

Margaret Scragg

(uxor Margaret Baldwin)

POLICE NUMBER 445 ¹	LITERACY read only
TRIAL DATE 15 August 1840	AGE ON EMBARKATION 25
TRIAL PLACE Chester Assizes	AGE ON ARRIVAL 26
OFFENCE stealing from the person	HEIGHT 5' 3¼" or 5' ¾"
SENTENCE 14 years	COMPLEXION fresh
GAOL REPORT imprisoned before, bad, single	HEAD large
PREVIOUS CONVICTION 3 times convicted, twice acquitted	HAIR brown
SURGEON'S REPORT orderly	VISAGE full
ON THE TOWN no	FOREHEAD medium
MARITAL STATUS single	EYEBROWS dark brown
CHILDREN 0	EYES light hazel
FAMILY	NOSE short
NATIVE PLACE Stockport, Cheshire, England	MOUTH medium
TRADE ON EMBARKATION	CHIN round
TRADE ON ARRIVAL house servant	MARKS stout made, long scar on fourth finger left hand

c1815

Born at Stockport, Cheshire, England.²

20 September 1839

Mentioned in the trial of Margaret Lemon, Elizabeth Horroces (alias Pretty Betsy) and Kate Rigby at Chester, England; intimated to be a prostitute.³

Newspaper report:

A Cheshire Farmer amongst the "Frail Sisterhood."

Margaret Lemon, Elizabeth Horroces, (alias Pretty Betsy,) and Kate Rigby, 'a trio on the pave,' were charged with having on Friday last, taken from the person of John Cash, a purse containing nine sovereigns, and stolen three sovereigns thereout. On the case being called, the prosecutor, who is near 80 years of age, came hobbling into the witness box, with the assistance of a stick. He is of a yellow short-haired breed, with a crimson snout, and a face the colour of the red lion at Brentford, and appavelled in a old-stone coloured suit, stitched and cut in the Obadiah fashion. In fact, he looked a regular, jolly, never-caring chaw-bacon; and although he felt himself in a very awkward predicament, he nevertheless, looked as content and "as comfortable as nine pence."

Cash stated that on Friday, the 31st inst., about half-past one o'clock, he went from the market down to where his cart and horse were, near the Bull Top, Millgate, for the purpose of making preparations to return home to Warford, in this county. Horroces beckoned him into a house just opposite. He had at that time nine sovereigns in a dark-coloured purse in his inside waistcoat pocket, besides two other sovereigns and some silver in one of his trowsers pockets. On going into the house, he paid for sixpence worth of gin, and afterwards paid 1s. For some more gin. When he was nearly druck, Kate asked him to go up stairs; and having no objection to the invitation, he was proceeding accordingly; but when he had ascended three or four steps, they all commenced jostling him; and immediately afterwards he missed his purse of gold. He refused to leave the house until his money was returned. They said they would help him to look for the purse; and presently his purse containing five sovereigns was given to him. On explaining that there were four short, the person who brought him the purse, and who he thought was Lemon, then gave him another sovereign; but denied all knowledge of the remaining three. The prisoners were then given into custody.

Cross-examined by Mr. W. VAUGHAN, who appeared for the accused – Come to Stockport nearly every Friday from Warford – was not taking a walk after an old acquaintance, named

¹ TAHO, CON40/1/10 p.50 No.445 [image 53] (Margaret Scragg); TAHO, CON19/1/1 p.255 [image 131] (Margaret Scragg); ML, CY 1282 p.154 (Margaret Scragg); ML, CY 1197 p.153 (Margaret Scrag); ML, CY 958 p.441 (Margaret Scragg)

² TAHO, CON19/1/1 p.255 [image 131] (Margaret Scragg)

³ *Northern Star*, 21 September 1839 Issue 97 (Margaret Scragg)

This biography supplements our book *Patchwork Prisoners* available from www.researchtasmania.com.au.

Scragg, on the above occasion – knew nothing about her, nor any other Miss Margaret Scragg – was not searching for any body particular – it was the middle girl that put up her hand for me to go into the house – she is a very “pretty sort of a girls and I thought so at the time” – (laughter) – did not know that her name was Pretty Betsey – but it was Kate that took me up stairs.

Mr. W. VAUGHAN: I suppose when you had them both upon your knees you repeated the words fo Captain Macheath.

“How happy could I be with either,
If to’ther dear charmer were away.”

