

SAMUEL HARFORD CONVICT

1. INTRODUCTION

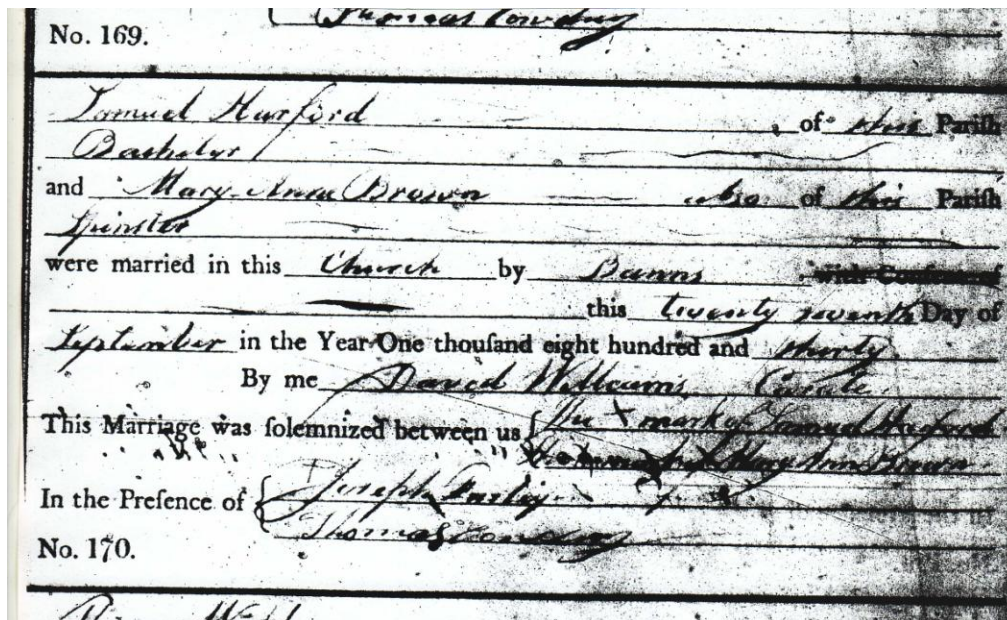
Samuel Harford was baptised at the Parish Church of St Peter & St Paul Heytesbury, Wiltshire, England on 12 November 1808 with his brother, **Robert**. The parents shown on the baptismal record were **William and Elizabeth** Harford.¹ We are not certain Samuel and Robert were twins but this is likely as the rule of the day was that all children were to be baptized within one month of birth.



Baptismal Record Samuel and Robert 1808

We have not yet determined with any certainty the names of their grandparents. However, there is a research hypothesis being explored that William's parents were in fact **William and Jane (Nee Cowdrey)** and that his grandparents were **John and Elizabeth**.

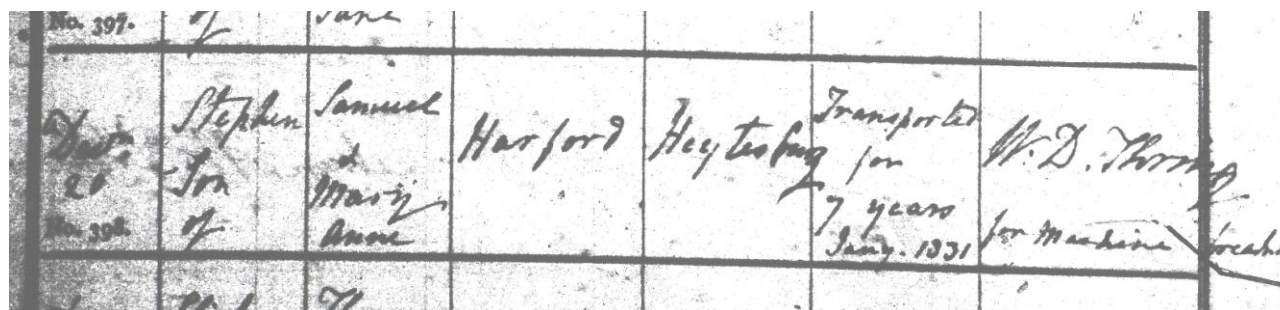
Samuel married **Mary Ann Brown** at the Parish of Heytesbury on 27 September 1830. Mary Ann Brown was baptized on 4 February 1813 at the Parish of Sutton Veny, a small village a few miles to the west of Heytesbury. Mary Ann's parents were **Thomas Brown** and **Grace Jordan**, who were married at the Parish of Sutton Veny, Wiltshire on 21 October 1811.



Marriage Record Samuel and Mary Ann 1830

¹ Heytesbury Parish General Registers Item 17 Baptisms Latter Day Saints Family History Library British Film 1279342

Samuel and Mary Ann had a child named Stephen who was baptized at the Parish of Sutton Veny on 20 December 1830. Their place of abode is shown on the baptismal record as Heytesbury. The significant item of the birth record is that it showed that his father, Samuel, had been "Transported for 7 years for Machine breaking Jan'y 1831"



Stephen's Baptism Record 20 Dec 1830

.On the day of Stephen's Baptism **Samuel** was in gaol awaiting trial for his participation in the Swing Riots. These were a series of riots that swept through the southern counties of England during the last six months of 1830. The rioters were mainly agricultural labourers who had been seriously oppressed and, without the right to vote, they drew attention to their situation by rather extreme and unlawful means. The riots were the closest that England experienced to a proletarian uprising or revolution.

The Baptism was some two weeks before Samuel was tried and found guilty on 3 January 1831. The next day he was sentenced to 7 years transportation to Van Diemen's so it is clear the note was added later. Without this small note we might never have known anything about this very significant chapter in Samuel's life. It also has drawn our attention to the social and political conditions of the day and also the way in which English justice was summarily executed

We propose to provide some of the details that relate to these riots and in particular what we know from written accounts of Samuel's involvement and indeed we are fortunate to have some insight into his activity. We will also to provide some details of the social background, the situation of the farm labourer and the government and political reaction to the riots. These are all very relevant to an understanding of Samuel's actions and to his conviction.