

WILLIAM 1758 to 1837 SAMUEL'S FATHER

First Marriage to Jane Cowdrey

William's first marriage was to Jane Cowdrey on 25 October 1781 at Heytesbury. Jane was the daughter of Henry Cowdrey (1730-1766) and Amy Potter (1729-1807).

William and Jane were both 23 years old. William was christened on 31 October 1758 and Jane on 23 September 1758.

We have identified that they had at least six children¹:

1. Sarah Christened at Heytesbury 25 May 1783

We have found only one possible event for Sarah. This was a marriage to **James Pearce** at Heytesbury on 19 May 1817.

2. William Christened at Heytesbury 9 April 1786

William was identified in the 1851 Census where he was recorded as living with Deborah (William's second wife) and her son David. The main point of interest is that he was shown as a "*Son in Law*" and a Widower with the age of 65 implying a birth year of 1786 matching the year of his Christening. The description of son in law is incorrect and should have been "*Stepson*". Nevertheless the record points to the fact that William was a son of his father's first marriage.

We believe that William married **Jane Cowdry** at Heytesbury on 30 January 1815. We have not identified that there were any children. We believe Jane died in 1846.

3. Hannah Christened at Heytesbury 11 October 1789

Hannah married **Nicholas Foley** on 25 March 1810 at Heytesbury. They had seven children four of whom died very young:

Charles Christened 14 May 1815

Jane Christened 9 February 1820 Buried 13 August 1822. Age at death: 2 years.

Jane Christened 13 October 1822. Buried 2 May 1823. Age at death: 7 months.

Joseph Christened 25 July 1824

Isabella Christened 28 August 1828

John Christened 18 December 1830. Buried 23 December 1830. Age at death: 3 days.

Anne Christened 27 January 1833' Buried 11 May 1833. Age at death: 7 months.

4. James Christened at Heytesbury 11 December 1791

¹ LDS Genealogy & Indexed Transcripts of Heytesbury Baptisms 1582 to 1837, WFHS

James married **Charlotte Linch** at Heytesbury on 21 November 1814. They had a family of ten children most of whom married and remained in Heytesbury for several generations. Their children were:

James Christened 9 April 1815. Died July-September 1839

George Born c1816. George married Sarah Davis on 21 November 1840. He died January-March 1893 at Heytesbury. Sarah was also born c1816 at Horningsham, Wiltshire. She died at Heytesbury in the October-December quarter 1889.

Maria Christened 2 April 1820. Married John Turner at Heytesbury on 15 March 1846. Maria died in the January to March quarter 1908 at the age of 87. Her husband John had died earlier in the January to March quarter of 1873 at the age of 63.

Joseph Christened 4 August 1822. He married Maria Cooper in the January to March quarter 1869. Joseph died in the January to March quarter 1893.

William Christened 26 Dec 1824. The 1871 Census showed a William Harford, age 45, as a Boarder with his sister Maria Turner and as unmarried.

Elijah Christened 6 June 1828. Elijah married Elizabeth Thomson 29 August 1859 at Norton Bavant near Heytesbury. Elizabeth was born c1835 at Upton Noble, Somerset. Elijah died In the October-December quarter 1892 at Fareham, Hampshire.

Rachel Christened 16 December 1830. Rachel married William Fry (born c 1827) at Heytesbury on 25 August 1850. Rachel died in the October to December quarter 1906 at the age of 76.

Emma Christened 1833. Emma married Charles Hurdle (1831-1901) on 12 July 1860. She died in the October-December quarter 1915 at the age of 81.

Louisa Christened 5 July 1835. She married William Haines (1827-1911) on 15 January 1856. Louisa died in the January to March quarter 1877 at the young age of 42.

Charlotte Christened 24 December 1837. She died in the April to June quarter 1838 only 6 months old.

5. **Robert** Christened at Heytesbury 5 September 1794. He died at the age of 2 years and was buried at Heytesbury on 17 March 1796.²
6. **Susanna** Christened at Heytesbury 2 March 1797. Susanna died at the age of 7 months and was buried on 8 October 1797.

William's first wife Jane died on 7 April 1802. He subsequently married Deborah Boffen later in the year on 10 August.

² Indexed Transcripts of Heytesbury Burials 1582 to 1837, WFHS

Second Marriage to Deborah Boffen

After Jane's death William quickly married Deborah Boffen at Heytesbury on 10 August 1802. He was born about 44 years of age and Deborah was born about 1776 and was aged 26. We have identified christening records for five children born to them over subsequent years:

Jane Christened 26 February 1804. In 1841 Jane was 35 years old and Single. She was not named in the 1851 Census. She died on 12 February 1846 of a diseased Liver which she had had for many years. Her brother David was present at the death and this is consistent with the 1841 census record that they were living together with their mother Deborah

No.	When and where died	Name and surname	Sex	Age	Occupation	Cause of death	Signature, description and residence of informant	When registered	Signature of registrar
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327	12 Feb 1846 Heytesbury	Jane Harford	Female	42	Spinster	Diseased Liver Certified	The mother of the informant David Harford present at death Heytesbury	1846	W. Harford Registrar
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Jane's Death Certificate

Eliza Christened 22 February 1807. Eliza died at the age of 9 months and was buried at Heytesbury on 19 December 1807.

