



A fine Portland limestone chest tomb with side panels and a ledger stone set on piers commemorates the death of James Prentice in 1810.

According to a report in the *Dublin Evening Post*¹, James was a student at Trinity College Dublin and died on 5th February 1810, “..at his lodgings near the city of Exeter, aged 19”. He was described as the only child of Thomas Prentice of Armagh.

Sadly, James was the only *remaining* child of Thomas and Rose Prentice. Two other children, Jane (b. 1787, d. 1806) and Rose Anne (b. 1791, d. 1807) pre-deceased James and both their parents.²

No information has yet been found to explain why James was in Exeter. He entered Trinity College Dublin on 4th July 1808, aged 17, as a *pensioner*.³ His father was described as *Generosus* (*Lat.* Gentleman), indicating that the family was moderately wealthy, and likely to have been merchants or tradespeople.^{4,5} His schoolmaster is recorded as “*Mr Carpendale*”³ and this refers to Revd. Thomas Carpendale A.M., headmaster of the Royal School Armagh (1786-1817).⁶ James did not matriculate from Trinity College Dublin – he died in the second year of his tuition.

It has not been discovered as yet who paid for James’s grave and who commissioned the stonework for his tomb. The plot cost 16 shillings – the sum resolved by the Committee of Georges Meeting in September 1809 for a ‘*common grave*’ of a ‘*non-member of the United or Mint congregation or who have not relatives already buried*’

¹ Dublin Evening Post, Thursday 15 February 1810. Accessed at www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk 2 August 2018.

² *Visitation at England and Wales. Notes. Vol. 3.* Edited by Joseph Jackson Howard and Frederick Arthur Crisp, page 24, 1898.

³ *Alumni Dublinenses.* A register of the students, graduates, professors and provosts of Trinity College in the University of Dublin (1593-1860). Edited by G.D. Burtchaell and T.U. Sadleir, Dublin, 1924. *Pensioners* paid a fixed sum annually and were sons of persons of moderate income.

⁴ http://www.prenticenet.com/pnet/news/?s=1&k=&f=%2Fnews%2F2009%2Fthomas_prentice_1643_armagh_ireland.htm.

⁵ Halligan, M. Scotch Street: Settling on a name. *History Armagh*, 2: 13-15 (2010). Also Quinn, K. The School Lane Cow Doctor and other forgotten eighteenth century occupations Armagh. *History Armagh*, 1: 18-21 (2006).

⁶ Dawson, A. The Rev. Thomas Carpendale AM. *History Armagh*, 2: 34-35 (2008). A.M. (*Lat.*) *Artium Magister* – Master of Arts. Also, <http://www.ocotilloroad.com/geneal/carpendale1.html#THOM1> accessed 9 August 2018.

there...' Permission to erect a tomb over the grave would have cost an additional 4 guineas, excluding the price for the stone and mason work.

James's death was commemorated in "*Elegiack Stanzas: On the death of Rosanna and James Prentice, children of Thomas Prentice Esq., of the City of Armagh*" by James Stuart, a historian and writer, and school friend of his father.⁷

From stanza 10:

*Lo! To the grave descends the darling boy,
Entombed in anguish and embalmed in tears,
And with him fled the lonely ray of joy,
That beamed across the winter of their years.*

*Friend of my youth, I feel thy sorrows mine!
Methinks I listen to thy plaintive moan,
My heart-strings beat with ev'ry pulse of thine,
My breast responsive echoes groan for groan.*

*For much I loved thy son forever gone,
From all thy hopes untimely torn away,
E'en at the moment when youths op'ning dawn,
Gave glorious promise of life's coming day.*

*Him, Mem'ry oft shall to thy soul restore,
And joy shall warm thee with a doubtful beam,
And thou shalt fondly gaze his image ov'r,
Then weep to find that image but a dream.*

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⁷ Stuart, James. *Poems on various subjects*. G. Dobbin & Murphy, Baltimore (1812). Also [https://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Stuart, James \(1764-1842\) \(DNB000\)](https://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Stuart,_James_(1764-1842)_DNB000). Accessed 9 August 2018.