

Baptism	31 March 1811, Pattiswick, St Mary the Virgin, Essex
Parents	William French and Elizabeth Towers
Parent's marriage	19 October 1803, Coggeshall, Essex
Siblings	Mary Ann (1805), Richard (1806), Ambrose (1809), Half-siblings Samuel Crow(1823), Elizabeth/Eliza Crow (~1827), Hannah Crow (~1829), John Crow (~1834)
Wife	Sarah
Married	Unknown
Children	None

William's father, William French senior, died on 2 September 1820, aged 38.

Elizabeth remarried on 7 May 1822 to widower Samuel Crow. Both were from Little Coggeshall.

Samuel Crow married Susannah French in 1809 in Coggeshall. She died 24 February 1822, aged 35, leaving him with six daughters –

Mary Ann (1812), Elizabeth (1813), Emma (1815), Sarah (1817), Harriet (1818) and Esther (1821).

Elizabeth and Samuel Crow had four children.¹

The marriage of William French has not been found. The first record of him was the 1841 census, as landlord of the Black Horse Inn.

Stoneham Street, Coggeshall, Essex.

Wm French, 25, publican, born in the county.

Sarah French, 25, was not born in the county.²

His mother lived at Things Ans, Little Coggeshall.³

Samuel Crow, 55, ag lab; Elizabeth, 55; Elizabeth, 15; Hannah, 10; John, 7; Elizabeth, 20; George, 3. All were born in the county.

The 'Black Horse Inn', the small building in the middle of the photo, was renamed the 'Locomotive' following the notoriety of the Coggeshall Gang.⁴

Now, the building is 14 Stoneham Street, Coggeshall.



¹ The year of birth for Elizabeth French/Crow varies considerably, between 1773 and 1783.

² The National Archives (TNA) UK, HO107/335/4

³ TNA, HO107/343/4

⁴ <https://coggeshallmuseum.org/coggeshall-gang-2/>

From 1844 to 1848, a series of violent crimes took place in Coggeshall and the surrounding villages, which had the local inhabitants in fear for their safety. A group of up to fourteen men, known locally as the Coggeshall Gang, carried out the crimes. They had their headquarters at the Black Horse Inn in Stoneham Street. The landlord was William French, the half-brother of the leader of the gang, Samuel Crow.

William French benefited from the proceeds of the crimes by receiving stolen property from the gang. Crow was employed in driving post-chaises for innkeepers and gentry and was well known in the neighbourhood. Armed with pistols and cudgels and wearing masks, the gang operated mainly at night and terrorised the local inhabitants.

Discovery of a Gang of Burglars at Coggeshall. This newspaper report is from 1848:

At the assizes held last summer, at Chelmsford, a field gardener, named William Wade, was convicted of a burglary at Bradwell, a village near Coggeshall. Previously to his committal he had entered into a compact with those of his brethren in the craft, who were concerned in this affair, that, in consideration of their taking care of his wife, he would refrain from "peaching." Unfortunately for themselves, however, his partners in delinquency, after a short time, neglected to fulfil their part of the contract, and the consequence was a full confession by the convict.

A meeting of Magistrates was thereupon convened, when, after the depositions of several witnesses, warrants were at once issued for the apprehension of the following parties, viz. William Ellis, William Springett, William Tansley, and Samuel Crow.

Ellis, having some suspicion that he might be wanted, left his lodgings at Rivenhall during the night, and on the appearance of the constables on the following morning was not to be found; he has, therefore, escaped for the present. Springett, who was employed in thatching, was apprehended on Wednesday afternoon at a farm in the parish of Feering, and Tansley, a labourer, was apprehended in Meeting Street, Coggeshall, shortly after the warrant had been issued. Samuel Crow, the well-known leader of the gang, has, up to the present moment, escaped the hands of the police.

