

Thrandeston History and Heritage Group

Woodhall Manor



and the Blacksmiths of Thrandeston

The cover picture is of Woodhall Manor, circa XXXX

Introduction

This document refers to the current property called Woodhall Manor which is in Great Green Thrandeston.

What is a Manor?

The **National Archives** gives the following description:

*“The manor was a landed estate originating in the Middle Ages. It was administered by and for their lords, with dependant tenants living on the land, and its business was carried out in the manor court before the steward. Manors varied in size, from a few acres within a single parish to manors covering several whole parishes, and even parcels of land scattered across several parishes but not adjacent to one another. They were, however, administered by their lords as a single unit”.*¹

It is not clear if the current Woodhall Manor is on the site of the original manor house or if the current property is the site where the manor was managed from.

Historic England cites:

“House. Late C15 or early C16 origins, stack added late C16, extended early C17, altered late C17, cased and part reroofed C19. Timber frame, colourwashed brick casing. Steeply pitched pantiled roof. 3 cell cross passage plan, originally a 2 bay open hall with stack and floor added before parlour, service bay later rebuilt. Now all 2 storeys. Entrance in original cross passage position, half glazed door, 2 and 3-light single glazing bar casements, ground floor hoodboards. Rebuilt ridge stack to left of centre, stack added on right gable end. Left gable end exposed and extended ground floor diamond mullioned window, exposed plates and purlins. To rear cement rendered, catslide roof over lean-to outshut behind

¹ The National Archives (Great Britain). Manors and Manorial Records (What is a Manor). <https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk> : accessed 28 May 2025.

parlour which has a slightly steeper pitch to roof. Interior: hall has exposed studding without a midrail, stop chamfered cross axial binding beams, parlour has close studding with a midrail, diamond mullioned windows, curved and reverse curved braces in walling, collars and halved principals clasping purlins, curved windbraces, hall and service end roof renewed. the age of the property as late C15 or early C16.”²

Woodhall Manor is mentioned in Coppinger’s Manor’s of Suffolk³ which cites that the manor was:

“the estate of Hayward, a freeman under the protection of Edric, in the time of Edward the Confessor, and was held by Robert MALET in the time of the Conqueror”.

From 1234 it appears to have been held by the DAGWORTH family for several generations.

At the end of the 15th century the manor was vested in Thomas Cornwallis and passed to several members of his family. The various rental rolls at Suffolk Archives will have the names of the Lords of the Manor.

The first records held in archives for Woodhall Manor are the court rolls of 1319 to 1323 and are held by Suffolk Archives. There is a total of 106 document files for Woodhall Manor held in archives and the Manorial Documents on the National Archives lists them all and where they are located.⁴

This document records the property from 1841 until 1939, but starts with the birth of Nathaniel BUTCHER, in 1813, the first known Blacksmith of Thrandeston.

² Historic England. Woodhall Manor. <https://historicengland.gov.uk> : accessed 28 May 2025

³ COPINGER, Walter Arthur. 1909. Manor of Suffolk, Notes on Their History and Devolution, Volume 3. Manchester: Taylor Garnett Evans and Co Ltd. Pp. 318 and 319.
<https://archive.org/details/manorsofsuffolkn03copiuoft/page/318/mode/2up?q=Thrandeston> : accessed 28 May 2025.

⁴ National Archives (Great Britain).

<https://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/details/c/F250361>

