

Peter Lewis, 82, Hashemy

Researched by Marcia Watson

Peter Lewis, whose real name is Thomas Bassett, used Peter Lewis and Thomas Lewis Bassett in Australia.

Born	7 August 1829
Baptism	25 December 1832 at St George the Martyr, Southwark, Surrey
Parents	Thomas Bassett and Sarah Milne.
Parent's marriage	27 July 1828, by Banns, at St. Mary's, Lambeth, Surrey
Siblings	Henry (1832), Frederick (1837), Alfred (1840)
Wife	Mary Ann Munday
Married	30 January 1859, York Western Australia
Children	Fanny Maria (1860 – 1861) Sarah Jane (1861) Thomas Alfred (1864) Charles Henry (1866) Alice Maria (1870) James Richard (1872) John Henry (1874) Emma Mary (1875) George Edward (1878) Frederick William (1880) Alfred Henry (1882) Lewis James (1885) William George (1886)

The Bassett family lived in Swan St, and the father, Thomas Bassett, was a carman. Railway companies often employed carmen for local deliveries and collections of goods and parcels. Also, someone who drove horse-drawn trams was called a carman.

The 1841 Census shows, living at Herberts Buildings, St. George the Martyr, Southwark, Surrey were: ¹ Thomas Bassett, 40, Clerk; Sarah, 28; Thomas, 12; Henry, 9; Frederick, 6; Alfred, 1.

By 1851 the family had moved to 50 Harwood Street, Kentish Town, St. Pancras, Middlesex ²

Thomas Bassett, 46, Gl (?) contractors, born Southwark.

Sarah, 44, wife, born Southwark

Frederick, 16, son, engine cleaner, born Southwark

Alfred, 9, son, scholar, born Southwark, Surrey

At the Central Criminal Court, on 26 October 1846: ³

Thomas Bassett was indicted for stealing one gelding, value £10; 1 set of harness, £1 10s.; the goods of Henry Piper: and George Thompson for harbouring and maintaining the said Thomas Bassett, knowing him to have committed the said felony,

Bassett's Defence. I did obtain the horse but had no thought of stealing it.

Thompson's Defence. I was employed by Bassett to sell the harness; I did not know it was stolen; I told Winkfield I had worked for a Mr Major, not that he was my master; I told him a young man had some to sell; Bassett came with me, and he received the money.

Bassett— Guilty. Aged 18.— Confined Eighteen Months.

Thompson— Guilty. Aged 25.— Confined Twelve Months.

Full transcription at:

<https://www.oldbaileyonline.org/browse.jsp?id=def1-2159-18461026&div=t18461026-2159#highlight>

¹ HO107/1086/8, p44

² HO107/1498. P536

³ Old Bailey Proceedings Online (www.oldbaileyonline.org, version 8.0, 04 December 2019), October 1846, trial of THOMAS BASSETT GEORGE THOMPSON (t18461026-2159).

His father petitioned for mitigation of this sons sentence. ⁴

To The Right Honorable Sir George Grey Secretary of State For Her Majesty's Home Department.
The Humble Petition of Thomas Bassett of Number 13 Upper James Street Camden Town in the County of Middlesex.

Sheweth, That your Petitioner's Son was tried and convicted at the Central Criminal Court on the 26 October 1846 of Felony and sentenced to Eighteen Months Hard the House of Correction Brixton, he had never before been in Custody and owing to Your Petitioner being for a length of time previous to his being in Custody, out of employment with a wife and two small Children to support he had not the means of Keeping the subject of this Petition in that subjection which if he had been in employment he would have enabled to do, he then got acquainted with very bad characters who prevailed upon him to leave his home, and Your Petitioner did not know nor could he learn where he had gone to,; Your petitioner having obtained employment and could likewise find the same for his Son, Humbly begs that this Petition might be taken into your merciful consideration by mitigating some period of the punishment that is awarded him which will be the means of restoring him to his family and make him a respectable member of that society which he at present has so disgraced. And Your Petitioner will ever feel in duty bound to pray &c

Cover: 192/1

Thomas Bassett, Central Criminal Court, October 1846, Hose Stealing, 18 months imprisonment

The Prisoner's father states that he was led away by bad characters & that he can procure employment for him if liberated.

