at home on some evenings.#

He was able to satisfy the Inquiry, that he used only texts sanctioned by the Board. However, even at this stage, he indicated that reading material and geography texts written by the Irish Commissioners were 'unsuited to colonial children'. When the time was appropriate he would hope to extend his teaching beyond 'mere primary elementary instruction'.

He developed a fine reputation for personally training pupil-teachers. Pupils at the school would apply at about age fourteen. In all by 1874, he had passed twenty such pupils teachers, with three of these already in the service with the Department of Public Instruction Schools.

#### **'A Born Teacher.'**

There was a touch of pride mixed with a sense of personal loss, as Mr Long spoke of the latter, the 'stone mason turned – teacher.'

"Q. And yet you say you have succeeded in training efficient masters, from very ordinary material, eg a stone mason?

A. Yes! He was one of the very best teachers I have known; he was a born teacher.

Q. Did you discover that?

A. No, he came to me, partly as a pupil, and partly as a candidate teacher, and after a few months he passed his examination. I have had a great deal to do with young teachers, and he certainly was the best; he died lately. #

## **Staffing**

Staffing of his school was difficult, because he was such a successful training master of pupil-teachers. As regards the want of teachers at the school, he replied: 'When the other Non-Vested schools want teachers, they are taken from me; my school is in fact a feeder, a training school for them.' #

He gave examples of such being sent to Roman Catholic Non-Vested Schools in Ipswich and Maryborough.

Others, such as the Sisters of Mercy, benefited from his knowledge and skills.

I act as a training master to the uncertificated, or untrained nuns. I give them the benefit of my experience as a primary teacher, and lessons on the improved methods of imparting instruction and organizing their schools. #

In fact he undertook to teach their novices at other hours, when he was not engaged at the school. This was on a Saturday and for two hours on Wednesday evenings. He gave five hours a week to them.

The power of a teacher, Mr Long maintained, depends on his capacity to maintain good order and discipline. Some pupil teachers of sixteen years of age can, while very good men, sometimes cannot.

He had very definite ideas on pupil-teacher training, based on the Irish National Schools System, and recommended that such be tried here. It was as it were to establish a 'hostel/residential' for pupil-teachers.

## **Religious Instruction in Non-Vested Schools**

It seems, at least for this period from 1870-80, when Non-Vested school salaries were paid by the Government, religious instruction was a clerical responsibility and not to be carried out by lay Catholics. Earlier, in reply to the question: 'Is religious instruction imparted?' Long interestingly replied: 'Yes, but not by my teachers. I would not allow that.' #

Regarding the Compulsory Scripture lessons, Long was quite open, clear and adamant.

Q. 'You know the Scripture Lessons?

A. Yes!, the Protestant children in the school read them.

Q. You do not read them to the children generally?

A. I never read them under the Irish System, as it is not compulsory to read them, but their reading is enforced by the Department of Public Instruction, Queensland. The Roman Catholic children bring notes from their parents asking to allow the boys to leave when the Scripture Lessons are being read. I allow them to go home; the Protestant boys read them under one of the teachers, who has instructions, not to make any comment on them

Q. How about the General Lesson?

A. This is read but not expounded. I inculcate these principles on the minds of the children, by my example in being kind to all children, no matter what their religious denomination may be; but I would be doing an injustice to the Protestant children, if I attempted to expound that lesson to them.' #

To me this a balanced, sane view, and ahead of his time, showing honest consideration of other faiths. It indicates also his high personal qualities as a teacher, responsible to his pupils, to their parents and to society.



At one point he was questioned about ‘premiums’ or prizes, given as encouragement to the pupils. He pointed out that prizes could not be given in his school, as he could not afford it. Further there was no one else prepared to provide them. The nearest to a small fund to raise money, was for some sporting equipment.

I make a practice of trying to encourage the boys, to give a small sum for the purpose of purchasing cricket bats, etc, for the playground.

