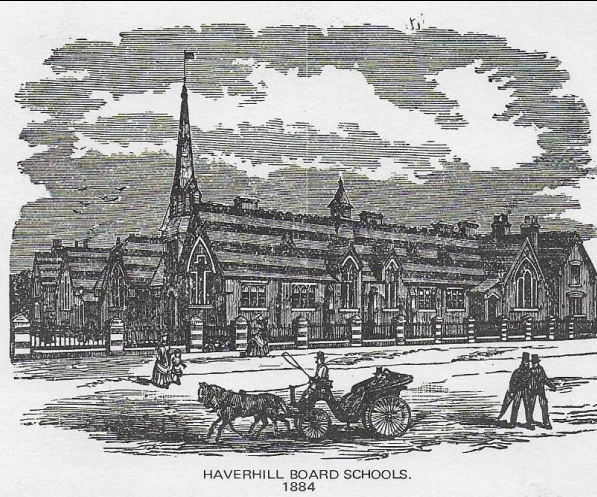




NEWSLETTER

APRIL 2025

SUFFOLK FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY

Registered Charity No 1087748

Next Meeting:

Thursday 10th April 2025 at 7.30pm

Old Independent Church Hall

It Happened here in Suffolk

with Pip Wright



We welcome back Pip, a retired teacher who has, for many years, been writing books and speaking on a variety of subjects, mainly related to Suffolk local history. His most recent book is a Suffolk Almanac - a collection of old newspaper items from across 300 years - one or more for every day of the year.

A character who featured strongly in news articles in the first half of the nineteenth century was George Wombwell. His talk will show how a lad, born near Saffron Walden, became the most famous showman of his age and regularly visited Suffolk towns with his travelling menagerie.

Always entertaining we look forward to Pips return.

Samuel Farrant

To make up for having made a real mess of the timing on Transportation and Rural Unrest, here is the story of Samuel Farrant which I had to rush, skipping a lot of the detail. I hope this in some way makes up for it.

Charmian Thompson

Samuel Farrant was born on 19th May 1830 in Haverhill, Suffolk, the son of silk weaver, James Farrant and his wife Susanna. He was the youngest of seven children, but his two eldest brothers had died before he was born. In 1841 the family was living in Haverhill Hamlet, which at the time was in Essex.

Samuel didn't follow the rest of his siblings into work as a silk weaver and instead found employment as an agricultural labourer.

On 20th September 1849, Samuel wandered up the road to The Bull Public House near St Mary's Church.



fiendish circumstances. The last mentioned fire occurred on the Town farm, Haverhill, the property of Sir Geo. Beaumont, Bart., in the occupation of Mr. Jno. Scotcher and we grieve to state the greater part of the dwelling house and all the farm buildings were totally destroyed. The latter comprised one barn filled with corn, stable, coach-house, cart-lodge, and granary; two stacks of wheat, two of barley, three of hay, one pea and one bean stack were also entirely consumed or rendered worthless. The town engine, with one belonging to the Rev. Wm. Mayd, was on the spot, but ere the engines were got to work, the flames had so extended that not a particle of the farming premises was left standing. Some fowls, the yard dog, and a boar, were the only lives sacrificed. The buildings were all insured in the Sun Fire office, and Mr. Scotcher is protected in the Royal Exchange to the amount of £1,000.

That night some stacks and farm buildings were destroyed by fire. News reports of the time tell us about the damage.

Published: Friday 28 September 1849

Newspaper: Chelmsford Chronicle

It was investigated and in October there was a report about one line of investigation concerning a 12-year-old.

Bury and Suffolk Herald - Wednesday 10 October 1849

CHICHESTER CHURCH.
THE LATE FIRE AT HAVERHILL.—A boy, about 12 years old, having been heard to say, whilst in company with the other boys, on the evening of the fire upon the premises of Mr. Scotcher, noticed in our last, "What a good fire there might be with the straw that lies against the barn in Mr. Scotcher's yard; I should like to see it, and I could then have a good warm in the morning;" suspicion fell upon the lad, but upon minute enquiry by the police four different persons were able to prove that he was at home and went to bed about 9 p.m., and was there when the alarm of fire was given about 12 p.m.

