

## Catherine Lyons

---

Catherine Lyons was born circa 1821 in London and was arrested on 28 August 1837 when she was 15 and charged with stealing a watch.<sup>1</sup>

LAMBETH STREET – Yesterday, John Barthram, a cab driver, and **Catherine Lyons**, were charged before Mr. Combes with robbing Jacob Verres, a German, of a valuable watch.

From the statement of the prosecutor, who spoke English but indifferently, it appeared that late on the night before he agreed with the male prisoner to take him in his cab from Aldgate to Kensington for 3s. He got into the cab, but they had not proceeded far when the driver, Barthram, got into conversation with Lyons and another female, and in a short time he stopped, and they both got into the cab. The prosecutor remonstrated against such conduct, but it was all to no purpose, and after remaining in the cab for some time, one of the women got out, and the second was about to follow her, when the prosecutor, suspecting that all was not right, examined his pockets and missed his watch, which had been cut from the guard. He in consequence held the female prisoner and called out "police," and a constable came to his assistance, but before his arrival the watch had disappeared. No doubt could remain as to the intention of the cab-driver, Barthram, to commit a robbery, for instead of driving the prosecutor towards Kensington, as directed, he drove in a contrary direction, and was in a back street close to the London Hospital, when he was stopped and apprehended.

Both prisoners were fully committed for trial.

Catherine's conviction is recorded in detail and is quite amusing as she would have been an inspiration for a female villain in a Dickens' novel. She was tried on 18 September 1837 for stealing a watch and ring, convicted and sentenced to 7 years transportation. From the records of the Central Criminal Court, Old Bailey, comes the following account.

2163 - John Barthram and **Catherine Lyons** were indicted for stealing on the 28th August, 1 watch, value 15s; 1 watch-key, value 2s; 1 watch-guard, value 2d; and 1 split ring, value 1d; the goods of Jacob Verres, from his person.

JACOB VERRES (through an interpreter) I am a locksmith and live in Charlotte Court, Kensington. On the night in question, I hired the prisoner Barthram's cab from Whitechapel to take me to Kensington - I never saw him before - I was later than I expected and was waiting for an omnibus - I went into a public house and had a pint of beer - while I was drinking it I saw an omnibus, but it went on and I saw the cabman talking to some women - he came to me and asked where I was going - I asked how much to Kensington - he said 3s - I said "Very well", and got into the cab - I told him to drive to Kensington - he drove a little further and took in two women - I did not invite them in - they got in - the female prisoner was one of them - I did not expect much good from them and put one hand in my pocket to mind my money and the other to take care of my pin - in the meantime I felt my watch gone - called to the cabman to stop, but he let the horse go faster - I then called a policeman, who came - I hardly knew what I was doing, but the girls got out of the cab and the policeman brought her back - give me my watch into my hand again, when the policeman had brought her to the station, as I came out again she put it into my hand - I cannot say which woman it was - it was the one that was brought back - the other woman ran away - it was the prisoner gave me the watch, but the policeman must know better than me because he brought her back.

Cross examined by Mr Phillips -

Q Had you not a chain and key with your watch?

A Gold key - I complained of losing that also - I have only known the interpreter the three months I have been in London - there were a lot of women in the house I went into - I did not eat anything there - there were not two women in my company there - no women asked me for a shilling - no women spoke to me - I could not understand if they did speak to me - I spoke as much English as I could when I was at the police-office, but I did not speak in the public-house - I give my evidence to the Magistrate in English, as well as I could speak - there was no interpreter at the office - I said at the police-office that I kept my hands on my pockets to take care of my money - when the policeman showed me the watch, I complained that my key was lost - that was at the station house - I did not know the key was gone till I had the watch again at the station, and then the string was cut - when the policeman came I had not got the watch back - when I got my watch back at the station, I complained that my key was gone - I did not understand what the cabman said.

