

John Lewis



Born April 9, 1865
Llanddewi Velfrey, Pembrokeshire, Wales

Death 8 Oct 1943
Victoria, British Columbia, Canada

Prepared by:

Jeffrey Stephen Lewis
Great-Grandson of John's Brother, Thomas

The Life of John Lewis (1865 – 1943)

John Lewis was born on 9 April 1865¹. Stephen Lewis was his 22-year-old father and Margret (sometimes Margaret) Thomas Lewis was his 27-year-old mother. He had a 2-year-old brother, Thomas. The family lived at Tyrbach, a 34-acre farm near Llanddewi Velfrey, Pembrokeshire, Wales. His father died suddenly of “Rupture of the Bowells” on 17 March 1866, before John’s first birthday². Margret gave birth to Martha on 27 October 1866 and was left to take care of Tirbach (translated from Welch as ‘small land,’ sometimes Tyrbach) with her three small children.



Mary Griffiths (wife of Emyln), Stephen B Lewis, Clara Griffiths (wife of Steve B Griffiths) & Anne Cleary outside Tirbach in 1963.



Circa 1967 and 2013 photos of Tirbach farm, Wales

The 1871 Wales Census¹ showed Margret as a farmer of 34 acres, living at Tyrbach with her three children: Thomas Lewis (age 8), John Lewis (age 6), and Martha Lewis (age 4). They had one farm servant named Elizabeth Beynon (age 19). Thomas and John are listed as “scholars” indicating they were attending school. By the 1881 Census, Tyrbach had shrunk to 26 acres, and 16-year old John was a “servant” with Thomas Thomas, his mother’s brother. This was at “Pantyhas,” a nearby 57-acre farm that previously belonged to Margret’s parents.



Circa 2012 photo of Pantyhas farm , Wales

About 1888, 22-year-old John married Catherine Jones from Buihth, Breconshire, Wales. On 14 October 1889 they had their first child, Anne. In 1891 John is a cabinetmaker,³ his profession for the rest of his life.

In 1891, John, Catherine and Anne immigrated to Canada.¹ Their second child, Thomas Llewellyn, was born 10 December 1893 in Victoria.⁴ They established themselves at 60 Niagara Street, Victoria, Canada with John working as a cabinetmaker.⁵ ⁶ Their third child, Maggie Myfanwy, was born 5 June 1896. In 1897, John was working for the Victoria furniture maker Weiler Brothers.⁷ ⁸ ⁹

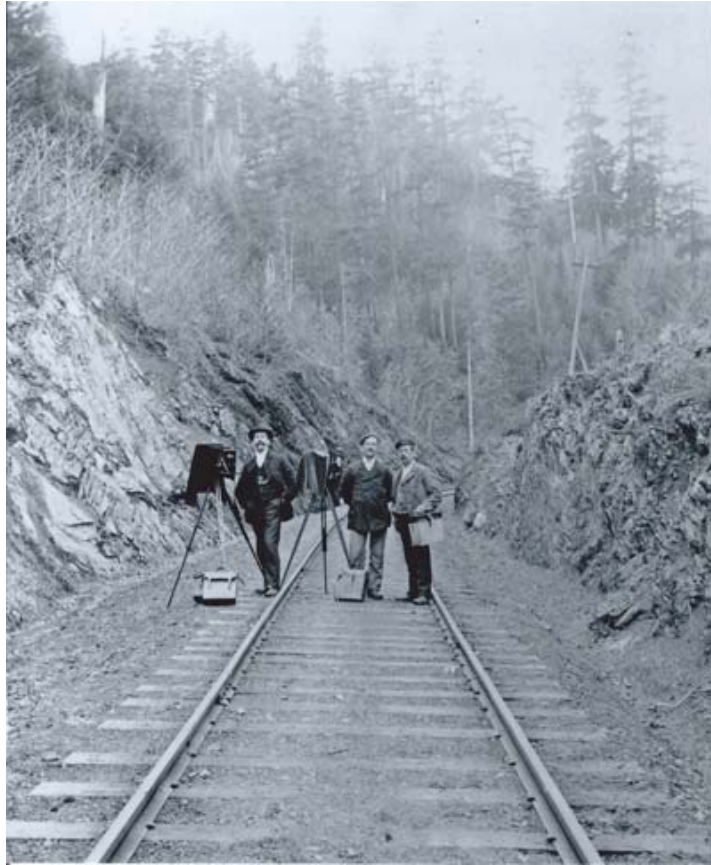


Weiler Brothers Warerooms, Victoria, circa 1891

In 1899, John's family moved to 5 Haughton Street in Victoria, a street name that no longer exists.¹⁰ About 1900 John built their new home at 87 Carr Street,¹¹ ¹² ¹³ a few blocks from the center of Victoria. Carr Street was renamed about 1907 and their address became 58 Government Street. "Evidence of [John's] craft can be seen throughout the house, especially in the ornate mantelpiece and decorative woodwork in the living room as well as in the wood-paneled vestibule."¹⁴ John built at least one other home in this timeframe.¹⁵