Nil GG

Answered 17 February 1847

Thomas was released from Prison in April 1848. Then in July 1848, at Southwark, Surrey:

Peter Lewis, dressed in the garb of a labourer, was charged before Mr Seeker with stealing a bay gelding, the property Mr John Gore, the extensive dust contractor at Paddington. The prosecutor said that he rented dust-yard Upper Ground-street, Blackfriars, and kept a number of horses there. On the 6th inst, all his horses were safe, but the evening the Prisoner presented a forged order to his foreman for the horse. The forgery purported to be written him for the delivery of one of his horses to the Prisoner. His foreman, not being able to read, took the order to a clerk at an adjoining wharf, who informed him the contents, and believing it to be correct, the horse was given to the Prisoner. On the following morning, the witness was informed of the robbery, and inquiry having been made, the animal was discovered at Mr Winkly's, a horse slaughterer's, in Green-street.

Mr Winkly said that, on the evening of the 6th, the Prisoner brought the horse in question to him for sale. He asked him to whom it belonged when he replied that it was the property of his father, cowkeeper, at Walworth. Suspecting, from the appearance of the horse, that his statement was false, he sent for Mr Harris, the inspector of slaughterhouses, who accompanied the Prisoner to Walworth, and ascertained that it was stolen.

Mr Harris, of the Equestrian Coffee-house, Blackfriars-road, said he was inspector of slaughterhouses and was sent for by the last witness to examine the horse; he questioned the Prisoner and suspecting that the animal was stolen, took him to Walworth when attempted to make his escape. He, however, secured him, and while on their way to the police station, he begged of him to let him go, as the charge would bring such disgrace on his family. After he had locked him up, the witness ascertained that the horse belonged to Mr Gore, who identified it as his property. The Prisoner declined to make any defence and was fully committed to trial. ⁵

The following month, at the Summer Assizes in Guildford, on 9 August 1848:

Peter Lewis, 19, was indicted for stealing a coat, and a watch, the property of George Wild.

The circumstances of this case were rather a singular character. It appears that a short time back, the Prisoner went to the station house of M Division of police and represented to the inspector on duty that a burglary was intended to be committed on the same night and that he would be the means of apprehending the burglars. In consequence of this statement, the prosecutor, who is a constable of the division, was directed to accompany him with instructions to apprehend the delinquents. He accordingly

⁴ HO18/192/1

⁵ Globe, 17 July 1848, p4

took the Prisoner to his own house where he gave him supper, and afterwards, after having taken off his uniform and put on plain clothes, they went out together on their expedition. Having been to several public houses to look for the supposed robbers, the Prisoner at length told the constable to wait in one of the public houses while he went out to reconnoitre, and he took this opportunity to run home to the constable's house and told his wife that her husband was likely to be out all night searching for thieves, and he wishes him to bring him his coat and watch. The wife had no suspicion of anything wrong, gave the articles to the Prisoner, who decamped with them, and nothing was heard of him until sometime after when he was apprehended on another charge. The jury returned a verdict of Guilty. The Prisoner who had pleaded guilty to a charge of stealing a horse and chaise and who also on a previous occasion had been convicted of a felony was sentenced to 15 years transportation.⁶

Another newspaper reported - Surrey Summer Assizes, Guildford

Peter Lewis pleaded guilty to having feloniously and unlawfully obtained, by means of forged order, from Joseph Baldwin, at Christchurch, gelding of the value of six pounds, the property of John Gore.

The charge was varied in the second indictment, to which he also pleaded guilty.

A third indictment charged him with stealing a watch and coat, the property of a police constable, at St. Mary's, Newington. The evidence went to show that the Prisoner went and gave information of an intended robbery, which proved pretence and having detained the policeman a certain time the place, went back to the wife Wylde and obtained the watch and coat if for the use of her husband. The jury found him guilty, and a previous conviction was proved. He was sentenced to fifteen years' transportation.⁷

Peter Lewis, 19, single, imperfect reading & writing, labourer, was convicted 7 August 1848 at Newington, of uttering a forged order, after a previous conviction, and sentenced to 15 years transportation. He was received at Millbank on 6 October 1848 from Horsemonger Lane. He was visited by his parents on 6 March 1849, shortly before he was removed to Pentonville Prison on 23 April 1849. The Pentonville register says

Peter Lewis, 20, convicted at Guildford Assizes, a brush maker, Gaoler's report – good. He was transferred to Portland Prison on 4 March 1850. From Portland Prison, on 19 July 1850, he boarded the *Hashemy* for the voyage to Fremantle.⁸

During the voyage, Peter was sick. The Surgeon's Medical Journal⁹ noted:

Folio 1: Peter Lewis, aged 25, Prisoner; sick or hurt, scalded foot; put on sick list, 24 July 1850, discharged 30 July 1850 well.