JOHN CHARLES GOOZEE. I am a policeman. I was in Turner Street, Whitechapel, and heard a cry of "Police, police," in an outlandish language, very loud - I immediately ran up and saw the female prisoner jump from a cab - she had got about ten or twelve yards from the cab when I came up - she was running and had left behind her shawl and handkerchief - she did not stop to pick them up, but went on - I caught her and brought her back, gave her shawl and handkerchief, put her into the cab and drove her to the station-house and there the cabman as well as the girl was charged - when he found he was going to be detained, he said "If you will look in my cab, you will see the key and the ring" - an officer looked into the cab and found the key and ring where he said, in the cab - the officer who found it is not here - I did not see him find it - the officer gave it to me by order of the Magistrate - it was stated in the prisoner's presence that it was found in his cab - it was brought in and shown to him - I did not hear him make any remark on it - he was not drunk, but he had been drinking - he did not say how he came to have the key, ring, watch and guard - I got the watch for the prosecutor - the guard was attached to it.

Cross examined

Q You have said you drove the cab to the station house?

A I ordered it to be driven down - I did not say I drove it down, the man drove it down himself - the prosecutor said, at the station house, that he had lost his key as well as his watch, as well as we could understand him - the answer Barthram made was, "If he has lost a key, and you look into my cab, you will find it" - he did not say, "If the man has lost a key it is in my cab" - he said, "If you look in my cab you will find it" - those were the words he said before the inspector - he said, "If you have lost a key and ring, if you look in my cab you will find them" - he said that in the station-house before us all, before the acting inspector and several people - he did not say, "If the man has lost a key it is in my cab" - he mentioned the ring - (looking at his deposition) this is my handwriting - it was read over to me before the Magistrate - I signed it - I was desired to attend to it - he said, "If you have lost a key and ring, if you look in my cab you will find it."

Mr. Phillips called

---

<sup>1</sup> London Standard 29 August 1837.

## Catherine Lyons

---

JOSEPH COX - I live with my brother, at a cook-shop in Red Lion-street. On the night of the 27th of August the prosecutor came to my shop with two girls, the female prisoner is one of them - they were all three in company - two plates of ham were ordered and cut - I was just about to serve them with it - I heard the females ask the prosecutor for a shilling, and at the moment they asked for a shilling they all three got up and went out - I will swear they went out together - the prosecutor appeared intoxicated - he could not walk straight as he went out.

Court.

Q. Are we to understand that they were in company, conversing and communicating together, and that the girls forced themselves on his society?

A. One of the girls came, and then the prosecutor came in with the other, they sat down together - I could not hear him speak - I heard them speak to him, and ask him for a shilling - I did not hear him say a word to them - I heard him mumble something as he went out of the door - he did not call for any thing, nor speak to them in my presence - I do not know whether they were with him by his consent or not.

Mr Phillips

Q. Did he sit at table with them?

A. Yes, about a minute - they got up together and went out together - I saw no shyness about him, to keep them off.

Court.

Q. Did he come in, sit down, call for nothing, then get up, and go out?

A. Yes - I do not know the prisoner, Barthram - I cannot say as I have ever seen him.

Q. How did they know that you knew any thing about this, then?

A. A gentleman called on me, and said they came here for the meat, and said I saw them - I do not see the gentleman here - this is one of the gentlemen (Osbourne) - there were two of them came.

WILLIAM OSBOURNE. I live on what property I have, in Morgan-street, Mile End. I have known Barthram between ten and eleven years - he always bore a very good character, indeed - a very nice little fellow he is.

Court.

Q. How came you to apply to the eating-house keeper?

A. We wanted to know where he had been drinking, and I went with the attorney to where it was said in the deposition at the Office they had been - I was not before the Magistrate - I went to ascertain the truth of it - I saw in the deposition what the woman said, as to where they had been drinking and eating - the attorney told me what was stated in the deposition. (The prisoner Barthram received a good character.)

LYONS - GUILTY. Aged 16 - Transported for Seven Years.

BARTHAM - NOT GUILTY.

The trial was reported: <sup>2</sup>

Sentenced 7 years - **Catherine Lyons**, Mary Lucas, Jane Hughes, and Mary Smith. The recorder admonished the female convicts and told them that much depended on their future on the voyage as to whether they would be placed in domestic servitude or have to endure the privation and suffering which in the ordinary sense of the term were appended to transportation.

They listened with attention and many of them evinced great contrition. Whether real or feigned will be thoroughly understood before they arrive in the colony for which they are destined.