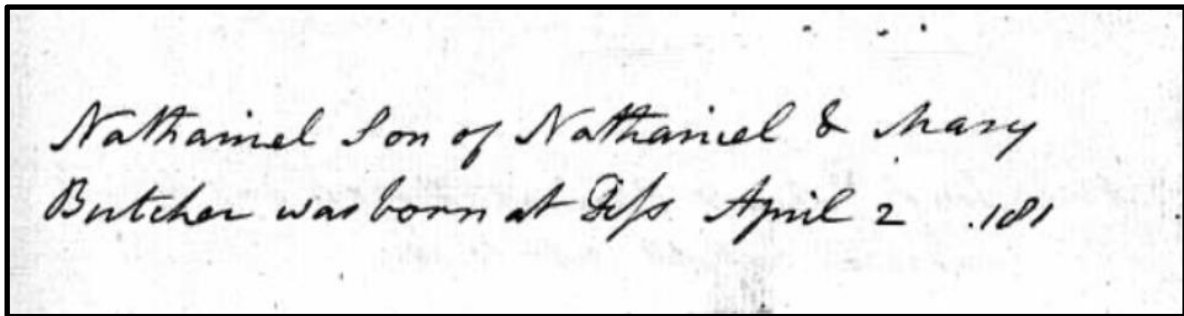
Woodhall Manor was established as a Blacksmiths by its location on the Tithe map in 1845, which is how the name of the family was identified.

Please note: Spellings of names and places are taken from records and may vary.

Nathaniel BUTCHER and Woodhall Manor.

Birth/Baptism

Nathaniel Butcher was born in 1813. The record below ⁵ cites his birth as April 02, but it is in fact a baptism record and is more likely the date of his baptism:



Birth/Baptism of Nathaniel BUTCHER

At this time, birth dates were not always recorded. The baptism took place in the Baptist Church, which was then in Croft Lane, Diss. (near where Croft Close now is). The record reads "*Nathaniel Son of Nathaniel & Mary BUTCHER was born at Diss April 2 181*" (the last number is missing). It is known by other records on the page that it was 1813.

Nathaniel's father, also named Nathaniel, was the Blacksmith in Brome. His mother's name before her marriage to his father was Mary ELSEY and she was born in Diss.

Marriage

Nathaniel married Mary Ann PETTITT on 16 April 1837 in Thrandeston Church.⁶

⁵ Baptism (PR) England. Diss, Norfolk. 02 April 1813. BUTCHER, Nathaniel. Collection: England & Wales, Non-Conformist and Non-Parochial Registers, 1567 to 1935.

<https://www.ancestry.co.uk> : accessed 28 May 2025.

⁶ Marriages (PR) England. Thrandeston, Suffolk. 16 April 1837. BUTCHER, Nathaniel and PETTITT, Mary Ann. Collection: Suffolk Marriage Registers, volume 4.

<https://www.findmypast.co.uk> : accessed 28 May 2025.

Nathaniel Butcher, of Thrandeston, & Mary
Ann Pettit, of Oakley, *lic.* 16 Ap. ,,

Marriage of Nathaniel BUTCHER to Mary Ann PETTITT

The record is taken from Phillimore Marriage Registers. The marriage was by licence and was shortly before civil registration started in July 1837.

1841 Census⁷: On 06 June 1841, Nathaniel and his wife Mary are living at The Green, Thrandeston with their 2 sons:

1841 Census for Nathaniel BUTCHER			
Name	Age	Occupation	Born in County
Nathaniel BUTCHER	25	Blacksmith	Y
Mary BUTCHER	25	-	Y
Abraham BUTCHER	3	-	Y
Edward BUTCHER	1	-	Y

Nathaniel is 25 years old and his profession is “Blacksmith”. He is living with his wife Mary and 2 sons, Abraham and Edward. This is the first census with individual listings and information was very limited.

Tithe Record:

The tithe apportionments for Thrandeston were recorded in 1845. The notice was printed in the Suffolk Chronicle on Saturday 15 March 1845.⁸ Nathaniel may have attended this meeting in the Crown Inn in Botesdale to find out what was going to happen.

⁷ Census records. England. Thrandeston, Suffolk. 06 June 1841. BUTCHER, Nathaniel (head). PN 1024. FL 9. SN 1078. P. 13. Collection: 1841 England Census.

<https://www.findmypast.co.uk> : accessed 28 May 2025.

⁸ Suffolk Chronicle. 1845. Parish of Thrandeston. *Suffolk Chronicle*. 15 March. 1c.

<https://www.findmypast.co.uk> : accessed 28 May 2025.