By 1901, John was an accomplished Victoria amateur photographer. Several of his photographs are in the City of Victoria Archives.¹⁶ John photographed his family, houses he built, and parks around Victoria.

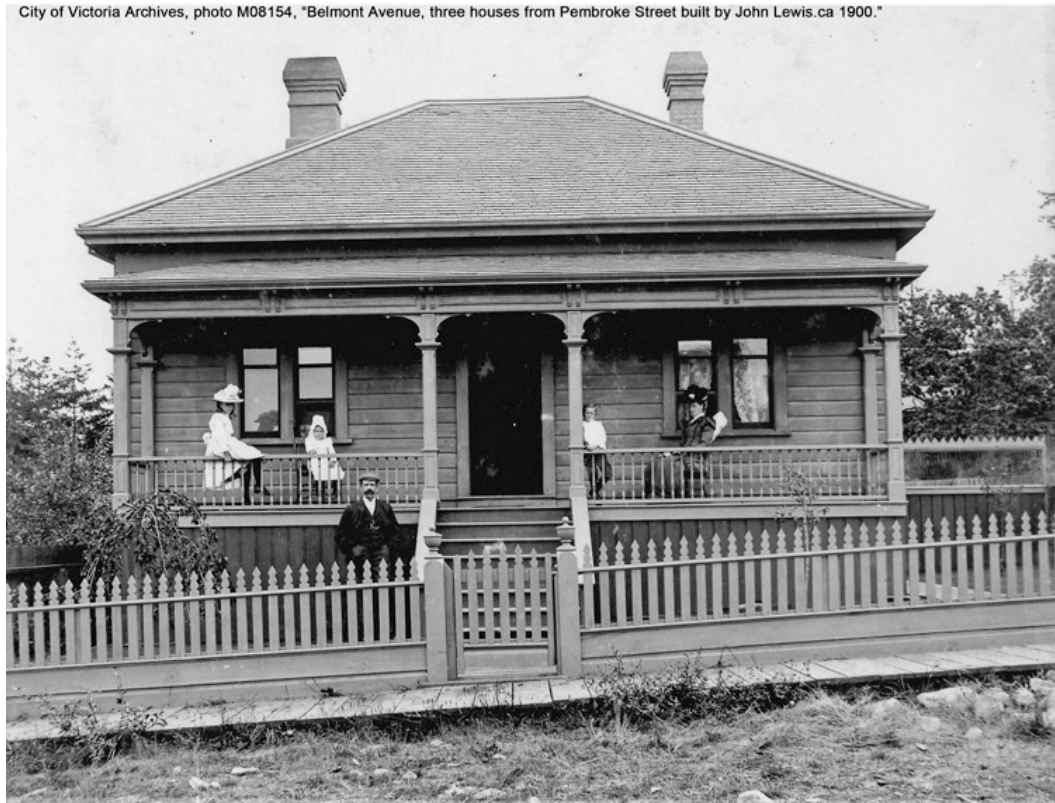
About 1903, John's older brother Thomas arrived from Wales, staying in Victoria before immigrating to San Francisco on the ship "Umatilla" in September 1903.¹⁷



Circa 1901 photo of photographer John Lewis (left) with two assistants
(Photo by John Lewis)



Circa 1901 photo of house built by John Lewis at 58 Government Street, Victoria, Canada
(Photo by John Lewis)



Circa 1900 photo of house built by John Lewis at 2217 Belmont St., Victoria, Canada.
L to R: Anne Lewis, Maggie Myfanwy Lewis, John Lewis, Thomas Llewellyn Lewis, Catherine Lewis
(Photo by John Lewis)

John's daughter Anne was still living at 87 Carr Street in 1905.¹⁸ In 1908, John was a cabinetmaker for D. Spencer Ltd department store and Anne was living with John, and was a clerk at Beeton & Company, a dry goods supplier.^{19 20} In 1909, Anne had moved away, and John's son Thomas was living at 58 Government and working as a plumber for A Sheret Limited,^{21 2223} a distributor of plumbing and heating supplies.²⁴