This fire was ultimately to have a massive impact on Samuel Farrant's future. Ten months later on 15th July 1850 he appeared at the Chelmsford Assizes charged with arson. He had no previous convictions. He was 20 years old.

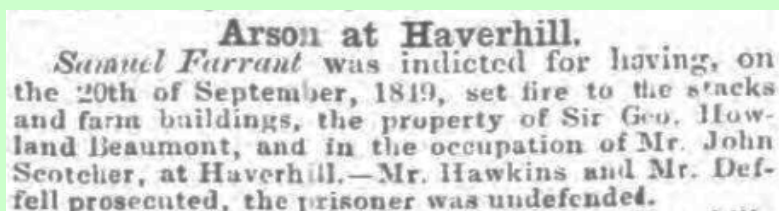
The Assizes were periodic courts held in various locations to hear serious criminal cases and civil matters. The Lord Chief Baron, the senior judge of the Court of Exchequer, was called upon to preside over the Assizes at Chelmsford in July 1850.

In 1850 the Lord Chief Baron was Sir Jonathan Frederick Pollock.

He was the Member of Parliament for Huntingdon from 1831 to 1844. He served as Attorney General between 1834 and 1835 and 1841 and 1844 in the Tory administrations of Sir Robert Peel. In 1841 he was admitted to the Privy Council and in 1844 he was appointed Lord Chief Baron of the Exchequer, a post he held until 1868.



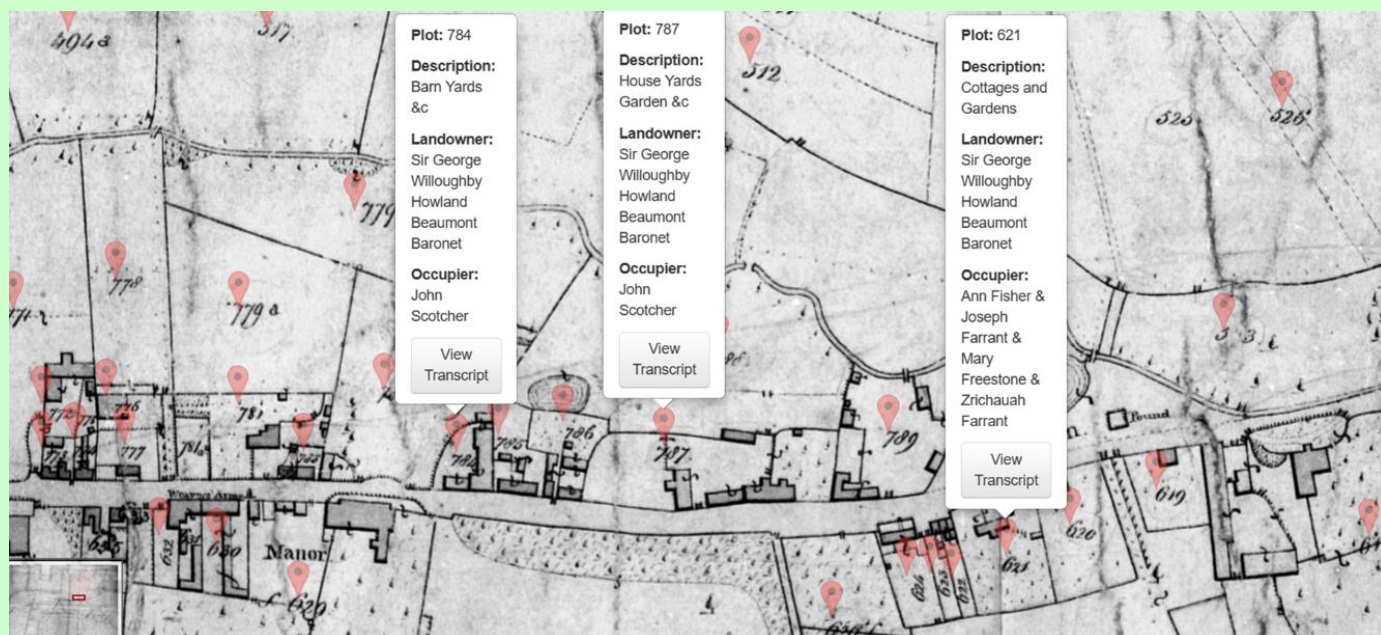
On Friday 19th July 1850 the Chelmsford Chronicle reported the trial which took place at the County Assizes under Chief Baron.