Sophia Christened 17 October 1811. We have not identified any other event for Sophia.

David Christened 12 June 1814. Married Ann Pearce at Corsley, Warminster, Wiltshire. They had two children:

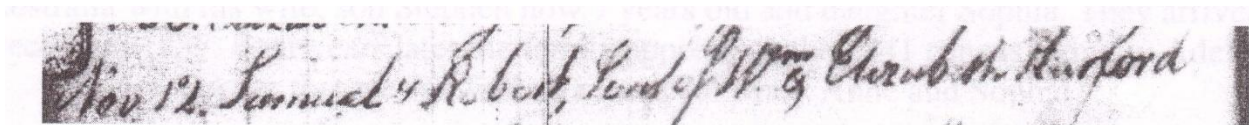
William was born 25 March 1856 at Heytesbury.

Henry C. was born about 1858. He was identified from the 1861 Census when he was aged 3. We believe he died young as was not shown in the 1871 Census.

Harriett Born about 1816 was identified from the 1841 Census in which she is recorded living with Deborah, by that time a widow, and two siblings, Jane and David. She is shown as Deborah's daughter. No christening record has been identified for her. The birth year is derived from the age of 25 supplied in the 1841 Census. On 18 April 1842 Harriett married George Muspratt at Heytesbury.

Obadiah Christened 23 February 1817. With such an unusual name we expected there would be little difficulty in tracing Obadiah's life. However this has not been the case. He is not shown in burial records (up to 1837) and he has not been recorded in Census records which are a basic starting point. The first available census was 1841 by which time he would have been 24 and old enough to have left Heytesbury and possibly England.

Samuel and his brother **Robert** were both baptized on 12 November 1808 at the Church of St Peter and Paul at Heytesbury. We believe that they were twins because of the practice in those days of christening very soon after birth. The Baptismal record shows that their parents were William and Elizabeth:



Baptismal Record Samuel and Robert 1808

The interesting point is the gap between the William and Deborah's children born in early 1807 and late 1811. Such a gap is quite unusual as one would expect children to be born quite regularly on a continuing basis. This combined with the view that William, or William and the vicar making out Samuel and Robert's christening record, made an error in the recording of the children's mother's name. The mother's name on the record is Elizabeth and this is in fact the name of William's own mother. It is quite plausible that when he was asked for the mother's name William supplied his own mother's name rather than Deborah's.

The importance of this explanation, if accepted, is that we are able to further trace William's ancestors. If it is not accepted then we have no further evidence of any other William Harford at the time and as well we have not identified any other children a William and Elizabeth. In fact the only Harford parents through this period were William and Deborah.

Proceeding on the basis that William and Deborah were in fact Samuel and Robert's parents then we can add their names to the children above filling in the gap between 1807 and 1811 in William and Deborah's family.

William died in 1837 at the age of 80. He was buried at Heytesbury on 12 March of that year. Deborah was recorded in the 1841 and 1851 Census returns. In 1841 she was living at Little London and described as age 65 and a Pauper. With her were her children David, age 25 with the occupation of Labourer, Jane age 35 Pauper, Harriett age 25 Woollen Cloth worker.

In 1851 she was still at Little London and the return shows her as the head of the household, a widow, age 68 and a Pauper. Living with her were her son David, unmarried, age 36, and an Agricultural Labourer. As well there is a William Harford recorded as "Son in Law," age 65 a Widower with occupation of Agricultural Labourer. This is the son of William and Jane Cowdrey and hence Deborah's step son. William's wife Jane had died in 1846 as had Deborah's daughter Jane.

These Census returns give quite different ages for Deborah implying birth years of 1776 and 1783. Deborah died of Apoplexy on 13 April 1852 at Heytesbury. Her age was shown as 72 years implying a birth year of 1780. The informant was her stepson William who appears to have continued to live with her.

No.	When and where died	Name and surname	Sex	Age	Occupation	Cause of death	Signature, description and residence of informant	When registered	Signature of registrar
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388	Thirteenth April 1852 Heytesbury	Deborah Harford	Female	72	Labourer	Apoplexy	William Harford The mark of William Harford present at death Heytesbury	Fourteenth April 1852	Thomas Rogshaw
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Deborah's Death Certificate