The word “Smy” is the short form for Blacksmith – Smithy.

1851 Census ¹⁰: On 30 March 1851, Nathaniel’s details are as follows:

1851 Census for Nathaniel BUTCHER at Great Green					
Name	Relation	Condition	Age	Occupation	Birthplace
Nathaniel BUTCHER	Head	Mar	37	Blacksmith	Diss, Norfolk
Mary Ann BUTCHER	Wife	Mar	38	-	Oakley, Suffolk
Absalom BUTCHER	Son	-	13	-	Thrandeston, Suffolk
Edward BUTCHER	Son	-	11	Scholar	Thrandeston

The discrepancy in ages from 1841 for Nathaniel and Mary is due to the fact that ages were rounded up and down by 5 years on the 1841 census.

Nathaniel was 37 and a Blacksmith and Mary was 38. Edward their youngest son was 11 years old and a scholar. Absalom was 13 but it would appear that he was not at school or had a trade. Education was very patchy at this stage and there was limited access for education for most working class people. Edward

¹⁰ Census records. England. Thrandeston, Suffolk. 30 March 1851. BUTCHER, Nathaniel (head). PN 1795. FL 621. SN 25. ED 10b. p. 6. Collection: 1851 England Census.

<https://www.ancestry.co.uk> : accessed 02 June 2025.

was possibly at the National School in Thrandeston which opened in 1850 (now the village hall). National Schools were set up by the National Association for Promoting the Education of the Poor in the Principles of the Established Church in England and Wales. Children stopped attending National Schools at the age of 12, which is why Absalom was no longer in education.

1861 Census¹¹: Nathaniel was listed with his wife, son and a lodger on 07 April 1861:

1861 Census for Nathaniel BUTCHER at Great Green					
Name	Relation	Condition	Age	Occupation	Birthplace
Nathaniel BUTCHER	Head	Mar	48	Blacksmith employing 1 man	Diss, Norfolk
Mary Ann BUTCHER	Wife	Mar	48	-	Oakley, Suffolk
Isaac BUTCHER	Son	-	4	-	Thrandeston, Suffolk
Samuel DOWLING	Lodger	-	19	Blacksmiths Labourer	Norfolk

Nathaniel is now 48, occupation “Blacksmith” and is now employing 1 man, Samuel DOWLING who is 19 years of age, occupation “Blacksmiths Labourer”. Nathaniel’s business must be thriving as he has hired help.

Nathaniel and Mary have another child Isaac who is 4 years old. Isaac was born in 1857, which is 19 years after his nearest sibling, but no other children have been found for Nathaniel and Mary. Absalom and Edward have left the family home. Absalom is boarding in a property in Colchester and is a “Blacksmith”. Edward is married and is living in Brome. He is now a “Master Carpenter and Grocer”.

Overseer:

Nathaniel BUTCHER was appointed as one of the village Overseers on 03 April 1871. This would be an Overseer of the Poor. Overseers collected a rate from the better off people in the parish which was then distributed to those in need

¹¹ Census records. England. Thrandeston, Suffolk. 1861 England Census. BUTCHER, Nathaniel. (head). PN 1150. FL 163. SN 14. ED 13. p. 3. Collection: 1861 England Census. <https://www.ancestry.co.uk> : accessed 28 May 2025.

of poor relief. They also sometimes arranged apprenticeships for poor children who often worked as unpaid servants. The following newspaper article listing overseers of Hartismere appeared in the Ipswich Journal on 08 April 1871 and shows that Nathaniel was appointed to the role with Edgar Nunn who also lived in the village.¹²

PETTY SESSIONS REPORTS. HARTISMERE.

EYE, MONDAY, April 3.—Before the Rev. J. F. Reeve (chairman), and the Rev. C. H. Chevallier.

Appointment of Overseers.—The following Overseers and Parish Constables were appointed :—

OVERSEERS.