Immediately on obtaining the warrant for his apprehension, having mustered a sufficient force to surround the premises, the police proceeded to the Black Horse, a small public-house in Coggeshall, kept by William French. The landlord, who is a half-brother of Crow, denied that the object of their search was in his house, stating, first, that he had gone to Colchester, and then to Stanway. These replies not being considered satisfactory, an examination of the premises was made, but without success; and it was not till nearly midnight that a policeman, named Nicholls, having been induced to search an unoccupied house adjoining, discovered a hole in the ceiling large enough to admit the passage of a man's body. He immediately ascended and discovered Crow sitting on a beam near the chimney. Having given an alarm, and other constables coming up, Crow at once offered to surrender if no violence were offered to him. The officer, deeming escape impossible, descended, when Crow, with a sudden movement forced himself through the roof; he then ran over the tops of several adjoining houses, dropped from a 12 feet wall, scaled another 10 feet high, and covered with broken glass; and having cleared a high gate, spiked at the top made his way into Church Street and escaped by the meadows near Abbey Mill. He has been followed as far as Stratford, where all trace of him has been lost.

On Saturday afternoon, the brother of Crow, a youth about 15 or 16, was apprehended on a charge of harbouring and concealing him. Elijah Clark, town crier of Coggeshall, on his return from Springfield Gaol, met the youth, driving a horse and gig. He questioned him as to his business in Chelmsford, and receiving an unsatisfactory answer, stopped the horse, and examined the gig, when it was found to contain a hat and coat, which Clark at once recognised as the property of Samuel Crow, and also a bloody handkerchief, the discovery of which was of importance, connected with the ascertained fact that Crow had, in his escape, severely injured his hand. There were also several packages in the gig, under cover of which, there is no doubt, he had lain concealed. The police are still in pursuit of Ellis, but up to the present time, without success. Several inhabitants of Coggeshall

have offered a reward of £10 for the apprehension of Samuel Crow. French, the landlord of the Black Horse, has since been arrested and remanded. Two other men have absconded, to whom suspicion attaches of belonging to the gang.

On Wednesday last, the examination of the prisoners in this extraordinary case took place at the County Gaol, Springfield, this course being necessary by reason of the illegality of removing a convict confined there whose evidence was material in the case. The magistrates present were F. U. Pattisson, Esq. (chairman), and the Rev. H. Du Cane. Mr Corder, from the office of Messrs. Blood and Douglas, clerks to the Witham Bench, attended to take down the depositions. Mr Lake, solicitor, of Braintree, appeared to watch the proceedings on behalf of the prisoner French.