Catherine was placed on board the "*Nautilus*", which departed Woolwich on 29 April 1838 and arrived in Hobart Town on 29 August 1838. The ship's master was J Newcombe and the ship's surgeon was John G. Stewart. The surgeon's report says she was punished for fighting and described her as being "noisy and giddy" (easily excitable).

By now Catherine had turned 17, her convict number was 178, she was a nurse girl and house maid from London and described as follows:

Height	4' 11"
Hair	brown
Complexion	fair
Eyes	blue
Head	oval
Forehead	low
Visage	long
Eyebrows	light
Nose	small
Mouth	small
Chin	small
Marks	scar on left cheek

---

<sup>2</sup> Morning Post 27 September 1837.

## Catherine Lyons

---

Upon arrival in Van Diemen's Land she was assigned to Mr George Mercer at "Lovely Banks" (south of Oatlands on the Midlands Highway).

Catherine's Gaol Report says her "connexions poor" – this means that her friends and family in England were poor and/or criminal.

Her convict record says she could read and was "on the town" for 12 months – this means she had worked as a prostitute.

On 11 June 1839, whilst assigned to Mr. Cahill, Catherine was charged with immoral conduct and was sentenced 4 months imprisonment in the Crime Class at the Cascades Female Factory.

Catherine married Alfred Revill on 13 December 1841 at the Parish C of E in Hobart. Alfred, aged 29, was a ticket of leave labourer. He was tried at York West Riding Quarter Sessions on 13 January 1836 for stealing a silver watch, departed London on 12 July 1836 aboard the "*Lady Nugent*" and arrived at Hobart Town on 12 November 1836. Alfred's gaol and hulk reports are not terribly flattering – "*character be very bad, a drunken idle profligate travelling thief, once convicted, once imported*" and "*orderly. Single, stated this offence. Robbing a man of his watch, at N P Sheffield. Once for assault 1 month; once acquitted for a watch. Brother Charley at Sydney, transported*". Catherine, aged 20, was a convict.

Catherine and Alfred had three children:

1. Catherine Revill born 14 February 1842 at Hobart and died 30 March 1843.
2. female Revill born 29 March 1843 at Hobart. An Ellen Revill married Frank Napoleon on 9 August 1870, so might this un-named female be Ellen. The evidence we have collected to support this possibility is only circumstantial.
3. Charles Revill born 12 September 1844 at Hobart, married Eliza Wright on 30 May 1867 at Hobart and died 12 February 1868 whilst whaling. Charles' death was reported as follows:

An inquest was held at four o'clock on Saturday afternoon at the house of Mr. A. C. Kirk, the Jolly Scotchman Inn, Brisbane-street, before A. B. Jones, Esq., Coroner, and a jury of seven, consisting of William Stewart, foreman, Thomas Augustus Reynolds, Charles Chapman Giles, William Wilson, William Wrathall, Henry Seton, and John Green, on the body of Charles Revell, late chief mate of the Flying Childers, whaling barque, who was accidentally killed whilst whaling off the South West Cape, on 12th inst, as previously reported.

The jury having returned from view of the body.

The Coroner said that the case for which they had been called together was rather a melancholy one, the deceased being one of the most promising whalers out of the port, and who was killed whilst engaged in following that pursuit in the whaling barque above mentioned. With reference to the accident itself which caused the death of Mr. Revell it did not appear that any blame or neglect was attributable to any one, but it was to be regretted that no one either thought of or had the presence of mind to make an artificial tourniquet to stop the hemorrhage which would naturally take place after the infliction of such a wound as that received by deceased, and which would be described by the witnesses who would be called before them.

