

## Memorial 76

**Sarah CLARK 1749-1810**  
**Joseph CLARK 1743-1812**

In 2014 the transcription for this stone read 'Sarah wife of Joseph Clark died 11<sup>th</sup> January 1810 aged --'



W. H. Hamilton Rogers transcription of 1894 reveals what has now worn away. Sarah is noted as having died on 11<sup>th</sup> February 1810 aged 61, the stone also commemorates her husband Joseph, who died on 7<sup>th</sup> January 1812 aged 69.<sup>1</sup>

We know they are both buried in the single walled grave for which 10 shillings was paid on the day Sarah was buried, 17<sup>th</sup> February 1810.<sup>2</sup> When Joseph was buried on 13<sup>th</sup> January 1812 the cost for opening the grave was 7s/6d.<sup>3</sup>

The gravestone was supplied by Joseph's executors William Boyd and his son, Robert Boyd (see **Memorial 72**), leave being granted by the Trustees of the graveyard for them to place a headstone there on 14<sup>th</sup> February 1812.<sup>4</sup>

Unfortunately, Joseph and Sarah pose more questions than answers at this time. We do not know where they were born or who their parents were. We know from Joseph's will that he still had a brother Richard, and that Sarah had a sister Susanna White, a widow, and nieces living in Kells, County Meath in Ireland. Susanna's maiden name was Lock, although the wording is confusing.<sup>5</sup> So was Sarah, Joseph's wife Sarah Lock? No marriage for Joseph and Sarah has been found.

When Sarah died the only mention of her death was in the *Royal Cornwall Gazette* 'Mrs Clarke, wife of Mr Joseph Clarke, Exeter'. Were they originally from Cornwall? <sup>6</sup>

Joseph was living in Dawlish when he died.<sup>7</sup> Were he and his wife originally living in Exeter before moving to Dawlish? We know that he was a prominent member of George's Meeting as his name and signature appear in the minutes of meetings. In 1794 Joseph's name appears as having signed to elect the Reverend Joseph Bretland as Minister and he also subscribed to the building of the new vestry at George's for the use of the Reverend Timothy Kendrick. In 1800 when a meeting was held to establish whether a new hymn book was published, Joseph ordered three.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>1</sup> 1894 Transcription by W. H. Hamilton Rogers. South West Heritage Trust (SWHT) [www.swheritage.org.uk](http://www.swheritage.org.uk)

<sup>2</sup> Report and Account Book of Dissenters Burial Ground 1748-1832 (DRO3693D/O/B/1) [www.swheritage.org.uk](http://www.swheritage.org.uk)

<sup>3</sup> As not 2 above.

<sup>4</sup> See Boyd biography at [www.edgt.org.uk](http://www.edgt.org.uk)

<sup>5</sup> Joseph Clark Will 1812 (PROB 11/1536/120), accessed via [www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk)

<sup>6</sup> *Royal Cornwall Gazette* 17 Feb 1810, accessed via [www.findmypast.co.uk](http://www.findmypast.co.uk)

<sup>7</sup> See note 5 above

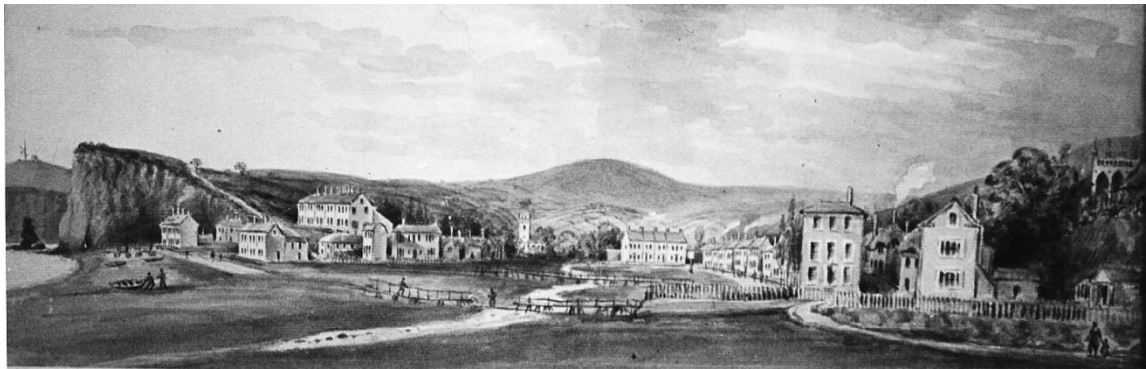
<sup>8</sup> Minutes of Meetings from 1791-1813 (Ref 3693D/O/M/4) SWHT

Dawlish is thirteen miles away from Exeter which would have taken about 4 hours to travel by carriage to worship at George's Meeting. Did he (and his wife) attend regularly?

In or before 1812, Joseph amongst others donated money towards repayment of a loan and interest that had purchased teaching premises for Manchester New College Dissenting Academy.<sup>9</sup> This also poses many questions regarding Joseph. Had Joseph studied at one of the Dissenting Academies?

What we do know is that Joseph was a man of property; in his will he mentions his own house and a lodging house, 'the second house on the beach', the contents of which he leaves to Robert Boyd Esquire. It is not possible at present to verify exactly which houses he owned but one may well have been one of those on the far right of the image below.

At the time of writing his will in October 1811 he had a Mrs Joan Ridge living with him. He wanted her to be allowed to stay in his house for as long as she wanted or until her death. Whatever the circumstances, his lodging house and contents are auctioned on Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> June 1812.<sup>10</sup>



Dawlish c.1790.<sup>11</sup>

Robert Boyd, as can be seen from his own biography had married Sarah Clark Tripe, a native of Dawlish on 9<sup>th</sup> April 1807 at St. John's in Exeter. Joseph Clark was a witness at their marriage. Was Sarah a relation of Joseph's or was his connection through business or as a friend of Robert and his father William? We may never know.

Robert Boyd died at Kenton in 1813 and was also buried in the Dissenters' graveyard in Exeter.<sup>12</sup>

**Anne Amosford**  
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<sup>9</sup> The Monthly Repository of Theology and General Literature, Vol. 7, 1812, pp.587-588. accessed via <https://books.google.co.uk/> Information on Dissenting Academies can be found at <https://www.qmul.ac.uk/sed/religionandliterature/dissenting-academies/dissenting-academies-online/>

<sup>10</sup> Advertisement in *Exeter Flying Post*, May 1812. accessed via [www.findmypast.co.uk](http://www.findmypast.co.uk)

<sup>11</sup> Image courtesy of Dawlish Local History Group.

<sup>12</sup> See note 4.