

John Luff, 98, Hashemy

Researched by Marcia Watson

Baptism	23 November 1817, Rudgwick, Sussex.
Parents	John Luff and Charlotte Jelley
Parent's marriage	16 January 1816, Rudgwick, Sussex
Siblings	Ann (1814), Mary (1816), Sarah (1820), James (1822-1834), William (1828)
Wife	Mary Ann Baker
Married	4 November 1843, Cheriton, Kent
Children	Elizabeth/Betsy (1844) Harriet (1846-1850) Jack/John (~1848) Charlotte Mary (1849) Thomas (1854) Harriet (1855) Peter (1857)

In 1841, living in Vicarage Lane, Rudgwick, Petworth, Sussex, were:¹

John Luff, 50, sawyer, not born in county; Charlotte, 45, born in county; John, 20; Mary, 20; Sarah, 20; James Jennor, 15, Ag lab.

John Luff married Mary Ann Baker on 4 November 1843 at Cheriton, Kent. His father was John Luff, and Mary's father was Thomas Baker.

They had four children in England and three in Australia:

Elizabeth (Betsy)	1844	Blandon, Suffolk
Harriet	1846 – 1850	bap. at Ely, Cambridgeshire. Resided at Common Muckhill.
Jack/John	~1848	St Ives, Huntingdonshire
Charlotte Mary	1849	St Ives, Huntingdonshire

1848. St. Ives.—On Thursday night, or early on Friday morning last, two valuable horses were stolen, from the field, belonging to Mr Charles Green, and one also, from another field, the property of Mr Jennings. As soon as the robbery was discovered, pursuers were sent in every direction. The thieves crossed the railway from Fenstanton parish, and at the toll-gate inquired of the keeper the distance to Peterborough; but, instead of proceeding in that direction, turned at the cross-roads towards Hilton, and the man at the Hemingford gate says they went through about 2 o'clock. We are glad to add that the search has not proved unavailing. Hiram Burgess, the constable, traced the horses as far as Horsham, in Sussex, and on Thursday last returned with them to St. Ives, together with the suspected thieves, Luff, the keeper of the Engineer public-house, and his brother-in-law, who, it is said, but we do not vouch for the fact, has been convicted before of sheep-stealing. They will be examined this morning. We understand that Luff's house has been searched, and that some suspicious articles have been found therein. One of the horses had been sold for £28, of which £26 was found in Luff's possession; and when he was taken by Burgess he was in the act of showing the other two horses in a field belonging to a gentleman who had offered money for them. Great credit is due to Mr Green for the energy with which he has followed this matter up.²

Huntingdonshire Quarter Sessions, 17 October 1848

PRISONERS. Horse Stealing.—George Pratt (58) railway labourer, and **John Luff** (34) railway labourer and beer-shop keeper were charged with having stolen two cart geldings, the value of £40 each, the property of Mr Charles Green, at Ives.

¹ HO107/1092/8, p21

² Cambridge Chronicle and Journal - Saturday 05 August 1848, p3

Mr Worlledge opened the case, and called James Day, a servant of Mr Green's, who deposed turning two horses into the close, between five and six o'clock, on the evening of the 27th July; saw them the same evening about nine o'clock; missed them on the next morning; has seen them since; they are now at the Crown, Huntingdon.

Mr Tozer, for the defence of Pratt, asked the witness how long he had lived with Mr Green, and he said twelve months.—Mr Naylor of John Luff, asked no questions.

Mr Taylor, blacksmith, of Epington, near Hartford, deposed to Luff calling him out of public house, to put a shoe on the grey horse, and fastened one on the brown horse, about eight o'clock on the morning of the 28th July has seen the horses this morning; sure the grey horse is the same one he shod; and believes the other is the same.

Mr Naylor : Why did you bring the horses here, are we to see them ?—Witness: They brought me here in Mr Green's waggon.

Thomas Pallet: His mother keeps the Green Man, Potter's Bar; saw the two prisoners at Epington; they had a grey and two brown horses with them; is sure the prisoners are the men who brought them.

Richard Green, a police-officer, of Horsham: Was on duty on the 29th of July; saw the prisoners coming along the London road, with three horses; the tall prisoner rode on the dark brown horse, leading the grey; the short one on the light brown horse; watched them to the Richmond Arms; it was market day, and they were trying to sell the horses; they were tied up for some time; saw them leave about five o'clock, and watched them about mile; they went away mounted as they came; saw an advertisement in the Hue and Cry; wrote to Wootton at St. Ives; Burgess the constable, and Chapman came, on the 3rd August; they went to West Grimsted, where they found the prisoners and the two horses; is sure the prisoners are the same men he saw with the horses at Horsham.

