

Memorial 50

MARTHA OTTLEY died 27th January 1835 **ELINOR MARTHA OTTLEY died 18th April 1835**

Martha Ottley, formerly Davy, was born on 16th July 1803, the only daughter of Isaac Davy of Fordton, near CREDITON, and his wife, Elizabeth¹. She was baptised on 27th January 1811 at Bowden Hill Presbyterian Chapel, CREDITON, along with her four brothers, Edward, John, William and Henry.² Martha's father, Isaac Davy, was born about 1754, the son of John Cadlick Davy, a CREDITON clothier, cloth dyer and merchant, and his wife Elizabeth, daughter of William Sparkes, a wealthy Dorchester maltster. Like his brothers, William and Samuel, Isaac was involved with the family business, and was variously described as a merchant, a silk and cloth dyer, and a serge and flax manufacturer. He spent much of his early life abroad, particularly in Spain, travelling in connection with the family business. His life included many colourful incidents, including being captured by French pirates, when he was lucky to escape alive. When his brother, William, went to live in America in 1795, his partnership with Isaac and Samuel was dissolved and the remaining brothers carried on the family business at Fordton.³ In 1803, Isaac was appointed Lieutenant in Captain Shute's CREDITON Voluntary Infantry, at the time when there was a severe threat of Napoleon invading and men were expected to show their willingness to serve in the militia if needed.⁴ He was a Unitarian by religion and, politically, a Liberal. In 1828, he chaired the Dinner for the meeting of the Western Unitarian Society at Yeovil.⁵ He is recorded as carrying on the usual pursuits of a country gentleman, giving the vote of thanks at a ploughing match in 1839, for instance. He died on 26th May 1840, aged 86 years.⁷

Fordton was described in the Universal British Directory of circa 1795: "Half a mile south of CREDITON, near Fordton Mills, is the pleasant villa of Fordton..... the property of Mr William Davy, who carries on a large business of dying silks and cloths of all kinds".⁸ Isaac and Samuel lived there after William went to the USA. William carried out his business in Philadelphia for many years and became an American citizen, coming back to England in 1816 to be the United States Consul for Hull and Leeds, a far cry from his early life in rural Devon.⁹

When Martha was 29 years old, she married Drewry Ottley on 2nd July 1833 at the Parish Church in CREDITON.¹⁰ Drewry Ottley was a Surgeon, born at St Vincent in the West Indies in November 1803. He was the son of the Hon. Drewry Ottley and Eliza Gray of St Kitts.¹¹ The family was originally from Yorkshire but emigrated in the 17th century and established a sugar plantation on St Kitts. The name Drewry had been used for generations by the Ottley family.

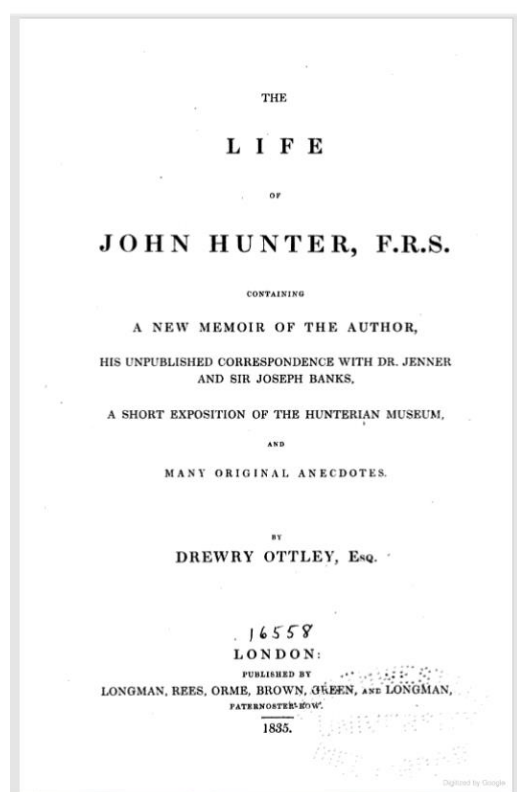


Elinor Martha, the only child of Martha and Drewry, was born on 18th May 1834.¹² Sadly, her mother, Martha, died on 27th January 1835¹³ and was buried four days later, on

the 31st January.¹ Elinor died on 18th April 1835, aged 11 months.¹⁴ It is not known where in Exeter the family were living at the time but, we do know that, one year later, Drewry was residing in Magdalen Street close to the graveyard.¹⁵

Drewry Ottley remarried on 11th February 1837, to Anna Waldron Gifford, at St Sidwell's Church, Exeter. Anna was the granddaughter of John Gifford and Anna Waldron Lee (see Memorial 45) and the daughter of their son, George. She was born on 10th December 1806 and baptized the same day at Bow Meeting, Exeter.¹

Drewry and Anna had six children: Anna Grace (born 1840 Exeter), Eliza Jane (born 1842 Exeter), Emily Harriet (born 1843 London), Drewry Gifford (born 1845 London), Henrietta (born 1847 London)¹⁶ and Walter (born 1850 France).¹⁷ The family lived in France for many years but, by 1881, Drewry had returned to England and was living in Kensington, London with his wife, Anna, their daughter, Eliza Jane and their son, Walter.¹⁷ Their eldest daughter, Anna Grace, married Octavious Leeper, a Solicitor.¹⁷ Henrietta married Osborne Charles Kent, who was also a Solicitor.¹⁷ Drewry, Anna and Drewry's eldest son, became a Civil Engineer and lived in Carrick-upon-Shannon, Ireland.¹⁸ The youngest child, Walter, became a Surgeon like his father. Sadly he died on 14th January 1883. He never married and lived with his parents at Ladbroke Grove, Notting Hill, London.¹⁸



Drewry Ottley wrote two books: "*The Life of John Hunter*" (1835) who was a Surgeon, and "*Observations on Surgical Diseases of the Head and Neck*" (1848). He died on 31st December 1882, just two weeks before Walter, his youngest child.¹⁸

Anna Waldron Gifford Ottley died on 4th July 1889 at her home, 19 Kildare Gardens, Bayswater, London.¹⁸

Beryl Coe (2014)
Updated by Yvonne Hensman (April 2021)

Sources

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