The following witnesses were called. William Wade, a convict under sentence of transportation for 15 years, said, on a Friday night in March, I met Wm. Ellis, Samuel Crowe, jun., and William Tansley, in the yard of the Black Horse Inn, when Ellis said, "I know where there is an old man at Bradwell who has money; I have heard it talked about when I was at work; and so then proposed that all four of us should go and rob him, the Black Horse Inn is kept by a man named French, and we were in the habit of meeting there; we all four agreed to go by the Horse River Bridge; Ellis led the way, Tansley and I followed, and in about 10 minutes Crowe came, when we all met in a cart-lodge at the Grange, Little Coggeshall. belonging to Mr Unwin: we then proceeded on the road to Bradwell; and when within 40 rods of James Finch's house, between ten and eleven o'clock, Crowe put a shirt over his head, and a white night-cap over his face, holes being cut in it for his eyes and mouth; the others blackened their faces with something which Crowe had with him for the purpose, and we all then went to the house; Tansley stood at the front door to look out, and give an alarm if any one approached: Ellis, Crowe, and I then went to the back of the premises, and Crowe, with a piece of iron, attempted to force the door open, making a great noise to the effort, which awoke the prosecutor; as he was coming down stairs Crowe burst open the door, and I then saw prosecutor and his housekeeper, Elizabeth Wright; Crowe asked if he had got any money; Finch replied he had not; Crowe, who had a pistol in his hand, then broke into the housekeeper's room, and Ellis and I went upstairs; in a minute or so Crowe followed us, and when he came into the room he again asked Finch if he had got any money; but Finch again said he had not. Crowe, who still held the pistol, said he knew better and insisted upon knowing; upon which Finch seemed very much alarmed, and told him there were a few shillings upon the beam in the room. Crowe then got onto a sack, which I understood contained wheat, and reached down a canvas purse, or bag, which he opened, and took from it a sovereign, a half-sovereign, and some silver. Crowe then told Finch he knew he had got more than that, but Finch said he had no more. Besides the money, there was a book, which I believe to be a Savings Bank book, which Crowe took from the bag; he opened the book, and asked if I could read it? I did so, and I saw Witham Savings Bank upon it. After Finch had told Crowe he had no more money, Crowe went to the bed, and found five shillings in his trousers pocket. Crowe again pressed Finch to tell him where the rest of his money was, and Finch said that was all he had, except what was in the Witham Savings Bank. Crowe then said, if he did not tell him where he had some more, he would hang him upon the beam; Finch replied, he hoped he would not do that; when Ellis and Crowe took hold of him, and dragged him into another room. Crowe made a noose in a rope which he had, and put it over Finch's neck, and, whilst Ellis held him up, Crowe, who had thrown the end of the rope over the beam, pulled him up and kept him suspended nearly a minute, whilst Ellis kept hold of him to prevent his straggling; I said, "mind you don't, hurt the old man," and they took him down; all this time Finch was in his shirt; we then went down stairs into the housekeeper's room, and found her sitting at the side of the bed, partly dressed; Crowe asked her if she had any money; she said she had not, and as Crowe was looking under the bed she said there were a few halfpence in the drawer; Crowe opened the drawer and found 5d., which he took; he then wanted to know if she had more, and said if she did not tell him he would set her on the fire; she said she could not help it, she had not got any; Ellis and Crowe then took hold of her and took her into the keeping room and placed her on the fire grate; Crowe placed some straw under her and lighted it, so that her gown caught fire and she screamed out; I said "don't do that;" and I put out the fire from under her gown, and Crowe

said to me "don't do that, you fool;" the housekeeper then went into her bedroom. Crowe then went to the cupboard and took out a mug, with which he proceeded to the pantry and drew some beer: we all partook of it, as also some bread and cheese; Crowe and Ellis after this told Finch if he would not tell them where he had some more money they would put him on the fire; Finch said he had not another farthing in the house, and they then placed him on the fire place; Crowe put in a lighted candle to make a blaze, and Finch, who was still only in his shirt, called out a great deal for them to spare him, and said "pray don't do that;" they then let him get off, and I believe he went upstairs; Crowe then looked up the chimney, and took down four hams and two chaps; we then all went into the pantry where we found two tubs containing pickled pork, some of which we took out and put into a sack and a bag which we found there; Ellis and Tansley then went forward carrying part of the pork with them; and I followed them with another parcel; Crowe, who remained on the stairs, overtook us before we got to Bradwell Hall Farm; when we arrived there we went into the farm-yard and Crowe got upon a haulm wall, in which he made a hole, and hid the pork there; we all four then went back to the Grange yard, and got into the cart-lodge, and stopped there some bit; Crowe left first, and went away homeward; Ellis, Tansley, and I stopped some time afterwards, and then repaired to the Black Horse stable; this was between four and five o'clock; we found Crowe there, and we waited till French got up, and parted the money in the meantime.

French came down between 6 and 7 o'clock, and spoke to us; he said, "You have been out somewhere tonight, I know:" I told him we had been a little way, and he said, "Where have you been to?" I told him we had been to an old man's house at Bradwell; he asked us if we had any luck; I replied no matters; he then asked us what we got, and I told him we had got a few shillings, and some other things; he then said, "Let us have a drop of drink;" and as we went towards the house he said, "Perhaps you will meet with better luck next time;" this observation was made to me alone as we were going along the passage, but the previous conversation took place in the presence of Tansley and Ellis; Crowe was about the yard all the time attending to his business; when we got into the house we all drank together in the tap-room, and all breakfasted together off a pigs-fry, which Crowe either fetched or sent for, and I know that French took part of it; Ellis, Tansley, and I, stopped there the greater part of the day, and Crowe often came in and oat; we had nothing more to eat, but plenty to drink; the next day I asked Finch if he was in a mind to buy a ham or two which we got at roaster French's; he said he did not like, for he had heard of that Halsted job, and he was afraid! Nothing more was said between me and Mr French at that time: and a fortnight after, Tansley, Ellis, and I went and removed the hams to the top of Water Lane, where Crowe met us: he had promised to bring a horse and cart, but he came without, and said he could not get one; we then carried it to a lodge in Mr Doubleday's meadow, in Robinbridge Road; Crowe afterwards took the pork, and gave Tansley and I, 4s each for our share; this took place in the yard of the Black Horse Inn, but French was not present.