Hume Burgess, a constable of Ives: Was sent after the horses; went to Horsham, and from there to West Grimsted; found the prisoners and the two horses, and Mr Gates's man trying the horses in a cart; said to Luff, "what is it you, Mr Luff", told him he had stolen the horses from Mr C. Green, of St. Ives; handcuffed them together; Pratt said "you have brought me into a nice mess". Mr Gates said, "I am glad you came—had you been ten minutes later, they would have had money, and you would have had the horses." Luff lived at St. Ives; Pratt he had seen frequently there, during the last twelve months; took men and horses to St Ives; Mr Green identified the horses.

Cross-examined: Had seen Pratt at St. Ives, the Monday before horses were stolen.

Mr C. Green, the prosecutor, spoke the horses brought back to St. Ives, by Burgess, being his property.

Robert Day, Mr Green's man, shewed the horses to Taylor and Pallet, yesterday afternoon: they were the horses his master lost the 27th July.

The prisoner's depositions were put in and read, in which they stated they bought the horses of Mr Eames, of Seabrook, near Folkstone; and a Mr Valence, of Hurstpier Poit [Hurstpierpoint], produced a receipt given by Luff, in the name Eames.

John Noble, a railway labourer: Deposed to seeing Pratt in St. Ives, either on the night of the robbery, or the night before, and spoke to him.

Charles Wootton, keeps the St. Ives lock-up: Knows Luff; saw him in St Ives, on the Wednesday before the horses were stolen.

Mr Naylor, on behalf of Luff, contended that he having given reasonable account of how he became possessed of the horses, saying he had bought the horses at Seabrook.

The Court overruled the objection.

Mr Tozer addressed the jury, behalf of Pratt, at considerable length.

Mr Naylor addressed them on behalf of Luff; and the Chairman then recapitulated the evidence; animadverted upon it at considerable length, and the jury found both the prisoners Guilty, and they were sentenced 15 years' transportation.

There were two other indictments against them, the one for stealing a bridle and saddle, the property of Mr A. Osborne; and another for stealing a bay gelding, the property of Mr Edw^d. Jellings, on which there was no evidence offered; and the Jury, under direction the Court, pronounced a verdict of Not Guilty.³

Records at Huntingdonshire Archives

1. Huntingdonshire Quarter Sessions records

Calm Ref No: KHCP/1/30/43

Reference Number: HCP/1/30/43

Title: Michaelmas Session: George Pratt 58, railway labourer of Dorking, Surrey, or **John Luff 34, railway labourer and beer-house keeper in St. Ives**; Stealing 2 cart geldings (£40 each) from Charles Green St. Ives. Stealing one cart gelding [] from Edward Jennings, St. Ives. Luff charged with stealing saddle, bridle, stirrups, leathers and girths from Allpress Osborn, St Ives

2. Calm Ref No: KHCP/1/30/74

Reference Number: HCP/1/30/74

Title: Deposition: George Pratt and John Luff accused of stealing geldings belonging to Charles Green, wine merchant and farmer and Edward Jennings, farmer, both of St. Ives. The horses, advertised in the 'Police Gazette', were, a week later, found (with the prisoners) in Horsham, Sussex after some smart work by Richard Green, constable of Horsham and Hume Burgess, St. Ives. constable. Luff was also charged with stealing a saddle etc. from Allpress Osborne, brewer, St. Ives.

Date October 1848

Description (Luff said he bought the horses between Tooting and Epsom from a gentleman named John Eams, of Seabrook, Folkestone, Kent. Pratt alleged he merely met Luff near Horsham). See also HCP/1/30/101.

3. Calm Ref No: KHCP/1/30/101

Reference Number: HCP/1/30/101

Title: Deposition: John Luff, stealing a saddle and bridle from Allpress Osborne at St Ives

Date 1848

Description See also HCP/1/30/74

Petition

John Luff did not petition for a change to his sentence; however, George Pratt did.

Part of his petition read:

That your Petitioner was tried at Huntingdon in the Session for October 1848 and was indicted with one John Luff for stealing two Horses the property of a Mr Green of St Ives in the County of Huntingdon on Thursday the (blank) day of July 1848.

Also sheweth that on the Wednesday following as your Petitioner was walking in company with one Henry Shore from Petitioners residence at Dorking in the County of Surrey to a village called Bolney in the County of Sussex to fetch his little child home, who had been removed there on account of petitioners illness (Typhus fever) - they met the other convict John Luff with two horses, about three miles from Horsham in Sussex aforesaid which is in a direct road from Dorking to Bolney - John Luff being personally known to Petitioner as a servant of Messrs Petoe & Betts the Contractors and your Petitioner being in the habit of Carting Bucks &c for the same Firm - the Convict Luff in accosting petitioner asked him to buy one of the horses stating he had purchased them at St Ives at the sale of Messrs Petoe & Co who were at that time disposing of part of their stock of horses &c this occurrence took place at the Farm of a Mr Gates a Farmer

³ Cambridge Independent Press - Saturday 21 October 1848, p4

residing at Horsham aforesaid, who was also asked by John Luff to purchase to horses, but having tried them in his Cart and not proving satisfactory he declined doing so. - and whilst your Petitioner was in the act of examining the mouth of one of the horses, to test its age, having offered Luff £20 for it, two Constables came up and accused Luff and your Petitioner of having stolen the horses.