Cash: I know nont about him – he warna there – (laughter) – I only went two or three steps before I missed my money – it was a wrong step that’s true – did not make any bargain – nor shewed any money – nor made each a present – ‘am three sovereigns short – that’s one a piece – did not pay anything to Kate – do you think I did not know what I was doing – got my share of the gin – we had first a noggin, then a gill, but no quart – and it is true, I am old, and they’ve made me pay for it – had not anything to do with the women beyond talking and drinking. [Here the prisoners gave intimation that Cash was not telling the truth.] The aged and “yellow-haired laddie” persisted in his innocence – did not fumble with my money in my hand – had not my trousers in my hand either – never pulled my purse out for anything – my waistcoat was loose, but no other part of my clothing was – ‘am not unfortunate in these sort of things – did not recollect having been robbed in such places on any future occasion – never was – because I do not make a practice of it – if they tell you to the contrary they tell you a lie.

The Court – We are not quite satisfied that you ever had this money; can you produce a witness who ever saw it in your possession on this day?

Cash – To be sure: I received eleven sovereigns from one person, two of which I put in this purse, and put two others in my trousers pocket to buy stuff with.

In answer to a question by Mr. W. Ingham, Cash said, I do not mean that sort of “stuff” mon – (laughter) – I mean groceries and that, like. Do you think I dunna know what I’m doink, mon? Cannot tell how it was; did not go to sleep, nor lie down – nout o’th’ sort, mon.

The Court – Cash, where did you receive this money?

Cash – Why, I received eleven sovereigns by ten o’clock ith’ morning from Mr. Blake for pigs; but never showed it any one.

Cash admitted being a married man, and having a grown up family; and that this transaction was not right; and in spite of some of the best information on behalf of the police, he persisted in not having been robbed in a house of ill fame.

By Mr. W. Vaughan – Never told the prisoners that I had been robbed in a similar manner by Margaret Scragg.

The Bench said they were not inclined to believe the testimony; and therefore did not call upon Mr. W. Vaughan for any reply or defence on behalf of the women.

The Superintendent of Police said that he should not be surprised if the prosecutor did not next Friday go to the same place, for he knew him to be guilty of going to lewd women, by whom he had been robbed more than once.

The Mayor – Prisoners, you have on this occasion narrowly escaped being put upon your trial; for had there been any other evidence than that of the prosecutor’s, or had his been somewhat stronger or more credible, we should have sent you before another tribunal. But we have doubts upon our minds, and we are willing to give you the benefit of those doubts, but if you come here again, it will be worse for you. Now, take my advice, which is, to change the course of life. You are discharged. With respect to you, Cash, an old man, we hardly know how to express our indignation at you, a man grey with years, being robbed in a common brothel. You must pay all the costs incurred in this prosecution. The magistrates are sorry that the girls did not take and keep the whole of your money – it would then have been a warning to you; and even at present you by losing part of your money, will be able to measure, to a certain extent, the cost of your folly and the price of your disgrace.

Cash – Very well; very well.

He then hobbled out of Court, followed by the Syrens, who kept taunting him on his way along the street, by pulling him by his coat or his stick, whilst a third would almost “kill him with kindness,” by clasping him round the neck.³

- 15 August 1840 Tried at Chester Assizes, Cheshire, England indicted for larceny in stealing from the person; sentence 14 years transportation.⁴
- 5 April 1841 Departed Woolwich, England on the *Rajah*.⁵
- 19 July 1841 Arrived at Hobart on the *Rajah*.⁵
- c24 July 1841 Upon arrival at Hobart, sent to Launceston for assignment.⁶
- 31 December 1841 Mustered in the service of Mr Bransgrove, Tamar.⁷
- 23 December 1842 At Launceston.⁴
- 11 January 1843 Application for permission to marry William⁸ Baldwin (free) sent to the Muster Master.⁹
- 28 January 1843 Application for permission to marry William Baldwin sent to the Secretary; approved.⁹
- 26 February 1843 Banns read at Holy Trinity Anglican Church, Launceston for marriage to James Henry Baldwin.¹⁰
- 5 March 1843 Banns read at Holy Trinity Anglican Church, Launceston for marriage to James Henry Baldwin.¹⁰
- 12 March 1843 Banns read at Holy Trinity Anglican Church, Launceston for marriage to James Henry Baldwin.¹⁰
- 8 April 1843 **Married** James Henry Baldwin at Trinity Anglican Church, Launceston; Margaret aged 29, free, spinster, resident of Dorset, illiterate; James aged 23, prisoner,¹¹ bachelor, resident of Launceston; witnesses Joseph Smith and Charles Mason (clerk).¹²
- 24 February 1845 At Launceston.⁴
- 28 February 1845 Husband James Henry Baldwin tried at the Quarter Sessions, Launceston indicted for robbing the stores of Mr King and stealing 50 lbs of nails; sentence 7 years transportation, 12 months probation on the Glenorchy Gang.
Description: never in prison before, came free on the *Dusty Miller* in December 1840, married, wife at Launceston, Protestant, can read and write, native place London, house carpenter.¹³
- 24 April 1845 Ticket of Leave granted; gazetted 29 April.¹⁴
- 11 July 1845 Husband James Henry Baldwin in the Picton Gang.¹³
- 19 January 1846 Husband James Henry Baldwin in the Jerusalem Gang.¹³
- 28 February 1846 Husband James Henry Baldwin in the Oatlands Gang.¹³
- 23 April 1846 Husband James Henry Baldwin emerged from the Gang.¹³
- 20 August 1847 At Launceston.⁴
- 15 September 1847 Conditional Pardon recommended; gazetted 21 September.¹⁵
- 15 April 1848 Husband James Henry Baldwin classified as a probation pass-holder.¹³
- 1 May 1848 Husband James Henry Baldwin charged with misconduct in being on his own hands for 14 months and representing himself to be free; in the service of Walters,