As you can see from the newspaper article, Samuel was indicted for having set fire to the stacks and farm buildings, the property of Sir George Howland Beaumont and in the occupation of Mr

John Scotcher. The 1841 census identifies the farm as being Manor Farm. The case was prosecuted by Mr Hawkins and Mr Deffell. Samuel was undefended.

This map shows Hamlet Road. You can see the properties marked. Samuel Farrant lived at the Vale Place end.



Mr Scotcher was the first witness.

'I am John Scotcher and I occupy a farm at Haverhill; on the past 20th September I was at home and in bed at half-past ten and was alarmed a little after 12, by the cry of 'Fire!'. On getting up, I saw that all the farm buildings were on fire and they were consumed together with part of the house.'

On the 12th June the prisoner was apprehended and he passed my door in custody. I said 'Well, Mr Sam, you have been my friend, have you?' He replied 'I don't know what I did it for, for you always paid me well when you gave me a job.'

John Beavor, Constable who apprehended Samuel Farrant confirmed that he heard the prisoner use the language detailed by Mr Scotcher.

William Fisher who was the brother of Ann Fisher, a neighbour of the Farrant family, was the next witness.

'I am William Fisher. I've known the prisoner for 18 years. On the 18th May I was going home at night when I saw the prisoner. He took hold of my shoulder and led me across the road. He said, 'You are aware these premises were burnt down. It was me that done it and nobody else.'

I said 'You make me frightened to stand here.' and he added, 'I'll burn all the endway (the end of the street) tonight.'

I said, 'You make me afraid to go to bed.'

He said he was coming down the street one night about half-past nine and was very hard up and went to Mr Scotcher's yard and could not get in. He went in afterwards and struck two lucifers but they would not light. He went away and saw W Harvey whom he wanted to treat to a pint of beer. He went up the street again and found a stone and said to it 'you shall do my business for me tonight.' He took the stone and went again to the yard where he struck a light and fired the stacks and then ran home as hard as he could. He knew Cook was courting at Mrs Freestone's and went on the soft ground so that Cook should not hear him. He had only crept down in bed when Cook called 'Fire'. Cook's right name is John Poole.'

The next witness was **William Bush**. In 1851 he lived in the last cottage in Haverhill Hamlet. He was a farm labourer, and his wife Susannah was listed as a beer shop keeper. He told the court:

'I keep a beer house and on the 11th of June I saw the prisoner who said, 'Master Bush I am a miserable fellow, I don't care what I suffer.'

He had had some beer.

He said, *'There is one thing and that's my old father, you know what I mean.'*

I said, *'I do not.'* He got up and whispered in my ear, *'I set Scotcher's premises on fire.'*

I said, *'Surely not.'* He said, *'I did it for a fact.'*

I said, *'Perhaps in your stingy fits you may do the same again'.*

He added *'I'll be damned if I would. Not in a moment, for I spent all my money and was afraid to go home.'*

Next day I mentioned the subject to Mr Scotcher. The prisoner said that two persons knew it. Fisher and his brother John.'

Next to provide evidence was **George Hawse** who stated:

'I am George Hawse, the landlord of the Bull at Haverhill. The prisoner was at my house at half past eleven on the night of the fire. Having drunk half a pint of beer he ran away without paying for it.'

W Harvey was the next witness.

'I am W Harvey of Haverhill and I'm a shoemaker. I saw the prisoner near the Bull Lane about a quarter before twelve. He said he'd been out drinking and wanted a pint of beer. He added that people were up at the Bull and wanted to treat him but he declined having any beer.'

Finally, **John Poole** or **Cook** as he was known, gave evidence.

'I am John Poole, also known as Cook, from Haverhill. I was at Mrs Freestone's next door to where the prisoner lives. I went in about ten and stopped till twelve and when I went to the door I saw some fire about the size of a cart in Mr Scotcher's farm yard. I instantly gave an alarm of fire.'

This concluded the case for the prosecution. Samuel offered nothing in his defence except a general denial of his guilt.

The verdict was Guilty.