Also sheweth that the convict Luff on seeing your Petitioner taken into custody declared Petitioners innocence and assured the Police, in the presence of Mr Gates and Henry Shore by repeatedly reiterating that Petitioner had nothing to do with the horses that they were his own (Convict Luffs) property, and that he was trying to sell them to Petitioner and Mr Gates. ⁴

Peto & Betts were railway contractors. In 1848 they were working on the building of the Great Northern Railway from Retford to Doncaster.

John Luff, 34, married, can read & write imperfectly, labourer, convicted on 16 October 1848 at Huntingdon of horse stealing and sentenced to 15 years transportation. He was received at Millbank Prison on 26 December 1848 from Great Stukeley, the Huntingdon County Gaol and House of Correction.⁵ No gaoler's report was received.⁶ On 26 May 1849, John was transferred to Pentonville Prison. The register recorded he was 35, a farm labourer, married, could read & write, and the gaoler's report of character was 'good'. Almost a year later, on 4 March 1850, he was transferred to Portland Prison.⁷ From here, he boarded the *Hashemy* on 19 July 1850 for the voyage to Fremantle.⁸

On arrival at Fremantle in October 1850, his description was:

98. John Luff, 38, 5' 8", black hair, hazel eyes, oval face, dark complexion, burn on back of left hand, labourer, married with three children. ⁹

General Register:

98. John Luff, 40 (in 1852), married, labourer, Church of England, private schooling, can read and write fairly, and tolerable at maths. John said his wife Mary Anne Luff lived near the Baptist Meeting House in St Ives, Huntingdonshire, and he had three children.

Attended Divine Service? Went but seldom

Received Sacrament? Never

Habits? Not exactly sober

Intellect? Sound

State of Mind? Very hopeful

Knowledge, Secular? Very limited

Knowledge, Religious? Limited, but am humble and I trust faithful believer in Christ

Alleged Cause of Crime? Poverty

Name of Person referred to for Character, &c. Mr Eadon Coote, St Ives, Huntingdon [probably William Eaden Coote, a grain and corn merchant]

John's health was much better than some of the other *Hashemy* convicts. He does not appear on the casual sick list at Fremantle. He received his Ticket of leave on 26 January 1852.

8 March 1852, Fremantle: John Luff, Richard Bowyer, and Henry Taylor, ticket-of-leave holders, brought before the Court, charged with having committed a felony on the previous day: case dismissed. He was received at Fremantle Prison on 9 March and discharged the following day to North Fremantle Station. He was recorded as "99. J Luff". ¹⁰

⁴ HO18/306

⁵ https://www.pastscape.org.uk/hob.aspx?hob_id=1109136

⁶ HO24/4

⁷ HO24/16

⁸ HO8/105

⁹ SROWA Acc 128/40-3

¹⁰ SROWA Acc 1156 RD1-2; Inquirer (Perth, WA : 1840 - 1855), 31 March 1852, p2

8 May 1852, Fremantle: John Luff, ticket-of-leave holder, charged with carrying fire-arms without permission; admonished.¹¹

November 1852. Arrived on the 6th. inst., the barque *Ann Maclean*, McGaw, master from London. Passengers : Mr Ellis, Mrs and Miss Masters; Mr and Mrs. Brooke and 5 Children ; D. Urquhart, H. Witton, C. Hall, F. H. Molt, B. and S. A. Buck, Charlotte, Jos and Jane Barker, Elizabeth Burkitt and 3 Children ; John Thomas, **Mary Luff and 3 Children.** [Mary A Luff 38, Betsy 8, John 4, Mary 3]¹²

1860. Fatal Accident.

A lamentable accident occurred on Thursday last at Bicton, near Fremantle, by which Mr James Duffield and John Luff, a hard working labourer, both lost their lives by the falling in upon them of a well they were engaged in sinking. The accident occurred about 2 o'clock in the afternoon, and as soon as information reached Fremantle large numbers of persons hastened to Bicton to assist in getting the bodies out, which owing to the loose nature of the soil was not accomplished until near ten at night.

