

**Robert Davis/Davies, 91, Hashemy**

Researched by Marcia Watson

The records vary between Davis and Davies; the correct surname is probably Davis.

Baptism	10 June 1821 at Ashton-in-Makerfield, Lancashire
Parents	Thomas Davies and Charlotte Atherton
Parent's marriage	
Siblings	James (1824), Mary (1828), Elizabeth (1831), Sarah (1833), Alice (1836), Sarah Ann (1841)
Wife	Martha Ashcroft
Marriage	15 January 1842, Wigan, Lancashire by banns
Children	Thomas Davies (1842-1842)

Robert Davies was baptised; the register said Robert was the first son and child of Thomas and Charlotte. No marriage of his parents has been found. They may have been Non-Conformists (Wesleyan) as some of the children were baptised in an Independent Church in Wigan. Thomas was a Nailor, a haberdasher in 1833 and a labourer in 1836. The family lived in Wigan from about 1828.

In 1841, living at Chapel Lane, Wigan: <sup>1</sup>

Thomas Davies, 40, labourer; Charlotte, 40; James, 15, m... piercer; Mary, 13; Elizabeth, 10; Sarah, 3months.

By 1851, the family lived at Jackson Sq, No 13, Wigan. <sup>2</sup>

Thomas Davies, 65, pipe maker, born Ashton-in-Makerfield; Charlotte, 50, charwoman, born Frodsham, Cheshire; Mary, 22, reeler in cotton mill; Sarah Ann, 10; John Davies, 1, grandson

Robert was in trouble from an early age. At the County Sessions, Salford, Lancashire on 8 January 1838: Robert Davis, 17, imperfectly reads and writes, convicted of larceny and sentenced to two months' imprisonment.<sup>3</sup>

In 1841, living at Queen St, Wigan were: <sup>4</sup>

Robert Davis, 20, pipe maker and Martha Davis, 20

However, Robert and Martha did not marry until six months later:

Robert Davies, 22, pipe maker, Chapel Lane, Wigan, father Thomas, a pipe maker

Martha Ascroft, 22, Chapel Lane, Wigan, father John Ascroft, a stonemason

Married, by banns, on 15 January 1842. Both made their marks, as did the witnesses Thomas Davies and Fanny Wright.<sup>5</sup>

Their son, Thomas Davies, was born on 19 July 1842 and baptised on 24 July. Their address was Chapel Lane, Wigan, and they have moved in with his parents. Thomas was buried on 16 October 1842, aged three months, and again their address was Chapel Lane.<sup>6</sup>

Then in March 1844, Robert was arrested at Wigan:

A most daring and serious highway robbery was committed on the night of Monday week, at Ince, near Wigan under the following circumstances:—Henry Worsley, of Westleigh, had been in Wigan, and during the evening became much the worse for liquor; he called at several public-houses; amongst others at the Ship Inn, Millgate, where he entered into the company of Robert Davis, William Johnson, and James Hurst, persons of bad character; whilst there he treated them to liquor, and left to go home, about twelve o'clock. When about a mile from the town, near the Ince toll bar, he was overtaken two men. Being intoxicated, they forcibly took him a short distance from the road down the lane, and there, throwing him to the ground, took from him about £87 in notes and gold, consisting of one twenty pound note, six ten pound notes, one £5 note, £2 in gold, and some silver. They also took a penknife and steel pencil case before

<sup>1</sup> HO107/525/8, p23

<sup>2</sup> HO107/299, p7

<sup>3</sup> HO27/55, p407

<sup>4</sup> HO107/523/9, p17

<sup>5</sup> Wigan Archives, D/P24/1/43

<sup>6</sup> Wigan Archives, D/P24/1/13

escaping towards Wigan. Mr Worsley returned to Wigan and gave information about the robbery to the police of the borough.

The police made immediate endeavours, and on Wednesday morning, they received intelligence of a suspicious character having been endeavouring to obtain change for a note on the preceding day. In consequence, they went to the public-house of Mr Pendlebury, he Rope and Anchor, and ascertained that Davis, Hurst, and Johnson came there at an early hour on Friday morning. They had a pint of raspberry brandy and gin, for which they paid, and shortly entered into conversation with Thomas Mather, a person whom they found on coming to the house. They fell asleep in one of the lower rooms and on awaking remained there until the forenoon. On leaving, Mather went with them, and, before leaving the public-house, a small paper parcel was left in the care of the landlord. They shortly afterwards left the town.