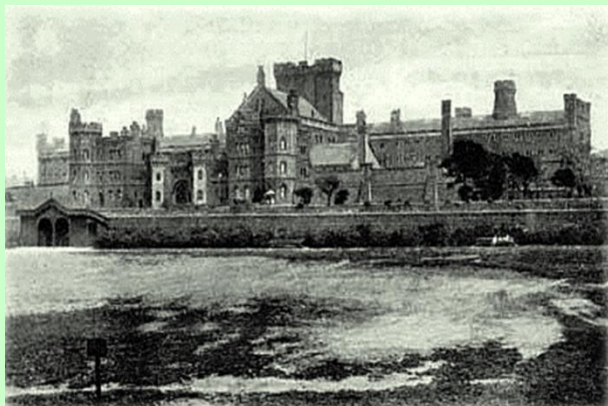
In passing sentence his Lordship said *'the crime of which the prisoner has been convicted is one of the greatest that could be committed against the peace, the property and security of the country and had evidently so haunted the prisoner that he could not keep his wicked secret in his own breast – nor was there any extenuating circumstance in the case to call for any for anything less than the full amount of punishment now awarded by the law.'*

Samuel Farrant – I sentence you to be transported for life.

Here you can see the 1850 Criminal Register.

NAMES.	Offences of which those tried were Convicted or Acquitted, and of which those Discharged without Trial were charged on Indictment or Commitment.	Convicted and Sentenced		
		Death	Transportation	Imprisonment: (state if also Whipped or Fined)
John Redgell	Causing bodily injury dangerous to life with intent to murder	Recorded Reprieved	15 Years	
William Green	Wounding to Murder	do	Life	
Samuel Farrant	Maliciously firing Bombs &c		Life	

Samuel was sent to Leeds Borough Gaol and House of Correction (Armley Gaol). He spent 18 months in separate confinement and from there was transported.



According to the return from the 1851 census for the institution half of the prisoners were farm labourers which perhaps indicates how tough life was for them at this time.

Samuel arrived at Freemantle, Western Australia on board the William Jardine on 1 August 1852.

The William Jardine left Plymouth on 3 May 1852 bound for the Swan River Colony. The voyage took 88 days and arrived in Freemantle carrying the 7th of 37 shipments of male convicts to Western Australia.



Samuel was described as a labourer, single, 5' 6" tall, with dark brown hair, hazel eyes, a long face, dark complexion and of stout build, with no distinguishing marks. He was unmarried and had no children.

In 1857 the British Government rescinded the law which obliged convicts to recompense the cost of their passage to Australia. Samuel Farrant was included on a list of those who received a refund of monies paid.

Samuel's convict records in Australia are sparse, indicating that he took advantage of a fresh start and behaved quite well in his new country.

Tickets of Leave were documents issued to persons in Australian penal colonies who had served part of their sentence with good behaviour between 1824 and 1874. In fact, Samuel got a Ticket of Leave on 16 January 1855. Not bad considering he didn't arrive until 1852 and that he had been transported for life.

If a convict held a Ticket of Leave, they were allowed to seek private employment, lease land, and move freely within the police district where the ticket was issued.



It wasn't all plain sailing though. Samuel spent three months in Fremantle Gaol after being convicted by the Resident Magistrate in the Guildford Police Court of having been drunk and overstaying his pass, at the same time being under suspicion of having committed an assault.

This was his first conviction since getting his ticket of leave. He was discharged from prison on 10 March 1857.

By February 1859 Samuel was in the employ of Marshall Waller Clifton of Australind.

Marshall Waller Clifton was an English civil servant, colonizer, and politician in Western Australia. He was born in 1787, in Alverstoke, which is part of Gosport, Hampshire, the son of the local Reverend.



He had a notable career with the Admiralty in England, rising through the ranks to become a first-class clerk. He married Elinor Bell in 1811, and together they had fifteen children, eleven of whom later accompanied them to Western Australia. Elinor was a close friend of prison reformer, Elizabeth Fry.

In 1840, Clifton was appointed Chief Commissioner of the Western Australian Land Company, which was founded to promote a large land settlement scheme in the Colony of Western Australia.

The settlement, named Australind—a contraction of Australia and India—was intended to establish trade between the two countries. Clifton and his family arrived in March 1841.