The particulars attending this unfortunate occurrence were very distressing and have created a general feeling of sympathy for the friends of the sufferers. Luff has, we regret to hear, left a wife and family of eight children. At the Inquest held on the bodies on Friday, before a Jury composed of Messrs. A. Francisco, O. Lodge, J. Harwood, and J. Bobin, the following evidence was given :—

Narley, an Aboriginal—I was helping to sink a well, when the accident happened to J. H. Duffield and John Luff. J. Duffield was at the bottom of the well, and Luff and I were drawing up the sand; about 3 o'clock some of the sand from the sides of the well fell in upon Duffield; Luff went down the well and tried to take the sand from him, when more sand fell down and covered him also up to the middle; J. Duffield asked me to send for Humphries; I did so. I pulled up buckets of sand which Luff filled. Humphries and three others came. J. Duffield said he was all right, and told Luff to come down and help him; the sand kept falling in and covering them.

Joseph Humphries—I was called about 2 or 3 o'clock to assist J. Duffield, who was down the well, up to his middle in sand. I went and found Duffield completely covered with sand, but I heard his voice calling out for me; a small cask was at that time over his head, which was also covered with sand. Luff, at this time, was not in the well; he was on the top along with three natives. James Duffield called out for someone to “come down and take away the sand from his mouth.” Luff went down, and three men helped me to draw up the sand which Luff put into a bucket. Duffield could speak and was well, and helped to fill the buckets; in half a minute, a large quantity of sand gave way, and covered him about 5 feet over his head, and covering Luff up to the middle. Chambers then went clown with a rope to help Luff; more sand fell in and covered Luff up to the neck. I went to Luff's house to get some cask; when I returned, Luff was covered over with sand. I sent for assistance which arrived, and we then dug both bodies out.

James Chambers corroborated the statement of the foregoing witness.

Henry Albert—I assisted with others last night in digging the bodies of Duffield and Luff out of the well; they were both quite dead and found as described by previous witnesses. Luff must have been dead about two hours and Duffield three or four hours before we found them.

Verdict—The Jury are of opinion that the deaths were accidental—caused by the falling in of the well; the Jury also considered that the conduct of James Chambers, was highly praiseworthy, for the strenuous efforts he made to save his fellow creatures, at the eminent peril of his own life.¹³

We have been requested to state that subscriptions are in the course of collection in behalf of the widow and family of the late John Luff, who was killed by the falling in of a well at Bicton, near Fremantle, a

¹¹ Inquirer (Perth, WA : 1840 - 1855), 9 June 1852, p2

¹² The Perth Gazette and Independent Journal of Politics and News (WA : 1848 - 1864), 12 November 1852, p4

¹³ The Perth Gazette and Independent Journal of Politics and News (WA : 1848 - 1864), 30 March 1860, p2

short time since. We have also been desired to state that the family are in a state of destitution, no property having come into their possession since the death of Luff. An erroneous impression on this head seems to have been formed, which has had a prejudicial effect on the amount of subscriptions.¹⁴

Mr Landor's lecture upon 'A Broomstick', delivered at the Hall of the Mechanic's Institute on Wednesday last, was well attended, and the numerous audience — among whom was His Excellency the Governor — testified their delight in a most unequivocal manner, and at its conclusion the Governor returned thanks on behalf of the Institute and those present, expressing his satisfaction that the 'Broomstick' had been so well handled. The lecturer, in the course of his amusing discourse, mentioned that the proceeds would be devoted to a special charitable purpose, namely, towards the support of the children of John Luff, who perished in the attempt to rescue young Duffield at Bicton, some time since. The Governor on the following morning, with his accustomed liberality, forwarded a donation of two pounds. The band of the Institute, under the able superintendence of Mr Mitchell, was in attendance, and contributed materially to the entertainment of the visitors. Notwithstanding there was a full attendance, but a very small sum was collected at the door; however, Mr Landor remitted £5 to Fremantle, and the Rev. Mr Barry, in acknowledging its receipt, stated that it, with other small sums, would be applied towards liquidating a debt of £30 due by Luff's Estate. The family of small children, 5 or 6 in number, are entirely supported by a man named Richard Davis[or Davies], a small farmer, the mother having died a few months after her husband. Davis thinks that was the Estate relieved from debt, he could manage to perform his self-imposed work of charity with less difficulty. There are, we are sure, many who would assist in such a work.¹⁵

Admin granted to Mary Ann Luff on 26 April 1860. John lived at Bicton and was a carter. The Estate was less than £50. Children named as: Elizabeth, Jack, Mary Charlotte, Thomas, Harriet and Peter.

Mary Ann Luff died on 10 June 1860 and was buried at the Alma and Skinner Street Cemetery on 12 June 1860. She was 41 years old and died of Consumption.

St Ives 100 years ago – not completely accurate.

<http://stives100yearsago.blogspot.com/2019/09/john-luff.html>

¹⁴ The Inquirer and Commercial News (Perth, WA : 1855 - 1901), 16 May 1860, p2

¹⁵ The Inquirer and Commercial News (Perth, WA : 1855 - 1901), 10 October 1860, p2