

MARY MOUNTJOY died February 1811

Memorial 24

JOHN MOUNTJOY died December 1823

John Mountjoy married Mary Pearse on 28th June 1770 at Holy Trinity church, Exeter. Their births/baptisms cannot be traced with certainty. If they were from non-conformist families this would not be surprising because many records do not survive. However, other Pearses were baptised at St Stephens by Launceston, the parish that included Newport where her relations still lived when mentioned in John's will, so she may well have been born there. John may have been the son of an Emmanuel Mountjoy and his wife Ann. They had other children baptised around the time he was born recorded an Exeter Non-conformist register, including an Elizabeth. John's sister Elizabeth, named in his will, had a son named Emmanuel, which suggests the same family. However, there were two contemporaneous Emmanuel Mountjoys, perhaps cousins. One served his apprenticeship as a woolcomber, and was admitted a freeman of Exeter in 1727, while the second, who had been apprenticed as a ropemaker, was made a freeman in 1734.¹

The Militia List of 1803 of Holy Trinity parish lists John's occupation as a fuller, and also records him as a constable.² Fuller may have been given as his "official" occupation, that is, he had served his apprenticeship as a fuller, because he is later described as a sergemaker. A sergemaker would usually have been apprenticed in one of the skills needed to make cloth, such as fulling. He does not appear in the 1821 census of Holy Trinity parish, so had presumably moved elsewhere by then, and had probably retired because he is not listed in Pigot's Directory of 1822/3.

Mary Mountjoy's death was announced in Trewman's Flying Post of 24th February 1814: "On Tuesday last died Mrs Mountjoy, wife of Mr John Mountjoy, of this city, sergemaker". She had died on 21st February, aged 74. John Mountjoy died in 1825, aged 80, and was buried on 13th December. They did not appear to have surviving children, and no records of any children have been found.

¹ Rowe, M M and Jackson, A M (1973) Exeter Freeman 1266 – 1967, pp 241, 252.

² W G Hoskins (1972) Exeter Militia List 1803, p 116.

John Mountjoy left his estate to trustees for charities with Unitarian connections, and various family and friends.³ His will was witnessed by James Bowden and his sister Sarah, the teachers at the Dissenters' School.

He left £30 for the Protestant Dissenting Charity School belonging to George's Meeting. The school was founded in 1710 for the education of poor children, and was situated in Paris Street. In 1828 it was described as providing for 22 boys and 20 girls. They were clothed, and given instruction in reading, writing and arithmetic. The girls were also taught sewing and knitting. The school was maintained by legacies, subscriptions, donations, etc.⁴

£20 was left for the Unitarian Fund for the Promotion of Unitarianism.

£10 was left for books for the Sunday school at George's Meeting.

There were bequests to his late wife's family: £50 to George and £10 to William Pearse, merchant, of Newport, Cornwall. John's sister Elizabeth Price was left £50, to go to her children Elizabeth, John, Mary and Emmanuel, if she had died before John.

Other bequests were £50 each to Sarah, the wife of Richard Every, scrivener (sic), Isabella, wife of Robert ffouracre, and Ann and Jane, the daughters of John Westbear the elder. £10 and half his clothes were left to John Westbear, £10 and the rest of his clothes to his sister Elizabeth's husband, John Price, and £10 to John Moore, the Governor of the Workhouse in St Thomas.

³ Inland Revenue wills (1826) John Mountjoy.

⁴ Besley, T and H (1828) Exeter Itinerary and General Directory, p 86.