Cross-examined by Mr Lane. French is a married man, and had a female servant in his house, but I don't know that he had one at that time; before the day of which I have been speaking I have often been at his house, and at all hours; on that morning in question I did not see any servant about; there are cottages and a blacksmith's shop in the yard of the inn, and the blacksmiths were at work; the conversation between me and French took place against the harness room, which is opposite the blacksmith's shop, and about three or four rods from it; when we went into the house there were customers present in the tap-room, but I don't know who they were; French did not sit down with us to breakfast, but sat down against the fire while the pigs fry was being cooked by Ellis; some of the others stood about; Mr French drew the beer as it was called for; French took part of the fry the same as the rest, and Mr Stribbling, who was in the bar in the coarse of the day, drew some of the beer, and brought it into the tap-room: we all paid our share; Samuel Crowe was ostler at the Black Horse, and it was his duty to be about the yard, and in and out of the house; the next day, when I spoke to the prisoner French about buying the hams, I called him into the passage alone.

Re-examined. The conversation which took place between the prisoner French and us near the harness room could not have been overheard by the men at work in the blacksmith's shop; Crowe is the half-brother of the prisoner French; I don't know that French stood treat.

James Finch, of Spencer's Garden, Bradwell, was next examined, and his description of the robbery and the treatment of himself and housekeeper corresponded with the statement of the accomplice Wade.

Superintendent Cook deposed that on Wednesday, 30 August, when he went to the Black Horse to apprehend Crowe; French, the landlord, denied that he was there, and said he had gone out with a gig on the Colchester Road; but on being questioned by Mr Corder said he did not know the name of the gentleman he was driving, and that he had not entered it in the Excise-book; but subsequently, on being farther questioned, he said it was a job of his own; witness searched the house, to which no impediment was offered. Witness further stated that French, at the close of his preliminary examination before the magistrate, said, "Well, if I had known it would have come to this, I would have told where he (Crowe) was."

Robert Evans, toll-gate keeper at Coggeshall, said he was on duty on the 30th inst., and was quite sure Samuel Crowe did not pass through on that day.

Rebecca Young, a resident in the Black Horse Yard, proved seeing the prisoner French come out and speak to the policeman; she heard him say to Inspector Ward, "do you want Sam?" and about ten minutes after she saw Crowe come out of a stable door, when he yawned and stretched himself, as though he had been asleep; she went up to him and told him the police had been after him or someone else; Crowe then went into the house, and she afterwards saw him come out and go into a cottage of French's, but she had not seen him since.

Cross-examined. Crowe went into the house about ten minutes after French.

William Osborne, basket-maker, remembered the day in question; between three and four o'clock saw Samuel Crowe peeping from behind the window curtain of the Black Horse, apparently watching Inspector Ward, who was in the street; saw French at the door a few minutes before, and afterwards; and he told Inspector Ward what he had seen, but not until ten at night.

Joseph Hills proved that he was in the passage of the Black Horse Inn between three and four o'clock on the day in question, when Samuel Crowe came in, and French said "they are after you," Crow replied, " they might have found me, for I have been having a nap in the stable."

Cross-examined. There was no appearance of alarm: nothing was said about concealment in my presence; nor did I perceive any desire evinced by French to conceal Crowe.