Folio 5: Peter Lewis, aged 25, Prisoner; sick or hurt, catarrhus; put on sick list, 5 October 1850, discharged 8 October 1850 well.

His description on arrival at Fremantle in October 1850:

82. Peter Lewis, 21, 5,3½", dark brown hair, hazel eyes, thin face, dark complexion, two moles on the right shoulder, faintly marked with smallpox, a carpenter and single.

General Register:

82. Peter Lewis, 21 (August 1851), single, bookkeeper, Church of England, went to boarding school, can read and write well, indifferent to maths.

Said his father, Thomas Bassett, carrier, lives at Dover Road, Lewis arms (Lewisham?) Borough, London. His other address is Buxted, Sussex.

Attended Divine Service?	Did not attend for some time previous to conviction
Received Sacrament?	Never
Habits?	Occasionally intemperate and irregular in his life.
Intellect?	Sound
State of Mind?	Hopeful
Knowledge, Secular?	Limited
Knowledge, Religious?	Limited
Alleged Cause of Crime?	Bad company
Name of Person referred to for Character, &c.	Makes no reference. ¹⁰

⁶ Morning Advertiser, 9 August 1848, p4

⁷ Sussex Advertiser, 15 August 1848, p2

⁸ Ho24/4; HO24/16, HO8/105; PCOM2 (AJCP reel 5974, No. 15632)

⁹ ADM 101/32/6/1-6

Peter on Casual Sick List at Fremantle Prison. ¹¹ H=in hospital

Lewis Peter	16 November 1850	Diarrhoea	Pilul & draught, Chalk mixture
Lewis Peter	26 December 1850	Headache	Pilul & draught
Lewis P	6 January 1851	Diarrhoea	Pulv. ?
Lewis Peter	7 January 1851	Diarrhoea	Castor oil
Lewis Peter	18 February 1851	Bad finger	
Lewis Peter	22 February 1851		Opening medicine
Lewis Peter	16 April 1851	Diarrhoea	Cal: ... mixt chalk
Lewis Peter	17 April 1851	Diarrhoea	Chalk mixture
Lewis Peter	18 April 1851	Diarrhoea	Pil: Cal, Chalk mixture
Lewis Peter	19 April 1851	Diarrhoea?
Lewis Peter H	20 April 1851	Feb C.C.	Feb mixture
Lewis Peter H	21 April 1851	Feb C.C.	Continue fever mixture
Lewis Peter H	22 April 1851	Febris	Continue
Lewis Peter H	23 April 1851		Mixt Quinine
Lewis Peter H	24 April 1851	Febris C.C.	Continue Quinine
Lewis Peter H	25 April 1851	Debility P. Feb	Continue Quinine
Lewis Peter H	26 April 1851		Castor oil
Lewis Peter H	27 April 1851	Debility P. Feb	Infus Gent
Lewis Peter H	29 April 1851	Debility P. Feb	Continue Quinine
Lewis Peter H	30 April 1851	Debility	Continue
Lewis Peter H	1 May 1851	Debility	Continue Quinine
Lewis Peter H	2 May 1851	Debility P. Feb	Continue
Lewis Peter H	3 May 1851		Discharged

Peter was issued with a Ticket of Leave on 26 October 1851 and was sent to Mt Eliza depot on 23 April 1852.¹²

At some stage, Peter returned to Prison. The sick list shows:

Lewis Peter HL	3 February 1854	Ringworm?
Peter Lewis	23 April 1854		discharged
Peter Lewis	19 May 1854	Febricula	Quinine
Peter Lewis	22 May 1854	Febricula	Gentium?
Peter Lewis	4 June 1854	Febricula?
Peter Lewis	5 June 1854	Febricula? one every three hours
Peter Lewis	6 June 1854		
Peter Lewis	20 October 1854		Nitrate to be continued to
3 November 1854. Peter Lewis, labourer, working in prison quarry, spots of disease over neck and cheek, lately very large. Spoon diet of 1lb potatoes, 8oz bread and 1pint soup.			
Peter Lewis H	4 November 1854	Ringworm	Discharged
30 November 1854. Readmitted, disease in an aggravated form, spoon diet plus extras. Treated with citric acid and			
Peter Lewis HL	8 January 1855	Ringworm	Cathartic
Peter Lewis HL	13 February 1855		Admitted
Peter Lewis	15 March 1855		Discharged
Peter was treated with 4 purgative injections, calomel, compound jalap, castor oil, croton oil, Epsom salts, colocynth and blue pills. Matter dislodged by purgative (in pounds): non-feculent matter – uncertain; feculent matter – 14lbs. Remarks: faeces quite decomposed.			
Peter Lewis	16 March 1855		Admitted

¹⁰ SROWA Acc 1156 R21A

¹¹ SROWA Acc 1156 CS1

¹² SROWA Acc 1156 RD1-2

Peter Lewis	10 August 1855	Pyrexia, Febricula	Pil Dovers
Peter Lewis HL	9 March 1856	Toothache	Extraction
Peter Lewis HL	7 October 1865	Piles	Gall ointment

HL=hard labour; H=in hospital

1854. Reconvicted Prisoner, Peter Lewis, received in Prison on 6 April.

1856. Reconvicted Prisoner, Peter Lewis, discharged on 29 November 1856.

1857. Reconvicted Prisoner, Peter Lewis, received 3 January 1857 and was discharged 5 January.

1859. Peter Lewis, Conditional Pardon in November next.

On 30 January 1859, at York, Thomas married:

Thomas Lewis Bassett, 28, father Thomas Henry Bassett

Mary Ann Munday, 16, single, father George Munday.

Mary Ann Munday was born 21 June 1843, at York, the daughter of George and Ann Munday.

Later in the year, on 31 December, the census for York shows:

Peter Lewis, 28, married, Protestant, Carpenter, can read and write, Ticket of Leave, arrived per *Hashemy* in 1850, born in London.

Mary Anne Lewis, married, 18, Spinster(occupation), can read & write, Free, born in Australia - Mary Ann Munday.

Henry Mundy, 3, colonial born. (Mary Anne's brother)

Henry Whittaker, 23, single, carpenter, can read & write, ticket of leave, per the *Nile* in 1858, born Liverpool.

On 2 March 1860, Peter Lewis could be recommended for his Conditional Pardon. H.E will not sign Conditional Pardon, 18 May 1860. Local Prisoner, Peter Lewis, returned to Fremantle on 30 May.

A Certificate of Freedom was issued on 31 August 1863.

At the Supreme Court, on 6 April 1860.

Larceny at York - Peter Lewis, charged with stealing sundry articles, the property of Charles Bracknell. The Advocate General moved for a post-postponement of this case on account of the absence of a principal witness. His Honor allowed the Prisoner to find bail.¹³

6 April 1864. Peter Lewis, Conditional Pardon, the trial was postponed in the absence of material witness on a certificate of ill health, Prisoner bailed.¹⁴ No other reference to the trial was found.

NOTE: Peter Lewis Bassett, T.L Bassett and J.L Bassett are the same person.

NOTICE.

Dissolution of Partnership.

NOTICE is hereby given that the partnership hitherto existing between G. SEUBERT, T. L. BASSETT & J. COOPER, Boat Owners, and Pearl Fishers, is this day dissolved, and the business carried on under the name of "Seubert, Bassett and Cooper," will in future be conducted by "G. Shubert and T. L. Bassett."

All debts due to the firm of "Seubert, Bassett and Cooper," are requested to be paid to the undersigned, who also hold themselves responsible, for all debts due by the said firm, contracted in the way of trade.

G. SEUBERT.
T. L. BASSETT.

WITNESS W. S. HALL.
S. W. LAZENBY.

17th June, 1868. 5. 7.

THIS is to give notice that I will not be responsible for any debts contracted by Peter Lewis Bassett on account of the firm of Seubert and Bassett as I have withdrawn from the said firm on Dec. 7th, 1868.