On the police obtaining possession of the parcel, they found it to contain one of the stolen notes. Having obtained this clue to the robbers, three of the police left the town on Thursday in search of them, and on the evening of that day, police-officer Sim, in consequence of some information, went to Stockport, and shortly had the good fortune to apprehend Davis, Hurst, and Mather a low public-house there, in company with some prostitutes. With the assistance of one of the Stockport officers, they were taken to the lockups and searched, when the sum of four pounds and some silver was found upon Davis. They were the following morning conveyed to Wigan, along with Johnson, who had given himself up to the custody of a county officer; and were during the day taken before the county magistrates assembled at the office of Mr Gaskell, solicitor, but in consequence of the absence of the Prosecutor, they were remanded to the following day, at eleven o'clock.

The following morning, Mr Worsley deposed to the robbery, and three of the prisoners having been with him on the same evening. Mr Pendlebury, of the Rope and Anchor, deposed to their coming to his house on the morning of the robbery, and Mather's leaving the note with him.

The prisoner, Johnson, at his own request, was admitted evidence against the others and stated that when with Mr Worsley at the shop, they went out before him and waited until he came when he was told to keep some distance behind them, whilst they managed the job; they took the Prosecutor down the lane to commit the robbery, and shortly came up to him and said they had only got 4s. 6d., and there was 1s. 6d for him. Johnson said he would not have it, and would split if they did not turn up, when they threatened to throw him over the canal bridge. They went to Pendlebury where they found Mather, and after having some liquor, they apparently fell asleep, when the prisoner, Davis, said to Mather, "these will do," shewing him the notes. Mather said they were flash, but it was denied by Davis; they then fell asleep; on awaking they had more liquor, and afterwards went to Lyon's, in Queen-street, after which the other prisoners left the town. The witness on the following morning went to his work at the coal pit, mentioned the affair to a person there, who gave information of the robbery.— The magistrates, after hearing other confirmatory evidence, committed Davis, Hurst, and Johnson to the next assizes for the robbery and Mather as an accessory after the fact.<sup>7</sup>

At the Liverpool Spring Assizes. 30 March 1844, Crown Court.

Robert Davies, James Hurst, and Thomas Mather were indicted for having stolen from the person of Henry Worsley, at Ince, in Makerfield, £83 10s., chiefly in notes. They were found guilty. Davies and Hurst were sentenced to two years' imprisonment, and Mather to twelve months' imprisonment and hard labour.<sup>8</sup>

Then in 1847, he was accused of robbery at Coppull.

On Friday last, a robbery was committed at Coppull, about four miles from Wigan by a man named Robert Davies, pipe maker, from Wigan, under the following circumstances:—Davies, it appeared, had received an order for some pipes from a publican, William Marsden, of the Waggon and Horses, Coppull, and on Friday he took the pipes home. On arriving at the house, no one but a little girl was in; her father was at work in the fields, and her mother was at Wigan market. The girl went to Marsden and informed him of the man's arrival with the pipes, and the Prosecutor directed her where to find the money and pay for them. She accordingly came back to the house, gave Davies the money he wanted, and the latter deposited the pipes in a box kept for the purpose and returned home. When the wife arrived from the market and was told of the delivery of the pipes, it was ascertained that the pipe box had been her safety bank, where she had

<sup>7</sup> Manchester Courier and Lancashire General Advertiser, 09 March 1844, p6

<sup>8</sup> Manchester Times, 06 April 1844, p6

deposited £25 10s in gold and silver. A search being made for the money; it was found to have been stolen, and suspicion, of course, fell upon the prisoner. Marsden gave information that night to the police. From his description of Davies (although he did not know his name,) the police apprehended the right party, and the Prosecutor identified him. He was taken before the Chorley magistrates the next day and committed for trial. When apprehended, he had £3 of gold and silver upon him, and one half-crown was sworn to as being Marsden's property.<sup>9</sup>

Robert appeared at the Easter Quarter Sessions, Preston, Lancashire  
Robert Davis 25, was charged with stealing £29 10s from a chest in a public house at Coppul, the property of William Marsden. The purse containing the money had been found empty in the yard, where the prisoner had been, and an invoice of theirs. Some of the money was found on the prisoner, and the landlady swore to one of the half-crowns. The prisoner, who had been previously convicted, was sentenced to fifteen years transportation.<sup>10</sup>