There is a delightful St James’s photo from 1872 of twenty-two lads with bats, stumps and balls, to verify the above – a 1st and 2nd XI at the school ?

#### **A St James’s School Picnic in 1874.**

Maybe there were no prizes or premiums, but Bishop Quinn [or someone] paid for a special country outing earlier that same year. On the morning of February 11, 1874, two hundred and thirty boys from St James’s went by twenty-nine horse-drawn cabs, to Mr T. Corbett’s Kedron Brook property. This was out along Samford Road with its ‘rugged and varied scenery’. Along for the day went eighty ‘more well-grown friends’ [adults], including priests and staff.

Mr Long addressed the latter in the ‘large branch-covered marquee’ with some down-to-earth comments on teaching:

..he must express his opinion that Queensland children were, on the average, superior to Irish children – as far as he had met them – in talent, but lacked the constant application of the latter. This was chiefly due, he thought, to the remissness of parents here, in not enforcing on their sons, the necessity of home study, and he stated his opinion that no one, ever became a really good scholar who relied wholly on the schoolmaster, [Hear, Hear!]

*(The Queenslander, 14 February, p.3.)*

### **The ‘Threat’ of the Christian Brothers.**

The following year, 1875, saw the arrival in Brisbane of the [Irish] Christian Brothers. Long did not welcome them. He saw them as a threat to his school and his pupils. (Steele 1994:4) quotes him: 'The Christian Brothers might think themselves smart fellows, but they won't get any of my boys.'

With hindsight we can take in the irony of these words.

At this time and until 1880, salaries for teachers in Non-Vested school were paid by the Department of Public Instruction {Queensland}. Some fees however were collected by the Christian Brothers, where pupils could afford them.

On the opening day of the first Christian Brothers' school in Queensland at the old St Stephen's chapel, the prominent, colourful Irish Catholic figure, Dr Izod O'Doherty launched a 'campaign' against Mr Long:

'You will have to beat Long, Brothers. When they get their education for nothing, they won't pay' (Steele 1994: 4).

### **The ‘Glory Days’ continue for a while with the Department of Public Instruction at Kelvin Grove Road State School 1877-83.**

Mr Long resigned from St James' in March 1877. By April 16, that same year he was appointed Head Teacher at Kelvin Grove Road State School, which had been opened in 1875. Certainly, this was a quick change-over, so one presupposes he had planned it in advance.

As promised, he had kept to his five-year agreement with Bishop Quinn. This was despite persistent rumours that the Education Service had been trying from the start to entice him to leave the Catholic, non-vested schools.

He would spend six and a quarter years at Kelvin Grove, and I sense they were good years for him, though one wonders if he appreciated the added red-tape involved.

Digests of Inspectors' Reports and State Schools Teachers' Returns, from some of these years 1877-1883 give us a picture of Mr Long's work in this somewhat different sphere of education.

*1877*

'The discipline is good...' though the school was very much overcrowded with 220 being the average daily attendance. Further, the grounds were rough and poorly fenced.

The report that year spoke of well kept records, smooth routine, good arrangement and discriminating examination of the work, and 'strong instruction of pupil teachers', are evidence that the general management is skilled, earnest and powerful.

Margaret, Long's fourteen year old daughter, became one of these pupil teachers at Kelvin Grove School in this year. # She will figure later again in this story. Long was appointed to Allenstown State School, commencing July 1st 1883.

### **Allenstown State School, for just Twelve Months: July 1 1883 – June 30 1884.**

At the Allenstown State School, Rockhampton Central Queensland, the average attendance was 202 taught by a staff of eight teachers. He was there for just one year. Was it because of difficulties with the local school committee? Maybe it was because he was less effective as an administrator or was he, aged now fifty, tiring of the teaching profession? I guess some crisis, maybe of a personal nature had arisen.