Aspall.—Joseph Palmer, John Curtis Capon.
Brome.—Thomas Paske, Henry Aldred.
Botesdale.—Wm. Robinson, George J. Beckett.
Burgate.—Jonathan Baskett, Fred. Baskett.
Braisworth.—Wm. Allen, James Runacres.
Bacton.—John Finbow, R. H. Hearn.
Cotton.—John Ford, Thos. Davey.
Finningham.—John Bloomfield, John Spicer.
Gislingham.—Robt. Brett, W. Bolton.
Mellis.—John Hammond, John Andrews.
Mendlesham.—John Rose, J. Foster.
Oakley.—B. Gidney, F. C. Ward.
Occold.—Henry Last, G. Johnson.
Palgrave.—Wm. Goodrich, Thos. Edwards.
Redlingfield.—John Barnes, W. G. Wardley.
Rickingham Superior.—Robert Freeman, Geo. Brett.
Rishangles.—Henry Sherman, Robt. Capon.
Redgrave.—Osborn Roper, Edward Vyse.
Stuston.—Noah Elsey, Osborn Tyrrell.
Stoke Ash.—T. R. Foulger, Elizabeth Colman.
Thwalte.—Thos. Sawyer, Richard Anness.
Thorndon.—Wm. Hill, J. B. Gooderham.
Thrandeston.—Edgar Nunn, Nathaniel Butcher.
Thornham Magna.—Daniel Lamb, Ephraim Murton.
Parva.—T. W. Gage, Charles Nunn.
Wickham Skeith.—John Ward, C. W. Womack.
Westhorpe.—T. L. Berry, Joseph Pryke.
Wortham.—John Rush, Thos. Jervy.
Wyverstone.—Joseph Sturgeon, John Baker.
Wetheringset-cum-Brockford.—Thos. Lingwood, Thos. Edwards.
Yaxley.—Samuel Murton, Barnabas Brundle.

¹² Ipswich Journal. 1871. Petty Sessions Reports, Hartismere. *Ipswich Journal*. 08 April. 7d.
<https://www.fidmypast.co.uk> : accessed 28 May 2025.

1871 Census¹³: On 02 April 1871, Nathaniel is listed with his wife and son Isaac who is now a Blacksmith help.

1871 Census for Nathaniel BUTCHER at Great Green					
Name	Relation	Condition	Age	Occupation	Birthplace
Nathaniel BUTCHER	Head	Mar	57	Blacksmith employing 1 man	Diss, Norfolk
Mary Ann BUTCHER	Wife	Mar	58	-	Oakley, Suffolk
Isaac BUTCHER	Son	-	14	Blacksmith help	Thrandeston, Suffolk

Death of wife:

Nathaniel's wife Mary Ann died in 1879.¹⁴ She was buried in Thrandeston churchyard on 15 May 1879.¹⁵

1881 Census¹⁶: On 03 April 1881, Nathaniel was listed with his son Isaac and grandson George:

1881 Census for Nathaniel BUTCHER at Great Green					
Name	Relation	Condition	Age	Occupation	Birthplace
Nathaniel BUTCHER	Head	Widower	67	Blacksmith master	Diss, Norfolk
Isaac BUTCHER	Son	Unmar	24	Blacksmith master	Thrandeston, Suffolk
George BUTCHER	Grandson	Unmar	15	App. Blacksmith	Broome, Suffolk
Eliza CHAPMAN	Housekeeper	Unmar	57	-	Stowupland, Suffolk

¹³ Census records. England. Thrandeston, Suffolk. 02 April 1871. BUTCHER, Nathaniel (head). PN 1738. FL 80. SN 8. ED 13. P.2. Collection: 1871 England Census.

<https://www.ancestry.co.uk> : accessed 28 May 2025.

¹⁴ Deaths index (CR). England and Wales. RD Hartismere, Suffolk. 2nd Q. 1879. Vol. 4a. p. 387. BUTCHER, Mary Ann. <https://www.gro.gov.uk> : accessed 28 May 2025.

¹⁵ Burials (PR) England. Thrandeston, Suffolk. 15 May 1879. BUTCHER, Mary Ann.