#### Confession!

During the past week, a confession has been made by a convicted thief, named Robert Davies, a pipe maker, of Wigan, known as a very old offender, through which the sum of £20, part of a sum stolen a few weeks since, by the prisoner, from Mr William Marsden, publican, at Coppull, has been restored to the owner. The prisoner, it will be recollected by our readers, was sent for trial on a charge of stealing £25 10s from the house of Mr Marsden; and, at the Preston Sessions, was convicted of the offence and sentenced to fifteen years' transportation. He has since confessed the robbery and directed Mr Martin of the Preston house of correction where to find twenty sovereigns of the money stolen. They were hidden at the foot of the railway bridge, near the Boar's head, in Standish, about two miles from Wigan. They have been recovered and restored to the owner.<sup>11</sup>

Robert Davis, 25, widower, can't read or write, pipe maker, was received at Millbank prison on 1 June 1847 from Preston Gaol. He had been twice previously convicted. Robert was transferred to Reading House of Correction on 5 August 1847. The register says he is a widower. After just over a year at Reading House of Correction, he was transferred to Portland Prison on 22 December 1848. While at Portland, he was reported ten times for irregularity and disposed of as in Report Book and Misconduct Book. The last report, the Governor noted in his journal:

Reg No 278 R. DAVIS having been guilty of giving extra food to a Prisoner on Bread & Water, I ordered him to Separate Confinement, and also recommended his name to be struck out of the list of Convicts Selected for Embarkation in the *Scindian* for W. Australia.<sup>12</sup>

He boarded the *Hashemy* on 19 July 1850 for the voyage to Western Australia.<sup>13</sup>

While at Portland Prison, Robert petitioned for mitigation of his sentence.

Received 17 May 1849

To the Right Honourable Sir George Grey, Bart, M.P., Secretary of State for the Home Department &c &c &c  
The Petition of Robert Davis, now a Prisoner in the Portland Convict Prison, and who was sentenced at Preston Sessions on the 7 April 1847 to fifteen years transportation.

Humbly Sheweth That your Petitioner was convicted for concealing money that was given to him in an empty box, in return for a box which he had previously given his Prosecutor filled with tobacco pipes. That sometime after the reception of this box your petitioner discovered twenty sovereigns and a half-sovereign of the just and lawful coin of this realm of England within the said box and your petitioner did not then make it known,

That your Petitioner after he was arrested, acting under the advice of his attorney denied all knowledge of the same, and continued so to do, until he was tried, convicted and had received his sentence.

That your Petitioner after having received his sentence made known to the Governor of the Preston prison, the plan where the money was to be found, and the said Governor immediately went and found it, returned the money to the Prosecutor, and also made the same known to the Recorder.

<sup>9</sup> Manchester Courier and Lancashire General Advertiser, 27 March 1847, p6

<sup>10</sup> Preston Guardian, 10 April 1847, p7

<sup>11</sup> Preston Chronicle, 24 April 1847, p7

<sup>12</sup> Portland Prison. Governor's Journal, 24 November 1848 to 9 August 1850. PCOM 2/354

<sup>13</sup> HO24/3; HO23/12; HO8/98; HO8/105

That the Recorder on hearing the same from the Governor told him (the Governor) that he (the Recorder) could not shorten the prisoner's (your Petitioner) sentence at the time as the Sessions were over, but if the prisoner had named where the money was before he would not have been transported. Your petitioner also received information from the Governor to the effect that as the Recorder could not alter his sentence, he would send a recommendation to you her Majesty's Secretary of State praying for a mitigation of the sentence.

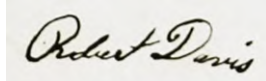
Your Petitioner has not heard anymore since he left Preston Prison and he humbly begs that if any doubts exists with regard to the truth of the above statement, you will make such inquiries of the Governor of Preston prison as may be requisite.

Your Petitioner humbly begs also to state that he has now been in prison upwards of two years, greater part of which time has been spent in solitary confinement.

Your Petitioner therefore humbly yet earnestly prays that you will take his case into your most favourable consideration, so as to prevent his being sent abroad, and if possible to restore him to liberty.

Your Petitioner humbly begs also to state that he has good reasons for believing that if he could gain his liberty he could at once have employment at his trade of pipe-maker, & maintain himself in a respectable manner; his former master residing at Wigan his native town and other individuals being most willing and anxious to employ him again.