A School Inspection of May the following year, 1884 brought matters to a head. On May 26 1884. Mr J G Anderson, the Under Secretary for the minister for Education, wrote to him at Allenstown State School. There had been a recent inspection and the letter stated very bluntly that: 'Your school was not in a satisfactory condition as to discipline, proficiency or progress.' #

Further, that despite the fact that the staff was strong in numbers, and that Long was freed from being in charge of instructing any class: 'It seems you have not been discharging your duty as head of the school in a manner worthy of your status and reputation.' #

So, by June 30 1884, his resignation was 'spontaneously tendered' to the Department. Sadly some lists of Head Teachers of the school omit Long's name!

#### **Long's 'Quite Satisfactory' Career Statement of July 8 1884.**

By July that year 1884 Long had a reference from the Department listing details of his career and his status as a Teacher. The 1884 Career Statement concluded:

The Inspectors' reports show that he was a successful teacher, a good disciplinarian, and a judicious manager, and that he is able to conduct a large school with efficiency. His record as a Teacher under this Department is quite satisfactory.#

After the twelve years of excellent reports from his days at St James's and Kelvin Grove Rd SS, what a let-down! For Mr Long, to be described as 'quite satisfactory' must have been a blow to his pride – in fact humiliating!

#### **Some Missing Years 1884-87.**

Just where was he over these years? Was he at a Catholic school in the south east of the Colony eg at Logan, Ipswich, Redbank Plains or Gympie. The suggestion earlier was he had gone to New Zealand! That field is open for searching.

### **So, back again briefly to St James's 1888-90.**

Post Office Directories establish that Long was back at St James's as Head Teacher for the years 1888 and 1890 so I'm presuming on the same for the year between. This verifies what was recorded in the special St James's Supplement of the Catholic paper, *The Age* in 1913.

In after years he returned to the charge of St James's; but his old time vigour, and tuitional initiative had, in the passing years deteriorated, and broken in health, he found himself unequal to the task of maintaining the school up to its old vigorous status, and eventually he relinquished the management.

It would be to this ageing – he was now fifty four- tired, unwell old School Master, living at Castleracke, above St James's School, that a seventeen-year old butcher boy would come after work, on weekends, to be tutored in Latin. The young man did this with a view to going to the seminary to become a Catholic priest - which he did - and went on to rise much higher.

In January 1890, while still at St James's, Long had reapplied to the Department for a teaching position. He was informed his application had been approved, but with a down-grading in rank and worse still, merely on 'probation'!

### **'Teaching to the End' : His last Eighteen Months, March 1890 – December 1891 at Ingham.**

After seven years, his name had been redeemed and he was reinstated to the Department on March 28 1890. The 'suitable vacancy' had 'occurred' and his last posting, was to be to pioneering town of Ingham in the Far Tropical North of the Colony, inland from Townsville. This was a one-teacher School of just 42 pupils. From being Head Teacher, Class 1 Division 1, Long was classified at Class 2 Level 3. He continued for the rest of 1890 and most of 1891.

Sadly, he died in the Townsville Hospital, on December 14 that year, aged fifty seven, four weeks after being admitted.. He was buried in the Townsville Cemetery on December 15 1891 there is no Memorial Stone on his grave}. It would seem that his daughter, Margaret, now Mrs C R Hopkinson and teaching in Townsville since late 1881, made her father's funeral arrangements,

### **'REMEMBER ...the School Master!'**

To conclude, I quote from an old newspaper cutting I'd date as 1910's:

Old Brisbane Catholic schoolboys will remember with gratitude, that extraordinarily gifted, and kindly schoolmaster, [Jerome] Long who under Bishop O'Quinn and Archbishop Dunne, ruled St James' School...

Mr Long had all the dignity and reserve of the Old World school master. Dr O'Quinn had brought him out to teach Mathematics, but he could teach anything. In fact it is on record that he gave Archbishop Duhig his first lessons in Latin. Of a most kindly disposition he delighted in helping everybody.

