

**Transcription of Petition Letter to The Right Hon. Sir George Grey
(main body of the letter only) dated 09/05/1850 and received 23/05/1820 – Petition No. 3**

For context, the “young Earl of Stamford” referred to in the follow transcription would have been George Harry Booth-Grey, the 7th Earl of Stamford and 3rd Earl of Warrington, born 7th January 1827 (died 2nd January 1883). In addition, it is known (from other documents) that Samuel was accused of setting fire to the thatched roof of the middle cottage of three.

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The Humble Petition of Reg. 2758 Samuel Wilcockson, a Convict, humbly sheweth that your Humble Petitioner formerly rented a farm belonging to the Right Honourable Earl of Stamford & Warrington his Lordship dying the young Earl of Stamford succeeded to the Estate of his late Lordship known by the name of Newthorpe Manor Court & also another Estate known by the name of Awsworth Manor Court. The young Earl of Stamford attained his majority on Jan 7th 1848 and on the 18th day of Oct in the said year his Lordship had all the Estate divided into allotments and sold by publick auction even not giving his tenants the privilege of purchasing these houses but all his Lordships tenantry was turned to the wide world in the short space of six month.

Your Humble Petitioner had four cottage houses. Three standing on the waste land and one standing on the late Lord Stamfords land. The one standing on his Lordships land was rent paid for it, separately from the farm rent but the other three there was never any rent paid for neither by your Humble Petitioner or his family before him. The said cottages was built by your Humble Petitioners Grandfather more than 100 years since and no acknowledgement was ever paid into court for them nor was any ever required either from your Humble Petitioner or his family before him.

Right Honourable Sir the matter of your Humble Petitioners case his this at the sale of Lord Stamfords Estate the portion allotted in one lot of the farm I lately held of his Lordship was the farm house, three closes of land & the cottage standing thereon. This lot was purchased by the prosecutor in my case.

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And he positively would take possession of the other cottages because they was in my possession although not inserted in the Catalogue of the Sale & your Humble Petitioner took the advice of his solicitor in the matter and your Humble Petitioner was advised not to give up the possession of the cottages because they clearly belonged to your Humble Petitioner paying no acknowledgement for the time past. After the sale the prosecutor came & took forcible possession of your Humble Petitioners cottages for such they where by the laws of the land.

Right Honourable Sir your Humble Petitioner was charged with setting fire to one of the cottages & by the evidence of the Witness Oliver Leivers your Humble Petitioner was found guilty & transported for 15 years.

Right Honourable Sir the evidence of the witness is this he said I was going home from my Money Club about 12 O clock at night & I saw a man go from the gate against the cottages & I thought it was Sam Wilcockson by his swaggering way of walking. I went home & pulled of my shoes to go to bed but instead of going to bed I went down again to the cottage houses & found one on fire. The fire was not extensive for I put it out with a bucket of water, There was neither lath or spar injured by the fire. This evidence & others as equally as bad your Humble Petitioner is now suffering transportation for, The other evidence is this they swore to hearing your Humble Petitioner say before the prosecutor should rob him of his cottages he would burn them to the ground.

Your Humble Petitioner hopes that his case may have a full investigation & an enquiry made what was the reason that the witness Leivers should go home a distance of 540 yards and then return to the cottages again if they was a fire at the time stated by the witness. Why did he not stop & put it out instead of going home such was the evidence addressed against your Humble Petitioner,

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Right Honourable Sir your Humble Petitioner was bailiff of the Manor Court of Newthorpe for 28 years & has borne an unexceptionable character all his life up to the present charge which character was fully borne out at the trial & also by a petition sent up to the Home Office by the Gentlemen and Clergyman of his neighbourhood. All that your Humble Petitioner request that is case may have your full investigation & your Humble Petitioner will willing rely upon your Honourable judgement in his case.

And your Humble Petitioner As in Duty Bound will Ever Pray.

Pentonville Prison
May 9th 1850