Samuel was sent out to Clifton's Eastwell property daily to work. He became a trusted employee, looking after the cattle and regularly bringing a few back to Australind for killing. On 21st February 1859 Clifton gave Samuel Farrant a holiday, allowing him 'to take the linen down in the donkey cart'. Controlling his workers' drinking habits was a major problem. On one occasion Clifton recorded that he was very angry with Samuel for staying away overnight after being permitted to spend a day in Bunbury. In August 1860 Clifton again gave him permission to go into Bunbury along with Samuel Dale to collect his Conditional Pardon. The two men were in trouble when they did not return until late at night. Trouble occurred again at Christmas, when Samuel stayed away in Bunbury for three days.

In January 1861, Clifton agreed to allow Samuel Farrant to lease one of his properties, 'Westover', for four years at a nominal rent, on condition that he would grub out all the trees on the block, clear and fence it with a three-railed fence and build a two-roomed slab cottage. Clifton was to retain the stockyard and a road 20 feet wide between the fence and the Estuary.

A month later Samuel asked to be discharged from Clifton's employ, but requested that the lease on 'Westover' be extended to five years, agreeing to hand over an extra ton of potatoes in the last year. However, Marshall Waller Clifton, died shortly afterwards in April 1861.

It is not known whether Samuel Farrant was able to see out his five-year lease at 'Westover'. He did, however, remain in the employ of the Clifton family for many years at a property known as Wokalup Hall. Marshall Waller Clifton's son Robert was his employer.



Samuel Farrant lived a long life in Western Australia, and possibly it was better than his life would have been in England.



His name occurs on the WA Electoral Roll from 1903, when he was listed as a labourer. From 1910–1917 he was listed as a kitchen-man at Wokalup Creek. He died in 1921, at the ripe old age of 91 years and was buried at the Old Harvey Cemetery.

Samuel would have witnessed many changes in the years since he arrived in Western Australia in 1852 including the end of convict transportation in 1868, the discovery of coal, the coming of the railway to this part of Australia in 1893 and also Western Australia's greatest railway disaster which occurred near Wokalup in November 1920.



And here he is...

‘Old Sam Farrant’ with child in pram, probably a Clifton daughter.
(Courtesy of Harvey History Online.)



Samuel Farrant (Haverhill, Suffolk 1830 – Western Australia 1921)

A bit harsh!

Advice on Marriage. TO YOUNG LADIES.

1. Do not marry at all.
2. But if you must avoid the Beauty Men, Flirts, and the Bounders, Tailor's Dummies, and the Football Enthusiasts.
3. Look for a Strong, Tame Man, a Fire-lighter, Coal-getter, Window Cleaner, and Yard Swiller.
4. Don't expect too much, most men are lazy, selfish, thoughtless, lying, drunken, clumsy, heavy-footed, rough, unmanly brutes, and need taming.
5. All Bachelors are, and many are worse still.
6. If you want him to be happy, Feed the Brute.
7. The same remark applies to Dogs.
8. You will be wiser not to chance it, it isn't worth the risk.

A SUFFRAGETTE WIFE.

Steve's father has four children. If the first three are named Sam, Sem, and Sim, what is the fourth's name?

Answer at the end of the newsletter.

Suffolk Family History Society News:-

2025 Fair (26th April 2025 10am-4.30pm)

Suffolk FHS Fair



Fascinating talks, interesting
displays/stalls from Family History
and related organisations

+ Free family history help desk (from 11:00-15:00)

- 11:00 Ian Waller: The times they are a'changing
12:00 Break
13:30 Nick Barratt: Future of Family History
14:30 Break
15:15 Judith Berry: Suffolk Archives - 2025 and beyond

Saturday 26th April 2025
10am to 4.30pm
Free entry

The Hold
131 Fore St
Ipswich IP4 1LN
Car parks nearby



Join SFHS

Benefits of being a member of SFHS

- Quarterly Suffolk Roots Journal
- Discount on CD's and downloads
- Members Help Forum
- Extra resources on website

www.suffolkfhs.co.uk



Charity No 108774

Special guests

Ian Waller is a retired professional genealogist, author, Fellow of AGRA and the Society of Genealogists. Vice chairman of the Family History Federation.



This talk looks at the many changes which have taken place in the family history world over the last 40/50 years since rubbing shoulders and getting bruised at St Catherine's House to the age of on-line data. A nostalgic trip back in time where much is still relevant today!