And your petitioner will ever pray



Portland Convict Prison

17 April 1849

Nil result <sup>14</sup>

On arrival at Fremantle, his description was:

91. Robert Davis, 29, 5'7¼", dark brown hair, hazel eyes, an oval face, brown complexion, scar on the bridge of the nose, a groom and single.<sup>15</sup>

Robert appears of the Casual Sick list at Fremantle. <sup>16</sup>

H=in hospital

		Complaint	Treatment
Davis R	4 November 1850	Stiff neck	Liniment, Plaister
Davis R	5 November 1850	Cough	Pills squills
Davis R	7 November 1850		Poultice, continue pill, Dovers powder
Davis R	8 November 1850	Boil on neck	Blue pill
Davis Rob	9 November 1850		
Davis Robt	28 November 1850		
Davis Robt	21 February 1851	Strained back	Liniment
Davis Robt	22 February 1851	Pain in back	Continue liniment
Davis Rob H	1 March 1851	Feb. C.C.	Pilup Cal; and Aper draught and Mist Feb
Davis Rob H	3 March 1851	Feb. C.C.	Continue
Davis Rob H	5 March 1851	Febris	Inf: Gent
Davis Rob H	6 March 1851	Debility from Feb.	Inf: Gent
Davis Rob H	8 March 1851		

He received his Ticket of Leave on 26 March 1851 and worked for Mr James Knight in the Wellington district. Robert was a mason, and his rate of pay was 10s per week.<sup>17</sup>

A Conditional Pardon was granted on 14 July 1854.<sup>18</sup>

No further trace has been found of Robert David/Davies.

<sup>14</sup> HO18/223

<sup>15</sup> SROWA Acc 128/40 - 43

<sup>16</sup> SROWA Acc 1156 CS1

<sup>17</sup> Further correspondence on the on the subject of Convict Discipline and Transportation. Presented to both Houses of Parliament by Command of her Majesty. 30 April 1852, p196

<sup>18</sup> SROWA Acc 1156 R21B

## *Martha Ashcroft*, wife of Robert Davis, convict 91

Baptism	11 February 1821, Wigan Chapelry of Upholland, Lancashire
Parents	John Ashcroft and Mary
Parent's marriage	
Siblings	Mary (1823)
Husband	Robert Davis/Davies (1821- )
Marriage	15 January 1842, Wigan, Lancashire by banns
Husband 2	William Seddon
Marriage 2	14 May 1849, Wigan, Lancashire
Children	Thomas Davies (1842-1842)

The Ashcroft family lived at Skelmersdale, about 4km from Upholland, where Martha was baptised. Her father was a weaver and probably worked in the cotton industry.

In 1841, Martha, 20, lived with Robert Davis, 20, a pipe maker, in Queen Street Cellar, Wigan, Lancashire. The couple married at Wigan the following year on 15 January 1842:

Robert Davies, 22, pipe maker, Chapel Lane, Wigan, father Thomas, also a pipe maker

Martha Ascroft, 22, Chapel Lane, Wigan, father John Ascroft, a stonemason

Both made their marks, as did the witnesses Thomas Davies and Fanny Wright.

Their son, Thomas Davies, was born on 19 July 1842 and baptised on 24 July. The family lived in Chapel Lane, Wigan. Baby Thomas was buried on 16 October 1842, aged three months.

Before his marriage, Robert Davis had spent two months in prison for larceny in 1838. Then, in March 1844, Robert Davies, James Hurst, and Thomas Mather Robert were drinking at the Ship Inn, in Millgate, when intoxicated Henry Worsley joined them. After drinking together, they left the Inn about midnight. Robert and his accomplices attacked Worsley in a lane and stole about £87 and other items. At the April Spring Assizes in Liverpool, they were found guilty. Davies and Hurst were sentenced to two years imprisonment and Mather to twelve months' imprisonment and hard labour.

Robert, released from prison in April 1846, appeared at the 1847 Easter Quarter Sessions at Preston, Lancashire, was found guilty of stealing £29 10s from a chest in a public house at Coppull, the property of William Marsden. Robert, 25, was sentenced to be transported for fifteen years. In custody, he confessed to the Governor of the House of Correction. He also told him where to find the money.

Robert and Martha may not have been together when Robert committed his latest offence. The prison register says Robert was a widower, a pipe maker who could not read or write. He was sent from Preston Gaol to Millbank on 1 June 1847.

Martha Davies continued to live in Wigan and remarried on 14 May 1849:  
William Seddon, 39, widower of Aspull, father James Seddon is dead, William signed the register  
Martha Davies, 29, widow of Wigan, father John Ashcroft is dead, Martha made her mark  
No occupation was recorded for either Martha or William.

On the 1851 census, lodging in Colliers Row, Borough and Township of Wigan, was Martha Seddon, 28, married, a weaver, and born at Skelmersdale. Her husband, William, has not been found on the 1851 census.

Martha has not been identified on other census records.

Note: She is not the Martha Seddon who died 28 February 1857 at Ince, aged 38, and buried at Haigh. Her husband was Peter Seddon, a bookkeeper at Ince.