



News and events

- There will be **no meeting in August**. Our **next meeting is on Wednesday 18 September** when Chris Blackler will give an illustrated talk **Old Wheathampstead on Film** with the addition of some of his own recollections.
- From now until 1 August 2024, the north transept of St Albans Cathedral is the venue for an **exhibition about the Peasants' Revolt** (1381) in St Albans.

Sir Samuel Garrard at the Old Bailey

Sir Samuel Garrard, 4th baronet, succeeded to the estate of Lamer in 1701. By the time he inherited Lamer he was 50 years of age and an established merchant in the City of London. He never returned to Lamer and died in 1725.



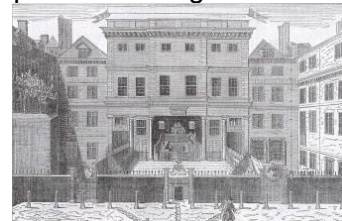
Sir Samuel Garrard

Highly motivated and ambitious, he became an Alderman and the Warden and Master of the Grocers' Company. In 1709 he was appointed as the Lord Mayor of London for a year.

One of Sir Samuel's many duties during his year as Lord Mayor was to preside at trials at the Central Criminal Court of the Old Bailey with the Lord Chief Justice and the London Jury. As the Lord Mayor he was entitled to sit on the judges' bench but did not participate in the hearings.

The Proceedings of the Old Bailey (1674-1913) is the written record of events that took place in the court; it documents the trials of the 150 defendants, men and women, who stood before Sir Samuel accused of a range of crimes. Of those found guilty, 15 were sentenced to death, 45 were branded with a hot iron, and 46 were sentenced to the pillory or to be whipped, while the remainder were acquitted. This was the era of the 'Bloody Code', when punishments were harsh and the death sentence was imposed for 200 crimes, a very wide and arbitrary range of offences, some surprisingly trivial. Trials were completed quickly and the odds were stacked against the defendants.

Sir Samuel witnessed the Lord Chief Justice passing the death sentence on defendants found guilty of murder, violent assault, infanticide, treason, horse theft and highway robbery. But defendants he saw included those condemned to death for stealing an Indian quilt, a repeating clock and a Parliamentary robe belonging to the Earl of Westmorland, and for the more trifling burglary of a brass kettle, a stew pan and a quantity of bacon. All these defendants were executed in public on the gallows at Tyburn.



The Old Bailey c. 1675

Sir Samuel presided over 45 defendants who were sentenced to be branded with a hot iron. These defendants, found guilty of grand larceny, stole items including wet linen from a washerwoman's line, 30 foot of glass from an empty house, a box of silk gowns, six elephant's teeth, 168 handkerchiefs, a red cow, and four coils of rope. Those sentenced to be pilloried or whipped included defendants involved in coining and receiving, petty larceny, and the theft of cutlery, a waistcoat and breeches, shoes, clogs and stockings.

Sir Samuel would have encountered at first hand the justice system of his day in action, with its large-scale criminalization of the poor. Sitting with the upper-class judges, he would have had a top-down view of London society. His wealth and success in business, with profits from the slave trade, contrasted sharply with the poverty of most of the defendants, while his power and status as the Lord Mayor of London differed strikingly from their impotence, insignificance and disgrace.

Source: www.oldbaileyonline.org, version 9

Dianne Payne