

**ROWE, Matthew and Luke** (d. September 1822)

**No Memorial**

**ROWE, Frederick Augustus** (d. 20 June 1825)

**ROWE, Septimus** (d. 12 August 1829)

**ROWE, Maria** (d. 1 March 1834)

Pigot's Directory of 1822/3 listed 25 retail linen-draperers in Exeter, 20 of whom were located in Fore Street.<sup>1</sup> Amongst them, at 74 Fore Street, was Christopher Rowe. Christopher was baptised on 3<sup>rd</sup> October 1794 in the parish of St George, Exeter, the son of Joseph and Ann (née Coplestone).<sup>2</sup> Joseph was a builder, but offered to serve as an artificer in the 1803 Militia List suggesting that he was familiar with military engineering and artillery equipment.<sup>3</sup>

Christopher Rowe married Maria Mare at St Petrock's Church, Exeter on 9<sup>th</sup> July 1820.<sup>4</sup> Marie was born c.1793 and was living in Exeter's Holy Trinity parish at the time of her marriage. She was described as a spinster and Christopher as a linen-draper on their marriage licence.<sup>5</sup> Their first child,



a son, was baptised on 19<sup>th</sup> July 1821 at Bow Meeting House, Exeter.<sup>6</sup> He was named John Kingdon Rowe, presumably as a tribute to Samuel "Iron Sam" Kingdon who was a prominent non-conformist member of the George's Meeting House congregation, mayor of Exeter (1835), and who was also married at St Petrock's (in 1806).

On Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> September 1822 the following notice appeared in the Exeter Flying Post. "**Births.** This morning, the wife of Mr. Christopher Rowe, of this city, linen-draper, of *three fine boys*, which, with the mother, are likely to do well; they were christened this forenoon, by the names of Matthew, Mark, and Luke, after the Evangelists: Mr R. having a former child living called John."<sup>7</sup> Sadly, two of the boys, Matthew and Luke, were buried in the Exeter Dissenters' Graveyard later the same month. Mark,

however, survived into adulthood, married in 1853 and lived in Devon until his death in 1896 aged 73. He was a linen-draper.

Christopher and Maria's fifth child was a boy, Frederick Augustus, who died in June 1825 shortly after his first birthday. The choice of his given names is interesting and suggests that the family were staunch royalists. Frederick Augustus (1763-1827), Duke of York and Albany, was the second son of King George III. The child was buried in Exeter Dissenters' graveyard.

Their sixth child, a daughter, Rosa Kekewich Rowe, was born on 9<sup>th</sup> February 1826 and she was baptised on 9<sup>th</sup> July 1826 at George's Meeting House by Revd. James Manning. Her middle name

<sup>1</sup> Pigot's Directory for 1822/23 accessed at [www.genuki.org.uk](http://www.genuki.org.uk) on 29 June 2020.

<sup>2</sup> SW Heritage Trust 4779A/PR/1/2 accessed at [www.findmypast.co.uk](http://www.findmypast.co.uk) on 26 June 2020.

<sup>3</sup> Hoskins, W.G. (1972) Exeter Militia List 1803. Phillimore & Co Ltd, Chichester.

<sup>4</sup> Devon Marriages and Banns accessed at [www.findmypast.co.uk](http://www.findmypast.co.uk) on 26 June 2020.

<sup>5</sup> DHC DEX/7/b/1/1820/182.

<sup>6</sup> England and Wales Non-Conformist Births and Baptisms TNA/RG/4/47 accessed at [www.findmypast.co.uk](http://www.findmypast.co.uk) on 26 June 2020.

<sup>7</sup> EFP 5 September 1822. Accessed at British Newspaper Archive online, 26 June 2020.

was presumably given in tribute to Samuel Trehawke Kekewich (1796-1873) who became Tory Member of Parliament for Exeter at a by-election on the day that Rosa was born.<sup>8</sup> Rosa died on 27<sup>th</sup> April 1846 at her father's home "after a short illness".<sup>9</sup> Her death certificate stated that she had a fever for six days and was attended at her death by Matilda Vicary of Lower Melbourne Street, Exeter. The place of her burial is not currently known.

Adolphus Frederick (b. 10<sup>th</sup> April 1827) was their seventh child and he, presumably, was also named after a son of the late monarch. Prince Adolphus (1774-1850), Duke of Cambridge, was the tenth child of George III and Queen Charlotte. Adolphus departed London in August 1852 (aged 25) on board *Northumberland*, arriving in Port Phillip Bay, Victoria, Australia in November the same year.<sup>10</sup> His 'Profession, Occupation or Calling' was stated to be 'Gold-Seeker', and he was recorded on the Ballarat electoral register in 1856. He married in 1858, served as a storekeeper for much of his life, was appointed as a magistrate in 1892 and died in Shepparton, Victoria, on 25<sup>th</sup> August 1905 aged 78.<sup>11</sup>

In 1828 Mrs C. Rowe of 184 Fore Street was named as a milliner and dress-maker.<sup>12</sup> This was the same address as Christopher's linen drapery.