G. SEUBERT,
WITNESS JAS. STEWART.
Perseverance, N. W. Coast, }
January 5th, 1869. }

NOTICE.

WE the undersigned have this day Dissolved Partnership as Boatmen, Pearl Fishers, &c., by mutual consent.

WITNESS F. McRAE,) J. L. BASSETT.
G. SEUBERT. }

¹³ The Perth Gazette and Independent Journal of Politics and News (WA : 1848 - 1864), 8 April 1864, p3

¹⁴ SROWA Acc 1156 V23

In Directories from 1868 to 1872: P Lewis, carpenter, North-West Settlements, Roebourne (Harding River).¹⁵

Peter was also using his real surname around this time.

Nicol Bay. The heavy rain and beating winds did much damage to the buildings. A house built of stone and pug, the property of Mr T. L. Bassett, was completely destroyed, the family being luckily absent at the time. The weather end of Mr Payne's residence, the Roebourne Hotel, was washed down. This house was built of sun-dried bricks. Mr Withnell's house received some damage. The walls of a building belonging to Mr Hall, and made of rammed earth, were much injured, and the part most exposed to the weather fell down. The house was unfinished and unprotected by a roof: The house in the course of construction on the Government reserve suffered much, being unshingled. The wet got between the mortar and unburnt bricks, and washed both plaster and bricks away, in some places making a clean breach through, Had the beating rain continued twelve hours' longer, the more exposed walls must have fallen.¹⁶

In 1877, he was named an executor: Thomas Brown deceased.

WHEREAS on 31 October 1877 Probate of the Last Will and Testament of Thomas Brown late of Roebourne in the Colony of Western Australia Publican and Currier deceased who died on 11 January 1877 was granted by the Supreme Court of the said Colony in its Ecclesiastical jurisdiction to Henry Cave and Thomas Lewis Bassett both of Roebourne aforesaid the Executors appointed by the said Will.¹⁷

1882. A tender for the conveyance of mail to the Westward of Roebourne for £300 has been accepted. One for a like service to the Eastward is in suspense. The contractor for the first is E. Martin, the tenderer for the latter T. L. Bassett.¹⁸

1883. The Government have accepted the tender of Mr T. L. Bassett to convey a mail, once in every four weeks, on horseback, for three years, between Roebourne and the DeGrey, for £215 per annum.¹⁹

Absconding: Frederick Stevens, middling stout, age 38 years, 5'9" high, light hair, blue eyes, round visage, dark complexion; being indebted to Thomas Lewis Bassett in the sum of £6 15s, and there are reasonable grounds to believe the said Frederick Steven is about to leave the colony without paying the said debt. Dated Cossack, 30 November 1883. Vide Apprehensions.

Peter Lewis, exp., late, 82, alias Bassett; charged at Roebourne, on the 7 December 1883, by Sergt O'Connell, with engaging Sai Quin (coolie) contrary to 46 Vic., No. 21. Fined £5 and costs.²⁰

1886. Government Gazette. T. L. Bassett, to convey mails for 3 years between Roebourne and De Grey at £189 per annum.²¹

Thomas Lewis Bassett and wife Mary Ann Munday ran the "Leap Year Inn" at Roebourne, among other interests.²²

LEAP YEAR INN,
SHOLL-STREET, ROEBOURNE,
C. BASSETT, PROPRIETOR.

Good Accommodation for all classes of Visitors. Single Bedrooms. Parlour and Bed
oms for Families. Good Table kept.

Only the Best Brands of Wines, Beers, and Spirits in Stock. Large Billiard Room, fitted
with one of Thurston & Co.'s Tables. Bath Room, Hay and Corn always on hand.

BASSETT BROS., Contractors for the DeGrey, Marble Bar, Pilbarra, and Tableland
Mails. Horses and Traps always on hand.

NOTICE.

THE WESTWARD MAIL, calling at the following stations, viz.: Chirritta, Karratha
Balmoral, Fortescue Telegraph, Mardie, Chinginarra, and Yarraloola, will in future leave
the LEAP YEAR INN, Sholl-street, every ALTERNATE WEDNESDAY MORNING.
Full particulars on application to the Agent.

