

## JOHN 1716 to 1782 SAMUEL'S GRANDFATHER

Samuel's father William was the son of John and Elizabeth Harford. John was christened on 12 March 1715 at Heytesbury. He was also known as Jack. The record shows John's father's name was Thomas.

John married Elizabeth, who was significantly younger, born about 1730. We are not aware of Elizabeth's maiden name or the date of their marriage. Elizabeth was known as Betty. We have identified that they had at least four children:

We believe their first born child was named **Benjamin** who was christened on 5 July 1752. The Christening record in the Parish Register shows his parents were John and Mary Harford but the Bishop's Transcripts show the parents as John and Elizabeth Harford<sup>1</sup>. There are no other births recorded with the parents of John and Mary Harford.

**Benjamin**, we believe, married Jane Lydford on 30 November 1791 at Heytesbury. We have identified one child of the marriage a son named Thomas christened 15 September 1793. Jane died at Heytesbury in 1804 at the age of 52 and was buried on 25 March. We have identified a Benjamin who was buried on 23 August 1809 at age 64 which implies a birth year of 1745 compared with the known christen date of July 1752.

The other children were:

**Mary** Christened at Heytesbury 14 February 1755. Buried 13 July 1755 at Heytesbury.

**William** Christened at Heytesbury 31 October 1758. He married Jane Cowdrey on 25 October 1781 at Heytesbury. They had six children. Jane died in 1802 and was buried on 7 April 1802. William then married Deborah Boffen on 10 August 1802 and they had 8 children including Samuel. William died in 1837 and was buried on 12 March 1837. Deborah died in 1852 at Heytesbury

**James** Christened at Heytesbury 23 January 1763. Buried on 11 May 1774

If John and Elizabeth had other children there are there no christening records for them.

We are fortunate to have a small insight into John's life that confirms the view of his poverty. The church at Heytesbury supported parishioners who were in need and records were kept of the assistance provided to them in the Churchwarden's Minute Book<sup>2</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> Indexed Transcripts of Heytesbury Baptisms 1582 to 1837, Wiltshire Family History Society

<sup>2</sup> Heytesbury Parishioners 1771-1785 and 1879-1883, Wiltshire Parish Records No.32, WFHS.

**HARFORD John/Jack**

26 Apr 1773 to allow 1/- per week until he gets work  
20 Sep 1773 to allow 1/- per week until he can get work  
4 Oct 1773 to allow 1/- per week and a shirt  
11 Jan 1774 to allow wife 1/- per week whilst ill  
12 Feb 1776 to give a blanket, a shirt, a buggcoat and two shillings per week until able to work at discretion  
8 Jul 1776 it is agreed that he shall go to the house he was turned out of until he can be better provided for  
26 Aug 1776 to allow the Doctor  
2 Feb 1778 to allow 1/- per week until his wife is better  
26 Oct 1778 to allow a shirt  
13 Dec 1779 to allow a shirt and 1/- per week until his wife is better  
28 Feb 1780 to allow wife 1/- per week until Easter  
25 Apr 1780 to allow wife 1/-  
18 Oct 1780 to allow a bug coat, shirt and a pair of canvas breeches  
24 Sep 1781 to allow a shirt, a pair of breeches, pair of shoes and a waistcoat

By 1773, Benjamin, the eldest of John's children was 21 and would have left home, Mary had died, William was 15 and probably working and the youngest James was 10 years old. He died in 1774 so for most of the nine year period this assistance was for John and his wife. John was approaching 60 and still working. Because of his age he would not have been as fit and strong as younger men and he was having difficulty in getting work from time to time.

Another item indicates the lack of control he had over his accommodation:

**DYER Simon**

13 Dec 1779 the family to go in with Mary GILBERT or John HARFORD and to allow 5/- per week until further orders

We have also observed that in 1776 John's son William received assistance because of some illness or injury:

**Harford William**

7 Jan 1776 to allow 2/- per week while he lays at home

In 1776 at age 60 John was obviously ill and by 1780/81 his wife also was apparently not well and she died on 31 October 1781 about a month after the last assistance was provided.

John died a very short time after his wife. He was buried at Heytesbury on 18 January 1782 some 10 weeks after she had died.