<https://tharston-past.info/THRA/index.html> : accessed 28 May 2025.

¹⁶ Census records. England. Thrandeston, Suffolk. 03 April 1881. BUTCHER, Nathaniel (head). PN 1854. FL 32. SN 9. ED 13. P. 2. Collection : 1881 England Census.

<https://www.ancestry.co.uk> : accessed 16 June 2025.

Nathaniel has been a widower for nearly 2 years. His son Isaac is listed with him and is now a Master Blacksmith. His grandson George age 15 is listed and is an Apprentice Blacksmith. George is the son of Edward, Nathaniel's second son.

Edward died in the first quarter of 1881, but it is not known if that is why George is now living and working with his grandfather. There is also a Housekeeper, Eliza Chapman. There are now 3 blacksmiths working from the property and a housekeeper.

1891 Census¹⁷: On 05 April, Nathaniel is listed with his son and a servant:

1891 Census for Nathaniel BUTCHER at Great Green					
Name	Relation	Condition	Age	Occupation	Birthplace
Nathaniel BUTCHER	Head	Wid	77	Blacksmith	Diss, Norfolk
Isaac BUTCHER	Son	S	31	Blacksmith	Thrandeston, Suffolk
Alice WHITING	Serv	S	20	General (Domestic)	Dickleburgh, Norfolk

Samuel is now 77 and is still working as a Blacksmith. His son Isaac is now 31 and is still living with him. He is also a Blacksmith. There is a General Domestic Servant listed with the family too.

Directories:

Nathaniel has 12 entries in White's and Kelly's directories from 1855 to 1892. Each entry describes him as either a Blacksmith or a Black and Shoeing Smith.

What happened after Nathaniel's death?

On the census on 31 March 1901, Nathaniel's son Isaac and his wife Sarah were found at the property where Isaac had taken over his father's property. Isaac had married Sarah at All Saints church, Paddington on 23 March 1898.

¹⁷ Census Records. England. Thrandeston Suffolk. 05 April 1891. BUTCHER, Nathaniel (head) PN 1459. FI 131. SN 56. ED 13. Collection : 1891 England Census.

<https://www.ancestry.co.uk> : accessed 16 June 2025.

1898. Marriage solemnized at *All Saints church* in the parish of *Paddington* in the County of *London*

Column No.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
No.	When Married.	Name and Surname.	Age.	Condition.	Rank or Profession.	Residence at the time of Marriage.	Father's Name and Surname.	Rank or Profession of Father.
68	X x iii March 1898	Isaac Butcher Sarah Hattam	full full	Bachelor Spinster	Blacksmith —	5 Kempson Road Walham Green 20 Talbot Square	Nathaniel Butcher Jesse Hattam	deceased Gardener

Married in the *All Saints church* according to the Rites and Ceremonies of the *established church* by *—* or after *—* by me,
 This Marriage was solemnized between us, { *Isaac Butcher* } in the Presence of us, { *A. P. Butcher* } by *William Bond, M.A.*
 { *Sarah M. Hattam* } { *Herbert Adams* } *Vicar of All Saints.*

Marriage of Isaac BUTCHER to Sarah HATTAM

The record cites Isaac’s father as Nathaniel BUTCHER deceased. Isaac is living in Walham Green in London at the time of his marriage. His wife Sarah is living in Talbot Square near Hyde Park. Sarah’s father Jesse is cited as a Gardener.

1901 Census: On 31 March 1901, Isaac has moved back to Thrandeston and is now the Blacksmith for the village:

1901 Census for Isaac BUTCHER at Great Green ¹⁸					
Name	Relation	Condition	Age	Occupation	Birthplace
Isaac BUTCHER	Head	Mar	44	Blacksmith, own account	Suffolk, Thrandeston
Sarah BUTCHER	Wife	Mar	47	-	Surrey, Wandsworth

Isaac is living with his wife Sarah.