In the 1940's, whenever (Archbishop) James Duhig visited St James's School in the Valley, he would regularly ask the boys: 'Do you remember Mr Long?'

Far from being in his dotage at that stage, the Archbishop was recalling, how as a seventeen-year old, he went at weekends to St James, at Castlerock, to be tutored in Latin by the 'Grand Old Man of Catholic Education in Queensland'.

## **The Coming of the Christian Brothers to St James's on October 2nd 1893.**

December 30 1880 had seen the end of funding in the form of salaries and textbooks to non-vested schools such as St James's. By then...

The better teachers had left for the Department schools, parents were not used to paying fees, and so numbers fell badly. Yet the school battled on. *[Steele 1993:4.]*

There had been a succession of Head Teachers at St James's School. These included Messrs: J B Hickie, James J Dempsey – quoted previously, H S Crowley and J F Carton. Mr Long was prevailed upon to return as Head Teacher, from 1888-90, to be followed by the highly respected Thomas M O'Leary. Enrolments had fallen and the reputation of the school was poor. #

As early as 1888 in fact, Archbishop Dunne had been imploring the Christian Brothers to take over St James's. This would not come about till October 1893, two years after Long's death when those 'Smart Fellows - Christian Brothers' eventually did get 'his boys'.

### **A 'Grand Old Man' of Queensland Education.**

Initially he had expended the first nineteen years of his career teaching in Ireland till 1871, then eight years in all at St James's and thirteen in the State Education Service.

My contention then is that Jerome William Long, Esq, not only contributed very significantly to Catholic Education in Queensland in these twenty years. His effect was seen widely in the lives and careers of many people. These included not only pupil-teachers, teachers, Head Teachers, [including an Inspector] who had successful careers in the State Education service, but more so the numerous past pupils in the community in general, as a result of his efforts.

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## ENDNOTES:

- <sup>i</sup> The Queensland Education Department was called the Board of Education from 1860-75 and then subsequently the Department of Public Instruction. All their records indicate that he went by Jeremiah W Long, not Jerome. Catholic Advocate 12.03.1913, p.13. However family records and descendents called him Jerome.
- <sup>ii</sup> Letter from Helen Browning, 25.02.1997, great grand daughter. She continued: 'My research reveals that before coming to Hobart in 1866, Fr Murphy went as Bishop to Hyderabad to India in 1846. Jerome was only twelve years. The family information suggests that Fr Murphy initially intended that Jerome become a priest; however Jerome seems to have decided otherwise.'
- <sup>iii</sup> Children of the first marriage: Mary b c.1860; Teresa Bridget b 1862; Maggie b c.1864. Mary would marry Dennis Lyons brought out to Q'ld by the Department of Primary Instruction [DPI]:. Teresa would marry Martin Peres, Q'ld consul in Spain; Margaret, a teacher, would married Charles Richard Hopkinson, also in the Education service; she had been transferred to Townsville in 1881.
- <sup>iv</sup> Queensland State Archives: Record of Service, DPI: 'After Clonmel, he was at the Dublin Training Establishment in 1855 and 1861; Carey's Cross Assistant Teacher, 3½ years 1848-52; Cahir 1¼ years 1853-5; Ennis Grammar School 1½ years 1855-57; Lusk School, Dublin, 1 year 1857-58; Irish Convict Prison School 1½ years 1858-61; Dublin Model School 6 months 1861-62; Waterford Portlaw School 4 years 1862-66; Catholic University School (Dublin) 4 years 1866-70. Record of application and service, DPI, p. 149.
- <sup>v</sup> Queensland Education Service Records show that this was from the Irish National System. He had received it in 1861.
- <sup>vi</sup> It would seem that Tynan was not aware that Catherine [nee Williams] was Long's second wife.
- <sup>vii</sup> These Minutes are from the same undated reference source as # (the State Education Department records)