

FOUR INFANT CHILDREN – MARDON

BENJAMIN MARDON died 1814

GRACE RICHARDS died 1809

Benjamin Mardon was the father of the four infant children buried in this graveyard and Grace Richards was his mother-in-law!

According to the Burial Register ¹ the children were:-

Ann Newman Mardon, born 09 April 1785 and died 27 November 1788 aged 3 years

Benjamin Mardon, born 6 October 1787 and died 24 November 1788 aged 14 months

Fulford Mardon, born ? died 17 February 1789 aged 16 weeks

James Mardon, born 15 December 1795 and died 16 September 1796 aged 4 months

Benjamin Mardon was born in 1757 and died on Sunday, 30 October 1814 (buried on 05 November 1814) aged 57 years.² It is possible, though not determined, that he was the son of John and Mary Mardon of Crediton,³ born on 16 February 1757 and baptized in March of that year at Bowden Hill, Presbyterian Chapel, Crediton.⁴

Benjamin married Elizabeth Newman Richards on 05 July 1784 at St Mary Major, Exeter.⁵ Elizabeth Newman Richards was the daughter of Grace, nee Thomas, and William Richards. She was baptized on 27 August 1761 at Holy Trinity, Exeter⁴ and died in 1832. She was buried on 09 September 1832⁶ and, whilst this information is shown in the Burial Ledger, her name does not appear on the family Memorial Stone. The Non-Conformist register shows that she was of St Martin's Parish and was buried by Henry Acton. Their children⁷ were:-

Ann	born 09 April 1785	died 27 November 1788
John	born 13 June 1786	
Benjamin	born 06 October 1787	died 24 November 1788
Fulford	born October 1788	died 17 February 1789
Elizabeth	born 03 July 1789	
Benjamin	born 27 May 1792	
Lucy	born 1794	
James	born 15 December 1795	died 16 September 1796
William	born 08 October 1798	
Thomas	born 27 April 1800	
Emma	born 18 March 1804	
James	?	

(unable to confirm but he is mentioned in Benjamin Mardon's Will of 1805 and again in the Will of his mother, Elizabeth, written in 1824).

Benjamin Mardon (senior) was a Mercer and Woollen Draper.⁸ From 1789 until his death, Benjamin and Elizabeth, and their children, lived in premises almost opposite the Guildhall in Exeter's Fore Street (the white building, now 54 High Street) and

Elizabeth remained there until 1821.⁹



Very little is known about the children of Benjamin and Elizabeth, with the exception of their son who was also named Benjamin, born on 27 May 1792. Benjamin studied at the University of Glasgow from where he graduated with a Master of Arts degree in 1821. From 1821 to 1825, he was a Unitarian Minister in Glasgow.

On 19 June 1821, Benjamin had married Isabella Cairns. The marriage was announced in the Inverness

Courier 05 July 1821 and read, "At Peebles, on the 19th June, the Rev. Benjamin Mardon, M.A minister of the Union Chapel, Glasgow, to Isabella, daughter of Mr Cairns, writer". In 1825, he moved to Maidstone, Kent. The records of Glasgow University indicate that, in 1827, Benjamin moved from Kent to take up the position of Minister at the Baptist Chapel, Worship Street, London where, it is said he remained until 1855 when he moved to the Unitarian Chapel at Sidmouth, Devon and stayed until his death in 1866¹⁰. If this is the case, then Benjamin returned to Maidstone in February 1828 where we know he married Ann Green at Loose Parish Church on 14 February 1828¹¹. It has not been possible to find a death registered for Isabella Cairns nor information that she and Benjamin divorced. (Deaths in Scotland were registered in women's maiden names but both Cairns and Mardon have been checked.)

In 1863, Benjamin and Ann lived at Alma Place, Sidmouth and Benjamin was the Minister of its Unitarian Chapel¹². It has not been possible to locate Alma Place but there is Alma Lane in Sidmouth.