C. BASSETT,
SHOLL-STREET,
ROEBOURNE.

¹⁵ <https://www.carnamah.com.au/WA-directories?search=lewis&page=3>

¹⁶ The Herald (Fremantle, WA : 1867 - 1886), 6 June 1868, p3

¹⁷ The Herald (Fremantle, WA : 1867 - 1886), 24 November 1877, p2

¹⁸ The West Australian (Perth, WA : 1879 - 1954), 28 November 1882, p3

¹⁹ The West Australian (Perth, WA : 1879 - 1954), 22 November 1883, p3

²⁰ Police Gazette, 6 February 1884, p22, and p23

²¹ The Albany Mail and King George's Sound Advertiser (WA : 1883 - 1889), 8 December 1886, p3

²² Western Mail (Perth, WA : 1885 - 1954), 3 December 1892, p30

Death of wife. Bassett.—On 6 May 1896, at her residence, Sholl-street, Roebourne, Mary Ann, the wife of T. L. Bassett, after a painful illness. [Southern papers, please copy.]

The Husband and Sons of the late Mrs T. L. Bassett tender their sincere thanks to numerous friends, especially to Dr Hicks, for the many kindnesses shown her during her long and painful illness.²³

Police Court. Thursday, 18 August 1898.

James Crogan was charged with being in a room of the Leap Year Inn, Roebourne, on the 17th inst for some unlawful purpose and pleaded not guilty. Sergt. McCarthy conducted the prosecution.

Thomas Lewis Bassett deposed: I am the manager of the Leap Year Inn and remember the 17th inst. I was staying on the premises, and between 4 and 5 that morning, I heard a noise and thought it was a cat or dog. I got out of bed to light a candle and found a man there. I asked him who he was, and he would not answer at first, but after some time, he told me his name was James Crogan. I could not recognise him, except by his voice, as it was dark. I asked him why he was there, and he said he was going to bed. I told him that was not his room and saw him out of the room when he stood upon the verandah. I did not hear him say anything when on the verandah. He went towards his room, but I did not see him go in. I then went back into my own room. I lit a candle and put on a pair of trousers to see what had occurred. I could not find my coat, trousers, or vest. They were not in the room.²⁴

In December 1898, Peter was ill: Mr T. L. Bassett is at present on the sick list, but it is hoped that a few days' quiet will restore him to his customary health.²⁵

Death of a Native.—A middle-aged native named Charcoal died at the native camp on Tuesday night. The deceased was a well-known figure about town and exercised considerable sway over the other natives. He had been in the service of Mr T. L. Bassett for over a quarter of a century.²⁶

Detention of Property.—At the police court on Friday last, Miss Horton was charged by T. L. Bassett with the unlawful detention of his property, to wit a sewing machine, a plated soup ladle, a plated teapot, and a work-basket. Mr Lyon appeared for the complainant.

The evidence went to show that the goods had belonged to the complainant's late wife, and as she had left no will, they reverted to her husband. It was stated that the goods were in the defendant's room at the Leap Year Inn and that she had refused to give them up until a sum of money said to be owing to her by Bassett Bros was paid. Defendant stated the goods had been placed in her bedroom, but not by her, and remarked that if Mr Thomas Bassett had been present, he would have been able to prove that she had nothing to do with them. Mr Brockman, who presided, informed the defendant that if she had a claim against Bassett Bros, she had her remedy in the local court and made an order for the restitution of the property with costs.²⁷



Thomas Bassett died on 2 or 12 February 1907 at Roebourne. He was buried in the Old cemetery at Roebourne, no headstone.

Photo provided by descendant Fiona Waltenberg.²⁸

²³ Northern Public Opinion and Mining and Pastoral News (Roebourne, WA : 1894 - 1902), 9 May 1896, p2

²⁴ Northern Public Opinion and Mining and Pastoral News (Roebourne, WA : 1894 - 1902), 20 August 1898, p2

²⁵ Northern Public Opinion and Mining and Pastoral News (Roebourne, WA : 1894 - 1902), 3 December 1898, p2

²⁶ Northern Public Opinion and Mining and Pastoral News (Roebourne, WA : 1894 - 1902), 15 April 1899, p2

²⁷ Northern Public Opinion and Mining and Pastoral News (Roebourne, WA : 1894 - 1902), 27 October 1899, p2

²⁸ <http://www.bassettbranches.org/newsletters/2009/09/200909.shtml>