Dr Nick Barratt is an author, broadcaster and historian best known for his work on Who Do You Think You Are. He is an Executive Director at Royal Holloway University of London, a visiting academic at the Knowledge Media Institute at the Open University, a teaching fellow at the University of Dundee and a Fellow of the Royal Historical Society. Nick looks at the impact of digital technology on the way we research and share information about our ancestors, including the risks and opportunities posed by generative artificial intelligence.



Join Judith Berry, Head of Suffolk Archives and The Hold, for an update on the Suffolk Archives service and plans for the future, including Ancestry.

Join SFHS

Benefits of being a member of SFHS

- Quarterly Suffolk Roots Journal
- Discount on CD's and downloads
- Members Help Forum
 - Extra resources on website
- 5 groups in Suffolk with monthly meetings
- Monthly free Zoom presentations
- Parish register transcripts available

Charity No 108774

Zooms

Monday, May 19th Helpdesk Session:

This time Trevor Rix will be in the chair so to speak, supported by others. **We need the questions in advance (one question per person please), so we have time to do some checking to make sure we give you the best answers. Send them to me, and I will share amongst the team.** The questions should be along the lines of - where do I go next? what records are available? We cannot discuss searching for living relatives and please keep to English records. Military research not a strongpoint but that still leaves much to explore.

Andy Kerridge
(Suffolk Family History Society Chairman)

Society of Genealogists Free presentation

SoG have announced in their latest Genealogy FREE online talk

Tuesday, 8 April, 2:00 PM - 3:00 PM

Else Churchill presents "Railway Collections at SoG and Elsewhere"
Discover fascinating items in the SoG's archives relating to railways and workers, plus the GWR probate registers. Learn about the information these collections contain within them, how they might help you and how to search them.

Follow this link to book

<https://members.sog.org.uk/events/6793b8b27acf770008c4e8c5/description?ticket=6793b8b27acf770008c4e8c9>

Other Events (Locally)

Haverhill Local History Museum
Presents a **free event** for the family
**'From the Victorians to Harry Potter,
The Fascinating story of 3D Pictures'**

Come and hear the fascinating story of the 'Rise and Fall of stereo photography'.
Adults and children welcome.
Come along to hear the story and have a go at looking at the stereo photographs using vintage viewers and some original cards up to 175 years old!



Everyone welcome
A FREE EVENT

Join us in the Studio, Haverhill Arts Centre on
Saturday, 5th April 2025 at 11.00am.
No need to book – just turn up (refreshments provided).

**LINTON & DISTRICT
HISTORICAL SOCIETY**
TUESDAY 15th APRIL 2025



The Risbridge Hundred Workhouse

**'A BAD START IN LIFE – THE
TALE OF TWO BROTHERS**

a talk presented by Charmian Thompson

**LINTON VILLAGE HALL
COLES LANE - 7.30 p.m.**

Refreshments and Raffle
Visitors and new members always welcome



EASTER BAZAAR

**SATURDAY 12TH APRIL 2025
AT 2PM**

OLD INDEPENDENT CHURCH HALL,
HAMLET ROAD, HAVERHILL

RAFFLES, EASTER 0'S AND 5'S,
COMPETITIONS, CAKE STALL,
REFRESHMENTS

EVERYONE WELCOME, DO COME ALONG!

FREE ADMISSION



2025 Programme of Meetings & Events

Usually, 2nd Thurs of the month, **unless stated otherwise**, start 7.30 pm,

Old Independent Church Hall (**CB9 9EF**), members £1 visitors £2.50 inc. tea/coffee

NB members £2, visitors £3 from September 2024.

10 Apr 2025	It happened here in Suffolk	Pip Wright
8 May 2025	AGM By George what style	Francis Saltmarsh
12 June 2025	The Mayflower	Cathy Shelbourne
July 2025	<i>Visit (TBC)</i>	<i>Must Book</i>
11 Sept 2025	History of Art	Edel Pinnock
9 Oct 2025	Borley Rectory the most haunted house in England	Bryan Thurlow
13 Nov 2025	CWGC	Mac Macdonald
11 Dec 2025	Christmas Quiz A light-hearted social evening with refreshments	Ourselves

Wednesday afternoons, help with your Research at Haverhill Library 2 - 4pm

Guided use of the Internet, especially for newcomers or those 'stuck'

telephone 01440 848095 to book your place

Answer: Steve