Mary Ann Farrow, servant to Mr Eley, of Coggeshall, deposed that on Wednesday, the 30 August, about four o'clock, she was opposite the Black Horse Inn, when she saw Samuel Crowe standing in the passage; he looked very pale, and appeared agitated, and was talking to two persons, one of whom she believed to be French; the witness, who appeared unwilling to give her evidence, afterwards said that at four o'clock she saw French and Crowe; in the passage together.

Inspector Ward proved that between 3 and 4 he looked over the lower part of French's premises, but did not see either of the parties he was in search of; he afterwards returned, and was repeatedly assured by French that he did not know where Crowe was; he visited the premises again with Smith and Nichols, when they went into the cottage adjoining, and upstairs they observed a hole, which appeared to witness to be larger than in the morning; Smith and Nichols went up and discovered Crowe, and, as there was no room for witness he called for them to seize him and hand-cuff him; he heard Crow say several times "don't hit see, and I'll come down like a man; they then left him, and presently heard a noise above, and he made his escape through the roof and got away.

A number of witnesses were then examined as to seeing John Crowe with a gig at Kelvedon, Feering, Tiptree Heath, Danbury and Woodham Ferris; at the latter place, he was accompanied by a man whose description corresponds with that of the escaped party, Samuel Crow. They enquired the way to Brentwood and are supposed to have gone to Stratford. On the return of the prisoner John Crow, he was stopped at Springfield by Elijah Clark, of Coggeshall, when, as above stated, several articles of clothing known to belong to Samuel Crow were found in the gig.

At the conclusion of the evidence, the Magistrates retired for a short time, and on their return, the prisoners, when asked if they wished to make any defence, French said he was not guilty; but the others declined making any statement. The prisoners were all fully committed to take their trial at the next assize; Ellis and Tansley for the burglary, French as an accessory after the fact, and John Crowe for aiding and abetting the escape of his brother. Upon the application of Mr Lane, it was stated that bail in two sureties of £50, and himself in £100, would be accepted for French's appearance at the assizes. The examination occupied eight hours, and as many as so witnesses were present, but the evidence of some of them was dispensed with.⁵

The owners of the Black Horse Inn were quick to replace William as the publican. On 13 October 1848 this advertisement appeared in the Chelmsford Chronicle ⁶:

TO BE LET,
With immediate Possession,
THE BLACK HORSE INN, Coggeshall—the
going in moderate.
Apply to Messrs. Wells and Perry, Chelmsford.

At the Chelmsford Assizes on 5 March 1849, the charges from the above account was heard in much more detail and with more witnesses called. William French was further charged with:

1. Burglary at Barkers. William Tansley, Samuel Crow and Samuel Juniper were indicted for a burglary in the house of William Barker, at Little Coggeshall. The prisoners, French and John Crow, were to have been arraigned as accessories, but by the permission of his Lordship, the prosecution was withdrawn.
2. Burglary at Cressing. Samuel Crow and William Ellis were charged with committing a burglary, robbery and assault in the house of Mr Totham, at Cressing, and William French with knowingly receiving part of the property stolen. French was defended, and Crow and Ellis were undefended. Ellis and French guilty; Crow acquitted.
3. Burglary at Great Tey. Originally charged with receiving from this burglary, the charge appears to have been dropped as he was convicted on other charges.

There were a number of other charges relating to various burglaries, involving a number of men from the gang. Some were acquitted or not charged again if already convicted.

The Magistrate handed down the sentences:

Samuel Crow, it appears upon the evidence which has been adduced before us, that you have been the most active man, and the head this gang, that has kept the people of Coggeshall in state of alarm for so many years; and you evidently, from what appears before the court, have been the leader of this party, organising attacks upon the people, going in the night tune armed and disguised, and committing offences for which very few years ago your Life would have been required; and upon this occasion you might suffer the penalty of death. However, I shall not think necessary, and indeed tie form in which you have been convicted would not permit me, and I should not if it would; but the sentence upon you is that upon the several indictments and for the several offences proved against you, you be transported for the term of your natural Life,—and that is the sentence upon each indictment.

