

In 1853 at Glasgow, Thomas Daily and Neil Higney seized a man by the throat and rifled his pockets, stealing 2s. A witness raised the alarm, and a watchman apprehended them. The 2s was found under Higney's tongue. The two men were well-known to the authorities, and Thomas narrowly escaped a custodial sentence at the previous Glasgow Circuit. Not so lucky this time, Thomas received 14 years' transportation and Neil 7 years' transportation.

In Scottish records, Thomas is described as a puddler, aged 19, from Old Wynd, Glasgow and born in Ireland. He arrived at Fremantle in 1855.

In 1862 at Glasgow, Thomas Dailey or Daily was accused of returning from transportation before his 14-year sentence expired. He pleaded guilty.

In his defence, his counsel said Thomas had conducted himself well in Western Australia and received a conditional pardon in 1858 that allowed him to go anywhere except any part of Her Majesty's dominions. He sailed to the west coast of South America. Along with others, he was pressed and put on board an American ship. He did not know the ship was bound for England until at sea. After landing in England, he came to Glasgow, where he has been employed for the last 12 months, living an honest life. He was now married with a child, although no marriage has been found. Thomas was sentenced to one month in prison, then three years of penal servitude.

He was sent to Millbank Prison and then to Dartmoor Prison. The quarterly Surgeon's Reports at Dartmoor describe him as invalid or rather delicate. In 1865, he was transferred to Portsmouth. While there, the Governor received a letter from Glasgow:

*Enquiries have been made by us to Mrs C Cassidy, Buchanan Court, 105 Stockwell St, Glasgow. – Her maiden name is Cassidy, and by marriage Higney, but there is no doubt she is the person referred to by your prisoner. – The Police know nothing against her, but she appears to be poor and miserable. – The Higney's, Cassidy's and Daileys relations are all composed of Returned Convicts or convicts undergoing imprisonment.*

Thomas then moved to the Woking Invalid Depot, released in October 1865 when his sentence expired.

He returned to Glasgow, but it was not long before he was in trouble again. In 1867, at his house in Old Wynd, he seized an army pensioner by the throat and robbed him of a watch, gold Albert chain, gold locket and £3 2s. While being taken to the Police Office, Thomas dropped the watch in the street. When searched, a portion of the gold chain was found in his mouth. He was sentenced to eight years of penal servitude.

Thomas served his time in Glasgow, Perth, Dartmoor, Portsmouth and Woking prisons. Due to delicate health, he mainly worked inside the prisons. The problem was curvature of the spine that made him a little deformed. However, it did not stop Thomas from getting into trouble numerous times – malingering, trafficking in bread, refusing to work, talking in his cell, wilfully cutting a new pair of shoes and insolence. After stealing a pipe from a sailor's pocket in 1871, he was to be marched to and from work in handcuffs for six months.

During his time at Portsmouth, Thomas wrote letters to his sisters in Glasgow and America. He received letters from one sister and his brother, both living in Glasgow. No letters were written to his wife, child, or sister, who was named his next of kin.

During the final two years of his sentence, spent at Woking, he was often unfit for work or performed light work such as knitting, picking oakum or working in the kitchen.

Thomas was released on license in July 1874, under the usual license conditions. He was to make an honest living and not associate with any 'unsavoury' characters. If the license were forfeited, the remainder of his sentence would be served in prison, i.e. one year and three months. The Discharged Prisoners' Aid Society in Glasgow was to assist him on his release.

No further information has been found on Thomas.

Notes: The Convicts in Western Australia book incorrectly has Thomas Daley/Daily dying on 30 June 1919 at Wanneroo.

Neil Higney was released on license in 1859 from Dartmoor Prison. He married Thomas' sister Isabella Daily in 1861 at Glasgow, and he died of a diseased chest in 1863.

Information on The Discharged Prisoners' Aid Society in Glasgow at:

<https://archiveshub.jisc.ac.uk/search/archives/d8935bbf-5abb-3a46-a50d-fe983c5c5ac8>