It is clear that Benjamin and Ann(e) were well respected in Devon. The report, though not entirely about the Mardon's, is interesting:-

On Saturday, 14 March 1857, Peter Hutchinson (History of Sidmouth) wrote in his diary, "Had tea with Mr and Mrs Mardon, at Sidlands. He is the

unitarian minister at Sidmouth. He tells me that he remembers my uncle, the Rev. W. Hutchinson, when he lived at Heavitree Parsonage; and also my grandfather the Judge. In the course of the evening he showed me a sword declared to have

belonged to Oliver Cromwell. It was in the possession of George IV, but how it came to him we are not informed. Its history from George IV, however is known. He gave it to Col. Hanger, who I believe was afterwards Lord Coleraine. From Lord Coleraine it passed to a gentleman of the name Jones; and by him was given to his relative Mrs. Honiton, who has lent it to Mr Mardon. It is a light two-edged, fencing or dress sword, in leather scabbard. The hilt is black horn; the guard (broken) of silver, and a silver shell, as an ornament, spreading down the blade. He made me a present of a little book, a translation from the Greek, of his own, of the Epistle of St John the Apostle.”¹³

“Amongst the many friends living in the neighbourhood none were more welcomed by the congregation than Benjamin Mardon M.A, and Mrs. Mardon. The closing years of Mardon’s long and active ministerial life were spent at Sidmouth and Pinhoe. His services were willingly given to members of the congregation who desired him to christen their children. Amongst those christened by him at George’s Meeting, in the sunset of his life, was the author of this little book, on 27 Sept., 1857. Mardon died at Pinhoe, near Exeter (*see below) on 15 April 1866, and was buried in the peaceful chapel yard at Gulliford. Mrs Mardon, a sister (Anne) of Henry Green, M.A., minister of Knutsford Chapel, 1827-1872, survived her husband some years, and died at Tunbridge Wells”.¹⁴



* (see above) This is incorrect! Reverend Benjamin Mardon was admitted to Bowhill House (St. Thomas Lunatic Asylum) on 14 November 1865 where he died on 15 April 1866.¹⁵ His Case Notes can be found at the Devon Heritage Centre (Case Book Vol.V, Page 142).

Benjamin was buried in the small Gulliford Dissenters’ Cemetery which is on the Exeter Road to Exmouth on the outskirts of the village of Lypstone.

After his death, Anne returned to Maidstone, Kent where she died on 29 January 1889 in her 84th year of age.¹⁶

Grace Richards – nee Thomas – (the mother-in-law of Benjamin Mardon senior) married William Richards on 10 November 1751 at St. Mary Arches, Exeter.¹⁷

In 1800, she was living in the parish of St Mary Major, Exeter and is not shown as living with others.¹⁸ She was buried on 22 June 1809 aged 82 years.¹⁹

Sources

1. Burial Register held by EDGT www.ancestry.co.uk
2. Non-Conformist and Non-Parochial Register Piece 0965 Page 182 of 191 – www.ancestry.co.uk
3. Non-Conformist and Non-Parochial Register Piece 3558 Page 27 of 51 – www.ancestry.co.uk
4. England Select Births and Christenings 1538-1975 - www.findmypast.co.uk
5. England Select Marriages 1538-1973 – www.ancestry.co.uk
6. Non-Conformist and Non-Parochial Register Piece 1085 Page 20 of 52 – www.ancestry.co.uk
7. Non-Conformist and Non-Parochial Register Piece 0965 – www.ancestry.co.uk
8. Exeter Flying Post 03 November 1814 – www.findmypast.co.uk
9. St Martin's Island by Todd Gray and Sue Jackson
10. www.universitystory.gla.co.uk
11. England Marriages 1738-1973 – www.findmypast.co.uk
12. 1861 Census – www.ancestry.co.uk
13. Peter Orlando Hutchinson transcripts 1857 – www.eastdevonaonb.org.uk
14. www.babel.hathitrust.org
15. Devon Heritage Centre (Register of Admissions 1861-1875)
16. Kent & Sussex Courier 08 February 1889 – www.findmypast.co.uk
17. England Select Marriages 1538-1973 – www.ancestry.co.uk
18. UK Land Tax Exemption 1798 – www.ancestry.co.uk
19. Non-Conformist and Non-Parochial Register Piece 0965 Page 179 of 191 – www.ancestry.co.uk

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