William Tansley, though not so active as Crow, you have been concerned in a great many robberies! In some cases, you have not been found guilty for want of confirmation evidence of the accomplice, but I feel no doubt that the convict, who has given his evidence throughout with great clearness and distinctness, is correct with regard to your guilt. I shall sentence you to be transported for the term of your natural Life.

John Crow, you were found guilty of assisting your brother to effect his escape with full knowledge of his guilt and trying to screen him from justice. You are a young boy, and it is natural to expect you would do all you could to assist your brother. Still, respect and obedience to the law must be secured, and every person who endeavours to procure the escape of a felon is preventing the law

⁵ Essex Standard, 08 September 1848, p2

⁶ Chelmsford Chronicle, 13 October 1848, p1

from being executed. The fact that you were brother to the criminal ought to have made you more desirous to do what was right. I shall not punish you by any sentence so severe as the law would permit me to pronounce. You have acted extremely wrong, but you are young, and I shall therefore only sentence you to be imprisoned and kept to hard labour for three months.

William Ellis, for the part you have taken in this guilty transaction in robbing and injuring Mr Dell, your Life is forfeited to that of your country; and I did not choose to interfere by recommending you to the merciful consideration of her Majesty, the consequence would be that you would suffer an ignominious death. You have evidently not been concerned in this alone, but the circumstances of the injury to the prosecutor were not so great as to justify me in letting the sentence take its course; therefore, your Life will be spared, but the rest of it will be spent abroad.— Death recorded.

William French, it is very clear from the evidence in this case, and from what was heard the day before yesterday, that you have been in the habit of harbouring in your house a gang of thieves, the terror of the neighbourhood. You have endeavoured to effect the escape of one of them and have been receiving part of the stolen property. You were in a station of Life which ought to have induced you to conduct yourself more respectably, but your house seems to have been made a perfect nuisance to its neighbourhood by allowing thieves to congregate there and form their plans for disturbing the neighbourhood. You will be transported beyond the seas for the term of seven years.

James Everett, you have been found guilty of being connected with a gang who have infested the neighbourhood of Coggeshall for some years past, and the fact proved against you is that you did assist in breaking into a warehouse and stealing a quantity of hams. You cannot be punished for anything but simple larceny in this case, but I should not be doing my duty to the country I did not punish everyone connected with this gang with an adequate punishment. Your sentence is that you be transported for seven years.

Before the prisoner **Samuel Crow** was taken down, he desired to say something to his Lordship, and, being allowed to do so, asked whether his clothes, which were in the hands of the police, might not be given up to him; he had three small children. His Lordship said he was sorry the prisoner had not thought of those children before; it was not in his Lordship's power to make any order, but very possibly the clothes would be given up to him. ⁷

On 24 July 1849, the following prisoners, convicted at the Lent assize, were removed to Preston Gaol, Lancashire, the present place of reception before transportation (Milbank Prison) being rendered unfit for the purpose, owing to the breaking out of cholera:— William Tansley, Samuel Crow, and William Ellis (for Life); William Springett, William French, and James Everett (seven years), burglaries, etc., at Coggeshall.

William Wass (15 years), arson at Aldham.— Joseph Bryant (seven years), robbery with violence at Ridgewell ⁸ (and other prisoners who did not come to Western Australia).⁹

The Prison Registers show that William French, 34, married, no children, can't read or write, publican, was convicted on 5 March 1849 at Chelmsford, Essex, of receiving and sentenced to 7 years. He was received at Preston Gaol on 24 July 1849 from Springfield Gaol. William had not been in gaol before. He was transferred to Portland on 2 May 1850, arriving there on 3 May. On 13 March 1851, he boarded the *Pyrenees* for the voyage to Western Australia. ¹⁰

By December 1852, William had repaid £5.17.0½ of his passage money. (£7)¹¹ A Conditional Pardon was granted in June 1853.