Christopher and Maria's seventh son, named Septimus, was born on the 12<sup>th</sup> December 1828. It does not appear that he was baptised.<sup>13</sup> He died on 12<sup>th</sup> August 1829 (aged 8 months) and was buried in the Exeter Dissenters' graveyard.

Maria Frances, the Rowe's second daughter, was born on 5<sup>th</sup> June 1831. She was baptised at George's Meeting House on 6<sup>th</sup> April 1834 together with her brother Adolphus (then aged almost 7) and her younger sister, Elvina Mare (born 15<sup>th</sup> February 1834). Revd. John Cropper officiated. It must have been a sad occasion because Maria Rowe, Christopher's wife, died on 1<sup>st</sup> March 1834 – less than 3 weeks after giving birth to her tenth child. Elvina's middle name, Mare, commemorated her mother.<sup>14</sup>

A touching obituary for Maria appeared in the local newspaper. "On Saturday last, being but a few days over a fortnight from her confinement, aged 41, Maria, wife of Mr. Christopher Rowe, of this city, linen draper. The deceased was a most excellent woman: assiduous and exemplary in the discharge of her domestic duties; and prompt and active in every thing that related to the general business of life. As a wife she was indeed and most deservedly beloved; as a mother she was a

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1820-1832/member/kekewich-samuel-1796-1873>  
Accessed 30 June 2020.

<sup>9</sup> Western Times, 2<sup>nd</sup> May 1846. Accessed at British Newspaper Archive online on 27<sup>th</sup> June 2020.

<sup>10</sup> Victoria, Australia, Assisted and unassisted passenger lists 1839-1923 British>1852 accessed at [www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk) on 1<sup>st</sup> July 2020.

<sup>11</sup> Name search on [www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk) and Government Gazette (Australia) 8<sup>th</sup> July 1892, p. 2857.

<sup>12</sup> Exeter Itinerary and General Directory. T. & H. Besley, South Street, Exeter, 1828.

<sup>13</sup> England and Wales Non-Conformist Births and Baptisms accessed at [www.findmypast.co.uk](http://www.findmypast.co.uk) on 26<sup>th</sup> June 2020. The birth date for Septimus was recorded, but the baptism register was neither dated nor signed.

<sup>14</sup> England and Wales Non-Conformist Births and Baptisms accessed at [www.findmypast.co.uk](http://www.findmypast.co.uk) on 26<sup>th</sup> June 2020. Maria Frances married James Pasmore Savery in 1854 and gave birth to a son, Robert James Savery, on 7<sup>th</sup> December 1855. She died a week later "after a short illness" at their home in Bystock Terrace, Exeter. Elvina married George Phare on 26<sup>th</sup> February 1859 with whom she had six children. George Phare died in December 1867 in South London. Elvina married for a second time in 1872 to Hinton Hill. They had one child. Elvina died in Middlesex in April 1907, aged 73. She is buried with her second husband in South Ealing Cemetery.

pattern such as it would be well if it were generally copied: as a friend, and the encourager of all industrious exertion, she has been the means of diffusing happiness among others and promoting the common good. Most deeply will she be lamented by many, yet will theirs not be a sorrow without hope, since, as regards their departed relative and friend, they are entitled to indulge in the brightest prospects, having the recollection, mournful as it now is, that her life was spent in doing good, was marked throughout its course by usefulness".<sup>15</sup> Maria was buried in Exeter Dissenters' graveyard on Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> May 1834.

### Christopher Rowe.

Mr Rowe was a linen draper from his mid-20s operating out of premises at 74 Fore Street, Exeter. A bill head from January 1823 (see below) lists a wide range of materials and items for sale, including 'A great Variety of Artificial Flowers'.<sup>16</sup> It also shows that he conducted business with some notable personages, including Lady (Dorothea) Frances Ley of Trehill, Kenn near Exeter.<sup>17</sup>



Christopher Rowe seems to have been community-minded, subscribing £30 in 1830 to Mr Coldridge's plan for the widening of North Street.<sup>18</sup> He also joined the committee to implement the plan at an estimated cost of £2830. In 1834 he was appointed as a Commissioner of Improvement for the parish of St Petrocks and three years later he served as an election assessor for the St Petrock



Ward in the 1837 election that had been triggered by the death of William IV.<sup>19</sup> By 1837 his business was located at 184 Fore Street, and an advertisement in September of that year stated that he had been making purchases from London.<sup>20</sup> His trade card (left) was ornate, bearing the description that Linen Draper, Silk Mercer, Hosier and Haberdasher. The 1841 Census shows that he spent time in London – he is recorded as a Merchant living at an address on Wardrobe Place in the parish of St

<sup>15</sup> Western Times, 6<sup>th</sup> March 1834. Accessed at British Newspaper Archive online on 27<sup>th</sup> June 2020.