By 1911, Anne had moved away, married Daniel Day and had a son Daniel. John was working 48 hours a week at the Spencer factory, making \$2000 annually. John was living at 58 Government with his 50-year-old wife Catherine, his 18-year-old son Thomas who was working as a plumber, and his 14-year-old daughter Maggie.²⁵

In September 1912, Stephen Benjamin Lewis, John's brother's son, arrived from Wales.²⁶ Stephen lived at 58 Government Street. Stephen got a job as clerk at the Hudson's Bay Company,²⁷ saving his money so he could send for his fiancée, Mabel Isabella Thomas who was living in Bournemouth, England.²⁸

In 1914 Maggie, now known as Margaret, moved out of 58 Government Street to live with her older sister, Anne.²⁹



Title: Spencer's Store; Government Street, Victoria, circa 1907

By 1915 Stephen had been promoted to manager of the Hudson's Bay liquor department.³⁰ In March 1915, Mabel arrived from England,³¹ and married Stephen on 5 April.³² Stephen and Mabel moved into their own Victoria home, leaving John, wife Catherine, and son Thomas at 58 Government Street.³³ Stephen and Mabel's baby son Leonard William Lewis was born 6 February 1916³⁴ leaving Mabel with childbirth complications that led to her death on 4 April 1916.³⁵ Likely John and Catherine assisted Stephen, Mabel and Leonard during these difficult times.

In August 1917, Stephen and Leonard immigrated to San Francisco³⁶ to join Stephen's father Thomas and stepmother Mary.³⁷

In 1920, both Margaret (aka Maggie) and Mrs. Anne Day were again living with John and Catherine at 58 Government St. Margaret was working as a nurse.³⁸ Anne was a court stenographer making \$780 annually.³⁹

In 1925, Maggie Lewis immigrated to Seattle, married William Anders Dunks⁴⁰ and lived the rest of her life in Seattle. She died in Seattle on 8 July 1965 at the age of 69.^{41,42}

In 1940, Anne Day was living with her husband Daniel in Yale, British Columbia.⁴³ Daniel died in 1946 at age 68.⁴⁴ On 11 July 1949, Anne married Stephen Henry Temple in Seattle, Washington.⁴⁵ Margaret and William Dunks were the official witnesses at this marriage. Anne died in Vernon, British Columbia on 16 December 1943 at age 84.⁴⁶