1911 Census ¹⁹: On 02 April, Isaac is listed with his wife and. Boarder:

¹⁸ Census Records. England. Thrandeston Suffolk. 31 March 1901. BUTCHER, Isaac, (head). PN 1765. FL 104. SN 93. ED 9 p. 15. Collection : 1901 England Census.

<https://www.ancestry.co.uk> : accessed 16 June 2025.

¹⁹ Census Records. England. Thrandeston, Suffolk. 02 April 1911. BUTCHER, Isaac, (head). RD 210. PN 10723. ED 08. Collection : 1911 England Census. <https://www.ancestry.co.uk> : accessed 16 June 2025.

1911 Census for Isaac BUTCHER at Great Green					
Name	Relation	Condition	Age	Occupation	Birthplace
Isaac BUTCHER	Head	Married	53	Shoeing and general smith	Suffolk, Thrandeston
Sarah BUTCHER	Wife	Married	55	-	Surrey, Wandsworth
Ernest CHAMBERS	Boarder	Single	23	Shoeing and general smith - improver	Suffolk, Eye

Isaac is 53 and his wife Sarah is 55. Isaac's profession or trade is listed as Shoeing and General Smith. Their boarder Ernest CHAMBERS is 23 and is a Shoeing and General Smith – Improver. Improver is an old description for someone who is near completion of an apprenticeship and is working towards being a Journeyman (a skilled worker who is no longer indentured to an employer).

The listing also states that Isaac and Sarah have been married for 12 years and have not had any children.

Sarah was 43 at the time of her marriage and it may be that she was unable to have any children.

1921 Census²⁰: On 19 June, Isaac is living with his wife Sarah.

1921 Census for Isaac BUTCHER at Great Green					
Name	Relation	Condition	Age	Occupation	Birth place
Isaac BUTCHER	Head	Married	64y 7m	Blacksmith	Thrandeston, Suffolk
Sarah BUTCHER	Wife	Married	66y 5m	Home duties	Wandsworth, Surrey

Isaac is 64 years and 7 months and his wife Sarah is 66 years and 5 months. His profession or trade is given as Blacksmith Own Account Working at Home.

²⁰ Census Records. England. Thrandeston, Suffolk. 19 June 1921. BUTCHER, Isaac. (head). RD 210. SN 41. ED 23. Collection : 1921 England Census. <https://www.ancestry.co.uk> : accessed 16 June 2021.

Death: Isaac died in the second quarter of 1928 in Thrandeston at the age of 71.
²¹ His burial record has not been found, but it is hoped it will be identified with the work that is being carried out to map the gravestones in the churchyard.

It is not clear when Sarah died, but if Isaac's headstone is found, it may be that she will also be listed on it.

²¹ Deaths index (CR) England and Wales. Hartismere, Suffolk. 2nd Q., BUTCHER, Isaac. Vol 4a. p. 1036. <https://www.gro.gov.uk> : accessed 16 June 2025.

After the BUTCHER family:

The last record found for the property is the 1939 registration.²²

John THOMPSON at Woodhall Manor				
Name	Gender	Date of birth	Status	Occupation
THOMPSON John H	M	15 May 1887	M	Gardener
THOMPSON Olive E	F	18 Mar 1887	M	Unpaid Domestic Duties
BROOKS Eliza A	F	04 Feb 1861	W	Incapacitated
BROOKS, Amy E	F	30 Nov 1888	S	Unpaid Domestic Duties
TOMKINS Emily A	F	05 Dec 1878	S	Private means

John Thompson appears to be the head of the house. He is married to Olive who was Olive Eliza BROOKS before her marriage. Eliza A BROOKS is her mother and Amy is her sister. Olive's father John had died in 1933. It is not clear whether Emily Tomkins is related to the family.

No records have been found after this date.

²² 1939 Register. England. Thrandeston, Suffolk. THOMPSON, John H. 29 September 1939. Schedule 69/1. PN 6643. RG101. ED Txhb. National Archives (Great Britain), Kew, England. Collection : 1939 England and Wales Register. <https://www.ancestry.co.uk> : accessed 16 June 2025.

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