⁴ TAHO, CON40/1/10 p.50 No.445 [image 53] (Margaret Scragg)

⁵ AJCP, ADM 101/63 *Rajah*

⁶ ML, CY 1282 p.142 (Margaret Scragg); ML, CY 1274 p.263 (Margaret Scragg)

⁷ AJCP, HO 10/51 p.396 No.445 (Margaret Scragg)

⁸ This was James Henry Baldwin.

⁹ TAHO, CON52/1/2 p.18 (Marg^t Scragg & Wm Baldwin)

¹⁰ TAHO, NS1735/1/4 p.2 (James Henry Baldwin & Margaret Scragg)

¹¹ James was not a convict – he wasn't sentenced to transportation until 1845 (TAHO, CON37/1/3 No.609 [image 8] (James Henry Baldwin)); and Margaret was not free, so perhaps their convict status was reversed on the certificate.

¹² TAHO, RGD37/1/3 1843/244 Launceston (Margaret Scragg & James Henry Baldwin); TAHO, NS1735/1/4 p.2 (James Henry Baldwin & Margaret Scragg)

¹³ TAHO, CON37/1/3 No.609 [image 8] (James Henry Baldwin)

¹⁴ *Hobart Town Gazette*, 29 April 1845 p.544 (Margaret Scragg)

¹⁵ *Hobart Town Gazette*, 21 September 1847 p.934 (Margaret Scragg)

- Launceston; sentence 6 months imprisonment and hard labour at the Prisoners' Barracks, Launceston.¹³
- Husband James Henry Baldwin a prisoner in the Prisoners' Barracks, Launceston Gang¹³
- 21 September 1848 Husband James Henry Baldwin at the Prisoners' Barracks, Launceston.¹³
- 17 October 1848 Husband James Henry Baldwin hired in private service as a probation pass-holder to John Strickley, East Tamar.¹³
- 7 November 1848 Husband James Henry Baldwin hired in private service as a probation pass-holder to GW Barnard, East Tamar from the Hiring Depot, Launceston.¹³
- 30 January 1849 Conditional Pardon approved; gazetted.¹⁶
- 27 March 1849 Husband James Henry Baldwin to apply in 6 months for a Ticket of Leave.¹³
Husband James Henry Baldwin hired in private service as a probation pass-holder to William Bransgrove, Launceston.¹³
- 26 June 1849 Husband James Henry Baldwin at the Hiring Depot, Launceston.¹³
- 2 October 1849 Husband James Henry Baldwin granted a Ticket of Leave.¹³
- 30 April 1850 Husband James Henry Baldwin recommended for a Conditional Pardon.¹³
- 13 May 1851 Husband James Henry Baldwin granted a Conditional Pardon available everywhere save in the United Kingdom and the Island of Van Diemens Land.¹³
- 13 July 1852 Husband James Henry Baldwin departed Launceston for Geelong, VIC as a steerage passenger on the *Helen*; free, ship to colony *Dusty Miller*.¹⁷
- 11 March 1852 Husband James Henry Baldwin issued a Certificate of Freedom.¹³
- 19 August 1852 Departed Launceston for Melbourne, VIC as a steerage passenger on the steamer *Yarra Yarra*; free by servitude, ship to colony *Rajah*.¹⁸

¹⁶ *Examiner*, 7 February 1849 p.8 (Margaret Scragg)

¹⁷ TAHO, POL220/1/2 p.76 (James Baldwin)

¹⁸ TAHO, POL220/1/2 p.113 (Margaret Baldwin)