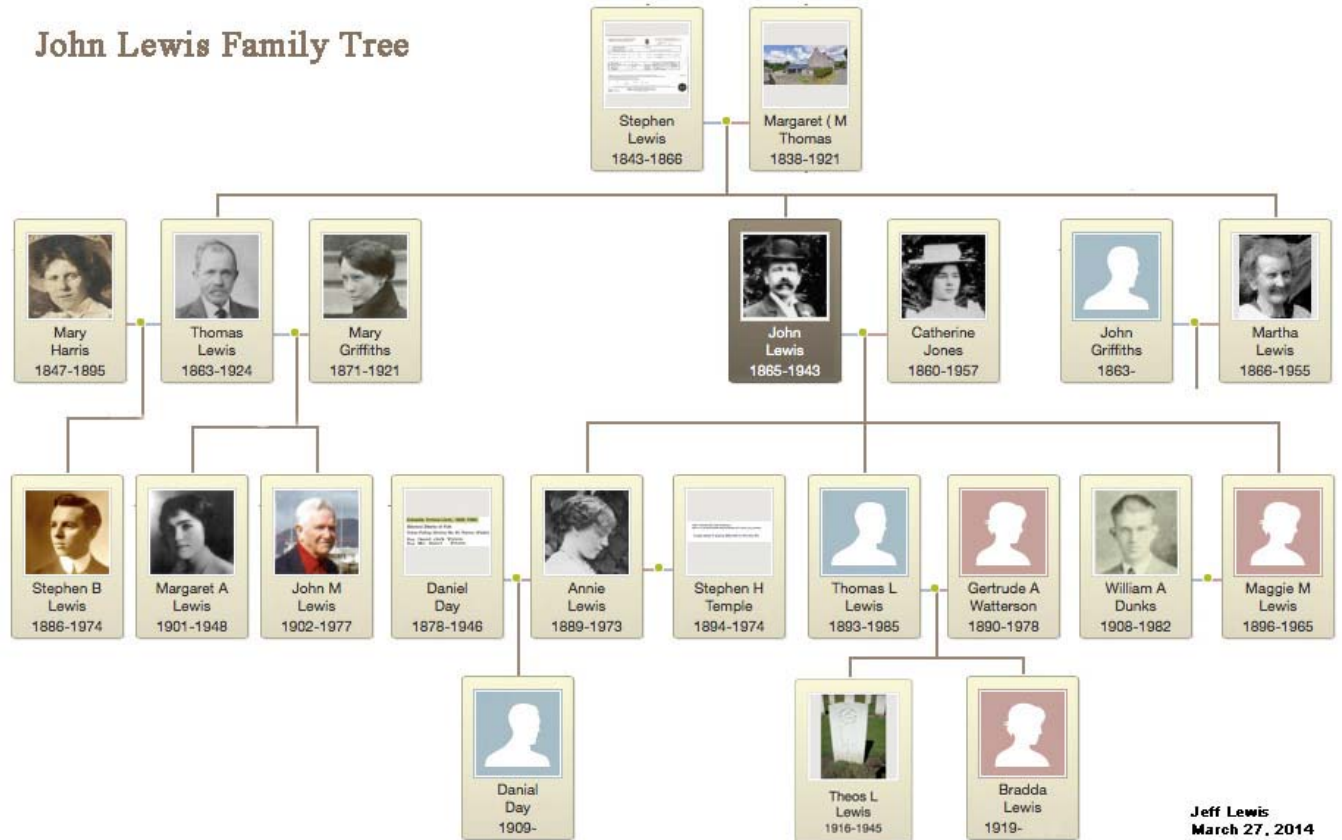


Anne Lewis
(Photo found at John Lewis B&B)

John Lewis died 8 October 1943 at age 78.⁴⁷ He was retired at 58 Government with his wife Catherine.⁴⁸ Catherine died 24 April 1957 at age 96.⁴⁹

Thomas L Lewis and his wife, Gertrude Alice Watterson, moved back to 58 Government by 1945.⁵⁰ This same year, Thomas's son, Theos Llewellyn Lewis, a Royal Canadian Air Force pilot, died in a flight accident in England.⁵¹

Years after Thomas's death in 1985,⁵² 58 Government Street became the John Lewis House Bed and Breakfast.⁵³ The author has not been able to find any living descendants of John Lewis.



John Lewis family tree

¹1871 Wales Census, Pembrokeshire, Llanddewi Velfrey, District 6, page 7 of 16

² Death certificate, Home Office, Identity & Passport Service

³ 1891 Wales Census, Carmarthenshire, Llanboidy, District 2, page 4 of 19.

⁴ 1901 Census of Canada, British Columbia, Victoria, page 22 of 283

⁵ 1894 Williams Official BC Directory, Victoria, which reads:

**Lewis, John, cabinet maker, res 60
Niagara S**

⁶ 1895 Williams Official BC Directory, Victoria

**Lewis, John, cabinet mkr, res 60
Niagara**

Reference: http://www.vpl.ca/bccd/index.php/browse/title/1895/Williams%27_Official_BC_Directory

⁷ 1897 Henderson's BC Gazetteer and Directory, Victoria, which reads:

Lewis, J., cabinet maker, Weiler Bros.

⁸ 1899→Williams Official BC Directory, Victoria

**Lewis, John, cabinetmaker, Weiler
Bros., 5 Haughton st.**

Reference: http://www.vpl.ca/bccd/index.php/browse/title/1899/Williams%27_Official_BC_Directory

⁹ 1900-1901 Henderson's BC Gazetteer and Directory, Victoria, which reads:

**Lewis, J., cabinet maker, Weiler Bros.
h. 5 Houghton.**

Reference: http://www.vpl.ca/bccd/index.php/browse/title/1900-1901/Henderson%27s_BC_Gazetteer_and_Directory

¹⁰ 1899 Williams Official BC Directory, Victoria, page 410, which reads:

**Lewis, John, cabinetmaker, Weiler
Bros., 5 Haughton st.**

¹¹ 1902 Henderson's BC Gazetteer and Directory, Victori

**Lewis, J., cabinet maker, Weiler Bros.
h 87 Carr.**

Note: Carr Street was renamed Government Street and renumbered at a later date

Reference: http://www.vpl.ca/bccd/index.php/browse/title/1902/Henderson%27s_BC_Gazetteer_and_Directory

¹² 1903 Henderson's BC Gazetteer and Directory, Victoria

**Lewis, John, cabinet maker, Weiler
Bros., h 87 Carr.**

Reference: http://www.vpl.ca/bccd/index.php/browse/title/1903/Henderson%27s_BC_Gazetteer_and_Directory

¹³ 1904 Henderson's BC Gazetteer and Directory, Victoria, which reads:

**Lewis, John, cabinet maker, Weiler
Bros., h 87 Carr.**

Reference: http://www.vpl.ca/bccd/index.php/browse/title/1904/Henderson%27s_BC_Gazetteer_and_Directory

¹⁴ See URL <http://www.johnlewishouse.com/about/>

¹⁵ This house was, and is, at 2217 Belmont St., Victoria, Canada. John's own photo included.