<sup>16</sup> DHC 2741M/F/V/46.

<sup>17</sup> Lady Frances was the daughter of the 7<sup>th</sup> Marquess of Tweeddale. Her husband, John Henry Ley, was Clerk to the House of Commons for 49 years until his death in 1850 (see <https://api.parliament.uk/historic-hansard/commons/1851/feb/05/john-henry-ley-esq-late-clerk-of-the>).

<sup>18</sup> £30 in 1830 is equivalent to around £2750 in 2020 ([www.measuringworth.com](http://www.measuringworth.com)). Exeter & Plymouth Gazette, 17 July 1830 accessed at British Newspaper Archive online on 30<sup>th</sup> June 2020.

<sup>19</sup> Exeter Flying Post, 18 December 1834 and Western Times, 4 November 1837, both accessed at British Newspaper Archive online on 30<sup>th</sup> June 2020.

<sup>20</sup> Exeter & Plymouth Gazette, 9 September 1837 accessed at British Newspaper Archive online on 30<sup>th</sup> June 2020.

Andrew by the Wardrobe near St Paul's and Ludgate Hill.<sup>21</sup> His children, John Kingdon (a Draper), Mark, Rosa, Adolphus, Maria and Elvina were recorded as living in Fore Street (presumably at No. 184), Exeter, with a Shopman, an apprentice and a servant.<sup>22</sup> Presumably, John Kingdon Rowe was managing the shop during his father's absence. In 1844 John Kingdon Rowe married Lucy Ann Ellis, third eldest daughter of Henry and Mary Ellis.<sup>23</sup> Henry was a goldsmith with premises in Exeter's High Street.

By the time Rosa died, in 1846, the family were living at No. 1 Lower Summerland Place in Heavitree,



Exeter, and in that same year an advertisement announced the return of John Kingdon Rowe from London (left). The business was named "Christopher Rowe and Son" and, interestingly, they advertised themselves as Undertakers of

Funerals as well as linen drapers. Their partnership did not last long. An announcement appeared in the London Gazette on 15<sup>th</sup> August 1848 dissolving the partnership. Shortly afterwards the 1851 Census showed John Kingdon and Lucy with their four children living at 121 High Street Taunton.<sup>24</sup>

Just two months after the Rowes dissolved their partnership, Christopher put the business up for sale. The entire stock-in-trade amounted to £3461.2s.6d – a very significant amount - and was available as a whole or in three lots, as well as the opportunity to the "large and commodious premises" at 184 Fore Street, Exeter (with a frontage to both Fore Street and North Street).<sup>25</sup> The 1851 Census for Exeter recorded Christopher, a retired linen draper, living at 1 Summerland Place with his unmarried daughters Marie-Frances and Elvina Mare, and two female servants.<sup>26</sup> Interestingly, his son Mark was lodging at 158 Fore Street, Exeter as an unmarried draper's assistant.<sup>27</sup> A decade later, Mark was married with four young children, and was living at 266 High Street as a linen draper.<sup>28</sup> Why Mark did not serve an apprenticeship with his father or join him in business once the partnership with John Kingdon Rowe was dissolved is not known. John Kingdon Rowe was named as a legatee in Christopher Rowe's will dated 21<sup>st</sup> September 1848, and Adolphus Frederick received his father's gold watch, but Mark, Marie Frances and Elvina Mare were not mentioned by name.<sup>29</sup> It appears that Mark converted to Roman Catholicism at some time before 1870, so it is plausible that there were religious differences between father and son.<sup>30</sup> In his will,

<sup>21</sup> 1841 England, Wales & Scotland Census HO107/719/13 accessed at [www.findmypast.co.uk](http://www.findmypast.co.uk) on 26<sup>th</sup> June 2020.

<sup>22</sup> 1841 England, Wales & Scotland Census HO107/267/12 accessed at [www.findmypast.co.uk](http://www.findmypast.co.uk) on 26<sup>th</sup> June 2020.

<sup>23</sup> The London Gazette (1848) Part Three, page 3097.

<sup>24</sup> 1851 England, Wales & Scotland Census HO107/1922 accessed at [www.findmypast.co.uk](http://www.findmypast.co.uk) on 26<sup>th</sup> June 2020.