The following evidence was then taken:

William Curtis, boat steerer on board the Flying Childers, being sworn, said: About 11 o'clock on Wednesday last, I was in a boat with deceased off the South West Cape. I was steering, and deceased acted as headsman. We were about nine miles to the southward and eastward of the Cape. We were fast to a whale, and another came up and stove the boat forward, striking it with his head and taking the bow clean off. The blow bent one of the lances lying in the boat sending it also through Mr. Revell's left leg below the calf. Deceased hauled the lance out himself, and then got into another boat which had come up, and the captain who was in that boat took deceased on board the ship. I did not go on board then, as myself and two others had to bale the stove boat and got her to the ship. I afterwards went down into the cabin and saw the deceased. There were six hands in the boat in all when the whale struck it. The lances were in their proper place in the boat and could not roll. The first time I saw deceased after he was on board he asked me "if we had got the whale," and when I told him, that we had, he asked what size it was. He did not seem to think he was dying, but he died soon after I saw him. The bleeding was stopped about an hour and a half before he died. The wound was bandaged and sown up on board, but I do not think any ligature or bandage was put round the thigh. We meant to come in immediately the man was wounded, but there was no wind. Mr. Revell died at 7 o'clock on the evening of the day on which he was wounded, and we started for Hobart Town same night, but could not reach Partridge Island until the next night.

By the Foreman: There were three boats down at the time. Our boat was the first fastened. The captain was close to, and there was not a hundred yards difference between any of the boats. The deceased was standing in his proper place when the whale rose. The whale rose on the starboard side. There were two lances on each side the boat. Deceased had his left leg in the thigh board, and had thrown one iron into a whale, leaving two lances on the starboard side. The wound was sown up on board by Captain Reynolds.

Thomas Thornley Brooke, duly qualified medical practitioner, stated that on the 16th inst. he had examined the body of the deceased, and found on each side of the lower part of the calf of the left leg a wound corresponding with what would be the ingress and egress of a whale lance, in such a direction that it would pass between the bones of the leg and sever the interior and posterior tibial arteries, and no proper means having been used to arrest the hemorrhage, bleeding to death was a natural consequence of such an injury.

Jeremiah Scanlan, whaler, in the Flying Childers, gave evidence that on the above day, a whale being in sight, a boat was lowered, containing deceased, and William Curtis, and four other men, and that after one whale had been made

fast, another suddenly rose alongside the boat in which deceased was and stove it, and deceased then came into the second mate's boat in which witness was. Captain Reynolds then came from his own boat and bound up the wound with pieces of cotton shirts, and then had deceased conveyed on board the ship and took him into the cabin, where deceased had his face bathed and was attended to. This witness further stated that he had been in the Flying Childers with deceased since he left the port of Hobart Town about two months ago, and that deceased was a kind good man, and was on friendly terms with all on board, and was deeply regretted.

The Coroner then briefly went through the evidence, and the jury returned a verdict of accidental death, adding a memorandum expressive of their regret that no one on board had sufficient thought or knowledge to lead them to apply an artificial tourniquet to prevent haemorrhage until the man could have been brought up to town for surgical assistance.<sup>3</sup>

HOBART TOWN AND THE SOUTH. An inquest was held on Saturday afternoon, touching the death of **Charles Revell**, late chief officer of the whaling bark Flying Childers. It appeared that on Wednesday last, when off South-west Cape, the boat in which deceased acted as headsman was fast to a whale, when another came up and stove the boat forward, striking it with his head and taking the bow clean off. The blow bent one of the lances lying in the boat sending it through Mr. Revell's left leg below the calf. Deceased hauled the lance out himself, and then got into another boat, and was taken to the ship, but it was found to be impossible, in the absence of a surgeon, to stop the bleeding, and the unfortunate man died the same evening. The jury returned a verdict of accidental death, adding a memorandum expressive of their regret that no one on board had sufficient thought or knowledge to apply an artificial tourniquet to prevent heomorrhage until the man could receive surgical assistance.<sup>4</sup>

Information was brought to town on 14th instant of a fatal accident which happened off the South West Cape on 12th instant to Mr **Charles Revell**, a young man of about 23 years of age, chief officer of the whaling barque Flying Childers, Captain M Reynolds, under the following circumstances - At eleven o'clock in the morning of 12th, as Mr Revell, with four others of the ship's crew was in one of the boats in chase of a whale which had been stuck, and whilst nearing the fish they were making towards a loose whale rose almost immediately under the boat in which Revell was standing, staving in one side, and by some means one of the lances became bent and was forced through Mr Revell's left leg, just below the calf, and it is supposed that the unfortunate man's side was also injured. The boat was immediately pulled to the ship, and Mr Revell having been placed in his berth, every means were taken to stop the hemorrhage, but the efforts made in that direction were not, we understand, successful until about six o'clock in the evening, Mr Revell breathing his last at seven. The boat steerer, Mr William Curtis, and crew brought up the body from Partridge Island and deposited it in Mr Revell's late residence in Brisbane street, to await an inquest. Deceased, who was much respected, was well known in Hobart Town, had passed his life from boyhood in whaling vessels, and had been married but about eight months. The flags of the vessels in harbor were lowered to half mast on receipt of the above painful intelligence. An inquest was held on the body in Hobart Town on 15th inst., and after the examination of several witnesses, a verdict was returned of accidental death. Deceased was buried on the 17th inst., and was followed to his grave by a very large number of persons.<sup>5</sup>