¹⁶ See URL <http://www.victoria.ca/assets/Departments/Legislative~Services/Archives/Documents/photos-subject.pdf>.

"The fonds consists of 26 copies of photographs that were loaned to the archives. Images depict the James Bay neighborhood, Beacon Hill Park, the Gorge, Weiler Brothers Furniture staff, house at 58 Government Street, and members of the Lewis family."

¹⁷ California, Passenger and Crew Lists, 1882-1957, San Francisco, 1903, September

¹⁸ 1905 City of Victoria and Suburban Directory, which reads:

Lewis, Annie, h 87 Carr.

**Lewis, John, cabinet maker, Weiler
Bros., h 87 Carr.**

Reference: http://www.vpl.ca/bccd/index.php/browse/title/1905/City_of_Victoria_and_Suburban_Directory

19 1908 City of Victoria and Suburban Directory, which reads:

**Lewis Annie clerk Turner Beeton &
Co h 58 Government**
...

**Lewis John cabinet maker D Spencer
Ltd h 58 Government**

20 See <http://www.historicplaces.ca/fr/rep-reg/place-lieu.aspx?id=3927>

21 1909 Directory of Vancouver Island, Victoria, which reads:

**Lewis, John, emp. David Spencer, Ltd.,
h. 58 Government.**
...

**Lewis, Thomas, plumber, lvs. 58 Gov-
ernment.**

Reference: http://www.vpl.ca/bccd/index.php/browse/title/1909/Directory_of_Vancouver_Island

22 1910-1911 Henderson's Greater Victoria City Directory, which reads:

**Lewis John cabt mkr D Spencer Ltd
h 58 Government**
...

**Lewis Thomas L emp A Sheret lvs
58 Government**

Reference: http://www.vpl.ca/bccd/index.php/browse/title/1910-1911/Henderson%27s_Greater_Victoria_City_Directory

23 1912 Henderson's Greater Victoria City Directory, which reads:

**Lewis John cabtmkr Spencer's r 58 Gov-
ernment**
...

**Lewis Thos L plumber Andrew Sherat r
58 Government**

Reference: http://www.vpl.ca/bccd/index.php/browse/title/1912/Henderson%27s_Greater_Victoria_City_Directory

24 Reference URL <http://www.sheret.com>

25 1911 Census of Canada, British Columbia Victoria Sub-District 24, page 7 of 36

26 Canadian Passenger Lists, 1865-1935, Quebec, Quebec, 1912, September, ship Ascania

27 1913 Henderson's Greater Victoria City Directory, which reads:

**Lewis John cabtmkr Spencer's h 58
Government**
...

**Lewis Maggie M opr B C Tel Co r 58
Government**
...

**Lewis Stephen B clk Hudson's Bay Co r
58 Government**

http://www.vpl.ca/bccd/index.php/browse/title/1913/Henderson%27s_Greater_Victoria_City_Directory

28 Story told by Stephen B Lewis to his grandson Jeffrey Lewis

29 1914 Henderson's Greater Victoria City Directory, which reads:

Lewis Annie r 2853 Graham

**Lewis John cabtmkr Spencer's h 58
Government**

Lewis Margaret r 2853 Graham

**Lewis Richd caretkr Parliament Bldgs
h 2853 Graham**

**Lewis Stephen B clk Hudson's Bay Co r
58 Government**

Lewis Thos L plumber r 58 Government

30 1915 Henderson's Greater Victoria City Directory, which reads:

Lewis John cabtmkr h 58 Government

**Lewis Stephen B liquor dept mgr H B Co r 58
Government**

Reference: http://www.vpl.ca/bccd/index.php/browse/title/1915/Henderson%27s_Greater_Victoria_City_Directory

31 Canadian Passenger Lists, 1865-1935, Saint John, New Brunswick, 1915, March, ship Missanabie

32 British Columbia, Canada, Marriage Index, 1872-1935, Registration Number: 1915-09-029462; BCA Number: B11371; GSU Number: 1983528