<sup>25</sup> Exeter Flying Post, 5<sup>th</sup> October 1848 accessed at British Newspaper Archive online on 30<sup>th</sup> June 2020.

£3461.2s.6d in 1848 is equivalent to around £350,000 in 2020 ([www.measuringworth.com](http://www.measuringworth.com)).

<sup>26</sup> 1851 England Census. Devon>Exeter St Sidwell>1c HO107/1868 accessed at [www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk) on 1<sup>st</sup> July 2020.

<sup>27</sup> 1851 United Kingdom Census Sample accessed at [www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk) on 1<sup>st</sup> July 2020.

<sup>28</sup> 1861 England Census. Devon>Exeter St Lawrence>District 6 RG9/1398 accessed at [www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk) on 1<sup>st</sup> July 2020.

<sup>29</sup> England and Wales Prerogative Court of Canterbury 1384-1858 PROB 11/2171

<sup>30</sup> Western Times, 29<sup>th</sup> January 1896 accessed at British Newspaper Archive online on 30<sup>th</sup> June 2020. Describes the funeral of Mark Rowe.



Mark Rowe instructed, “*I give out of my own personalty the sum of £200 to the Right Reverend Doctor Vaughan or such person at the time of my decease shall be the Roman Catholic Bishop of the Diocese of Plymouth to be invested by him and the income thereof applied towards the maintenance of schools belonging to the Roman Catholic Church of the Sacred Heart in South Street Exeter.*”<sup>31</sup>

Christopher Rowe died at his home, 1 Lower Summerland Place, Exeter, on 1<sup>st</sup> April 1853 and Mark

No. 1, LOWER SUMMERLAND PLACE, EXETER.  
**M**R. CHARLES FORCE has been instructed by the Executors of the late Mr. C. ROWE, to SELL by Auction, on TUESDAY, JULY 12th instant, and following day, the whole of the handsome MAHOGANY and ROSEWOOD  
**FURNITURE,**  
 ORIENTAL and ENGLISH CHINA, CUT GLASS, PLATED GOODS, brilliant CHIMNEY GLASSES, a fine-tone Six-and-half Octave Grand Square PIANO FORTE, by Broadwood, a few choice PAINTINGS and ENGRAVINGS, about TWO HUNDRED VOLUMES of BOOKS, particulars of which will be published in Catalogues, 6d. each, to be had of the AUCTIONEER Monday preceding the Sale, which will commence each day at half past 11 o'clock.  
 100, St. Sidwell's, July 4th, 1853.

Rowe was named on the death certificate as being in attendance. Cause of death was “*Tic doloureux/ 20 years/Exhaustion*”.<sup>32</sup>

Christopher’s will was proved in London on 21<sup>st</sup> April 1853.<sup>33</sup> Probate was granted to his brother Joseph Coplestone Rowe, brother-in-law John Sommers Gard and his friend James Pasmore. Three months after his death Christopher’s executors commenced the process of selling the contents of his house.<sup>34</sup>

In 1894 Devon historian William H. Hamilton Rogers recorded the inscription on a memorial

stone in George’s Meeting yard, South Street, Exeter.<sup>35</sup> He noted, “*Maria wife of Christopher Rowe born June 26, 1793, died 1 March 1834. Their children Matthew & Luke, 1822 – Frederick Augustus, 1825 – Septimus, 1829 – Rosa Kekewich, 1846. The above named Christopher Rowe born 10 Aug. 1794, died 1 April 1853*”.

Ian M. Varndell  
 August 2020

<sup>31</sup> DHC 7001. Estate of Mark Rowe (folder 1 of 4, 1883-1896).

<sup>32</sup> *Tic doloureux* is now better known as trigeminal neuralgia – a chronic painful affliction of a facial nerve, often associated with other conditions including multiple sclerosis. The condition was known in the 1850s – see C. Toogood Downing (1850) On Tic Doloureux and other painful affections of the nerves; with suggestions for their treatment by means of aneuralgicon. *Prov. Med. Surg. J.*, **14**: 41.

<sup>33</sup> Exeter Flying Post, 7<sup>th</sup> April 1853 accessed at British Newspaper Archive online on 30<sup>th</sup> June 2020.

<sup>34</sup> Exeter Flying Post, 7<sup>th</sup> July 1853 accessed at British Newspaper Archive online on 5<sup>th</sup> July 2020.

<sup>35</sup> DCRS, Parish Information Files, Copy inscriptions of Unitarian Burial Grounds, 1894. Held at Devon Heritage Centre. Hand-written notes by historian W.H. Hamilton Rogers includes many, but not all, memorial inscriptions at several burial grounds.