Catherine received her Certificate of Freedom on 17 February 1847.

Alfred Revill died in Sydney in 1847, aged 35. He presumably went to NSW to join his brothers Charles and Benjamin, both convicts who had been transported to NSW. But Catherine did not accompany him there.

Catherine then partnered with Henry Surman and two children resulted:

4. Walter Surman born 15 May 1849 at Hobart and died 1 July 1849 of convulsions.
5. Catherine Surman born 12 May 1851 at Hobart and married (1) Richard Peters on 20 November 1876. Richard was born 3 April 1848 in Hobart and died 18 October 1885 at Port Cygnet, Tas. Catherine then married William Mitchell on 27 August 1887. William was born 27 December 1859 at Greenponds, Tas. and died 23 January 1897 at Zeehan, Tas. Catherine then married Frank Charles Stevenson on 24 May 1899 at Hobart. Frank was born in 1859 at Linton, England and died 8 June 1934 at North Hobart.

Catherine Surman/Peters/Mitchell/Stevenson died 31 March 1928 at Hobart.

The relationship between Henry Surman and Catherine Lyons appears to have ended in 1851, when Henry applied to marry 17 year old Emma Attwood.

On 24 May 1861, Catherine Lyons was charged by Sub-Inspector Hadley with disturbing the peace,<sup>6</sup> for abusing another woman in Warwick St, where she lived. She stated she had been "three and twenty years in the colony", indicating she arrived in 1838, the year in which our Catherine arrived. Coincidentally, Henry and Emma also lived in Warwick St at that time.

Catherine then took Emma Surman to Court on 29 April 1863:<sup>7</sup>

Sureties of the Peace. - Lyons v. Surman. An application by **Catherine Lyons** to have "Ellen" Surman bound over to keep the peace, for using threatening language to the complainant, by saying that she would tear her heart out, if she waited till the dead of the night for it.

---

<sup>3</sup> The Mercury 17 February 1868.

<sup>4</sup> Launceston Examiner 20 February 1868.

<sup>5</sup> The Mercury 29 February 1868.

<sup>6</sup> The Mercury 1 June 1861.

<sup>7</sup> The Mercury 30 April 1863.

## Catherine Lyons

---

Mr. Moriarty appeared for the complainant, and Mr. Graves, for the defendant.

The complainant examined by Mr. Moriarty, deposed to the language used by the defendant, and stated that she was in fear of personal violence from her.

Cross-examined by Mr. Graves: I am afraid that the defendant will do me an injury. There was no one in the street, but Mrs. Crowther was in my house.

Agnes Crowther gave evidence as to some bad language made use of by the defendant to the complainant.

Ellen Patterson gave similar testimony.

Mr. Graves addressed the Bench for the defendant, and proposed to call witnesses to prove provocation and malice.

Mr. Jones said that no evidence could be called as to the facts, but only as to malice, and that must be express and direct.

Mr. Graves submitted that he could show from the words of the complainant, that she entertained the most bitter malice towards the defendant.

Mr. Jones observed that the learned counsel intended to prove implied and not direct malice, and such evidence could not be admitted.

Mr. Graves then sat down.

Mr. Jones said that this case was similar to one tried yesterday, in which His Worship saw no reason to bind over the defendant. The present case must therefore be dismissed.

Catherine Revill died in Hobart on 6 August 1864 and her age at death matches what we have discovered about Catherine Lyons. Her death certificate says the informant was George Revill, her husband, but we cannot tie this partnership to any official records.

**Document written by Geoffrey A Court.**