33 1917 Henderson's Greater Victoria City Directory, which reads:

Lewis John cabtmkr h 58 Government

**Lewis Stephen B mgr retail liquor dept
H B Co r 1028 Princess**

**Lewis Thos L mech Begg Motor Co r
58 Government**

Reference: http://www.vpl.ca/bccd/index.php/browse/title/1917/Henderson%27s_Greater_Victoria_City_Directory

34 Birth Certificate and personal knowledge of Jeffrey S Lewis.

35 British Columbia, Canada, Death Index, 1872-1990

36 Washington, Passenger and Crew Lists, 1882-1961, 1917, August, ship name not stated

37 1920 United States Federal Census, California, San Francisco, San Francisco Assembly District 27, District 0341, page 33 of 44.

38 1920 Henderson's Victoria Directory, which reads:

Lewis John cabtmkr h 58 Government

Day Mrs Annie r 58 Government

Lewis Margaret nurse r 58 Government

http://www.vpl.ca/bccd/index.php/browse/title/1920/Henderson's_Victoria_Directory

39 1921 Census of Canada, British Columbia, Victoria, Sub-District 11, Ward 5, page 32 of 39

40 U.S., Naturalization Records - Original Documents, 1795-1972 (World Archives Project), Washington District Court Petition and record, 1940, #29685-30151, page 392 of 470.

41 Washington Death Index, 1940-1996

42 See <http://www.findagrave.com/cgi-bin/fg.cgi?page=gr&GRid=88033852>

43 Canada, Voters Lists, 1935-1980, British Columbia, Yale, 1940, page 190 of 210

44 <http://www.findagrave.com/cgi-bin/fg.cgi?page=gr&GSln=DAY&GSpartial=1&GSbyrel=all&GScntry=10&GSsr=121&GRid=41413658&>

45 Washington, Marriage Records, 1865-2004

⁴⁶ British Columbia, Canada, Death Index, 1872-1990, Registration Number: 1973-09-018184; BCA Number: B13329; GSU Number: 2050284

⁴⁷ British Columbia, Canada, Death Index, 1872-1990, Registration Number: 1943-09-630990; BCA Number: B13180; GSU Number: 1953640

⁴⁸ 1943 British Columbia and Yukon Directory, page 1967.

Lewis

—John (Cath) retired h 58 Govt

⁴⁹ British Columbia, Canada, Death Index, 1872-1990

⁵⁰ 1945 British Columbia and Yukon Directory, page 1960

LEWIS—(Cont'd)

—Thos L (Gertrude A) mach VMD r 58 Govt

⁵¹ British Columbia Death Registrations, 1872-1986, Theos Llewellyn Lewis, Affiliate Film Number: B14425; GS Film number: 2231495; Digital Folder Number: 004479292; Image Number: 00289; Registration Number: 702525

⁵² British Columbia, Canada, Death Index, 1872-1990: Registration Number: 1985-09-021280; BCA Number: B16577; GSU Number: 1358017

⁵³ Reference the URL www.johnlewishouse.com

About the Author
April 2014

It might be said that my interest in John Lewis began when Janet Himmelright found and contacted me, her second, half-cousin. Both Janet and Jeff used ancestry.com to research their Lewis ancestors. Later, Janet's mother, Margaret A Simmons, made a casual comment about the very tall heights of her female Welsh cousins in Canada. What cousins in Canada?

Jeff and Janet began to track down John Lewis and his family. John Lewis is both Jeff's great granduncle and Janet's great granduncle. Thomas Lewis, John's older brother, mentioned in the story, is Janet's and Jeff's great grandfather. Jeff is the son of Leonard William Lewis, mentioned in this story.

During her online search, Janet made two key discoveries: The John Lewis Bed & Breakfast, and the **John Lewis fonds** in the City of Victoria Archives. Jeff had been outside 58 Government Street decades before, and knew his grandfather Stephen had lived there. Jeff also knew Stephen's wife, Mable, was buried at Victoria's Ross Cemetery.

After months of research, Jeff, his wife Cindy, and Janet and her husband Tom, decided to stay at the John Lewis B&B and expand their search for John Lewis information. During their stay in July 2012, the innkeepers, Bob and Becky, the Royal BC Museum and the City of Victoria Archives all provided key documents.

Jeff and Cindy Lewis live in Templeton, California. Janet and Tom live in Ridgefield, Connecticut.