⁷ Chelmsford Chronicle, 09 March 1849, p3; Chelmsford Chronicle, 16 March 1849, p4

⁸ Edward William Wass, 261, per *Mermaid*; Joseph Bryant, 667, per *Pyrenees*

⁹ Essex Standard, 03 August 1849, p2

¹⁰ TNA, HO23/11; PCOM2/383

¹¹ TNA, CO18/69

Sailing from Fremantle on 2 March 1857 was the barque *Dolphin*, for Cape of Good Hope and London. Passengers: Archdeacon Hale, Mrs Hale and five children, with a servant. The sailing was delayed one day due to the illness and ultimate death of 7-month-old Augusta Hale. In steerage was Mr French.¹²

The *Dolphin* arrived at Table Bay, South Africa, on 16 April 1857 and at Gravesend on 26 July 1857.

Back in Coggeshall.

Sarah French was homeless in 1848 and she moved to Colchester, about 15km away.

On the 1851 census, East Street, Colchester.¹³

Sarah French, widow, 46, servant to George Hitchcock, widow, 64, cooper and his grandson. Sarah was said to have been born in Norfolk, parish unknown.

William's mother was still alive in 1851 and living at West Street Gravel, Great Coggeshall, Essex.¹⁴

Samuel Crow, head, married, 69, pauper, ag lab, born Feering, Essex

Elizabeth Crow, wife, 72, charwoman, born Pattiswick

Eliza Crow, daughter, unmarried, 24, silk weaver, born Little Coggeshall

Hannah Crow, daughter, unmarried, 22, silk weaver, born Little Coggeshall
and 7 lodgers.

On his return to England, William was reunited with his wife, Sarah.

1861 census, Upper Stoneham Street, Coggeshall.¹⁵

William French, head, married, 53, jobber, born Pattiswick

Sarah, wife, 60, born in Milford, Suffolk¹⁶

William's step-father, Samuel Crow, died in 1856, aged 75, and his mother, Elizabeth, lived at Upper Stoneham Street in 1861.¹⁷

Eliza Crow, head, widow, 88, charwoman, born Pattiswick

John Crow, son, married, 30, shoemaker, born in Little Coggeshall

Eliza Crow, daughter, married, 29, silk weaver, born Great Coggeshall

Samuel Crow, grandson, 17, silk mill, born Great Coggeshall

and two boarders

Sarah French, 76, died on 1 February 1869, Back Lane, Great Coggeshall, wife of William French, horse keeper, died of paralysis of one year. Rebecca Everett, Back Lane, present at death.

William moved back to live with his elderly mother. The 1871 census, The Gravel, Coggeshall:¹⁸

Elizabeth Crow, head, widow, 93, born Coggeshall

William French, lodger, 63, widower, labourer, born Coggeshall

John Crow, grandson, unmarried, 36, labourer, born Coggeshall

and four lodgers

William's mother, Elizabeth Crow, died at Great Coggeshall and was buried on 22 February 1875. She was said to be 97 years old.¹⁹

William French, 67, labourer, residing at East Street, Great Coggeshall, was buried on 13 May 1877.

¹² The Perth Gazette and Independent Journal of Politics and News, 6 March 1857, p2

¹³ TNA, HO107/1781

¹⁴ TNA, HO107/1783

¹⁵ TNA, RG9/1109

¹⁶ Possible Long Melford; no place called Milford in Suffolk or Norfolk

¹⁷ TNA, RG9/1109

¹⁸ TNA, RG10/1696

¹⁹ Her age was probably about 8-10 years younger if John Crow born in 1834 was her son.

The Coggeshall Gang members who came to Australia.

William Wade was convicted on 18 July 1848 at Chelmsford for burglary and sentenced to 15 years. His sentence was reduced to 7 years' transportation after giving evidence against his fellow robbers. William was sent to Tasmania on the *Rodney* in 1850.

William Tansley, 4687, arrived on the *Nile* in 1858, having first spent 8 years in Gibraltar.

William Ellis, 1442, arrived on the *William Jardine* in 1852.

William Springett, 616, arrived on the *Pyrenees* in 1851.

James Everett, 615, arrived on the *Pyrenees* in 1851.

Samuel Crow, the ringleader, escaped from the police who went to apprehend him. He was a determined and cruel robber, according to the Prison Register. Samuel died on 7 March 1850 in Preston Gaol.